

THE FOUNTAIN

TRINITY COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

Thank you letters

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Global Trinity

Our First
Prime Minister

Great Court's Clock

Singing in the
Wilderness

Fellows' Awards,
Books and Stunts

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EDITORIAL

In this issue of *The Fountain* we thank our donors, now partners in Trinity's philanthropic tradition. In gratitude we name all who gave to our Annual Fund last year. Jon Parry, director of the Isaac Newton Trust in succession to John Rallison, illustrates the good that Trinity facilitates in the University at large. Some of our own junior members offer their personal thanks for what they have been enabled to do, by reason of gifts and bequests donated to the College in the past and held in trust for the benefit of education and research.

What sort of institution are you supporting? We can with confidence say it is one of the finest Colleges in one of the world's finest Universities. Our Fellows' News section is full of achievement. Ali Alavi and Jean Khalfa explain how we attract the world's best graduate students and how vital it is for us to continue to do so. Trinity has, finally, been among the top three colleges in the Tripos tables for each of the last six years, not to mention two boat-burnings this year, and our teaching, as Hamish Low claims, is not to be blamed for the City's mistakes.

But if one asks how fairly we select those whom we admit as undergraduates, the answer might not be so readily agreed.

In May the *Financial Times* carried an article entitled 'Colleges defy pressure over private students.' Seven per cent of the UK's schoolchildren are privately educated. They form 26 per cent of undergraduates in the Russell Group of top universities, and 47 per cent of Trinity's undergraduates over the past four years.

The *FT* concluded that we and four other Cambridge colleges habitually admit disproportionately large numbers of private school students, despite government pressure to raise the number of state school students.

Some of our alumni members may be reassured by this news, others appalled. Neither reaction would reflect the more complicated truth.

Over the same four years our independent school applicants had, on average, significantly higher GCSE and AS-level results—the ones we know when deciding on admissions—than those from state-maintained schools. When we later received their A-level results we found we had selected candidates of astonishingly equal merit from both sectors, with an 0.29 per cent difference between them. The Tripos performance of undergraduates from both school backgrounds has also been roughly equal.

The conclusion is clear. Among home applicants we favour the best. We discriminate by merit alone. We must preserve the relative independence that allows us to pursue this steady course. We hope all our members can applaud that aim.

Where we are constrained is in the number of overseas undergraduates we may admit, as agreed between University and government. These generally come top in Tripos, together with our EU intake. That our overseas students—admittedly recruited in a more competitive market—outshine our home-bred ones ought surely to worry our government more.

In a wider perspective this issue celebrates centenaries, single for the



Great Court clock, double for people. Edward FitzGerald remains better loved than in life, Spencer Perceval is scarcely remembered. But he was first among Trinity's six British Prime Ministers and the first to be assassinated. Not many know we have had ten PMs in all, in France, India and Singapore—and Ireland's President Childers. But that's Trinity for you.

*Professor John Lonsdale (1958), Fellow,
Secretary to the Alumni Relations Committee*

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THE ISAAC NEWTON TRUST COMES OF AGE

By Jon Parry

It is now 21 years since Trinity established the Isaac Newton Trust, through which it channels money to support education and research in the University. The Trust continues to be run from offices in Trinity and benefits from the counsel of several Trinity Fellows: the Master and Vice-Master are both Trustees. However the Trust has long been a significant institution for the University as a whole. We hope and believe that it is respected by both the central bodies and the Colleges for its constructive solutions to the variety of financial problems faced by Cambridge students and academics.

Much of that respect is due to the long and highly effective service of its first two Directors, Anil Seal and John Rallison, both, of course, Trinity Fellows. Last year I became the first non-Trinity Director of the Trust. I remain in the History Faculty and in Pembroke College, where I have been a Fellow for the last 17 years, although on most days I can be seen walking along King's Parade to the Trust offices, clutching some rather heavy files.

Most of the Trust's expenditure is for two purposes: financial support for students in need, and research grants for academic projects, particularly to support early-career researchers.

As readers of *The Fountain* will know, the Trust runs the Cambridge Bursary scheme, through which any student in receipt of a government maintenance grant is also entitled to a University bursary. The scheme aims to make up nearly the whole shortfall in maintenance costs for those students receiving the maximum grant (about 40% of all bursary holders), while

giving proportionately lower awards for those on smaller grants. This has been the third year of the revised national tuition fee and bursary policy instituted by the government in 2006, and this year the Cambridge Bursary Scheme has helped over 2,400 undergraduates.

The bulk of the cost is met from the University's additional fee income, with most of the rest coming from the Trust itself and from private donations made through the Trust by individuals and corporate sponsors. These include a substantial number of *Fountain* readers. Other Colleges are required to contribute about 10 per cent of the total, and now most of that amount derives from donations to those Colleges by alumni and others who believe in the cause of supporting needy students through Cambridge. One way or another, therefore, alumni commitment has helped Cambridge to give the best students the support they need. The university's drop-out rate remains the joint lowest in the country at around 1%.

I had some prior experience of bursaries, because before becoming Director I had been in charge of student financial support at Pembroke. I knew much less about the Trust's support for University research, so it has been an eye-opener to discover the number of University Departments who rely on it for funding projects which cannot get enough financial assistance in other ways. The Trust gets 70 or 80 applications a year to help fund post-doctoral or other early-career research, and assists just over half of them. These are high-quality applications—we have



a rigorous refereeing process—but ones that may not fit the criteria of the Research Councils for various reasons, perhaps because the applicant is not yet established, or because there is a need for a rapid response. Most applicants can raise some money from external sources, which is an important indication of quality, but additional Trust support can make all the difference in giving outstanding academics the time to produce significant results and to lay good career foundations, to their and the University's benefit.

The Trust's Opportunities Fund was set up to provide seed-corn funding for such projects and has had a successful year, attracting from Trinity alumni one large and generous donation and several others, for which we—and the recipients—are very grateful.

Professor Jon Parry (Pembroke College)
is Director of the Isaac Newton Trust

THE HOLLOND FUNDS

Professor Harry Hollond (matriculated 1903, Fellow 1909–1974, Vice-Master 1951–1955) is commemorated by three funds, one established by the bequest of his widow Mrs Marjorie Hollond, one by gifts from his three sisters, and one by a gift from the American Friends of Cambridge University. The Funds promote advanced legal study and assist our Law students to buy books and to travel. Four of Trinity's students tell of how they have benefited.

Amy Ludlow (2005) I never dreamed I'd have the opportunity to do a Legal Masters (LLM), let alone abroad!



