

NEWSLETTER

THE MAGAZINE FOR THE STAFF OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE



A fruitful partnership

PLUS: £30 million gift to New Hall | Flexible working | What's new

SNAPSHOT

In plain sight Early arrivals at the 8 July 'topping out' ceremony on the new roof of the refurbished Department of Plant Sciences on the Downing Site were treated to the spectacular sight of a Second World War B17 Flying Fortress, accompanied by a Mustang fighter plane, passing low on their way towards the American Cemetery at Madingley. Once complete, the £4 million Plant Sciences project will provide much-needed new laboratory and office space and a growth room.



Car higher On Sunday 8 June, 1958, student pranksters carried out the legendary feat of perching a Austin Seven van on the apex of the Senate House roof. The authorities were unsuccessful in their efforts to remove it whole, and after five days of trying, gave up and cut the vehicle into six pieces. In June, the team of 12 Gonville and Caius College engineering students, now respectable septugenarians, returned to the College for a 50th anniversary dinner.



INES ROBERTS, © GONVILLE & CAIUS COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

Double take A portrait of Lord Broers, former Vice-Chancellor at Cambridge, was unveiled on 24 June in the Combination Room at the Old Schools, where it will hang amongst portraits of other University dignitaries. The portrait was painted by celebrated portrait artist Sergei Pavlenko, shown here with Lord Broers. Pavlenko, who counts HM The Queen, HRH Prince William and other members of the Royal Family among his client list, began work on the portrait last spring.



Gateway to leadership Imagine the leadership potential when the Gates Cambridge Scholars Society launched the first pan-scholarship symposium in late June. The event, Leadership for Positive Change, was the first of its kind to bring international scholars from across the UK together. The speakers were Lord May, former Chief Scientific Adviser to the Government and President of the Royal Society, Adele Blakebrough, a leading social entrepreneur, and Mary Hockaday, Deputy Head of News at the BBC.



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St John's College Pastry Chef Tim Robinson works with Abbie, a catering student at Huntingdonshire Regional College. Photo by Philip Mynott.

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NEWSLETTER

The *Newsletter* is published for the staff of the University of Cambridge and is produced by the Office of External Affairs and Communications. Please send in ideas for the content and other ways we can improve the publication. Tel: (3)32300

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Suggestions for articles for the Oct/Nov

edition should reach the Editor by 19 August.

Editor: Susan Dalzell

Designers: Esterson Associates/Richard Reeve

Printers: Cambridge Printing

Newsletter online

www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/newsletter/

WHAT'S NEW

→ Your comments and contributions are always welcome. Please send them to the Editor at newsletter@admin.cam.ac.uk. The deadline for the next issue is 19 August.

800th activities ready to roll



DAVID CHAPIREAU

Cambridge Contemporary Dance has received money from the 2009 Fund to stage an 800th Anniversary event.

ONE ACCOUNT of the foundation of Cambridge University has it that a group of scholars fled Oxford in 1209 following the judicial hanging of two of their number for the murder of a local woman. It was hardly the most auspicious start to the life of an institution that, 800 years on, is one of the most respected universities in the world.

The 800th Anniversary Team is working towards producing a series of events running throughout next year to draw attention to the University's role as a world leader in a variety of disciplines. Events will also celebrate the University's history and the many Cantabrigians whose ideas have shaped the modern world.

University staff and students are already contributing to the Anniversary programme of events through the 2009 Fund. This fund has been established to support University or College groups wishing to stage their own 800th Anniversary events.

"The opportunity to contribute something special has clearly galvanised many groups, with over 100 ideas being submitted so far," says Professor Jeremy Sanders, Chair of the 800th Anniversary

Committee.

A sample of the many events and projects that have already received funding include:

- CU Spaceflight will be launching the first rocket designed and constructed entirely by students into outer space.
- Cambridge Contemporary Dance is staging a newly choreographed dance set to live choral and chamber music in a college chapel.
- Lucy Cavendish College will mark the year with an exhibition entitled *Rooms of Our Own*, telling the story of women's education through the centuries.

The application deadline for the final round of funding is 22 October. Before submitting an application, applicants are urged to contact the Anniversary Team on 61672 or ideas@800.cam.ac.uk with their ideas.

Other 2009 events include a garden party for staff at the Botanic Garden on 18 July, a gala concert in London featuring Cambridge music on 22 July, and a Winter Light Finale from 20 to 22 November.

→ For a listing of 800th Anniversary activities, visit www.cam.ac.uk/800

ALL NEW...

Get the scoop

Did you know that 100,000 pupils took part in face-to-face activities run by the University and Colleges in 2006-07? Facts like this and more are published in new fact sheets produced by the Cambridge Admissions Office and the Office of External Affairs and Communications. The sheets are chock full of information about undergraduate admissions and widening participation and are designed to be easily printed for sharing. Staff are encouraged to use them as hand-outs to visitors or for meetings with external parties.

→ www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/admissions/factsheets/

Hilton on view



RONNIE DUNCAN COLLECTION

Untitled 1963

The only showing of a major exhibition of oil paintings by Roger Hilton will take place at Kettle's Yard from 2 August to the 22 September. Hilton (1911-1975) is widely thought to be one of the best and most adventurous painters of his generation. *Roger Hilton: swinging out into the void* comprises more than 40 important works from public and private collections across the UK and includes several paintings rarely seen or not previously exhibited.

→ www.kettlesyard.co.uk/

Clocking in

The Human Resources Division has introduced a standardised 36.5 hour working week for assistant staff across the University, effective 1 August, with a phased timetable over a two-year period for departments and offices with complicated local agreements. The HR Division is working with relevant institutions and trades union representatives to develop guidance on the transition to identify local solutions, where needed.

→ For more information, contact your HR Advisor

Test tube maybe



The University's 2008 Science Exhibition will take place from 10am to 3pm on 17 September in the Large and Small Exam Halls, New Museums Site and will feature University preferred suppliers of scientific products and services. Visitors will have the opportunity to speak with supplier representatives and review their products, as well as attend topical seminars. The event is open to all University staff; entry will be by University Card.

→ To register for seminars, visit www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/purchasing/events/

WHAT'S NEW

£30 million gift brightens New Hall's future

A £30 MILLION gift to New Hall by Cambridge-based entrepreneurs Ros and Steve Edwards will be used to strengthen the College's widening participation efforts.

"We were set up to provide the best education to able women from all backgrounds. All our students are special – but they may not be rich," said President Anne Lonsdale. "Now we can allocate further financial help where it is needed and build on our teaching strengths."

In recognition of the gift, which is the largest ever given to a Cambridge College by a British couple, New Hall has been renamed Murray Edwards College.

Dame Rosemary Murray founded the College with one shilling in 1954 as a third foundation for women students in the University of Cambridge. It was to be known as the 'New Hall', waiting for a donor to appear who would endow and name it.

It would take more than 50 years and one of New Hall's own graduates to bring that hope to fruition. Ros studied at New Hall in the early 1980s and praised the education she received while in Cambridge.

"I came here from a very ordinary background," Ros said at an 18 June press conference, held under New Hall's iconic dome in the College's dining room. She explained that her father was working as a taxi driver at the time that she came up to Cambridge.

"New Hall made me feel welcome. I owe Cambridge and New Hall a great deal. Cambridge's excellence and New Hall's energy and kindness allows students to go on to be their very best."

