The Shwedagon Pagoda, which dominates the skyline of Yangon. Dr Thant Myint-U (1991) discusses the importance of protecting the architectural heritage of this rapidly expanding city on Pg. 18.
The Fountain aims to provide news of what is happening at Trinity and of the achievements of members of the College round the world. It also tells stories from the College’s history, and looks to its future plans and development. The mix will be different in different editions, but do please tell us what you do and don’t like and what you might like to see in the future. Guided by your feedback and input, the magazine will become, so we hope, an important means of maintaining and strengthening the College community.

In this particular edition, you can read of remarkable contributions by members of the College across a very wide range of fields – from protecting the architectural heritage of a rapidly expanding city to leading a global initiative to revolutionise cancer research through the use of virtual reality. And who knew that Trinity could claim one of the first tennis idols as well as the man who solved the problem of Guinness?

It is, of course, just over 40 years ago that the first female postgraduates were admitted to the College and in the course of this year various events will celebrate the contribution which this addition has made to the College’s intellectual life. So it is good that we bear direct witness to this contribution by reporting in this edition that Professor Val Gibson (e1994) was honoured by the Royal Society for her work on increasing and advancing women in science, technology and mathematics, and that Dr Emily Shuckburgh (1994) was awarded an OBE for her services to science and public communication of science.

There are already plenty of reasons for being proud of a connection with Trinity College, but we hope that you will find a few more in this edition of The Fountain and in future ones.

Dr Michael Banner  
Chair of Alumni Relations & Development

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Front Cover © istock
Professor Stephen Troupe (1983) has been selected as the next Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge.

Paul Arkwright (1980) has been appointed British High Commissioner to Nigeria.

Chris Weitz (1986) has written the screenplay for Rogue One: A Star Wars Story.

Sonya Passi (2006) has been included in Forbes ‘30 Under 30’ for Law & Policy for her work with FreeFrom.

Dr Emily Shuckburgh (1994) has been awarded an OBE for services to Science and Public Communication of Science.

Paul Arkwright (1980) has been appointed British High Commissioner to Nigeria.
Peter Ajak (2013), the first South Sudanese student at the University of Cambridge, has made a documentary on ‘Wrestling for Peace in South Sudan’ for Vice Media.

Dr Laurie Bristow CMG (1983), has been appointed British Ambassador to Russia.

Su-Mei Thompson (1984), CEO of The Women’s Foundation, has launched ‘She Objects,’ a documentary and campaign against gender stereotyping.

Singaporean Prime Minister, Lee Hsien Loong (1971), attended a Trinity reunion with more than 50 alumni alongside the Master, Sir Gregory Winter (1970), on Wednesday 19 October.

The Master of Trinity, Sir Gregory Winter (1970), has received the Prince Mahidol Award 2016 in the field of medicine. Established in 1992 by Thailand’s royal family, the award recognises outstanding achievements in medicine and public health worldwide.

Global Alumni News
MATHS MATTERS: Felixstowe Academy and Trinity join forces

A new collaboration between Felixstowe Academy, Trinity College Cambridge, and Cambridge University’s NRICH project will build the mathematical thinking and problem-solving skills of hundreds of secondary school students.

The three-year initiative led by Felixstowe Academy is the first of its kind for Trinity, which is renowned for mathematics. Admissions Tutor at Trinity, Professor Adrian Poole, said:

“We are delighted to be involved with this innovative partnership aimed at raising the aspirations and ambitions of students, and supporting teachers in Felixstowe. Trinity is celebrated for its mathematics, science and engineering, including ongoing research at the Large Hadron Collider, on offshore wind energy, and climate change. We want to help inspire young people with a sense of the importance of mathematics and the way it underpins all kinds of activities at every level, in school, university and beyond.”

Head of Maths at Felixstowe Academy, Steve Jones, said the partnership was “an amazing opportunity.”

“The project will enable us to be involved in many activities that our students may not have had the opportunity to participate in before. It will improve their ability to engage with problems and help them understand that not knowing the answer is just the start.”

NRICH is a programme of the Millennium Mathematics Project at Cambridge University, which publishes free online mathematics resources for ages 3 to 18, works face-to-face with teachers, and runs events for more than 15,000 school students a year.

Director of NRICH, Ems Lord, welcomed the new collaboration.

“The new GCSE Maths curriculum stresses the importance of problem-solving, reasoning and fluency, and the partnership will therefore focus on developing students’ mathematical thinking, confidence and ability to tackle mathematical problems.”

“As well as supporting students’ mathematical development, the Felixstowe project aims to promote further study of mathematics at A-level and beyond.”

Trinity partners with Villiers Park Educational Trust

Trinity is supporting the Villiers Park Educational Trust’s Scholars Programme in Swindon to help raise the educational attainment of students from lower income backgrounds and increase access to leading universities.

The College has committed £150,000 over three years to support the Cambridge-based Trust’s programme in Swindon, an area where only 24% of 18-year-olds go on to higher education, compared to the national average of 35%.

Professor Adrian Poole, said the partnership reflected the College’s commitment to academic excellence, regardless of a student’s background or financial situation.

“We recognise that the factors affecting educational achievement are many and often deep-rooted. Raising aspirations and improving attainment is a complex task, not something that happens overnight. We have been impressed by the results Villiers Park has achieved, and we are pleased to collaborate with them in their carefully planned Scholars Programme in Swindon.”

Villiers Park Educational Trust has over 50 years of experience of empowering young people to fulfill their potential by helping them develop a passion for learning and raising their aspirations. The charity is committed to fair access – enabling students from lower income backgrounds to gain places at leading universities and to thrive once there.