But here I am at The Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium, as the academic year draws to a close. I've met some wonderfully encouraging professors and made full use of Leuven's opportunities for travel. Brussels is 20 minutes away, the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg is a few hours away and the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg not much further. At the heart of Europe, Leuven is an ideal base from which to further my interest in EU law, but above all, I've learned about myself this year. Moving to Leuven from Trinity was a big culture shock. The academic environment is very different and little problems which were so readily resolvable in Cambridge seemed at first unmanageable here. I've muddled through, though, and think I've emerged a more confident, independent, and worldly-wise person. For that alone, I cannot thank Trinity enough.

Barend van Leeuwen (2005)

After the film *In Bruges* one might assume that Bruges is no more than a small town in Belgium interested only in tourists and chocolates. To some extent that is true. But Bruges is also home to the College of Europe: a postgraduate institute where students can study for a one-year Masters in European Economics, Diplomacy, Politics, and Law. Each Member State sends a fixed number of students to Bruges which guarantees a variety of nationalities. This European microcosm, with its collegiate structure, makes for a fascinating place to live and study. The education is in both English and French, so all students have to be bilingual. The faculty consists almost entirely of visiting professors who fly in from different European and American universities.

It has been a great experience to study European Law from a continental perspective and to experience some 'Euro-positivism' again after three years in England. I am grateful to the Hollond Fund for its support. Studying Europe and its institutions has proven very challenging. I will use this new knowledge next year when I return to Britain to do the Bar Vocational Course.

Magnus Jones (2004) and Jan Stejskal (2005) Thanks to a generous contribution from the Hollond Fund, we spent the past year completing a Master's (LL.M.) degree at the University of Pennsylvania Law School. The Penn Law LL.M. Class of '09



comprised almost 100 students, most of them experienced lawyers. It was a great opportunity to study alongside these professionals and we enjoyed working in such a diverse group. The class spirit was fantastically supportive, and we have formed lasting friendships with lawyers from around the world. While we concentrated on US commercial law we also found time to pursue interests we first developed at Trinity. Magnus studied law and economics, Jan wrote a dissertation on international human rights law. We also developed other interests. Being elected to the Philomathean Society, America's oldest continuously existing literary society, we learned from talented students and



academics from all over the university through its lectures and debates. We naturally took the opportunity to explore America. Trinity's American alumni welcomed us in Washington and New York. In Philadelphia we experienced history as Obama won the Presidency and the Phillies the World Series. Our Penn year has enabled us to develop professionally and we are now preparing for the New York Bar Exam. It has also been a time of personal growth. We are both grateful to the Hollond Fund for making it all possible.



CAMPAIGNING FOR OBAMA

By Sonya Passi

During the summer preceding my final year reading history at Trinity, I worked in Washington, DC, for three months with the help of a very generous grant from the College's Project Fund. My days were spent as an intern on Capitol Hill in the Office of Congresswoman Corrine Brown of Florida and my nights volunteering on Barack Obama's campaign in Virginia. With a sharp interest in racial politics in America, I was very keen to work for an African-American member of Congress. The Congresswoman's office also gave me a platform from which to explore first-hand the issues that I had studied.

Washington, DC, is a city run entirely on adrenaline, and a political nerd like myself is overcome by the buzz that consumes it. Living just one block from Union Station, my walk to work took me past the Supreme Court, Library of Congress, and the Capitol Building. Just as I still get goosebumps walking through Great Court, so too I felt them every day on my way to and from work.

Having worked in the House of Commons during the previous summer, I was able to compare the two systems. What struck me most was the opulence and luxury of the United States House of Representatives, compared with the much more understated House of Commons—although we have since learned that British taxes were, instead, paying for private swimming pool repairs and duck houses. The lack of spontaneous debate on the House floor was thoroughly disappointing, and co-workers admitted to watching UK Commons debates purely for their entertainment value.



During the first month, I spent my evenings volunteering on Barack Obama's campaign in Virginia. A democrat had not won Virginia in a presidential election since 1964, but for the first time in almost half a century, Virginia was leaning blue. The determination to make history was visible in the eyes of every college student working tirelessly to register voters and galvanise local communities in the last few months of the campaign.

Although my work on the campaign came to an end as I was needed to work longer hours on the Hill, I maintained close contact with the friends I made in Virginia. When an opportunity arose for a fellow campaign volunteer and me to spend a morning on Barack Obama's plane, we seized it, taking a road trip to New Hampshire, where Obama was

holding a rally. I remember very little of what happened when he arrived to board his plane, except that I was lost for words for the first time in my life, and refused to let go of his hand.

The only experience that topped meeting Barack Obama was attending the Democratic National Convention in Denver, Colorado, together with Congresswoman Brown. In the mornings we attended caucus meetings, took care of guests, and political business; in the afternoons we attended receptions and headed over to the convention center where the main activities took place at night. On the last day of the convention, we made the five-hour 'pilgrimage' to the Mile High Stadium to witness Barack Obama make his acceptance speech. It was 45 years to the day since Martin Luther King had made his 'I have a dream' speech, a fact not lost on the 84,000 people surrounding me.

A successful summer in and of itself, it also provided the inspiration for my third year dissertation which investigated the campaigns of Jesse Jackson and Barack Obama for the Democratic Nomination. Through contacts made on the Hill, I was able to base my research almost entirely upon first-hand accounts, interviewing Jesse Jackson himself, Congressman Jesse Jackson Jr., and a number of close aides and journalists tied to both campaigns.

My experiences last summer exceeded my wildest dreams and I cannot thank the Project Fund committee and donors enough for their generosity and support.

Sonya Passi (2006)

GLOBAL TRINITY

By Ali Alavi and Jean Khalfa



Every year Trinity considers nearly one thousand applications to pursue postgraduate work at Cambridge, from students already admitted by the appropriate Department or Faculty. We admit about sixty such students annually. Competition is fierce! Trinity is overwhelmingly the first-choice college for postgraduate applicants, receiving almost one third of all the University's applications. We are privileged to be able to select the very best. Our only criterion is exceptional promise. Geographical origin and ability to pay are of no concern, so our graduate student population is diverse as well as brilliant. This makes for a rich College community.

Admission is only a first hurdle. The second is funding. Postgraduate work is expensive. An Overseas student, defined as non-EU, needs up to £100,000 to fund a one-year MPhil course followed by a three-year PhD—to pay fees and to provide a stipulated minimum for maintenance. The cost for an EU student, at roughly £60,000, is not much less. Fortunately, nearly all our students receive full-cost awards (studentships) or part-cost bursaries from various sources: our national Research Councils provide studentships, administered by the Departments and Faculties. But such public funds are being squeezed, and

we must expect large cuts. Government has already ceased to fund the Overseas Fee element for outstanding applicants. Many of these come from developing countries, without access to loans or bursaries. Someone must step in. Foundations such as the Wellcome Trust fund medical and biological research. The Gates Trust and the Cambridge Commonwealth and Overseas Trusts also help. And of course there is Trinity.