Steve Edwards had a similarly positive experience at St Edmund Hall, Oxford. It helped to guide their decision to make a donation to support education.

"We thought for a long time about how to achieve the greatest benefit



from a gift," Steve said. "We came to believe that education was the best thing to do because it gives the greatest long-term benefit to the world."

"I felt I had to put something back," Ros said. "I believe it is my duty to support the education of current and future students and give them the opportunities given to us."

It's a duty she hopes others will embrace. "We hope by making this gift and our reasons for it public to encourage all British graduates to donate," she said.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Alison Richard expressed her gratitude. "They are exemplary donors in their

New Hall benefactors Steve and Ros Edwards, shown here with President Anne Lonsdale, made their donation in the hope it would inspire other British graduates to also support education.

generosity and the seriousness of their generosity. I know and we all know that you are doing it for a wonderful cause," she said, turning to face Ros and Steve. "The Campaign for Cambridge's 800th anniversary is helping to ensure that our Colleges are supported and your gift resonates in so many ways. I can only say thanks on behalf of us all: Cambridge past, present and yet to be."

→ For more information about the 800th Anniversary Campaign, visit www.foundation.cam.ac.uk/800-home.php

→ For more information about Murray Edwards College, visit www.murrayedwards.cam.ac.uk/

→ Pay a visit to the new interactive version of the online edition of the *Newsletter*: www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/newsletter/. You can now turn the digital pages of the virtual *Newsletter* with the same ease that you might flip through the print edition.

Get an insider's view

NEARLY A DOZEN Cambridge Colleges will be open for guided tours and for a charity 'Bridge the Gap' walk during the second weekend of September. The events are combining to form the University's first Open Cambridge Weekend.

On Saturday 13 September, University and College experts will lead subject-themed tours through Colleges, providing insights into



history, architecture and art. All Saturday events are free, but do require a reservation. For details, contact Joanna McPhee on jm631@admin.cam.ac.uk or 64930.

On Sunday 14 September, roughly 2,000 people will take part in a 4.5-mile 'Bridge the Gap' walk with a route through several Colleges. Walkers will also have the opportunity to visit the Scott Polar Research Institute Museum and participate in family activities.

This year, walkers are raising money for Teenage Cancer Trust Appeal, Arthur Rank Hospice and Press Relief. The walk starts at 9.30am from Jesus Green.

Registration is £8 in advance or £14 on the day and is free for children under 16.

→ www.bridgethegapwalk.org

Professor McKendrick retires from PVC post

PROFESSOR Melveena McKendrick is retiring from the post of Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education, a role she has filled since January 2004.

Professor McKendrick will leave a significant legacy in many areas of the University including undergraduate admissions, the development of the tripos, graduate education, pedagogic support and quality assurance.

Professor John Rallison, Senior Tutor at Trinity College and Director of the Newton Trust, has been



named her successor and will begin his duties on October 1.

Professor McKendrick has had a long and distinguished career at Cambridge. She is Professor of Spanish Golden-Age Literature, Culture and Society in the Modern and Medieval Languages Faculty and a Professorial Fellow at Girton College.

She served on the University's General Board and chaired its Education Committee in the 1990s, was Senior Tutor at Girton College for seven years and is a Fellow of the British Academy. She gained her first degree at King's College, London and her PhD and LittD at Cambridge.

"I would like to thank Melveena for her outstanding contributions to the University," said Vice-Chancellor Professor Alison Richard. "In John Rallison the University has found a fine successor, and the Pro-Vice-Chancellors and I greatly look forward to working with him."

ALL NEW...

Festival of Ideas coming soon



Doug Richard

BBC presenter Evan Davis, Doug Richard of *Dragon's Den* and MP Michael Howard are in the line-up for the first ever Cambridge Festival of Ideas in October. The event, which runs from 22 October to 2 November, celebrates the arts, humanities and social sciences. In addition to debates and lectures, there will be a huge range of hands-on activities, performances, department open days, language workshops, school visits and discussions held around Cambridge.

→ Nicola Buckley, njb1010@admin.cam.ac.uk

Summer trails

Trot around museums through 15 September for a horse-themed trail. The Cambridge Museums Summer Trail 'Point to Point' is for children under 14 who can answer questions as they go from museum to museum. Each correct answer earns a 'pony point' for entering a prize draw. The Botanic Garden is offering its own Summer Thursdays Trail throughout August. Children will be able to record their travels through the Garden.

→ www.cam.ac.uk/museumevents

→ www.botanic.cam.ac.uk/ducevents.htm

Seeking global ties



A new online International Directory aims to map the University's extensive international links and expertise and improve the information available to anyone involved in international activity. Advisers to foreign governments, recipients of honorary degrees from overseas and speakers of unusual languages are just a few of the people encouraged to contribute to the site's list of resources and connections. To register, visit www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/international/, click on 'International Directory' and then 'Edit'.
→ intmedia@admin.cam.ac.uk

Joining DisabledGo

The University is working with DisabledGo, an innovative project designed to help disabled people into education and employment. The DisabledGo website, www.disabledgo.info, will advertise Cambridge jobs and publish detailed information on physical and sensory access to 40 University buildings. The buildings are currently being agreed and detailed assessments should start in September.

→ Helena Scott, 32301, hjs54@admin.cam.ac.uk

For 150 years, Cambridge Assessment has raised standards in education throughout the world

Exams (still) in progress

PAY ATTENTION at the back! Hands up who knows the name and age of the UK's oldest surviving examination board?

On February 11, 2008, Cambridge Assessment marked its 150th anniversary and celebrated its standing as the United Kingdom's most senior exam board.

Celebrations take place throughout 2008. These include a series of seminars this summer as well as Cambridge holding the prestigious Annual International Association for Educational Assessment (IAEA) Conference in September.

Set up in 1858 as the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (changed to Cambridge Assessment in 2005), the organisation played a pioneering role in introducing public examinations for schools with the aim of raising standards in education.

Queen Victoria was on the throne when UCLES began a journey that has resulted in its emergence as a global authority on the planning and implementation of exams.

During the intervening years, it has evolved as a world leader in three distinct areas: international examinations, UK examinations and English examinations for speakers of other languages.

"Although there have been countless changes to the education system over the last 150 years, the



original ethos that sparked the creation of the Syndicate still drives the work of Cambridge Assessment today," says Chief Executive Simon Lebus.

"In 1858, just 370 candidates sat UCLES exams and we are proud of the fact that, today, with the new name of Cambridge Assessment, we deliver qualifications to millions of candidates in 150 countries – ensuring that learners across the world access the benefits of their education."

From the first overseas centres such as Trinidad, Mauritius and New Zealand (all established in 1877), Cambridge Assessment now has centres in nearly all of Europe, North and South America, the Middle East and Far East as well as Australia and much of Africa.

This year, Cambridge Assessment will send out more than 20 million exam papers around the world. In its early days, numbers were more modest. The names of those who took them are still recorded.

Earliest subjects sat included English language and literature, geography, history, geology, Greek, Latin, French and even zoology. Religious knowledge was also tested – unless parents objected.

The presiding examiners travelled, usually by train, wearing academic dress and carrying a locked box containing the question papers, to ensure that the exams were carried out in the proper manner.