One of seven regional programmes run by the Trust, the Swindon Scholars Programme will support 120 students each year through one-to-one sessions with Learning Mentors, undergraduate e-mentors, workshops, masterclasses and residential courses in Cambridge.
Valerie Gibson receives Royal Society Athena accolade

Professor Valerie Gibson has received a Royal Society award for her activities to increase and advance women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

She is among four individuals and two organisations recognised by the inaugural Royal Society Athena Prize, which celebrates those who have contributed most to the advancement of diversity in STEM in their spheres.

Professor Gibson is Head of the High Energy Physics Research Group at the Cavendish Laboratory and the School of Physical Sciences Equality & Diversity Champion at Cambridge. She spearheaded the Cavendish Laboratory’s Athena Swan Gold Award in 2014. The Cavendish was the first – and remains the only – university physics department in the UK to achieve this recognition of its development of employment practices that support and further the careers of women. Professor Gibson said:

“A workforce with a balance of gender and minorities is more innovative, productive and successful in its outcomes. So it is in all areas of science. However, in my own discipline of physics, less than 20% of our undergraduates are women, only 16% of our research active academic staff and 8% of our Professors are women, and 94% are of white ethnicity.

“My work focuses around removing any barriers that lead to these fractions, to provide equality of opportunity for all, and to show under-represented groups that a career in science is achievable and fulfilling.”

When she is not searching for new phenomena at CERN’s Large Hadron Collider, or teaching physics at Cambridge, Professor Gibson is promoting women in science and making science exciting, relevant and accessible to a broad audience.

Among her innovations are the introduction of high chairs in the Cavendish Laboratory’s canteen; establishing a Research Staff Committee and events programme; and instigating research to understand and improve undergraduate women’s exam performance.

Professor Gibson said the recognition by the Royal Society would strengthen her voice in Cambridge and beyond – including working with schools to encourage more girls to consider studying science.

“It is also a great boost for morale and keeps the enthusiasm for change at the highest level. This recognition will give me further opportunity to help others along the same journey towards the ultimate goal of equality of opportunity for all.”

The London Mathematical Society’s Women in Mathematics Committee received the overall Royal Society Athena Prize for its efforts to improve the gender balance of mathematicians in academia.

The Crewe Bequest – “One of the most exciting undiscovered libraries in Britain”

First editions inscribed by Byron, Shelley, Wordsworth and Tennyson, and unknown manuscripts of Napoleon Bonaparte, George Washington, Florence Nightingale, and Charles Dickens are among more than 7,500 books left to Trinity’s Wren Library in one of the largest bequests in its history.

They were bequeathed by Mary, Duchess of Roxburghe, whose father, Robert Crewe-Milnes, and grandfather, Richard Monckton Milnes, both studied at Trinity before embarking on important political careers. Between the 1830s and the early twentieth century, they amassed what Trinity’s Librarian, Dr Nicolas Bell, said was “an extraordinary library – one of the most important private collections in Britain.”

Dr Bell said it had been “quite a complicated logistical exercise” moving 7,500 books from Surrey to Trinity and a “huge effort by staff sorting, classifying, cleaning and conserving the books.”

The first few hundred volumes have been added to the Library’s online catalogue and all the books in the Crewe Collection are available for consultation by researchers by appointment. A display of selected treasures from the collection is on view in the Wren Library during public opening hours, and a first selection of books has been added to the Wren Digital Library, where they may be browsed in full online.
As Head of Housekeeping, ‘the human touch’ has been essential to Lucia Bramwell’s smooth-running of Trinity’s largest department. As she steps down after 13 years, she reflects on the challenges of changing working practices, her pride in the department, and the vital role of the Cambridge bedmaker.

‘A people person’ may be a cliché but in Lucia Bramwell’s case, it is true. Temperamentally, she seems to have housekeeping in her blood. Between 1968 and 1970, during her hotel catering and management training, she spent her holidays working in hotels – chambermaiding, waitressing, and on the reception desk.

“I did a bit of everything. Meeting so many different people from all walks of life, it made the job so interesting. In apparently small, simple ways you could make someone’s day. With high expectations in the service sector I enjoyed the challenges of the job. I knew working with people was what I wanted to do.”

She arrived at Trinity in 2003, after 22 years as Student Service Manager of a chain of language schools. She recalls:

“The then Junior Bursar said to me: ‘On paper you have the experience. But this is a much larger organisation.’ He was absolutely right. The sheer size of the College – 1,000 beds, with the then external houses. I didn’t really know where to start.”

In fact, she instinctively did, together with the Deputy Housekeeper, Rebecca Mansfield, who had recently joined from Newnham. “Things were different then. There wasn’t much in the way of staff training and bedmakers did their own thing – on staircases they had worked for decades, in ‘their’ areas of College.

“We had to go quite slowly. That lay behind all the changes. A senior colleague in Catering told me that the first year would be about observing, the second about learning and the third, putting everything into practice. I have never forgotten and often recalled those words!”

“It was a huge, wonderful challenge,” she says, even if objectives were scarce. “I am quite a proud person so I wanted to do it, to come up with results.”

Between them, Mrs Bramwell and Mrs Mansfield assessed the allocation of work to staff and made it fairer. Recruitment was made more systematic and rigorous. Training and inductions were introduced. Leave arrangements were made more flexible. Environmentally friendly cleaning products and recycling became the norm.

Did she meet resistance to all the changes? Mrs Bramwell smiles. “Improving communication was ‘key to everything’” she says. She jokes that when she arrived, for bedmakers, moving between Burrell’s Field, Great Court or Whewell’s Court was like “going to another country.”

“With the introduction of a formal agreement between the College and each student, the Licence to Occupy, comes greater expectations,” she says.

“I put a lot of effort into staff management – I can do that because I have a great team. We did spend a lot of time recruiting the right people. We have got a fabulous team now.”