Trinity is a major provider of graduate studentships, both for our own members and, through our donations to the Newton Trust and the Cambridge Trusts, to the University as a whole. Last year, through the former alone, Trinity supported nearly fifty studentships and bursaries. Our contribution to graduate education in Cambridge in 2009 was over £2 million. Part of this cost is met from the College's Corporate Revenue, and part from the many Trust funds—some of them centuries old—which the College holds.

Our funding capacity is one reason why graduate students apply to Trinity. Our distinguished history and the splendid conditions of study we offer, equal and often superior to those of the best universities in the world, also play a part. But, in the end, we will not attract the best of the world's students if we do not match our competitors in funding. The converse is also true. When we do offer studentships, especially in specific subjects, we see a marked increase in both number and quality of applicants in those fields. A case in point is our new Moorhouse Gibson studentship in Chemistry. Roughly £1

million of a much larger bequest, which also endowed a University Chair in Inorganic Chemistry, enabled Trinity to establish a studentship in Chemistry. No sooner was it advertised than over twenty candidates applied. Four were considered outstanding by the relevant committee. In the end, by combining the income of this fund with others, we offered two studentships, not one.

Recent donations to the College have enabled us to establish named Studentships. Krishnan-Ang Studentships—following a major donation by recent graduates Eashwar Krishnan and Tzo Tze Ang—currently support two Overseas PhD students per year. Thanks to the Eranda Foundation we now have Rothschild Studentships for students from the developing world. This maintains a fine Trinity tradition. Aaron Klug, one of Trinity's Nobel Laureates (for Chemistry in 1982), came to us from South Africa after the Second World War, on an 1851 Exhibition Scholarship and a Trinity Research Studentship.

The long-term health of both College and University is crucially dependent on our ability to produce brilliant, imaginative and motivated individuals, who will go on to lead in their field, as we have done so well, for instance with Ludwig Wittgenstein or Amartya Sen. The first step in this long chain is for us to attract the very best in the world at an early stage in their careers. That is why graduate studentships are such a high priority for the Trinity Campaign.

Dr Ali Alavi (1984) and Mr Jean Khalfa (c1994), Tutors for Advanced Students



TRINITY'S FIRST PRIME MINISTER: A BICENTENARY

By Boyd Hilton

Spencer Perceval is mainly remembered as the only British Prime Minister to be assassinated, having been shot in the lobby of the Commons by a madman with a grievance just two-and-a-half years into a premiership that began two hundred years ago this October. During that time he had been sniped at (metaphorically speaking) by colleagues who wanted his job, he had been assailed by a forceful opposition party in Parliament, and he had faced a succession of crises: riots and radicalism in the streets; a banking crash of 2009 proportions; a constitutional impasse when the King went gibberingly mad and had to be substituted by a Regent; and an unsuccessful but expensive war against all-conquering Napoleon, whom Perceval once described in biblical-prophetic terms as 'the mother of harlots, drunken with the blood of saints'. And yet by the time of his death in May 1812 this diminutive, pale-faced, skull-like looking man had, through patience and resilience, acquired an impressive degree of authority over both cabinet and Commons, while in the following month Napoleon was to self-destruct by invading Russia. But for Bellingham, his assassin, Perceval would almost certainly have gone on to preside over the country's victory at the battle of Waterloo, and would probably now be known by some more inspiring tag than simply 'The evangelical prime minister'.

The Trinity College of which he became a member in 1780 was predominantly Whiggish in politics, waggish and aristocratic in tone, dissolute in morals, indifferent or

(at most) latitudinarian in religion. Its great reforming prime ministers of the 1830s, Earl Grey (matr. 1781) and Viscount Melbourne (matr. 1796), were representatives of the type, but Perceval was very different in every way. For a start he was intensely serious, having been brought up by a father who, according to Horace Walpole, 'was humane, friendly and as good humoured as it is possible for a man to be who was never known to laugh', and only 'once indeed seen to smile, and that was at chess'. At Harrow and Trinity the younger Perceval was known as a swot and a prizeman, and he also became ostentatiously devout after falling under the sway of the evangelical President of Queens', Isaac Milner. Although he came from an aristocratic family, as a fourth son from a second marriage he had to make his own way in the world, which in his case meant the Law, and to have a successful legal career in a period turned upside down by the French Revolution it was necessary for him to support the government of the Younger Pitt. He quickly made a name for himself by prosecuting radicals, which led him into politics and up the ladder from Solicitor General to Attorney General to Chancellor of the Exchequer and finally First Lord of the Treasury.

Because he was a Pittite Perceval was naturally denounced as a 'Tory' by the Opposition Whigs. It was not a label that he ever used himself, but it conveys a truth since he took opposition to reforms of any sort about as far as any sensible front-line politician of the day could have taken it. As a Church of England evangelical



he especially opposed any reforms to increase the rights of Roman Catholics. So, while he loathed the French Revolution, he nevertheless argued that a merciful Providence had permitted it to take place as a means 'for the overthrow of the popish superstitions' in France, Italy, Belgium, and Spain.

No one seems to have had a bad word to say against him personally. Driven by faith, he was immensely charitable towards the poor, honest and decent to colleagues, warm with his family, politically unambitious, and privately unassuming. A nation in crisis might have looked for a more glamorous pilot than Perceval, but what they got instead was a gritty determination and a competence that Grey and Melbourne, for example, could never have matched. As a political antagonist put it appreciatively, 'He is not a ship of the line, but he carries many guns, is tight-built, and is out in all weathers.'

Professor Boyd Hilton (e1974)
Fellow, History

LORD GRIMTHORPE

By Graham Chinner

A clock is stopped. Only then may one realise how frequently it was wont to be consulted. So it was in Trinity with the Great Court Clock, inactivated for over a month at the end of 2008 for modifications to the winding mechanism. Passers-by would repeatedly glance expectantly up—to disappointment at the static skyward-pointing hands.