Earlier this year, several schools and colleges around the country sat through lessons and exams '1858 style'. Pupils attempted to answer questions from the original papers, overlooked by an 1858-esque teacher – complete with cane!

Pupils at Bristol Grammar School experienced exams 1858 style on 15 January. They took part in a special lesson to celebrate the anniversary of it being one of the first schools in the country to sit exams from the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, now called Cambridge Assessment.

1858 EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

How would you have fared in 1858? Try tackling the sample (authentic) questions from 150 years ago below. (Answers on page 14.)

Mathematics

- 1) Obtain the sum of forty-six times seven thousand and twenty, seventeen times one million and one, and thirty-three times thirty-three.
- 2) Write the year 1858 in Roman numerals.
- 3) Divide 2322500 by 1858.

Geography

- 4) Describe accurately the situation of the following places:
 - a) Genoa
 - b) Londonderry
 - c) Mecca
 - d) Rio de Janeiro
 - e) Singapore

History

- 5) Name in order the Queens and the children of Henry VIII.

On what grounds was he divorced from his first wife?

- 6) Describe one of the following events (give four facts):
 - a) Guy Fawkes Plot
 - b) Battle of Naseby
 - c) Trial of Charles 1

Religious Studies

- 7) In what three ways was our Lord tempted in the wilderness?

Making your hours work for you

The art of flex-time

WORKING PART-TIME has allowed Andrew Clarke to combine earning with his passion – art. In fact, working part-time as a gallery attendant at the Fitzwilliam Museum feeds into his work as an artist.

Clarke works Tuesday to Friday lunchtimes at the museum and on Saturday afternoons. He also covers evening events.

“I had been working full time for around seven years, but I wanted to go back to being an artist,” he says. “I could not afford to do that on a full-time basis. I needed a small job to give me some income while I was working on my painting and drawing.”

Clarke, 43, is now hoping to get exhibited in Cambridge. “Working part-time has been perfect for me,” he says.

Many staff at the University work flexibly. Sarah Botcherby, Human Resources Division Consultant, told a recent meeting of the Women’s Network that the University had been operating ad hoc flexible working practices well before the new legislation on flexible working was introduced in 2003. These had now become more formalised with staff expected to make their requests in writing to their line manager, as set out in the University’s revised Flexible Working Policy.

A discussion then takes place

where the employee has to put forward his or her reasons for the request and how it will work in practice. The manager then considers the request and can only turn it down on business grounds, for example, if she can show it will put a financial burden on her organisation. There is a right of appeal against this decision.

The policy recognises that requests might not always be appropriate, for instance, to work part-time to try out a job elsewhere, but the main aim is to recognise that people’s circumstances change.

“It is not exclusively for people with caring responsibilities,” says Botcherby. “It acknowledges that people have to balance needs outside work with work.” The important thing is whether the request is feasible, she added. The onus is on employees to show that it will work. A trial period can be suggested if managers have doubts about feasibility, or alternatives can be discussed.

In addition to the formal process, many managers and staff still come to informal arrangements.

Nan Taplin, for example, originally worked 22 hours a week as a senior secretary in the Department of Italian and Modern Greek so she could look after an elderly parent and pursue other



PHILIP MYNOTT

Since he began working part-time as a gallery attendant for the Fitzwilliam Museum, Andrew Clarke has had more time to pursue his love of art, painting in his home studio.

interests. She soon realised her work pattern didn’t make sense: Work was hectic during term times and quiet during the summer.

She discussed it with her manager and developed her own system whereby she works longer hours during the hectic times – what she calls “red weeks” – and shorter hours in quiet periods – “green weeks”.

“I thought, what was the point of sitting in the office for 22 hours a week in the summer when the staff are away doing research or writing books,” she says. “The faculty have been phenomenally flexible. Their view is that if it makes operational sense, it will work.”

FLEXIBLE WORKING OPTIONS

There are a wide range of flexible working options available to University staff, including part-time working, flexi-time, job shares, annualised or compressed hours (working agreed hours over a year or over fewer days) and term-time only work.

Additional options include:

- Career breaks of up to two years for academic and academic-related staff. Staff taking career breaks can do a minimum of 10 per cent and a maximum of 20 per cent of their work in this period. This can be worked all in one short burst at the end of the break period or

used to keep in touch on a regular basis.

- Unpaid family leave of up to six months for support staff who have been at the University for more than five years.
 - Graduated return from maternity leave so women can gradually work up to a minimum of half time.
 - Return from sick leave on a phased basis.
 - Working part-time for a limited period of time before returning to working full-time, for example, to take care of a preschool child until she starts school.
- www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/policy/flexible/

The catering teams in St John's College and Girton College have partnered with Cambridge Mencap and Huntingdonshire Regional College to give students with learning disabilities valuable work experience. The *Newsletter* spent a day in St John's to see the students in action.

Cooking up a future

PASTRY CHEF Tim Robinson is standing at a large countertop in the kitchen in St John's College, chopping fruit for that evening's dessert. Across from him, two Huntingdonshire Regional College (HRC) students, Abbie, 18, and Lucy, 24, are buttering slices of bread for sandwiches that will be served later in the College bar.

Lucy, Abbie and Tim work together every Thursday: the students help with the prep work for everything from pancakes to fruit salads to tarts and have become a valued part of the kitchen team.

Abbie likes to tease Tim; Tim likes to tease Abbie. Later in the day they'll have a light hearted debate over who is more of a 'cheeky monkey'.

Sue Ridley, an instructor for HRC, hovers nearby, helping to keep Abbie and Lucy on task. They both have Down's Syndrome and joined the catering course through the auspices of Cambridge Mencap, a charity which assists people with learning disabilities.

Tim is full of praise for them. "They're lovely," he says, and smiles in their direction, knowing they are listening. "They really are a great help and are very capable. I don't know what I'd do without them."

The young women are not immune to flattery. Smiles bloom on their faces as Tim makes his comments, even as their hands keep busy buttering the bread.

Cambridge Mencap has been arranging for HRC students with learning disabilities to work in the Catering Department at St John's since 2001. The programme was expanded to include Girton College in 2003. This year, seven HRC students are at St John's, working on a three-year City & Guilds

Hospitality and Catering course. At Girton, three students are on a three-year Hospitality and Catering course. On both courses, the students work three days a week.

Bill Brogan, St John's Catering and Conference Manager, says the arrangement has been a beneficial one, for all involved. "Our team like the Mencap students and get on well with them. It's excellent to see them come here and develop," he says. "It's a good working partnership."

A typical day

The students arrive about 8:30am. They change into their black Cambridge Mencap uniforms and are ready by 9am for HRC Tutor Jeanette Popham to begin their formal instruction.

The College has provided a small room near the kitchen which serves as an office and classroom. The class sits around a single table that gets pulled into the middle of the room.



The students help with the prep work for everything from pancakes to fruit salads to tarts and have become a valued part of the kitchen team.



The room also has two computers for students to use. The walls are covered with bright displays on topics such as food safety and nutrition.

Today is a special day for student James, 19, because he has an interview with the Buttery Manager for a casual position in the plate wash. The job would mean working shifts when the Buttery was particularly busy. The prospect fills James with pride.

"I can picture myself wearing one of those uniforms," he says, sitting up a little straighter as he speaks.

The lesson for the five students today is learning and reinforcing the meanings of signs and symbols the students are likely to encounter when working in catering. HRC Tutor Jeanette and Instructor Sue gently guide them through a game of dominoes, played with cards that depict safety symbols and their meanings.