Trinity’s bedmakers are diverse, with origins in China, Japan, Poland, Chile, Nigeria, Spain, Jamaica, Nepal, the UK, Lithuania and Thailand.

Bedmakers are the only members of staff entitled to enter a student’s room without notice. They get to know their students and are a friendly face. Freshers, particularly, will talk to their bedmaker about what might seem trivial matters. So bedders pick up on student behaviour and contribute to the great support network the College provides.

Asked about her most important legacy, Mrs Bramwell says, “I would like to think I have helped to bring the Housekeeping Department into the twenty-first century by modernising and bringing structure to it and to be remembered as having achieved positive change.”

Unsurprisingly, Mrs Bramwell has mixed feelings about retiring.

“It is going to be really hard because I have put so much into it. I have put my life into it. It is an incredibly magnetic place.”

With one son in Colombia and another in Italy, she will have more time to visit and see her grandchildren. She is going to learn Spanish and Italian (her grandmother was Italian), garden, organise some household renovation projects and probably start volunteering once a week. But initially, like all good managers, she is going to take stock, assess what needs doing, prioritise and plan...
Making Guinness Guinness – Michael Ash (1945)

Michael Ash was born in Calcutta, British India, on 17 December 1927. He was the youngest of three children (a half brother and sister), and a lot of cousins.

His father Wilfrid Cracroft Ash worked as an engineer for the Indian Civil Service and was engineer-in-chief and designer of the new harbour for Vizagapatam 1928–1935. He was a dynamic forward-thinking man who sent both his sons to relatively experimental schools. When he was very young, Michael was sent to prep school in the UK. He then went on to Canford School in Dorset and not to Eton, which his prep school advised as his grandfather regarded this as too flashy. His brother, Maurice, who was 10 years older, had been sent to the experimental Gresham’s School.

At 16, Michael left school because he had a quarrel with his headmaster about being confirmed; he didn’t wish to be confirmed. At confirmation there was an exam and he was asked to say things that he didn’t agree with. He had already by that time taken his exams and had the school certificate, so he didn’t need to stay on from that perspective. He went off on his own with his father’s approval and enrolled at the University of London for a science degree as an external student. He then went to live in Staffordshire and worked for his father who was then working for the war effort as engineer-in-chief for the largest ordnance factory in the world in Swynnerton, Staffordshire (1940–1945). When Michael was 17 he was eligible to apply to Cambridge, so he took the scholarship exam for Trinity and went to Cambridge and completed both degrees (he got a First in the Mathematical Tripos at Trinity and a First in Science from UCL).

In particular, Michael loved Cambridge, and especially Trinity. He was very proud of his time at the College. He was also proud and happy to have had Patrick Duff as his tutor with whom he got on very well. While at the College, he took dancing classes and was fond of dancing the Samba. He was passionate about music, in particular Mozart. Michael’s mathematical ability was similarly evident as he became Senior Wrangler* during his studies.

However, as was de rigueur at the time, “I wanted to get on with my life. The war was still on and I expected to be called up and in uniform. That was of huge effect. So I decided to get as many qualifications as I could and go into uniform and fight the Japanese if necessary. The Japanese didn’t get defeated until August 1945. At that time, we thought the war was going on for another five years. Well, to get a commission you had to have a degree, without a degree you would be in the ranks.”

After leaving Trinity and Cambridge he lectured in mathematics at The Bedford College for Women for three years. Following this stint, he joined Guinness & Co. at their London Brewery in Park Royal in January 1951.

Hugh Beaver had become Managing Director of Arthur Guinness just after the end of the war. He knew Michael’s grandfather, as both had been involved in the construction industry and the War
Hugh Beaver (who called Michael ‘Ash’), always encouraged him to stick his neck out and look for things that were original. Michael had to think from first principles. He didn’t use formulae given to him because as a mathematician and not a scientist he was ignorant of those formulae. He had to use his wits. Hugh Beaver and the Head Brewer supported him intellectually but he had almost no budget. Michael’s daughter, Lucy Ash, remembers her father saying that at the time 90 per cent of those at Guinness were hostile to his ideas.

Despite this hostility, Michael worked unpaid at weekends and in his spare time for four years on the ‘Draught Guinness’ problem. Not one to be deterred, he journeyed across the UK and Ireland on his own and observed people in pubs to discover the perfect pint. As he recalled to his daughter, “I was given a start because in Dublin they dispensed it with air – it was air at a high pressure from a cask. The beer was much too fizzy, so the only way they could serve draught was by mixing a high pressure one with a low pressure one, which they got by leaving the cask alone for a few weeks, so that the gas could settle. That’s why draught could be done in Ireland and not in England. Air gave rise to the nice small bubbles in the head and they were getting this head in Ireland, but by a very tortuous method.

“I started on it and got more and more involved and thought it was probably solvable if you put enough energy into it. It was, I wasn’t a scientist, they had tried and failed. But I was enough of a scientist to know that you had to get rid of the oxygen because the beer would go acid. If you used nitrogen, which is an inert gas, you could solve that problem. So you had to get rid of oxygen, use the nitrogen and combine it with CO₂, which was the natural gas of beer. And if you could get those proportions right, if you could do that constantly, you would have what we wanted. To get it constant, we had to have the two part cask to keep the pressures constant.”
“The removal of oxygen was necessary so that the beer didn’t go off. The presence of nitrogen was necessary because CO₂ gas is very soluble and nitrogen is insoluble, therefore giving rise to small long lasting bubbles.”

Guinness had for years been looking for a system in which a barman with no special training could pour a glass of draught in a matter of seconds to settle quickly with a head (3/8” in a normal ½ pint glass). While Ash realised the solution lay in the use of a blend of nitrogen and carbon dioxide (beer typically just uses the latter), it took years to figure out a mechanism to dispense nitrogenated beer.