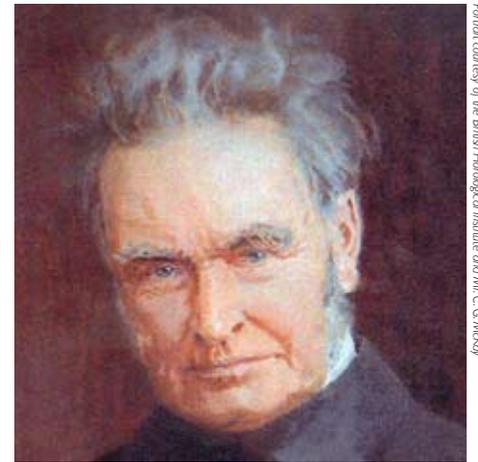
That we have a clock to be so missed is largely due to the remarkable Trinity alumnus Edmund, 1st Baron Grimthorpe (1816–1905), sometime Edmund Beckett Denison, sometime Sir Edmund Beckett, Bart.—brilliant barrister, ecclesiastical lawyer, amateur architect, innovative horologist and locksmith, multi-millionaire, controversialist, and bully-at-large.

The Yorkshire village of Grimthorpe cradled the Beckett line. The first Beckett baronet was Edmund's grandfather; his father, Edmund senior, had become Denison in a marriage settlement. So it was as E.B. Denison that young Edmund entered Trinity to read Mathematics, and in 1838 graduated as 30th Wrangler. Following legal study in London he was called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn. This, in 1841, was nice timing, for a year later his father was elected Chairman of the Great Northern Railway Company. A latecomer in the railway boom, the infant GNR had found its routes north from King's Cross all blocked by earlier bids. Pushing the metals up into Yorkshire involved ferocious battles both on the ground between rival gangs of navvies, and in the Law Courts and Parliament. With his powerful physique and pugnacity,

young Edmund might well have fitted the platelayers' phalanx. Instead he trod the higher battleground, laying the foundations of his fortune as Counsel for the GNR and drafter of its Parliamentary bills. By the struggle's end, the rails had reached Doncaster, which the Beckett Denisons, father and son, made into a railway town.

Edmund's acumen at law was matched by his passion for polemic. Copious columns of *The Times* were regularly filled with his fulminations, packed with great power of reasoning and expression, and supreme contempt for any opposing view. High on his hit-list were architects. ('The only architect I've never quarrelled with is myself!' he told the Prince of Wales). The Doncaster development had involved him in the construction of two neogothic churches; coming to rate his expertise highly, he published a practical (and quite successful) guide to building. It was surely this hubris that led to his later vandalism at St Albans. Wealth helped: Edmund's legal fortune had been greatly engorged in 1872 by his Beckett baronetcy inheritance.

The ancient Abbey Church of St Alban, a medieval building with substantial Roman and Norman remains, was in view of the house that Edmund had built for himself in 1874. The venerable structure had become fairly ruinous. With his offer to finance restoration, and his ecclesiastical connections (his position of Chancellor and Vicar General of York Diocese was also to lead to ennoblement as Grimthorpe in 1886), it was not difficult to gain a faculty to work his will on the fabric. Sadly, his encyclopaedic



Portrait courtesy of the British Horological Institute and Mr. C. McKoy

knowledge of Gothic forms was not matched by any feel for the idiom; to the dismay of many, he morphed the old minster into a disneyesque fantasy. "To Grimthorpe" (OED: to restore with lavish expenditure rather than skill and fine taste) became a verb of abuse.

The title of Edmund's most successful and oft-editioned work, *Clocks, Watches & Bells*, epitomises perhaps the most lastingly fruitful interest of his multifaceted life. His was a fine mechanical mind; supposedly, aged five, he dismantled a watch—and reassembled it. During a post-graduation stay at Helions Bumpstead (east of Cambridge) he spent much time in the village carpenter's workshop, and helped install a new turret clock in the tower of his host the Rector's church. Edmund was also instrumental in the recasting of three cracked bells there, and went regularly as a bell ringer to neighbouring churches. At Great St Mary's in Cambridge, he became familiar with its then unique clock chime mechanism which signals each quarter by a different



E'S GIFT

striking sequence of four bells—the “Cambridge Quarters”.

During the 1840s, Edmund’s interest in the improvement of clock accuracy led to the invention of his friction-reducing three-legged escapement. At the Great Exhibition of 1851 he was a well enough respected horologist to be chairman of the clock-judging committee. The new Houses of Parliament were nearing completion at this time; the Astronomer-Royal, G.B. Airy (Trinity, 1819–36) proposed performance criteria for a clock to occupy the tower. The doyen of London Clockmakers, Villiamy, decreed Airy’s specified accuracy to be unobtainable. Edmund disagreed; not without a fight, he gained the task. The resultant Great Clock, with Edmund’s improved double three-legged gravity escapement, was at its installation in 1859 the most accurate as well as the largest clock ever made, and since then has been the

model for all good mechanical turret clocks. For the striking scheme of the Great Clock, Edmund reproduced the mechanism of the melodious “Cambridge Quarters”. Previously little regarded, these, thanks to him, are today globally familiar, but now of course as the Westminster Chimes.

The constricted tower space provided by the architect Barry had posed problems in the clock installation; these were magnified when it came to the huge tenor bell (“Big Ben”). Edmund’s first bell, at 15+ tons, proved too heavy for its mountings; it cracked badly on ringing. Broken up and remelted, the rather lighter recasting (13+ tons) also initially cracked but, rotated on its bearings, has survived. After 150 years it still booms out the passing hours, *Urbe et*—BBC gratias—*Orbe*. The Great Clock, and Big Ben, surely remain as Grimthorpe’s superb monument.

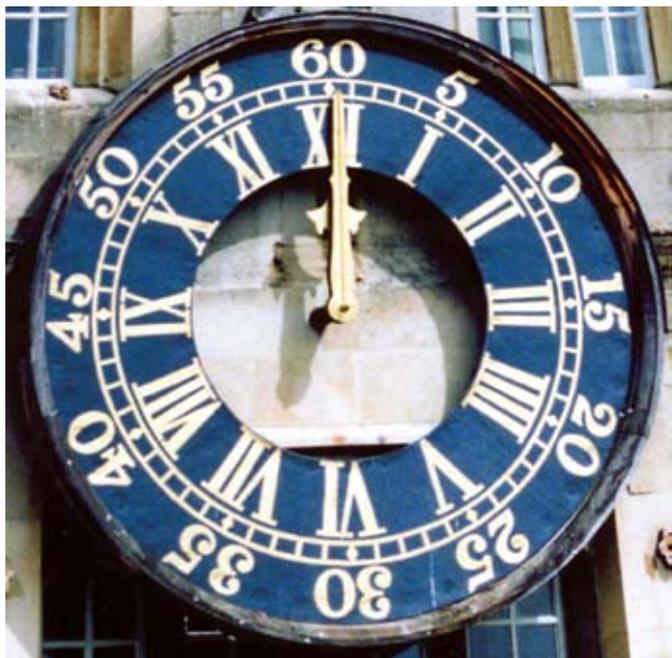
Widowed and childless, Edmund spent the first five years of the new century—and the last of his long life—in the harrowing of his will. The final multi-codicilar document, probated at just over £2 million gross (£112 million today?), contained a minor bequest to Trinity College for a replacement, to the Grimthorpe design, of the King’s Tower clock commissioned

in 1726 by Bentley. The gift was conditional, inter alia, on the construction of a new clock dial bare of numerals.