By 9:30, Jeanette has read out the day's assignments. James heads to the plate wash, his favourite, and spends the day ensuring that cutlery, glasses and plates are spotless. Chris L, 26, will work in the Buttery, first cleaning and preparing the dining area for students and staff, and later, serving jacket potatoes from behind

Huntingdonshire Regional College student James says the plate wash is his favourite task when working in St John's College's Catering Department. He graduated from his City & Guilds Hospitality and Catering course on the 25 June.



the buffet. Chris T, 19, is sent to the Combination Room, where he assists with setting 58 places for lunch. Lucy and Abbie head to their kitchen duty.

“This time of year we just supervise,” Jeanette says. In September, the instructors – which include Sam Cooper, a learning support assistant – are much more hands-on, demonstrating the tasks and doing them right alongside the students.

Routine and structure is important for students with learning disabilities, Jeanette says, but the real world can be a bit messy, especially

when the College has dinners and event scheduled that add to the workload. “In catering, you can’t always have that routine,” she says. “It’s really good for the students to gain experience in a real working environment.”

It’s an experience that student Chris L really appreciates. “It gives you a real sense of achievement,” he says, explaining that he can suffer from anxiety. “That’s part of the reason I come here. It helps. The days go by quite fast.”

He is wiping down the counters in the Buttery, where sunlight is streaming down through the sky

lights. “My favourite place is here,” he says. “I like doing the cleaning. It’s lovely in the Buttery. This time of day it’s quite quiet.”

Jeanette’s goal for each student is to train them to work to the best of their ability. Some will go on to independent employment; others may work on a volunteer basis. She says her students have a lot to offer. “They are incredibly motivated and are here every day, ready to work,” she says.

Soon after 2pm, the students have changed out of their uniforms and returned to the classroom in blue jeans and sweatshirts. They each complete a job diary, summing up their tasks for the day, and their tutors work individually with them on skills such as spelling and maths, part of the overall curriculum for the course. As a group, they review the safety symbols from the morning.

At 3pm, it’s time for the class to shoulder their backpacks and say goodbye to Sue and Jeanette for the day. James stays behind, to talk through his job offer with Jeanette. Abbie, Lucy, Chris and Chris walk out together into the cobbled courtyard, passing through several knots of Johnian students as they head towards the College’s medieval gate onto Trinity Street.

Left, St John’s Pastry Chef Tim Robinson works alongside catering students Lucy and Abbie, while the students’ Huntingdonshire Regional College Instructor, Sue Ridley, looks on. Below left, student Chris T helps restock the St John’s Buttery with the help of HRC learning support assistant Sam Cooper. Below, right, HRC Tutor Jeanette Popham oversees Chris L as he cleans in the College Buttery.



PHOTOS BY PHILIP MYNOTT

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Radio-Frequency Identification Tags may not be household technology yet, but before long they could be in everything from cars to airport boarding passes – maybe even in us. At Cambridge, researchers are already exploring their potential ...

Chips with everything?

IMAGINE A CAR that recognises its owner and can stop itself from being stolen, an Oyster card that you can use anywhere in the country, or a nightclub where you buy drinks without needing to bring your wallet. They may sound like science fiction, but the truth is that none of these things may be far off. Soon they could be as much a part of everyday life as DVDs, music downloads and mobile phones.

The reason is a developing area of research into Automated Identification Technology, or Auto-ID. Cambridge, which has its own Auto-ID “Labs” within the Institute for Manufacturing on Mill Lane, is one of a number of universities at the forefront of the field.

The usual definition of Auto-ID is not exactly something that trips off the tongue. “It’s a way of communicating a unique identification directly from an object into some sort of information system,” explains Andy Shaw, business manager for the Cambridge Auto-ID Labs. “Basically, it removes the potential for human error.”

You’d be forgiven for finding that a little abstract, but once you start to consider what Auto-ID actually is, the picture becomes a lot clearer. In fact, it can mean all sorts of things, some of which have been with us for years. Barcodes and chip and pin are both examples of Auto-ID. If you have a University card programmed to let you into a certain building, you probably use Auto-ID several times

during the working day.

At Cambridge, researchers are investigating where the technology might take us next, in particular in the form of Radio Frequency Identification Tagging (RFID). Where a barcode tells you about what an item is, these electronic tags can provide unique information about the object in question. RFID tags come in all shapes and sizes, however. The smallest are about as big as a grain of rice, but others, such as those used on container ships that require mobile phone technology and batteries as well as the electronic chip that sits at their heart, are much larger.

“At the moment, the barcode on your groceries may tell you that you have purchased a 500 gram jar of coffee,” Shaw says. “It doesn’t tell you anything specific about that jar, for example its sell by date. RFID can do that. Once you’re able to ascribe unique identifications to individual objects, you can do some really clever things.”

One of those clever things started in June, with the launch of a new Cambridge-led project which could ultimately slash airport delays dramatically. Researchers are currently in discussions with several airports about piloting a system that would use RFID tags in items

RFID is already giving rise to real-life developments you would expect to crop up in an episode of *Doctor Who*

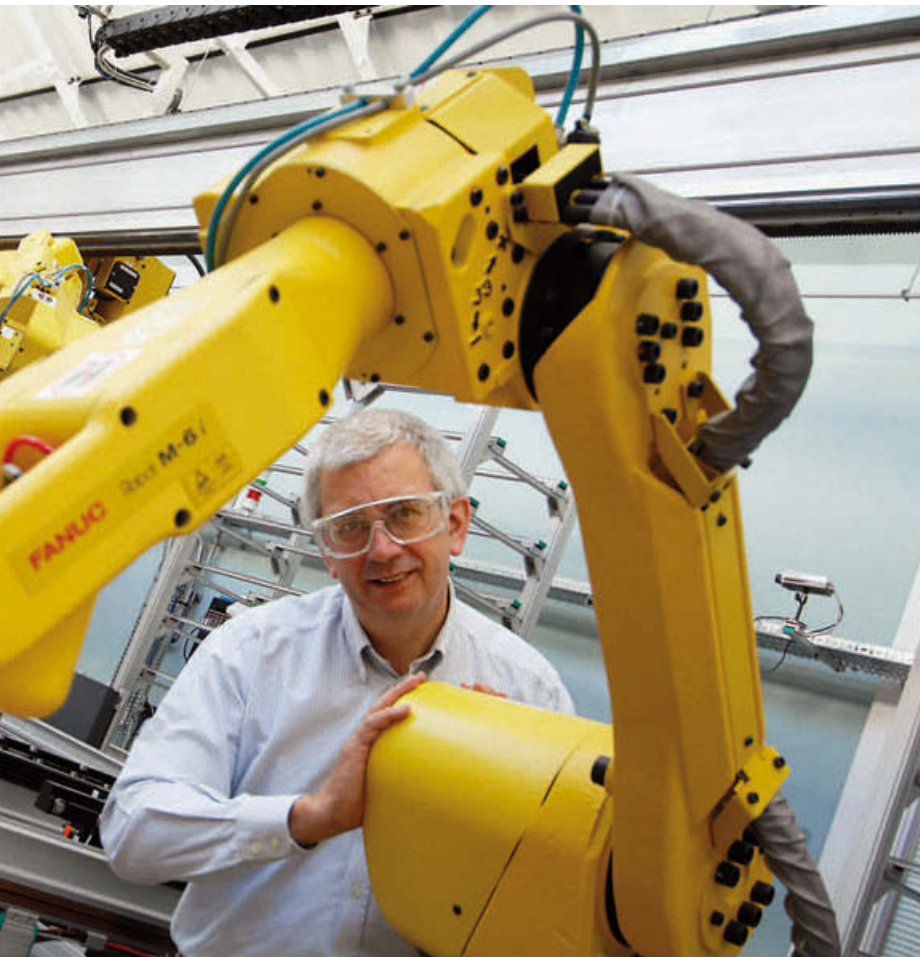


such as baggage, boarding passes and catering trays. Information relayed from these tags would make airport operations clearer to personnel on the ground, and they, in turn would be able to work with greater efficiency.