Within Guinness, Ash’s quest was regarded as quixotic and other brewers referred to it as ‘daft Guinness’ and the ‘Ash Can’. Eventually, working with a keg designer, Ash hit on a revolutionary, self-contained two-part keg, with one chamber full of beer and the other full of mixed gas under pressure, and the introduction of nitrogen. Because nitrogen is less soluble than carbon dioxide it allows the beer to be put under high pressure without making it fizzy. The high pressure of dissolved gas is required to enable very small bubbles to be formed by forcing the draught beer through fine holes in a plate in the tap, which causes the characteristic ‘surge’.

Ultimately called the ‘Easy Serve System’, it began to replace the old ‘high and low’ taps used in Ireland and spread to Great Britain and beyond beginning in the 1960s. The invention, which made for a smoother, less characterful beer, was not without controversy, and for years Irish drinkers complained about the change. Eventually, nitrogenated stout became a standard, not just at Guinness, but among all Irish makers of stout.

When asked by recent filmmakers if there was a particular equation that solved the problem, Michael said that “There wasn’t an equation, just a beautiful cloud. Equally there wasn’t a ‘eureka’ moment, but a gradual approach in the right direction.”

Despite his remarkable discovery, only Michael’s closest friends knew about his role in making Guinness Guinness, so it must have been a surprise to most of the inhabitants in Paincastle, Wales when a film crew arrived to film him at his local pub in December 2015.

When asked if it was a shock that Guinness finally recognised her father, Lucy Ash told us that “It was a lovely surprise, something he wasn’t expecting at the age of 88. We hadn’t realised that ‘Nitro Beer’ had become such a huge thing, particularly in the States. Diageo were launching ‘Nitro IPA’, which came directly out of my father’s invention.

This was what prompted their interest. They had used his image alongside Hugh Beaver in an advert, and discovered Dad when they needed usage permission for the image of him.”

Given his impact on the rise of Guinness, we asked Lucy if it was served at their home. “Not always but certainly for a period of time we had it on tap. The whole family loved it and were/are very proud of his achievements.”

Michael Ash died in April 2016. A tribute to his remarkable life is available to watch online at bit.ly/MichaelAsh.

We would like to thank his daughter, Lucy Ash, for her support and advice in the writing of the article.

* The Senior Wrangler is the top mathematics undergraduate at the University of Cambridge, a position which has been described as the greatest intellectual achievement attainable in Britain.
Anthony Wilding (1902):
The hero who set Wimbledon hearts a-flutter

Long before the PR driven age of image rights and social media, before Borg, Laver and even Perry, Wimbledon had its own matinee idol – Anthony Wilding. Yet despite him being a superstar of his day, and a war hero, why is there relatively little awareness of him today?

New Zealand born, with English parents, Wilding won four consecutive Wimbledon championships, two Australian Opens, and four Davis Cups, before his career was cut short due to the outbreak of World War One.

His incredible on-court success was matched by his off-court cult-following where, blessed with an irresistible mix of good looks and charisma, he became arguably the first superstar of tennis. He reportedly set many hearts a-flutter among spectators, with newspaper reports of a number of women fainting in the Wimbledon crowd, such was his charm.

But when World War One began he signed up for the British Army and was killed in action in France in 1915.

“He was like a movie star, but on the tennis court. Tennis hadn’t ever had anyone like that, with that combination of charm, decorum and adventure.

“Imagine the Great Gatsby era, but he was the real deal, the toast of society. He stayed with kings and queens and prime ministers.”

He has been called the James Dean or David Beckham of his day. Women swooned and fainted.”

He was seen as something of a pioneer in terms of his training. He never drank alcohol and, unusually for the period, never smoked. He was renowned for his physique, with his Davis Cup teammate Norman Brookes describing Wilding as “without doubt one of the finest specimens of manhood physically.”

The greatest match of his career is regarded as the 1913 Wimbledon final against the brilliant young American Maurice McLoughlin. McLoughlin was the favourite, but Wilding put on a superb performance, winning 8-6, 6-3, 10-8 (there were no tie-breaks at that time).

Wilding was always on the lookout for adventure. He had a great love of motorcycling and would ride around Europe on his Bat-JAP. In 1908, he motorcycled from John O’Groats to Land’s End.

“Anthony was an icon and good-looking,” says his great niece Anna Wilding, who is a director, actress and White House correspondent.

Wilding’s life and career
• Born in Christchurch, New Zealand, on 31 October 1883
• Studied law at Trinity, graduating in 1905
• Won four consecutive Wimbledon championships from 1910 to 1913
• Also won four Wimbledon doubles titles, two Australian Open singles titles and an Australian Open doubles title

“At the same time he would camp on the roof of the Monaco Tennis Club under the stars and play tennis the next day.
After the outbreak of World War One, he joined the Royal Marines, allegedly on the advice of Winston Churchill, who was then First Lord of the Admiralty.

He remained in the Marines for just a few days and was then attached to the Intelligence Corps, where his knowledge of European roads proved invaluable as he was assigned to the battlefields of northern France.

In his last letter, dated 8 May 1915, he wrote: “For really the first time in seven and a half months I have a job on hand which is likely to end in gun, I, and the whole outfit being blown to hell. However, if we succeed we will help our infantry no end.”

The following day, 9 May, he was killed in action during the Battle of Aubers Ridge at Neuve-Chapelle, when a shell exploded near the dug-out he was sheltering in.

He was buried the next day, but was later reinterred at Rue-des-Bercaux.

He had been due to marry Broadway star Maxine Elliott.

“He was like a movie star, but on the tennis court. Tennis hadn’t ever had anyone like that, with that combination of charm, decorum and adventure.”