A majority of the College Council favoured accepting the bequest, emphasising the supposedly dilapidated state of Bentley’s clock, “held together with little more than bits of wire and string”. In contrast a significant minority considered the 1726 mechanism readily updateable at little expense, and should the College submit to ordering by that tasteless Grimthorpe—*vide* St. Alban’s? To lose the familiar roman and arabic numerals of the old dial seemed, however, a step too far for all. The Senior Bursar, McLeod Innes, adroitly ensured that the projected cost of a new clock, and recasting of the bells, would leave little from the legacy. So when in 1909 the bequest was finally accepted, the 18th century dial was saved. The old mechanism, said to be too worn for repair, was hustled off, presumably for scrap.

It is sad that the old clock was lost. However, Grimthorpe’s gift did ensure that Trinity could boast the finest turret timekeeper in Cambridge. Of that Bentley would surely have approved—if only for its keeping the Fellows prompt and on their toes. Now, with the loquacious Great Court bells once more sounding out the hours ‘in male and female voice’, might we not spare some passing thought for eximious Edmund Grimthorpe, consummate creator of clocks?

*Dr Graham Chinner (1954) Fellow,
Natural Sciences (physical)*



EDWARD FITZGERALD

TRINITY'S POET-TRANSLATION

By Erik Gray

This year marks a double anniversary: the bicentennial of the birth of Edward FitzGerald (who took his BA at Trinity), and the sesquicentennial of his *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*—arguably the best-known English poem of the nineteenth century. Indeed the anniversaries fall on almost the same day. FitzGerald was born, in Suffolk, on March 31, 1809; the British Library received its copy of the *Rubáiyát* on March 30, 1859, on the eve of the author's fiftieth birthday. A hundred and fifty years ago, however, neither event was being celebrated. FitzGerald spent his birthday that year at the bedside of a dying friend, and his poem, which was published anonymously as a paper-covered pamphlet, went unheralded and almost unnoticed.

The story of the poem's unlikely discovery and subsequent fame—what one biographer dubs “The Romance of the *Rubáiyát*”—has passed into legend. The volume went on sale at the publisher's bookstore in London, where for two years not a single copy is known to have sold. In 1861 the remaining copies (some had apparently been lost) were put on offer at a penny apiece in a box outside the shop, where one was purchased by a certain Whitley Stokes, who read it with delight. Stokes happened to be acquainted with some of the major poets of his day, including Dante Gabriel Rossetti, to whom he gave a copy; Rossetti in turn bought copies for Swinburne and William Morris. Within weeks the *Rubáiyát* and its anonymous author had a small but wildly enthusiastic following among England's literary elite. After

FitzGerald published a second, significantly expanded edition in 1868 the poem's fame increased, especially in America, where the second edition was glowingly reviewed in a leading journal. Two more editions, each with further alterations, appeared before FitzGerald died in 1883, by which time the *Rubáiyát* had become a literary phenomenon, and the name of its reclusive author an open secret. By the turn of the century the *Rubáiyát* was familiar to readers throughout the English-speaking world, and it was often the only book of verse to be found in households that otherwise had no taste for poetry. Many of its phrases entered everyday speech, and even some whole quatrains:

*A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!*

*The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.*

The poem's genesis was equally fortuitous. Omar Khayyám was a twelfth-century Persian astronomer and mathematician, who in his own lifetime was not known as a poet, but to whom are attributed several hundred *ruba'iyat*—the plural of *ruba'i*, a four-line epigrammatic poem. In 1857 FitzGerald, who had recently learned Persian under the tutelage of a friend, began to translate Omar's poems for his own amusement—

first into Latin, then into English. Eventually he had translated enough that he decided to order his quatrains into a single sequence and publish them. FitzGerald never pretended that his version was anything like a complete or exact translation. To the contrary, as he explained in a preface, his seventy-five quatrains were selected from over five hundred in the manuscripts from which he was working. Some are composed of two or three Persian quatrains “mashed” together, and all are translated freely. FitzGerald's poem therefore differs markedly from the Persian source, yet he strove diligently to remain faithful to its spirit. He felt profound sympathy with the melancholy skepticism he found in Omar's poetry, and he aimed to convey its tone in a manner more forceful than a more literal translation could have achieved. (Later scholars have for the most part agreed that FitzGerald succeeded admirably in this aim.) The poem is thus a hybrid—at once a translation and also a transformation of Omar's work into an extraordinarily beautiful and original English poem.

The Epicureanism that the *Rubáiyát* expresses—its mingled love of beauty and resignation to fate—was characteristic of FitzGerald as well. His greatest pleasure came from his friendships, which he maintained faithfully throughout his life. Yet he preferred to maintain them at a distance: especially once he reached middle age, he remained rooted in his solitary home in Woodbridge, writing long letters to his old friends but rarely visiting them, and discouraging



LD, 1809–1883: OR



their visits to him. His years at Trinity, however, predate this period of seclusion and appear to have been among the happiest of his life. It was here that he met William Makepeace Thackeray, long before the latter achieved fame as a novelist, and struck up a passionate friendship; shortly before his death Thackeray named FitzGerald as the dearest friend he had ever had. Another contemporary at Trinity was Alfred Tennyson, whom FitzGerald got to know shortly after they had both left Cambridge, and to whom he remained devoted (as with Thackeray, in spite of, not because of, his literary celebrity) for the rest of his life. After FitzGerald's death Tennyson remarked that "I had no truer friend"; in fact the laureate was composing a

poem to FitzGerald when he received news of his death.

FitzGerald's attachment to Cambridge itself also continued long after he had left. For many years after he took his degree in 1830 he would return for visits of up to several weeks, renting the same lodgings at 19 King's Parade that he had inhabited as an undergraduate. His aim in these visits was not so much to relive his own youth as to take pleasure in the atmosphere of youth in general—a pleasure described in FitzGerald's first published work, *Euphranor: A Dialogue on Youth* (1851), which is set in Cambridge. FitzGerald's last visit came in 1881, by which time his friend from undergraduate days, W.H. Thompson, had become Master of Trinity. FitzGerald stayed on that occasion in his old college with the Vice Master, William Aldis Wright, a younger scholar with whom FitzGerald had begun to correspond on literary topics. At his death, FitzGerald—now to his own amazement a celebrated man of letters—bequeathed his papers to the college and named Wright his literary executor.