Earlier studies suggest that by tightening up the way information is shared using RFID, aircraft turnaround delays could be cut by 25 per cent. At the UK’s 10 biggest airports alone, that would generate annual airline savings of £160 million.

Last year, researchers also unveiled an intelligent system that uses RFID to enable a car to “diagnose” its own servicing needs. In this case, electronic tags were attached to the engine parts inside a specially-adapted Fiat





PHILIP MYNOT

Andy Shaw, business manager for the Cambridge Auto-ID Labs, is helping to develop practical applications for Radio Frequency Identification Tagging (RFID). RFID tags, shown below left, can be used to track everything from small objects, such as catering trays for airplanes, to shipping containers.

prototype. In conjunction with sophisticated software, they can tell garage mechanics about the state of its components in seconds.

The longer-term prospects are perhaps only limited by the imaginations of researchers. Shaw believes RFID technology will come into its own once it is made available “across extensive supply chains” – in other words, once it is applied to several parts of a bigger system, as in the airport scheme.

In the future, the Oyster cards used on public transport in London could also be used to catch a train at Cambridge station, or park your car in a council-owned car park. Cars themselves could be designed to “recognise” their owners using an RFID-fitted card, thus stopping thieves from driving them away. In hospitals, tags could be attached to vital but scarce machinery so staff can track it down.

In fact, RFID is already giving rise

to real-life developments you would expect to crop up in an episode of *Doctor Who*. In Spain, some nightclubs have already arranged to have their customers fitted with chips containing a membership identifier which allows drinks to be charged directly to their credit card. Youngsters are lapping up the opportunity to club money-free. And as Shaw points out, at least it means no one is going to mug you.

But what about the Big Brother factor? Isn't there a privacy issue here? Yes, Shaw says, but the technology has definite limits.

“The idea that you could walk into a bar and somebody would be able to work out how much money you've got because of this technology is wrong,” he says. “And on the up-side, RFID could be used to ensure that stolen goods are returned to their rightful owners. There are issues, but the benefits could be huge.”

OTHER RECENT FINDINGS

Reducing crime

Restorative justice, in which offenders confront their crime victims, reduces the frequency of reconviction by an average of 27 per cent according to a new, independent evaluation of Cambridge-led research. The study assessed a Cambridge University-based project led by Professor Lawrence Sherman and Dr Heather Strang in the Institute of Criminology. The original programme brought almost 400 offenders face-to-face with their victims. The victims themselves found the process helpful and positive, while some offenders have described the meetings as “traumatic” and life-changing.

In need of direction

The Government is “planning blind” in its efforts to use faith communities to aid social welfare reform, a report by the Von Hügel Institute, at St Edmund's College, has found. Researchers examined the Church's current contribution to society and its potential to contribute to voluntary activity and public service delivery. They concluded that the Government has “good intentions, but is moral without a compass.” The study was commissioned by the Church of England.

A bond for life

A new centre to research the important biological interactions between a woman and her fetus launched this July. The scientists at the Centre for Trophoblast Research will focus on the unique cell type (trophoblasts) that forms the interface between the maternal and foetal tissues. These unique cells are key to a successful pregnancy; they provide essential nutrients to the fetus, play a vital role in the production of hormones and prevent the mother's immune system from attacking the embryo.



PEOPLE

PEOPLE COMING



SIR MARTIN HARRIS will become the seventh President of Clare Hall on 1 October. Sir Martin has had an outstanding career in higher education, having served as Vice-Chancellor of two universities – Essex and Manchester – and as Chairman of the Committee for Vice Chancellors and Principals (CVCP), now Universities UK. Sir Martin is currently Chairman of the Universities Superannuation Scheme Limited (USS), Director of the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) and Chancellor of the University of Salford.



PROFESSOR ADRIAN DIXON became the 52nd Master of Peterhouse on 26 June. He is only the second medical Master in the College's more than 700-year history. He enjoys a world-wide reputation as a radiologist, with research and clinical interests mainly centred on developing body-computed tomography and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). He became a Lecturer in the University of Cambridge Department of Radiology in 1979 and since 1994, he has been Professor of Radiology at Cambridge. Professor Dixon read Medicine at King's College.



DR MARTIN VINNELL has been appointed to the position of Health and Safety Director from 1 September. For the past seven years, he has been the Safety Officer for the School of the Biological Sciences, University Biomedical Support Services and Health and Safety Adviser for Downing College. Coming from a research background, with a PhD in Molecular Biophysics, Dr Vinnell initially made the move into Health and Safety in 1997, becoming the Safety Officer for the Wellcome Trust Centre for Human Genetics, University of Oxford, before joining Cambridge.

PEOPLE GOING



PROFESSOR EKHARD SALJE FRS, FRSA is retiring as President of Clare Hall, a position he has held since 2001. He came to Cambridge as a Professor of Mineralogy and Petrology after a distinguished career working in Germany, France, Switzerland, Japan, Spain and the USA. Professor Salje is a Fellow of the Royal Society, Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Palmes Academiques and an Honorary Fellow of Darwin College. He also will be stepping down as Head of the Department of Earth Sciences.



LORD WILSON OF TILLYORN KT, GCMG, FRSE has retired as Master of Peterhouse. He became Master of the College in June 2002. After early embassy postings with the Foreign Service, he left to edit the *China Quarterly* at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, and to obtain a PhD. After rejoining the Foreign Service and serving as Assistant Under Secretary for Asia and the Pacific, he was appointed as Governor of Hong Kong from 1987-92. He is also Chancellor of the University of Aberdeen.

OBITUARY



Revd Prof Henry Chadwick (1920-2008)
The University is sad to announce the death of Revd Professor Henry Chadwick FBE, KBE, a former Master of Peterhouse and Fellow of Trinity, Queens' and Magdalene Colleges. He was educated at Magdalene College, where he was a music scholar, and later became Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford University and a Canon and Dean of Christ Church. In 1979, he returned to Cambridge as the Cambridge Regius Professor of Divinity, retiring in 1983. In 1987 he was elected Master of Peterhouse, a position he held for six years.

PRIZES AWARDS & HONOURS

Pilkington Prizes

Eleven of the University's finest teachers were presented with Pilkington Prizes at a ceremony on 11 June. The prizes recognise their excellence in teaching.

→ **Dr Gavin Alexander**, Faculty of English, has brought the Renaissance period to life by developing an online course in English Handwriting from 1500-1700.

→ **Dr Patrick Barrie**, Department of Chemical Engineering and the Department's Admissions Officer, has doubled the course's intake in four years.