Daily Telegraph tennis correspondent Andrew Wallis Myers, in his 1916 biography of Wilding, described him in action: “Wilding observed and directed the fire, both from the gun platform and the trench, all the time under the hottest counter-shelling.”

In 1978, he was inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame. But Ms Wilding feels he has not received enough recognition for his achievements.

“Anthony died fighting for the British, not the New Zealanders, so in some ways he drops between the lines.

“He is not celebrated in New Zealand military remembrances nor by the government there, and I feel this is because he spent so much time in the UK.

“Nor do the British seem to claim him as he was from the colonies. It would be nice to see more acknowledgement from the British as he lived there for much of his life and passed away fighting for them. So it’s sad in a way, as his story is incredible.”

Wilding’s obituary stated that even more than the New Zealand All Blacks, he “carried the name of the Dominion into regions of the Earth where it was probably unknown until it became associated with his fame.”
Bromide and champagne: a new glimpse of Housman at Trinity

A. E. Housman lived in Trinity for the last 25 years of his life, following his appointment as Professor of Latin in 1911. A newly discovered collection of 53 hitherto unknown letters to his godson reveals much about life in College between the wars.

While a student at Oxford in 1887-81, Housman developed an infatuation for his contemporary Moses Jackson, and his disappointment that the love was unrequited is often seen to have contributed to the wistfulness of many of Housman’s poems. Moses Jackson subsequently married and emigrated to India, but he remained in contact with Housman, who became godfather to Jackson’s fourth son, Gerald. Gerald Jackson kept his godfather’s letters, and they have recently been acquired from his family as a major addition to Trinity’s Housman collections.

The letters span Housman’s final decade, from 1927 to 1936. Gerald Jackson, born in 1900, had left university to undertake geological fieldwork in the copper mines of Northern Rhodesia. In 1927 he was considering pursuing a research degree in geology, and wrote to his godfather for advice on studying in Cambridge. Housman was characteristically diffident, writing that “it is no good asking my opinion and advice, which are valueless, as I stick to my job and know hardly anything about scientific studies here”. He nevertheless made arrangements with Tresillian Nicholas, the geologist who was about to be appointed Senior Bursar of Trinity, for Jackson to be kept a table in the College laboratory. Jackson ended up studying at the Royal School of Mines, part of Imperial College London, but spent a few months at Trinity from November 1930, staying in B3 New Court.
this time demonstrates Housman’s wish to be welcoming while following correct protocol with the Senior Tutor:

“Once you are admitted it will not be possible for me to ask you to the High Table, so will you come and dine with me in Hall on Monday, the first day I have free; and I will ask Winstanley to put off your fall in the social scale till afterwards.”

Jackson completed his D.Sc in London, but Housman continued to profess ignorance whenever Jackson sent him some of his geological writings: “What it chiefly teaches me is the wealth of the English language, and my ignorance of it ... full of beautiful new words, both long and short, of which my favourite is “vug” ... The vocabulary, like the English army at Bannockburn, was ‘gay yet fearful to behold’.”

Housman was a diligent and generous godfather, supporting his godson financially in order to enable him to prolong his decision of a final career. From 1932 Jackson trained in medicine at St Thomas’ Hospital, and he visited Housman in Trinity from time to time over the following years. Housman was always keen to pass on pieces of College news, and these give an air of the Combination Room conversation of the 1930s. In February 1933, Housman was appalled that “the Lent races are just over, in which Third Trinity was bumped by Fitzwilliam Hall, a disgrace unknown in history,” while the following month “the bronze Hermes in Whewell’s Court had his body painted black and his face yellow on the last night of term.”

Later in 1933 Housman became ill for a prolonged period, but he had recovered sufficiently by the end of the year to eat 52 oysters on New Year’s Eve.

In 1935, following further medical problems, Housman moved from his rooms on K staircase of Whewell’s Court to B2 Great Court, a ground-floor set, “exceedingly comfortable, and the bathroom, which the College has equipped at its own expense, strikes the beholder dumb with admiration.” Although wisteria growing outside the window made it rather dark, the location was convenient for the Hall and for the lecture room (which is now the College bar). Before asking Jackson to send him a smoked ox tongue from Fortnum & Mason, Housman informed the trainee doctor of his own preferred medicine: “My walking is weak and slow, and for getting to sleep I am using diminishing doses of bromide, supplemented with champagne.” Despite these sound preventative measures, Housman’s health continued to deteriorate, and following a period in the Evelyn Nursing Home, he briefly returned to College late in 1935, where he died on 30 April 1936. His last letter to his godson thanked him for sending a carefully chosen box of sweets to the staff of the nursing home on his behalf.

The letters were purchased by the College through the generosity of an alumnus with particular interests in Housman. Harry Richardson Creswick was University Librarian in Cambridge, and did much to expand the UL’s holdings of Housman manuscripts in the 1950s and 60s. He kindly left a significant portion of his estate to Trinity, where it is used for the purchase of rare books and manuscripts.
The first First and Third women's boat


The year was 1976 and, as you may remember, it was the Year of the Dragon in the Chinese calendar. It was also the year in which women were first admitted to Trinity. The College took a cautious first step by admitting an auspicious initial wave of 13 postgraduate women, before venturing further.

This small group of intrepid pioneers turned up for the start of the academic year. Some arrived early only to be firmly told that they had come to the wrong place. College lore has it that the Fellows feared that the porters might disapprove of women in College, so delayed telling them until the day term started.

Having found their feet, members of the group explored ways in which they could participate fully in College life. Ann Kelley, who excelled not only academically but also as an athlete, came up with the idea of forming a rowing eight. Although Ann had been captain of the University of Pennsylvania women’s lacrosse and field hockey teams as an undergraduate, the rest of us had no claim to athletic prowess. In fact, for some of us, rowing was a rather alarming prospect, not improved by the prospect of getting up unreasonably early on frosty winter mornings, with the added potential to experience the very cold water of the Cam! But Ann was not to be deterred: she deployed a mixture of persuasion and strong arm tactics to get six more of our cohort to row: British natives Ann Ewing and Fiona Heseltine and North Americans Betsy Bruce, Jane Hamblen, Deborah Kramer, and Lynne Pepall. What we lacked in experience, we made up for in enthusiasm.

