Donor Report | 2021

‘My Churchill 2020’ Photography Competition – Highly Commended, by Ramit Debnath (G18)
In the last report, I was pleased to announce our ambitious new fundraising campaign would launch in 2020 as the 60th anniversary of the College. Of course, as I have subsequently written now to donors and all members of the College, 2020 will now be known to all as the year of the coronavirus pandemic.

The changes to our way of life in College and throughout society wrought by the Covid-19 crisis have been substantial. We had to send students home in March last year, and were pleased when they were able to come back in late September for the new academic year, but as I now write we are facing the challenge of another lockdown in the UK and few students are on site (about one quarter of the usual number). Throughout the pandemic the determination and fortitude of our alumni and donor community in a number of ways has been demonstrated. So our 60th anniversary year did not start as we had hoped.

First of all, when the pandemic crisis hit we, in common with other Colleges, had to take drastic action to minimise expenditure. We furloughed many staff, using the UK government’s business support scheme, but topped the Government’s 80% contribution up to 100% to ensure that staff did not suffer. Inevitably, this placed an additional burden on our finances. It meant we were able to give staff security and they all adapted well to these extraordinary circumstances. I am deeply grateful to those teams who worked through the lockdown to support the students who had to remain on site.

Nevertheless, the majority of students left, and as the College lost its rental and conference income, we launched our Covid-19 contingency fund to support our students who had more hardship needs due to unforeseen technology and transport costs, and provide enough funding to support pastoral and mental health support. In common with the rest of the community, many of our students have suffered from loss of income or parental income, more mental health challenges and isolation. This has had a knock on effect on the amount of support the College needed to provide.

We were delighted that the College community rose to this challenge, and within six weeks, we had raised over £250,000 not including matching funding, from alumni and donors for the Covid-19 contingency fund. Over £50,000 was contributed by the Fellowship and College leadership.

Secondly, alongside the pandemic the world saw the mass protests sparked by the death of George Floyd at the hands of police in the US, which built on the existing Black Lives Matter movement. Our entire community has its part to play in tackling racism and injustice across the board. We have set up an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (with staff, student and Fellowship membership and which I chair) within the College to ensure our internal actions and policies are appropriate across the College for all the different protected characteristics. It is a source of pride that this academic year, for the first time, we had a 50:50 gender mix in our undergraduate admissions, down to some seriously hard work by the Admissions team.

The College’s very name is problematic for some, although for many others Churchill remains a hero. Family background and experiences, going back generations, will colour our perspectives and it can be hard to remain truly objective. He was a determined anti-fascist, his actions saved the lives of many across Western Europe, including many Jews, but his attitudes and record – like that of most historic figures – in other spheres and other parts of the world can be critically assessed.
The British Empire and foundation of the Commonwealth are intrinsically linked to the foundation of this College, as a memorial to Sir Winston. Therefore, we are reflecting on this with a series of debates on Churchill and his legacy. The most recent event in this ongoing series exploring Churchill, Empire and Race, addressed some of these difficult issues head on. I believe we should not shy away from discussing the many-faceted aspects of Churchill’s character, painful though some aspects may be. The event held in February received much attention from different directions, and was also the focus of a ‘rebuttal’ in a Policy Exchange paper. Recognizing that those whose families lived in what was then ‘Empire’ may have a very different perspective on Churchill’s actions compared with those whose familial backgrounds are firmly based in Europe, consensus is unlikely to be achieved. Nevertheless, all aspects must be borne in mind if future generations of students, whatever their backgrounds and whatever their ethnicities, are to feel respected and welcome here. We regret how difficult these discussions are, but are committed to our role in ensuring they take place and inform our future. The series will continue next term.

This College has always been proud of the way it has been open to students from a very wide range of backgrounds. However, we are aware that there is still a way to go in opening up to all who can benefit. Conscious of this the College has just launched fundraising to support students from Black British backgrounds with a new student support fund for both undergraduates and postgraduates. Additionally we have already secured funding from a generous donor to fund a black student from Southern Africa and are raising funds – in memory of former Fellow in Chemistry Professor Stuart Warren – for a postgraduate student from the same part of the world to come to the College to study chemistry.

Finally, despite not being able to celebrate many events in person since March 2020 thanks to Covid, we did hold many events online and launched our Think Forward campaign and new website, with a view to having a live launch when that finally becomes possible. To date we are delighted that the campaign has raised over £4 million, even in the circumstances we currently find ourselves in – the majority being for the support of our students or the endowment.

This brings me to probably the greatest need we encounter – to bolster our endowment, which is the main focus of Think Forward. In order to continue to provide the very best education for our students and support future research and innovation, we must continue to grow our endowed funds. We have only been able to weather this crisis thanks to the foresight of our original Fellowship, generosity of our benefactors and wise financial management of the College. Our Think Forward campaign is very much focused on these aims, and we continue to innovate as much as possible and further learning and research in science and society as part of our campaign priorities.

During this pandemic we were delighted that our one ‘in person’ event was a very special one – the admission of Michael Cowan (U70), our most generous alumni benefactor, as a Winston Churchill Fellow of the College. This was marked by Michael planting a Metasequoia Glyptostroboides in the grounds near the archives centre and his wife Hilary planting a Cercis Reniformis near to Cowan Court.

As the College, Cambridge and the world comes out of the pandemic crisis we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible, and launching our Think Forward campaign with events to supplement our online offerings as soon as that becomes possible. In the meantime, I hope you remain safe and well. Thank you for all your ongoing support during these difficult times.