Pilkington winners

→ **Dr Angeles Carreres**, Senior Spanish Language Teaching Office, has worked with the Language Centre and CARET to develop original course materials and online resources.

→ **Dr Stuart Clarke**, Department of Chemistry, received the award for success in conveying a fundamental understanding of his field, colloidal and interface science.

→ **Penny Coltman**, University Lecturer in the Faculty of Education, initiated the establishment of a research-informed course for those teaching three- to seven-year olds.

→ **Dr Stephen Hladky**, Department of Pharmacology, organised teaching almost single-handedly as Secretary of the Department's teaching committee for 17 years.

→ **Dr Marian Holness**, Reader in the Department of Earth Sciences, has designed innovative but practical classes in microscopy, including narrative video demonstrations.

→ **Dr Tim Lewens**, Department of History and Philosophy of Science, has brought philosophy of biology and biomedical ethics alive across the University.

→ **Dr Hugh Matthews**, Department of Physiology, Development and Neuroscience, has developed new practical teaching to foster understanding of good experimental design and technical skills.

→ **Dr Tim Wilkinson**, Department of Engineering, teaches courses from

fundamental electromagnetism to specialist optics and telecommunications and contributed to a unique multi-centre Masters' programme in display technology.

→ **Dr Diana Wood**, School of Clinical Medicine, led a reform of the undergraduate clinical course curriculum and a complete restructuring of the Final MB examination.

Queen's Birthday Honours

→ **Polly Courtice**, Director of the University of Cambridge Programme for Industry (CPI) and Chief Executive of The Prince of Wales's Business & the Environment Programme (BEP) was appointed Lieutenant of the Royal Victorian Order. She has refocused CPI to help leaders in business and government address the social and ecological challenges of sustainability and established BEP as the leading international forum for cutting-edge expertise on sustainability

→ **Duncan Robinson**, Master of Magdalene College and former Director of the Fitzwilliam Museum, was awarded a CBE. He is one of the leading authorities on British art from the eighteenth century onwards and directs studies for both Clare and Magdalene Colleges.

OTHER AWARDS

→ **Dr Luisa Corrado**, of the Faculty of Economics, was the first social scientist to receive a Marie Curie Excellence Award. The five winners share an award fund of €2 million. The prize was awarded for her report "No Man Is An Island", which assessed the results of the ongoing European Social Survey into well-being.

→ **Professor Steven Ley**, of the Department of Chemistry, was awarded the Prous Institute-Overton and Meyer Award for New Technologies in Drug Discovery by the Hans Herloff Inhoffen Medal. Professor Ley works on the synthesis of natural products, with more than 115 targets successfully produced so far.

→ **Professor Georgina Born**, of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, was awarded the Dent Medal by the Royal Musical Association for her outstanding contribution to



Professor Georgina Born

musicology. Professor Born is currently involved in a major research project on improvisation and recently completed a study of interdisciplinarity, including the emerging field of art-science.

→ **Professor Robin Milner**, from the Computer Laboratory, has been elected as a foreign associate of the US National Academy of Engineering. Election to the National Academy of Engineering is among the highest professional distinctions accorded to an engineer. Professor Milner was elected for his fundamental contributions to computer science.

→ **Professor Julius Lipner**, Professor of Hinduism and the Comparative Study of Religion in the Faculty of Divinity, was awarded the A K Ramanujan Book Prize for Translation by the American South Asia Council of the Association for Asian Studies for his translation of *Anandamath*, the novel that provided

India's national song.

→ **Professor Brian Moore**, of the Department of Experimental Psychology, was given the Award of Merit by the Association for Research in Otolaryngology (ARO) for his contributions to auditory neuroscience. It is the only major award given by the ARO. Professor Moore also recently received the Hugh Knowles Prize for Distinguished Achievement from the Hugh Knowles Center for Clinical and Basic Science in Hearing and Its Disorders.

→ **Professor John Barrow**, Director of Millennium Mathematics, was appointed Gresham Professor of Geometry at Gresham College, London. It is the oldest mathematics professorship in the UK. Professor Barrow is the only person except Laurence Rooke (in 1657) to hold Gresham chairs in two different subjects.

ADVERTISEMENTS

Advertising on this page is open to University staff. The cost is £15 for a single insertion or £75 for six insertions (six for the price of five). The deadline for the Oct/Nov issue is 27 August. Maximum 70 words; we reserve the right to edit. Send your copy to the Editor at newsletter@admin.cam.ac.uk or call 32300.

HOUSES TO RENT

→ Argentina, Buenos Aires

Spacious three bedroom flat (110 m²) in San Telmo. Next to Plaza Dorrego and very close to Puerto Madero and Costanera Sur Nature Reserve. Surrounded by numerous restaurants, bars and milongas. Ideal for two to four people (two double bedrooms, plus single guestroom). The flat has all modern amenities, plenty of light and beautiful views of Rio de la Plata from the 11th floor.

Contact: fmot2@cam.ac.uk or visit www.tangoflat.com

→ France, Provence

Large comfortable flat (80m²) in idyllic resort of Carry-le-Rouet embraced between land and sea wildlife reserves and close to the Camargue and Marseilles. Seafront, beach and coves within 50 to 100 metres. Excellent for scuba diving, snorkelling, sailing, walking and cycling. Near all provencal heritage treasures. Sleeps 6 comfortably. 20 minutes Marseille's airport. 30 minutes from Marseille's TGV station. Available in August and other times.

Contact: Anita Ogier, ao10001@cam.ac.uk

→ Italy, Rome

One-bedroom luxury flat available for short rentals. Air-conditioning, cable television, fully networked, vast terrace. £450 per week all inclusive. Further information available on request.

Contact: car37@cam.ac.uk

→ Italy, Tuscany

18th century farmhouse with east-facing studio available September to May. Restored to high standard, with writers, artists and academics in mind. Central heating; mod. cons and broadband. Beautiful location above small hamlet 10 miles from Lucca. Sleeps 5. Long term rent discounts. Further information and photographs available.

Contact: jmg47@cam.ac.uk

→ Northern Guatemala

Situated on the shore of the picturesque and tranquil Lake Peten Itza and surrounded by jungle, Gucumatz is a friendly, family run pension, offering a restful holiday coupled with

swimming and boating, guided tours of exotic fauna and flora, Spanish lessons, visits to amazing ruined Mayan cities like Tikal, and even voluntary work in the nearby indigenous village. English spoken. Individuals/small groups welcome. For more information:

www.gucumatz.com

Contact: moyastenton@hotmail.com

→ North Yorkshire Moors

Cottage in Low Mill, Farndale, with sitting room, dining room, play room, kitchen, 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and garden with lovely views. Sleeps 7. All mod. cons. Fabulous walks in all directions. Near Rievaulx, Castle Howard, Runswick Bay. 2008 rate: £360/week.

Contact: Horace or Miranda Barlow on 01223 366618 / 333867 or hbb10@cam.ac.uk

→ Portugal, Lagos

Individual, superb 4 bedroom/4 bathroom villa with pool set amongst the tree lined links of the Western Algarve's premier golf and leisure resort Parque da Floresta. Near Costa Vincentina Nature Reserve, historic port of Lagos, pristine beaches and quaint fishing villages. Luxury accommodation sleeps 8/10.