Having resolved to launch a women’s boat, we had a few obstacles to overcome: we needed an eighth oarswoman, a cox, and a coach. Although the First and Third Boat Club, all men at the time, was somewhat sceptical of adding such a motley and female crew to the club, some club members willingly offered assistance. Understandably hesitant to provide such novices with a shell, Jonathan Anderson, the Club Captain, kindly did provide us with a clunker to row. Larry Poos, an American first-year postgraduate student at Trinity, bravely volunteered to coach us during the first
half of the year, and Ian Ray, a Trinity engineer, stepped in for the second half. Marshall Marcus, Rob Kerwin, and John Harrison, also club members, coxed the boat in successive terms. Keen moral support and informal coaching came from Henry Pearson, Nigel Brookes, and Peter Hetherington.

“We discovered that rowing in the summer was a great deal more pleasant than its winter equivalent. Some May evenings were positively balmy, which finally persuaded the North American crew members that it didn’t rain every day in England.”

Our enthusiasm knew no bounds as we managed to persuade Charlotte Carey, an American postgraduate student from Selwyn who had rowed at University level in the USA, to be our initial eighth. She brought much needed expertise to the crew, and she and Ann brought much needed athletic co-ordination. When Charlotte qualified for the Blondie boat during Michaelmas Term, her position was filled by another Selwyn oarswoman, Fiona Morrison. Fiona’s tenure with us was also brief, however, as she soon made the Blue Boat, demonstrating once more the remarkable impact that joining our boat had on a woman’s rowing career.

Somewhat to our surprise, but maybe due to the talent borrowed from Selwyn, we reached the finals of the Clare Novices Regatta by defeating Girton, Churchill and Newnham. The officials postponed the final race a couple of days due to darkness and, sadly, we lost the final race to New Hall. Not deterred, our novice boat entered the Norwich Regatta, where we learned that “carb loading” on Fitzbillies Chelsea buns is not best pre-racing practice.

After losing two successive Selwyn oarswomen, we turned to Sidney Sussex in the Lent Term for help and recruited Angela Baart as our eighth. We managed one bump during the Lent Bumps, but an oar eluded us.

In the Easter Term, our crew shrank to a four: Lynne Pepall, Jane Hamblen, Ann Kelley and Ann Ewing. Ian Ray continued as our coach and John Harrison as our cox. We discovered that rowing in the summer was a great deal more pleasant than its winter equivalent. Some May evenings were positively balmy, which finally persuaded the North American crew members that it didn’t rain every day in England. We competed in the May Bumps as a Four, but had more fun than glory.

Although several of our crew stayed in Cambridge for a few more years while completing graduate degrees, the first First and Third women’s boat was retired in June 1977. The friendships and memories made during that year, however, have lasted 40 years.

It was wonderful to see the old photograph of us all at the Trinity Women@40 celebrations in October 2016. We enjoyed a warm reunion and shared many memories. We fondly remembered the two who are no longer with us: Ann Kelley, our stroke, and Rob Kerwin, one of our coxes, both of whom died in 2007.
Yangon is at a turning point. Since the beginning of economic reforms in 2011, dozens of new hotels, office and apartment towers have been built. Many more are being planned, together with mammoth infrastructure projects meant to support a population that, according to McKinsey’s 2013 Myanmar report, could climb to 10m by 2030. The number of cars on the streets has tripled, bringing traffic in places to a near halt.

Without proper planning, Yangon could easily follow the path of many of its Asian neighbours in losing its character and architectural heritage and becoming a congested, polluted, urban sprawl. Or it could transform itself into one of the most beautiful and liveable cities in the region. The decisions taken over the coming year or two will shape Myanmar’s largest city for the rest of the century.

I am not an architect or an urban planner. I was born in New York to Myanmar parents and for much of my career I worked for the UN, either at headquarters or on peacekeeping operations in the field. I have also been a Fellow of Trinity and have written books on Myanmar and Asian history.

I have visited Yangon almost every year since I was a child and remember the city in the 1970s and 1980s as a lush, lazy, backwater, trapped in General Ne Win’s ‘Burmese Way to Socialism’, a place of overgrown gardens and hidden gems, like its 19th-century Armenian church and the tomb of Bahadur Shah Zafar, the last emperor of India. And later, as an historian, I began to understand what a special place it was.

I moved to Yangon four years ago and at first concentrated on the issues more familiar to me, issues related to international aid and the new round of peace talks between the government and country’s myriad insurgencies. However, I couldn’t help but notice the alarming rate at which the city’s elegant 19th and early 20th-century buildings were being knocked down and replaced by some of the shoddiest looking constructions I have ever seen.

In January 2012 I had my first meeting with government ministers. Three months later, together with a few like-minded architects, businessmen and engineers from Myanmar, I founded the Yangon Heritage Trust, the first organisation dedicated to protecting the architectural heritage of Yangon.

Protecting the architectural heritage of Yangon
the conservation of the city’s built heritage. We held our first international conference in June that year, and in February 2013 I met with U Thein Sein, President of Myanmar.

“Good you intervened when you did – we were thinking of knocking down the whole lot of them,” said one official.

Everyone seemed encouraging. “Your dream will come true,” said one official. The government asked for plans and quietly put in place new policies that have, if not halted, at least slowed down the demolitions. For a while, it seemed that saving Yangon’s architectural legacy would be easy.