The very popularity of the *Rubáiyát* seems to have done damage to its critical reputation in the later twentieth century. It continued to be published in innumerable editions and to be widely read and quoted, but it eventually began to be ignored by scholars, even of Victorian poetry. This neglect, however, has happily been

rectified in recent years, and this past July an international group of critics and scholars gathered at Trinity for a conference dedicated to FitzGerald and his poem. FitzGerald was a sincerely modest man; almost all his works, not only the *Rubáiyát*, were published anonymously, and he shrank from public displays and tributes of all sorts. But he was also a sincere lover of poetry, and throughout his life he delighted in discussing literature with his friends, whether by letter or in person. He would have been both embarrassed and pleased to know with what affection and admiration his work continues to be read, and himself to be remembered.

Erik Gray (1991)

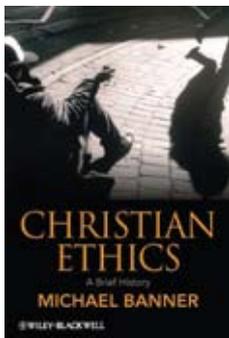
A NEW SECRETARY OF ALUMNI RELATIONS

John Lonsdale's five-year term of office as secretary of the Alumni Relations Committee ends on 30th September. Douglas Kennedy, whom many recent graduates will remember as their Senior Tutor and Director of Studies in Mathematics, will be taking over. John will continue as editor-in-chief of *The Fountain*, with Lynne Isaacs as the managing editor. Douglas looks forward to getting to know more of Trinity's members with the help of Corinne Lloyd and her splendid team, soon to be reinforced with an Events Co-ordinator Dr Emma Beddoe while Ed Smith is off to do an MA, to be succeeded by Anna Hunt.

FELLOWS'

Michael Banner (e2006) Dean of Chapel published *Christian Ethics: A Brief History* in Blackwell's series 'Brief Histories of Religion'.

Banner begins in the 6th century with Benedict and, after Barth, ends in this century with biotechnology—and all in only 140 pages. Amongst other things one learns that the Reformation began, if in a roundabout way, with 'a change in a university syllabus'. Does Cambridge still possess the influence of Luther's Wittenberg?



Many of his changes were startling and few have been accepted. But as an example of how a great scholar can rework a great poem, with the best of intentions, it has few equals.

Two of Bentley's annotated copies survive. His copy of the 1720 edition has long been in the University Library. This year the chance arose to buy his earlier working copy of the 1674 edition. The hundreds of markings in this edition, more dense than in that of 1720, show Bentley returning repeatedly to the problem he had set himself, trying out words where he believed Milton had been misrepresented. 'Whence Adam soon repeal'd / The doubts that in his heart arose:' or might it be dispell'd? resolv'd?'

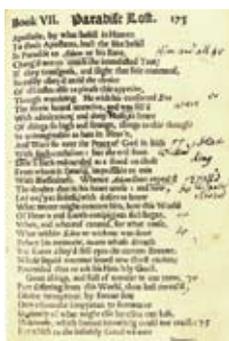
There were obvious reasons for trying to acquire the volume. It has never been fully studied. The College is deeply grateful to an anonymous alumnus and to the Breslauer Foundation for their help in seeing this volume safely into the Wren Library, where it has aroused immediate interest from readers.

Simon Baron-Cohen (e1995) has been elected Fellow of the British Academy for his path-breaking research into the causes of autism.

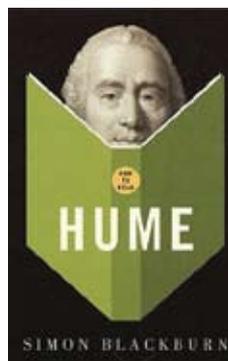
Richard Bentley rewrites

Milton: Richard Bentley, (Master 1700–42), is remembered for many achievements, including his edition of

Horace in 1711; his encouragement of Newton; and his founding of the University Press in its modern form. He is also notorious as the editor of *Paradise Lost*. He believed the text had been corrupted, and sought to restore it in a new edition published in 1732.



Simon Blackburn's (1962) new book on David Hume enters Granta's series on how to read difficult philosophers. Hume himself was not technically a Trinity man, but his benign wisdom



and acute intelligence, not to mention his naturalistic, Darwinian, take on human nature, make his ghost a welcome presence in the College.

Joya Chatterji

(1985) has been promoted University Reader in South Asian History. Her latest book is

Spoils of Partition: Bengal and India 1947–1967. She is currently researching into the Bengali diaspora in the United Kingdom.



Val Gibson

(e1994) who described her research at CERN in the last issue of *The Fountain* and is still waiting for the Hadron Collider to re-start has been appointed to a Personal Chair in High-Energy Physics.



Lynn Gladden (1983), Professor of Chemical Engineering and Head of Department, was appointed CBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours, for her services to science. Professor Gladden's chief research interest is in developing magnetic resonance imaging techniques (that's the MRI technique used in hospitals) in order to study systems in chemical engineering research. MRI allows us,

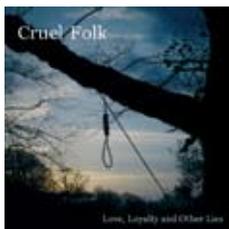


NEWS

as no other technique can, to picture and measure the flow fields and chemical conversions which occur in many chemical processes. Among the practical applications of this work are the reduction of the energy demand and carbon footprint of, for instance, petrochemicals processing and food processing, and the greater reliability of controlled pharmaceutical delivery systems.

Sean Holden

(e2004), our Director of Studies in Computer Science, also plays the mandocello, bouzouki, guitar and assorted other instruments, and sings for the duo Cruel Folk. They can be found this summer at a festival or folk club near you, having to date played at the Wimborne, Two Rivers, Glastonbury and Cambridge festivals, amongst others. They released their debut CD last summer, which can be purchased from www.cruelfolk.com or www.myspace.com/cruelfolk. The traditional music of England has a decidedly dark side. Revenge, incest and murder are commonplace, often within the same song. Cruel Folk promote this aspect of English folk music.