Contact: Graham (gb313@admin.cam.ac.uk) or Lyn (lb334@medschl.cam.ac.uk)

→ Southwest Cornwall

Granite cottage in peaceful countryside between St Ives and Penzance. Sleeps 5 in 3 bedrooms, with comfortable sitting room, kitchen-breakfast room and bathroom. Sunny garden and off-road parking. Ideal for families and couples. Easy reach of wonderful beaches, coastal path, many sub-tropical gardens. 45 minutes Newquay airport. Visit www.tinminerscottage.co.uk

Contact: Penny Barton on 01638 507192 or pb29@cam.ac.uk

→ Spain, Barcelona

2 bedroom apartment near beach, sleeps 6 with balcony overlooking swimming pool. Prices from £55 pn to £110 pn. Discounts for 6+ nights bookings. More information: www.barcelonabeach.com

Contact: Mary Aldridge mea@eng.cam.ac.uk

→ Suffolk, Butley

Comfortable, spacious, well-equipped cottage with piano in Butley, Suffolk. Available for Aldeburgh Festival, weekends and short breaks throughout the year. Close to Orford, Sutton Hoo, Snape and Minsmere. Sleeps up to 8. More information:

www.butleycottage.co.uk
Contact: Miranda on 01223 357035 or info@butleycottage.co.uk

→ Germany, Black Forest

Traditional wooden house (c. 1765), fully renovated, with all mod cons, in idyllic valley setting at the foot of the Feldberg mountain. Sleeps 8. Suitable for families and all ages. Ideal for walking, skiing and relaxing; many activities and varied sights nearby. Close to Basel-Mulhouse, Karlsruhe-Baden and Friedrichshafen airports (Ryanair and Easyjet flights from Stansted/Luton). £275-£375 per week (plus electricity). Photographs and full details available on request.

Contact: blackforestholidays@googlemail.com

EVENTS VENUE

→ Italy, Tuscan Apuan Alps

High in the Tuscan Apuan Alps – sixteenth-century Italian monastery owned by Cambridge University physicist is available for conferences, workshops, schools and group meetings. Fully-equipped lecture theatre and extensive computer facilities with all accommodation onsite. Daily activities such as mountaineering, caving, canyon walking, city tours, swimming, art classes and restaurant trips organized on request. Unique venue and memorable location. See website for photos and reviews.

Contact: <http://www.vallico.net/tt/itti.html>

SERVICES

→ New Press partnership

Cambridge University Press Design is delighted to announce its new consulting partnership with Mark Mniszko of Cambridge Design

Studio. Mark's vast experience working with the University and Colleges complements our expertise in graphic design, art direction, typography, and web design, especially in relation to the University's new branding initiatives and the capital campaigns associated with its 800th anniversary in 2009.

Contact: Ellen Matthews on emathews@cambridge.org

→ Fitness for All

The Leys School on Trumpington Road has opened its state of the art Gymnasium and is now looking for new members to join. The member package includes use of the gym, squash, badminton and tennis courts, three swims a week in the heated pool and members' families are invited to swim with them. The latter offer costs £350 per year but cheaper offers are available.

Contact: 01223 508986 or plt@theleys.net

→ Transcription service

Academic Transcription is a Cambridge-based service specialising in the transcription of recorded interviews, lectures, seminars and conference proceedings for academics and researchers. We also undertake research-related data processing tasks and secretarial services. For more information see our website: www.academictranscriptions.co.uk

Contact: Sue Barnard on 01223 872291 or

susan.barnard@btinternet.com

→ Salsa Every Friday

SalsaBravo Classes for all levels 7:30 – 9:30 at St Paul Centre, Upper Hall (Hills Road). 10:00 to 10:30 a bonus class of Merengue, Bachata or Cha Cha Cha. 10:30 party till late (friendly atmosphere, great music). Class-club: £8, club: £4. You can book SalsaBravo for hen parties, birthdays and corporate events. Private salsa lessons and gift vouchers available. More information:

www.salsacambridge.com
Contact: 077 298 298 06 or info@salsacambridge.com

HOUSES FOR SALE

→ France, Montelimar

Lovely house close to Montelimar, a group of fieldstone buildings built around a courtyard. Set in the countryside yet only 20km from the future Montelimar TGV and La Valdaine golf course. Full 120m² of carefully renovated living quarters, includes three BR, living room, bathroom with toilet, shower room, separate toilet, cellar, workshop. Separate room with mezzanine, woodshed, outdoor bread oven and well, huge barn. Approx. 200 m² just waiting to be renovated. Surrounding land 4,730 m². Owned by a Swiss family. Price: Best offer (estimated €450,000). Call 0041.21.781.12.12 or robriest@bluewin.ch for images and further information.

VOLUNTEERS

→ Help the Lesbian Association of India

The L.A.I., a non-profit organisation based in the UK, is looking for graduate volunteers to get involved with fundraising, research, and writing articles for the newsletter. We support Lesbian and Bisexual women in India to establish community centres in areas where there is no existing support network. We collaborate with groups or organisations in India, coordinating events or outreach programs, offering funding, support and resources.

Contact: Molly Blackburn mblackburn@l-a-i.org or www.l-a-i.org

→ Cambridge Concert Orchestra

The Cambridge Concert Orchestra has vacancies for double bass, French horn, bassoon, trumpet and other instruments. Charitable ethos for concerts with a lively musical selection of film themes, show tunes and light classics. No auditions and friendly social scene of 60 members – town and gown.

Contact: concerts@cambridgeconcertorchestra.org

The University of Cambridge accepts no responsibility for the advertisements or their content.

1858 EXAM ANSWERS

The answers below are from the Cambridge Assessment exam questions published on page 6 of this issue.

- 1) 17,324,026
- 2) MDCCCLVIII
- 3) 1250
- 4) a) Italy b) Northern Ireland c) Saudi Arabia d) Brazil e) South-east Asia
- 5) Wives: Catherine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn, Jane Seymour, Anne of Cleves, Catherine Howard

and Catherine Parr. Children: Mary, Elizabeth and Edward. Grounds for divorce: Henry VIII divorced Catherine of Aragon, stating the marriage had never been legal as he had married his late brother's wife or He wanted a son.

- 6) a) Guy Fawkes Plot – 1605, Houses of Parliament, other conspirators, James I b) Battle of Naseby – June 1645, Royalists led by Prince Rupert, Parliamentarians led by Sir Thomas Fairfax, Parliamentary victory c) Trial of Charles 1 –

- opened on 20 January 1649, finished on 27 January, trial held at Westminster, President Bradshaw wore a bullet proof hat, King refused to answer questions.
- 7) Hunger; power and wealth; and instant acclaim

BACK PAGES

ROLL OF HONOUR

NOW THAT female students make up almost 50 per cent of Cambridge's undergraduate population, and women graduates are making inroads into spheres once dominated by men, it takes a leap of imagination to return to the strikingly different academic environment of Cambridge in the early 20th century.

By 1917, Newnham College – founded in 1871 with just five students – had about 200 students. These determined women were permitted to attend University lectures and supervisions, but were not awarded degrees.