My original motivation had been an aesthetic one centred on the colonial-era buildings downtown, but my colleagues and I quickly realised that the Trust’s focus had to be far broader. Yangon’s greatest treasure was, after all, the sublime 344ft-tall Shwedagon pagoda on a hill overlooking the city, the most important religious landmark in the country. There was certainly no threat of its demolition, but views of the shrine were in danger of being blocked by a swathe of new developments. There were also Yangon’s other religious sites. Downtown Yangon alone is home not only to three other ancient pagodas but also to Anglican and Roman Catholic cathedrals, dozens of other churches and mosques, Hindu, Chinese and Sikh temples and a synagogue.

At the Trust we began to think not just about the individual buildings but entire streetscapes and neighbourhood communities. At the government’s request we began to install ‘blue plaques’ at historic sites. We organised tours and exhibitions to raise public awareness and fostered a good working relationship with the city administration. In March last year I was invited to Clarence House in London to discuss the Trust’s ideas with the Prince of Wales. And last November I escorted Barack Obama, the US president, around the historic Secretariat complex and discussed Yangon’s future.

The Trust worked towards a more coherent vision, one where a mix of conservation areas would be combined with areas for medium and possibly high-rise development. The waterfront would be remade, allowing for public access, with existing industrial sites moved to a new deep-sea port 15 miles away. Beyond this ‘historic core’, there would be ample room for less regulated construction. A new mass transit system would complement this vision. We advocated a 21st-century city where the best of the old would be combined with the new.

Yangon City Hall was the first building where the Trust installed a Blue Plaque. The day-to-day challenges, though, are daunting. With the move of the capital to Naypyidaw in 2006, the government left behind an enormous portfolio of colonial-era property, some now virtually empty. The reuse of these buildings could be a catalyst for urban renewal, and with market rental prices now sky-high (more than $5 a sq ft per month for office space), the long-term leasing of some of these buildings could pay for the renovation of the rest. But there is no clear government strategy to do this and coordinating the myriad ministries and agencies responsible will be a Herculean task.

Then there are the privately owned buildings, where ownership is unclear and often contested. In many apartment buildings, like the one I live in (which was home to Pablo Neruda in the 1920s), the ‘landowner’ has few, if any, rights to the apartments themselves, pays no property tax and has no obligation towards maintenance. For these landowners, any hope of financial gain rests in the building’s demolition. A beautiful 19th-century building would then be replaced by a cheap 12-storey one.

There are reasons to be disheartened. In an effort to increase parking space for new car users, the once wide pavements downtown have been torn up, destroying street life and making the city far less walkable.

Yet there are reasons to be hopeful, too. The government has made several difficult decisions in our favour, including blocking a proposed 38-storey tower in the heart of the old downtown. More recently, the lease of the state-owned Secretariat to a private company was made contingent on a ‘conservation management’ plan. We are providing technical assistance for a number of renovation projects, for example at the century-old General Hospital, and are beginning projects of our own. Public opinion is increasingly on side.

What is important now is to bring the government, business sector and local communities together around a concrete action plan, drawing on international best practices, but grounded in Yangon realities. If we seize this opportunity, I am confident we will be on track to create a 21st-century city unrivalled in Southeast Asia.

Left: Me and President Obama at the old Secretariat (headquarters of the government bureaucracy 1900-c. 2000) in 2014. Right: The Shwedagon Pagoda – which still dominates the skyline. Our most important aim is to protect views of the Shwedagon. Bottom opposite: The old Accountant-General’s Office.
To fully understand cancer, scientists need to know everything about a tumour – what types of cells are in it, how many there are and where they are located in the tumour.

Having such a detailed picture of a tumour would allow scientists and doctors to develop new ways to diagnose and treat the disease, and new ways to stop it spreading and coming back.

But getting such an accurate, precise picture of tumours is extremely difficult to do. So difficult that it’s not been done before.

Trinity Fellow, Professor Greg Hannon (e2016), and his team of scientists, computer scientists and virtual reality experts aim to change this. With his team, Professor Hannon will create the world’s first virtual reality map of cancer tumours to reveal their cellular and molecular make up, in order to improve diagnosis and treatment.

His groundbreaking project is one of the first Cancer Research UK Grand Challenge Awards, which aim to overcome the biggest obstacles facing cancer researchers in a global £100 million effort to beat cancer. Established in 2015, Cancer Research UK’s Grand Challenge intended to award £20 million for one new team every five years – the biggest awards ever funded by the charity. But the exceptional quality of research proposals meant four projects were deemed too important not to fund.

Professor Hannon’s virtual reality tumour map was one of those. To build the 3D breast cancer tumour will be an “enormous challenge” he said, but would lead to significant advances in the understanding – and thus diagnosis, treatment and management – of cancer.

“Cells communicate with each other in ways that we really don’t yet capture with any technology that we have developed so far. But with our project, we hope to change that,” he said.

Scientists will be able ‘walk into’ the 3D tumour using virtual reality and then...
Professor Hannon explained this “Superman mode”:

“It literally lets you fly inside a tumour, point at every cell, know exactly what kind of cell it is, know what it’s doing, who it is talking to, and what it is saying to them. By doing this, we could learn more about tumours and begin to answer questions that have eluded cancer scientists for many years.”

By developing an entirely new way to study breast cancer, the team hope to change how the disease is diagnosed, treated and managed. Ultimately, it could improve how women with breast and other types of cancer are classified, which would improve their treatment and help more people survive the disease.

“Scientists will be able to ‘walk into’ the 3D tumour using virtual reality and then examine its workings in unprecedented detail.”