Hugh Hunt (1984), senior lecturer in mechanical engineering and a noted maker of boomerangs, provided the scientific expertise behind a daredevil

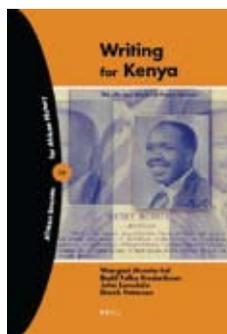
Stunt Special episode in the TV series 'Fifth Gear' on Channel Five earlier this year. His task was to advise the stunt driver, Steve



Truglia, who had driven in James Bond films, at what speed to launch his car into a 12 metre-diameter loop-the-loop. If he were too slow, he would drop out of the sky as soon as he was upside down. If he were too fast, he would experience enough G-force to make him black out, with less predictable consequences. Hugh also had to consider other matters like tyre pressure, suspension bump stops (whatever they are), steering, and the possibility of the engine cutting out. Even at the recommended launch-speed of 36 mph the driver would experience G-forces six times his own weight. To find out more (and if Hugh and Steve survived) the Fifth Gear website can be found at <http://fifthgear.five.tv>

John Lonsdale

(1958) has helped to edit three political pamphlets by a Kenyan journalist of the 1940s in *Writing for Kenya: The Life and Works of Henry Muoria* published by Brill of Leiden. Lonsdale got to know Muoria—whose favourite proverb was 'an unspoken



word convinces no one' and who ended his life as a pensioner of London Transport—while enjoying the curries provided by the latter's wife Nuna wa Karera in their home just off the Holloway Road in North London.

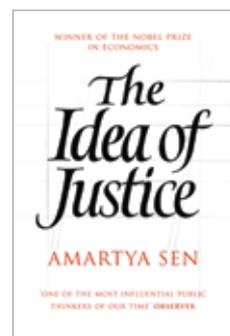
Suchitra Sebastian

(e2005) has been awarded a five-year Royal Society University Research Fellowship starting in October for her project on 'a materials-driven approach to novel phenomena in condensed-matter systems'.



Amartya Sen

(1953) published *The Idea of Justice* with Penguin Books. In this his latest book to reflect on large problems our former Master argues that not all questions of justice can be settled from first principles. There can well be alternative assessments of what is reasonable. He therefore advocates the role of practical public reason in absorbing divergent viewpoints and interests if we are to establish societies that may prove to be less unjust, and in a less unjust world.



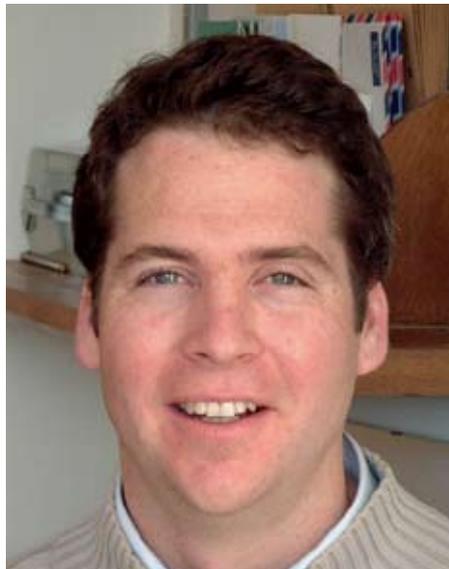
TRINITY ECONOMICS AND THE CREDIT CRUNCH

By Hamish Low

Who is to blame for the current recession? Clearly, economists will get their share. I have been asked how far the teaching of economics—especially at Trinity—can be held responsible.

To answer, we must first distinguish between economics and finance. This is not a cop-out! To me, economics begins with understanding how real people take real decisions—not how they say they *might* behave. We can then move on to consider when and in what ways governments should intervene. By contrast, finance is more exclusively focused on how to allocate money. The distinction I have drawn is far too stark, but that's part of the problem. In the past it has been far too easy to be successful in one field without any knowledge of the other.

Mistakes were clearly made in the quantitative modelling of financial markets. These did not arise simply out of the attempt to model the markets, but because in my view (not universally accepted), the financial models took insufficient account of the underlying economics. And here the way we teach economics is in part responsible. Too often it takes no account of how financial decisions interact with real decisions. Even in areas such as monetary policy, where finance clearly matters, our economic models of banking are too simplistic. This split between finance and economics has generated the two problems at the heart of the current crisis: first, the modelling of risk in financial markets did not take account of how financial products could generate systemic risk in the real economy. Second, the modelling of the



government's budgetary calculations failed to identify the illusory nature of the tax returns which were thought to be flowing from the financial sector.

But all such modelling is extremely difficult. That is the fascination of economics! It tries to provide a structure in which to approach these problems. Typically, there are three separate questions at issue in the analysis of a particular economic policy. What does the policy-maker want the outcome to be? What is the outcome more likely to be? And how desirable is that likely outcome? Formal modelling of the economy and this way of structuring analysis lie together at the heart of current economics teaching. They are closely intertwined, since formal modelling allows the analysis of the likely outcomes of policy to be made independently of value judgments. The use of maths in this formal modelling is simply a shorthand way of writing the underlying assumptions.

The press has fiercely criticised this formal modelling. While the critics do not offer a clear alternative procedure, the underlying desire seems to be for more 'common sense'. This could mean one of two things. It could mean that we should learn the difference between good and bad modelling. Or perhaps we should learn more modesty, and accept that financial modelling contains not so much objective science as personal opinion. The danger is that the common sense which gets listened to is likely to be the loudest and most self-confident.

What I think this criticism of formal modelling does get right is the failure of our teaching to focus enough on the real-world successes or failures of our models. For economics graduates who go on to work for government or in the world of finance, this leads to a separation between what they learnt at university and the daily decisions they have to take. I worry that the large number of economists who flow into 'the City' cannot use what we have taught them. Equally, however, we do not know how much worse the situation would have been if they had!

For the future, to integrate finance and economics better we need more appropriate modelling. We also need better communication between the universities, government, and the city. As to our teaching, I want to see us reinforce two aspects: first, the value of careful formal modelling in capturing actual economic behaviour; second, the distinction between hubris and analysis!

Dr Hamish Low (e1998), Fellow, is a Lecturer and Director of Studies in Economics

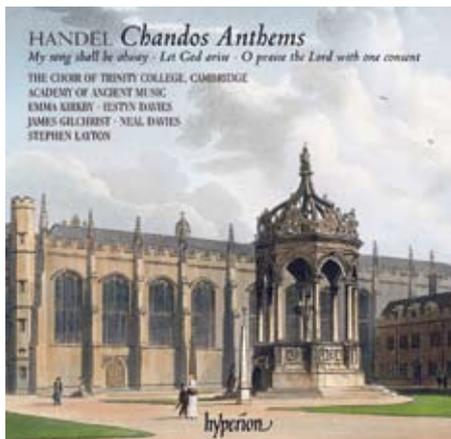


TRINITY COLLEGE CHOIR

NEW CD RELEASE

The Choir's latest release on the Hyperion label is a recording of three of Handel's *Chandos Anthems*, written whilst Handel was composer-in-residence for James Brydges, the first Duke of Chandos.