In that year, Newnham, (the first Oxbridge women's College to seek to be self-governing), was granted a Charter and Statutes. This provided an important statement of the women's claim to academic equality. Included in the Charter was the constitution of the Newnham College Roll, which then came into existence in 1918. As the College's alumnae association, the Roll replaced the Old Students Club and comprised the proof that Newnhamites had completed their studies at Cambridge. The first Newnham College Roll Letter was published in 1919 and recorded the attendance and achievements of the College's students.

It was not until 1947 that women won the right to gain Cambridge degrees on the same basis as their male peers, who had been awarded degrees since medieval times. The first



women received their degrees in the Senate House in 1948.

To celebrate the 90th anniversary of the Roll, and the 60th anniversary of women being given full University membership, Newnham held a garden party on 5 July, attended by 350 guests from the UK and beyond. Fifty Newnhamites whose College days pre-dated or overlapped with the 1948 landmark were treated to a champagne reception in the Senior Combination Room, followed by a pre-1948 versus 2008 croquet match. The pre-1948s showed they hadn't lost their touch and soundly beat the current graduates.

Newnham is still an all-female College and is extremely proud of its early history as champion of women's education, which provided the bedrock of its values as a community that is at once diverse and inclusive.

The Newnham College Roll Letter has been published every year since 1919, and now appears as a glossy publication with colour photos. Copies are posted out to addresses



Students in 1921 meet with Helen Gladstone, Vice-Principal of Newnham. Inset, left to right, current Newnham students Ting-Yueh Liu and Vivien Wong enjoy a 5 July croquet match with alumnae Hilary Temple and Joan Barraclough. "Newnham gardens looked absolutely stunning and the only thing I wished was that I had been wearing a proper hat and a long skirt!" Joan Barraclough said.

across the world to keep Newnhamites abreast of current College happenings and news from members through the decades.

Today Penny Hubbard, Newnham Development Director and herself an alumna, holds the title of Registrar of the Roll. She says: "It's a huge privilege to be part of an institution that transforms people's lives and as Registrar of the Roll to be helping to foster an ever-expanding network of remarkable women."

DID YOU KNOW?

- There are currently three all-female Cambridge Colleges: Newnham College, founded in 1871; Murray Edwards (New Hall), founded in 1954; and Lucy Cavendish College, founded in 1965.
- Three other Cambridge colleges have female roots. Girton College, founded for women in 1869, went mixed in 1979. Hughes Hall, founded for women as Cambridge Teaching College in 1885, went mixed in 1973. Homerton College was mixed when it moved to Cambridge from London in 1894, but soon became women-only. Men were not admitted again until the 1970s.

MID-WEEK FUN

Late shopping, special offers, Park & Ride service: Cambridge staff can enjoy all this and more on 'Wonderful Wednesdays,' an initiative sponsored by Cambridge City Council.

Following on from the success of late night trading before Christmas, many retailers throughout the city and the Grafton Centre have agreed to open late for all of 2008 on Wednesdays. To offer extra

encouragement for city centre workers to stay in the city after 5pm, Wonderful Wednesdays has organised weekly deals sweeter than a Tunnock's teacake, including discounts for shopping, dinner and Cambridge attractions. Recent offers included a free Blue Badge-guided city centre tour and half-price punt hire from Scudamore's.

Park & Ride is running its late



service at all five sites and city centre car parks will have reduced charges after 5pm on Wednesdays.

→ For this week's offer, visit www.cambridge.gov.uk/ccm/content/arts-and-entertainment/wonderful-wednesdays

BACK PAGES

GETTING THE MESSAGE ACROSS

IT'S MID-DAY in the sorting office of the University Messenger Service (UMS) tucked behind the Mill Lane Lecture Rooms. Today there has been a large mailing to get out: 200 statements from the University Telecomms Office to circulate right across the University.

Alan Thompson and Paul Conder have just finished sorting all the internal mail for the second delivery of the day. Peter Goddard is back from his round, delivering mail to the New Museum Site. Radio 2 is playing quietly in the background.

There's a companionable atmosphere among the University Messengers who together sort and deliver 3,000 items (plus some outside mail) to a total of 230 sites every day – though when there is a large mailing to get out, the sorting offices gets extremely busy.

UMS comprises seven Messengers, plus a term-time only part-time sorter. Six members of the team are based at Mill Lane, one at Old Schools and one at Greenwich House.

"We're all male, our average age is 64, and four of us are former Royal Mail postmen," says Alan.

In Royal Mail style, all items are "primed" (sorted into piles by delivery round) and then sorted into final destinations, bound by elastic

bands and loaded into plastic boxes. The chief headache in sorting the mail is deciphering tricky handwriting and working out the intended destinations for departments that no longer exist or changed their names long ago. This can involve some inspired detective work and a good memory for detail.

Alan says that the best thing about his job is being out and about on his bike and that the worst thing is the weather. There are seven different delivery rounds, some of which are done twice a day. Each cycling round takes approximately one hour. Items for city centre locations are delivered on four sturdy bikes, painted in Cambridge blue and carrying the University crest; mail for outlying sites is carried by three small white vans, also identified by the University livery.

Ken Long, who drives one of the three vans and is the longest-serving team member, has worked for UMS for almost 13 years and recently celebrated his 70th birthday. He says his main challenge is the increasing traffic, a challenge all of the Messengers face.

UMS senior messenger, Peter Goddard, describes himself as "Cambridge born and bred" but had little contact with the University



Messenger Alan Thompson cycles through Cambridge to deliver post for the University Messenger Service (UMS).

until he joined the Service. "I could point out King's College Chapel and the Senate House but that was it. I now have a pretty detailed map of Cambridge in my head," he says.

He is proud of his team. "Although we are a postal rather than messenger service, we pride ourselves that we can normally collect and deliver items within 24 hours, provided it is properly addressed, and can accurately re-route mis-delivered Royal Mail items," he says.

Peter knows that the internet has replaced much paper-based communication. But he can't imagine a time when he and his colleagues will not be a vital, though often overlooked, part of the life of the University.

SUMMER READING

The inner workings of a fictional Cambridge college are explored to satiric effect in a new novel, *Hearts and Minds*, by Dr Rosy Thornton, a Fellow of Emmanuel College and a University Lecturer in Law.

St Radekund's College, Cambridge, is a women's college that has just appointed its first male Master. When an old friend of the new Master offers to make a large donation to the college, the Fellows and students are divided on whether to accept, especially when it becomes clear the donor may have a motive other than altruism.

Writing a novel about Cambridge

was initially suggested to Dr Thornton by her agent. At first, she was resistant. "I said 'No, because everyone will hate me,'" she says, and laughs.

For the record, *Hearts and Minds* is purely a work of fiction, although Dr Thornton can't deny that her experiences in Cambridge influenced her when she sat down to write. Prior to becoming a Fellow at Emmanuel in 2006, she was a Fellow of New Hall for 16 years.

Writing fiction is a relatively new hobby for Dr Thornton, who snatches time for writing by rising early in the morning. Her first novel, *More than Love Letters*, was published in 2006;



Dr Rosy Thornton

her third, *Crossed Wires*, is due for release in December 2008.

Neither of those novels are set in Cambridge, but a work-in-progress is positioned prominently in our fair city. This time, the novel features a fictional ancient college bordering the River Cam. Mum's the word on its plot, but no doubt, Cantabrigians will be keeping a sharp eye out to see if they recognise themselves in the finished product.

→ *Hearts and Minds* (*Headline Review*, 2008, £6.99) is available in bookstores throughout Cambridge.