Cutting edge it may be, but Professor Hannon says he conceived the idea when using old-fashioned technology – on a bicycle – and refined the project with colleagues in the very traditional surroundings of Trinity’s Old Combination Room.
From the ‘smiling crocodile’ in Zimbabwe to Junior Bursar of Trinity College

During his interview for the post of Junior Bursar ten years ago, Rod Pullen was asked how he would respond to the differing opinions, on matters large and small, of Trinity’s 180 Fellows. “In my last job I dealt with Robert Mugabe, so I think I can manage to work with the Fellowship of Trinity,” the former British Ambassador to Zimbabwe replied.

In Zimbabwe, the government controlled media called Dr Pullen ‘the smiling crocodile’, so assiduous was his attendance at state functions, visits to local Zanu PF party offices and undaunted cordiality. Meanwhile, privately, he spoke his mind to key contacts, although always, he says, non-confrontationally.

“It was professional diplomacy as it used to be practised, rather than the megaphone diplomacy of today,” he recalls.

With 30 years’ experience in nine countries across four continents, Dr Pullen could be forgiven for thinking that life at a Cambridge college would be relatively straightforward. As it turned out, little prepared him for the world of acadernia – and in particular for life at Trinity College.

“The academic mindset was totally alien. Instead of negotiating and seeking common ground, it’s all about enhancing your personal profile and virtually never agreeing, as fresh ideas and discoveries are prized. It makes for stimulating debate but it can be... challenging when trying to reach decisions on practical matters,” he says, ever the diplomat.

However, during Dr Pullen’s 10-year tenure at Trinity, things have changed significantly, from major renovations of buildings to a proper staffing structure and improved coordination between departments.

Therein lie his diplomatic skills, honed not just in Zimbabwe but as Deputy High Commissioner in Kenya and Nigeria, High Commissioner to Ghana, and Special Representative in Sudan, not to mention Acting High Commissioner in Fiji during a coup in which his wife was taken hostage. In fact, he says, a senior diplomat answers not to one person but to the whole of Whitehall, so the FCO
was, in some ways, excellent training for Trinity’s 180 ‘bosses’.

“How do you get things done in this College? Slowly and subtly, choosing your moments carefully. It is all about personal relationships, understanding your opponents and enthusing your allies. And you absolutely must have a sense of humour at all times.”

Dr Pullen has overseen major and sometimes controversial projects at the College, from the remodelled Porters Lodge and refurbished Chapel interior, to the major renovation of New Court and the glinting modern kitchens below Trinity’s historic dining hall.

For the most part Dr Pullen is cordial, even benign. But he can be outspoken and – perhaps surprisingly for an ex-diplomat – wonderfully indiscreet, and not only about others. When looking to return to the UK from the whirl of foreign postings, the former Ambassador to Zimbabwe certainly wasn’t contemplating a step down.

“Junior?...I don’t think so”, he told the recruitment agency. After they explained the seniority of the role and how it would play to his diplomatic skills, Dr Pullen took more notice.

“It offered a fresh context and challenges but with a level of autonomy and responsibility I felt comfortable with. I would not have been interested in being the Domestic Bursar of another college.”

Unlike other colleges, the Junior and Senior Bursars of Trinity are independent, each with his (there has never been a her) own remit, staff, and position on Council, the College’s governing body.

You still get the sense Dr Pullen’s previous career isn’t fully understood at Trinity. In the rarefied atmosphere at High Table, what often counts is a particular sort of cleverness – less the emotional intelligence and persuasive negotiation vital to securing Britain’s interests, and more the in-depth knowledge of a field, combined with inventive thinking, which can break new ground.

And Dr Pullen understands that. He has a PhD in Protein Crystallography but recognised early on that he was more suited to the scope and pace of diplomacy than academia.

“The academic mindset was totally alien. Instead of negotiating and seeking common ground, it’s all about enhancing your personal profile and virtually never agreeing, as fresh ideas and discoveries are prized. It makes for stimulating debate but it can be ... challenging when trying to reach decisions on practical matters…”

After three decades at the FCO, and increasingly disenchanted with “targets and metrics, process not substance,” he turned his skill in representing the UK’s interests to those of students, Fellows and staff at Trinity.

“Trinity spends wisely its wealth earned outside the College curtilage to create an extraordinary environment within the College of intellectual, financial and practical support in which extraordinary people can achieve extraordinary things,” he says.

“The job of the Junior Bursar is to help ensure that this unique environment functions efficiently and I would like to think I have done that effectively in partnership with the 350 dedicated staff here.”

His time at Trinity has not only been rewarding but “a breath of fresh air. I learned and embraced Trinity’s ethos that if something is worth doing, it is worth doing well,” he says.

Now retired as Junior Bursar, Dr Pullen remains at the College, joining Trinity’s Fellows for life. Doubtless the ‘smiling crocodile’ will remain cordial but nevertheless always speak frankly.
Alumni Events: what you said

Golf Day – 24th June
Royal Worlington Golf Club

“A perfect day with a lot of care and attention shown by the College organisers. The meal in College was great. Thank you.”

TrinTalk: Art and Fear
TrinTalk: Art and Fear – 25th September
Trinity College

“Thank you for a wonderful and thought-provoking day yesterday. I was thoroughly absorbed by the presentations and particularly enjoyed the opportunity to talk to the speakers and other guests. Lunch was delicious! Please congratulate your team on a fantastic day.”

TBCA’s latest guest at one of their speaker series events was Simon Fox, CEO of Trinity Mirror Group. He gave a fascinating talk, focusing on the digitalisation of media, both in the context of newspapers and in his previous experiences as CEO of HMV. There were many insightful questions from the audience, which contained Trinity alumni from a wide range of backgrounds. The talk continued a recent theme of media personalities that has featured David Abraham (CEO of Channel 4), Nicholas Coleridge (President of Condé Nast), and Geordie Greig (Editor of The Mail on Sunday).

Trinity Golf Day
Wednesday 7 June 2017
Hankley

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