Recorded with the Academy of Ancient Music in Trinity Chapel last summer, it features a stellar line-up of soloists: Emma Kirkby, Iestyn Davies, James Gilchrist and Neal Davies.



"The Choir of Trinity College Cambridge sing with flexibility and lightness ... Trinity's choral blend and polish is highly disciplined ... performed with such elegant restraint and skill." *Gramophone*, July 2009

"Of the big anniversaries this year, Handel is doing best in terms of good new recordings ... the pick of the crop is a beautifully recorded CD from the Choir of Trinity College Cambridge." *The Mail on Sunday*, April 2009

"The only thing missing on this disc are the words 'Vol. 1'. Such 'Handel with care' deserves nothing less." *BBC Music Magazine*, June 2009

Copies of the CD are on sale in aid of Trinity College Choir Fund at £13.99 including postage and packing. Please send a cheque (payable to Junior Bursar Trinity College) to the Music Office, Trinity College, Cambridge, CB2 1TQ



Benjamin Edwards

CALIFORNIA TOUR

The Choir is currently on a 12-day concert tour of California visiting Los Angeles, Fullerton, Hemet, Azusa, Stanford, San Francisco, Sacramento and Oakland. Venues include First Congregational Church (Los Angeles), Meng Concert Hall (Fullerton) and Grace Cathedral (San Francisco).

Programmes will feature the music of British composers from all ages, including Tallis, Byrd, Elgar and Holst, alongside European greats such as Bach and Mendelssohn, and California's own Morten Lauridsen and Eric Whitacre.

A full schedule for the tour can be found on the College website. Alumni in the California area have been sent full details separately and the Alumni

Relations Office will be running some events alongside the tour. Further details are on the back page of this issue of *The Fountain*.

SAVE THE DATE

The Choir's next London performance is on Thursday 18 March 2010 at Cadogan Hall, Sloane Square, as part of the 'Choral at Cadogan' series.

The 2009–10 series is on the theme of light ('Lux Aeterna') and Trinity will perform a programme entitled 'Nocturnes', music inspired by the magical hour of twilight.

The Alumni Relations Office will be holding a reception at the concert—further information will be circulated shortly.

IN MEMORIAM

Two people who played a full part in College life, although not strictly members of Trinity, died earlier this year.

Many members will remember with fondness **Mollie Butler's** friendly hospitality in the Master's Lodge. Tony Weir spoke at her funeral in Saffron Walden. His address will be printed in this year's *Annual Record*.

Nicholas Maw

(Fellow Commoner in the Creative Arts 1967–69) was Trinity's first FCCA. He

will be best remembered for his orchestral work *Odyssey* (1987) and the opera *Sophie's Choice*, commissioned by the Royal Opera House and the BBC, and first performed at Covent Garden in 2002.



Maurice Foxall

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

17 September 2009

Trinity Choir Concert at Stanford Memorial Church, Menlo Park, California. This free concert will be preceded by an informal buffet supper for Trinity members and Cambridge alumni hosting choir members.

18 September 2009

Trinity Choir Concert, Grace Cathedral, San Francisco. A Drinks Reception for Trinity members and other Cambridge alumni will take place beforehand.

27 September 2009

5th Annual Buffet Luncheon in Nevile's Court—sold out. We would urge members who have not previously attended this event to apply early for next year.

22 October 2009

'Trinity in the City' Insights Meeting will take place at Quaritch, the antiquarian bookseller in Golden Square, W1. Sir David Rowland has kindly agreed to speak.

29 October 2009

New Members' Drinks in London. Invitations enclosed with the Grad-Packs sent to all those who graduated earlier this year.

8 November 2009

Remembrance Sunday Service followed by a luncheon for former and current members of the Armed Forces.

19 November 2009

Trinity Law Association Drinks Reception hosted by Herbert Smith in London; Rabinder Singh QC will be talking about human rights and the law.

5 December 2009

800th Anniversary Gala Dinner in New York City. This event is organised by Cambridge in America and further details can be found on their website: www.cantab.org

6 December 2009

Trinity Brunch in New York City. Invitations will be sent to all members resident on the East Coast of America.

6 March 2010

Regional Event: Trinity Lunch in Yorkshire. Invitations will be sent to all members living in the Yorkshire area.

18 March 2010

Trinity Choir Concert in Cadogan Hall, London. There will be a Drinks Reception for Trinity members before the recital.

For further details on any of the events above, as well as details of other events, please see <https://alumni.trin.cam.ac.uk/home> or contact the Alumni Relations Office at alumni@trin.cam.ac.uk or on +44 01223 761527.

TRINITY EMAIL FOR LIFE

Register now for your own personalised @trinity.cantab.net email address

We are delighted to introduce a new facility for members: a life-long Trinity email address. This service allows new graduates and alumni to set up a trinity.cantab.net email. Members can choose from the following account options:

- A free for life email account accessible through webmail, offering 10MB of account storage and email forwarding.
- An enhanced account from just £4.99 per year with the first 12 months free for new graduates and the first three months free for all other members, sponsored by Cambridge University Development Office. It has all the features of the free account with additional account storage of between 100–5500MB, full remote mail access, the ability to send mail via private servers, and an option for personal web hosting.

You can register for this service by going to Trinity Members Online <http://alumni.trin.cam.ac.uk> and clicking on [Trinity Email for Life](#).

The generosity of a Trinity member, who has chosen to remain anonymous, has enabled us to offer this service:

'I have been really glad of my Trinity friends over the years. If this helps other alumni to keep in touch, then I'll be delighted.'

We hope that you will find this service useful. If you have any questions or require more information, do please contact the Alumni Relations Office at alumni@trin.cam.ac.uk or on 01223 761527.

ANNUAL GATHERINGS 2010

Tuesday 29 June—(1977–1979)

Choral Evensong at 6.30pm
Dinner at 8pm

Friday 30 July—(1986–1987)

Choral Evensong at 6.30pm
Dinner at 8pm

Friday 3 September—(1988–1989)

Choral Evensong at 6.30pm
Dinner at 8pm

Wednesday 22 September—(1996–1997)

Choral Evensong at 6.30pm
Dinner at 8pm

Invitations for Annual Gatherings are usually sent out three months in advance and further information can also be found on <https://alumni.trin.cam.ac.uk/home>

Please contact the Annual Gatherings Administrator for further details at records@trin.cam.ac.uk or on 01223 765748.