Professor Dame Athene Donald DBE, FRS
(Master of Churchill College)
College Finances
July 2019 – June 2020

The College was impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and was closed from mid-March 2020. Although over 100 students remained in residence throughout, the pandemic meant that the majority of students were not in residence in College during Easter Term 2020 and 70% of non-academic staff were furloughed. Fortunately, the College’s conference business during summer 2019 was very successful. This, together with donations and profits from the Møller Institute has helped to mitigate the financial effect of the spring lockdown.

During the ‘lockdown’ period the College continued to support teaching and research of our 845 students by providing online teaching and examination assessment to all of its students. The University and the colleges have worked collaboratively since the start of the pandemic with joint planning and subsequent recovery streams.

This included sharing resources over student support, medical advice and scenario planning.

Donations

In an unprecedented year the College was heartened by the generous support of alumni and friends over the last year and a total of £4 million was raised, a similar figure to the previous year. A total of 1990 donors made a gift for which we are hugely appreciative. This was an increase of 186 donors on the previous year and we hope we can continue to grow our number of supporters again next year.
£444k for student bursaries

£15k travel and conference grants to postgraduates

£11k on travel grants to undergraduates

19 students received a Winston Churchill Top-Up Bursary in addition to a Cambridge Bursary

21 clubs and societies received funding

£582k for postgraduate studentships

£27k for undergraduate scholarships and prizes

100 undergraduate students received a Cambridge Bursary

£11k on travel grants to undergraduates

£22k for hardship grants to postgraduates

Investment Performance

The College’s Amalgamated Investment Fund (AIF), which makes up over 90% of the College’s investments, delivered a total return of -1.0% compared with +7.2% the previous year. This reflects the downturn in the world economy and investment valuations as a result of the Covid-19. The return compares favourably with the College’s benchmark return for 2019/20 of -3.9%. £1.5m new funds were invested in the Amalgamated Investment Fund during the year, made up of new donations and unspent income held in restricted funds.

The most significant variation between 2019/20 and 2018/19 is the valuation of the College’s investments. The value fell by £3.1m in 2019/20 compared with a gain of £6m in 2018/19. The portfolio was performing well until the Covid-19 pandemic affected share valuations across the World. The valuations have increased slightly since the year end and the College’s portfolio continues to perform satisfactorily against its own and standard benchmarks.
How has your money been spent?

Student Support

The College spent a total of £1.1 million on student support in 2019-20, a similar level to the previous year. Undergraduate support remained at about £500,000 but we saw an increase in postgraduate support to £620,000 from the previous year of £594,000.

Capital Expenditure

The College spent more (including staff costs) on repairing and maintaining its operational buildings and grounds this year (£1.6 million) and a further £2.1 million was capitalised. Most of the capital expenditure was on buildings.

Major projects undertaken in 2019/20 included:

- upgrading library heating
- replacing the library/Wolfson Hall roof
- replacement of dining hall roof
- the rewiring and refurbishment of two staircases – 48 &52
- IT transformation project

Archives Centre

The Archives Centre was closed for two months for a major refurbishment comprising physical improvements to the reading room, reprographics room and storage for newly-acquired papers. A new locker room was created for researchers and the lift to the reading room was replaced. These improvements constituted the most significant upgrade to the Centre’s facilities since 2002 and were funded by private philanthropy.

The Centre had to close again to visitors in March as a result of the pandemic, though a remote service was maintained. New collections were acquired during the year and the work of processing new and existing materials continued, including the production of a published version of the wartime diaries of Churchill’s youngest daughter, Mary Soames.
Donations Received 2019/20

The table below lists the total amount of donations received into some of the funds that can be supported at Churchill.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1977-81 Bursary</td>
<td>£31,518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex Hopkins Memorial Fund</td>
<td>£7,307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Fund</td>
<td>£57,378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boat Club</td>
<td>£49,050</td>
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<tr>
<td>Covid-19 Contingency Fund</td>
<td>£165,708</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foreseeable Hardship Fund</td>
<td>£167,544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends of the Archives Centre</td>
<td>£30,788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern African Bursary</td>
<td>£8,201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Support Fund</td>
<td>£228,399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tizard Opportunities Fund</td>
<td>£5,574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winston Churchill Top-Up Bursary Fund</td>
<td>£115,284</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The main focus for 2020/21 will be to manage the continued impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The primary objective is to continue to offer excellent teaching and research opportunities whilst maintaining the safety of students, Fellows and staff. The College must also ensure that the finances are managed very carefully during an extended period of uncertainty and virtually no commercial activity. However, the College has made significant surpluses during the last 10 years, totalling over £8 million. These reserves, together with tight financial control and the continued support of donors, will enable the College to move forward with confidence.
When the College first went into lockdown in March 2020 all teaching and exams were delivered online and the tutorial team continued to support our students wherever they were in the world. Although students were able to return for the Michaelmas term, this respite was short-lived and students were once again asked not to return to College during lockdown 3, unless they were unable to study from home.

Throughout this period the College has maintained support for the students remaining here and its staff, having furloughed many staff on full pay. However, the impact of the pandemic on the financial stability of the College has been dramatic. The loss of almost all rental and conference income from March to June alone, triggered a 30% drop in income in the 2019/20 academic year.

It was in response to this financial crisis that the College launched a Covid-19 contingency fund in April 2020, to support core College costs such as teaching and pastoral care and to provide urgent support for students facing hardship.

The fund raised £300,000 (including matching) over the summer and has now raised almost £400,000. The impact of having this extra funding has been significant in terms of giving the College capacity to fund more student hardship grants, as well as meeting the increased demand for student bursaries as more families face financial uncertainty. It also meant that the College could continue to fund its staff on full-pay throughout the government’s employment retention scheme.

Examples of student hardship during the pandemic:

• Students needing to buy equipment such as laptops to access their remote learning and buy flights at unprecedented high prices in order to travel home safely

• The loss of summer work and internships restricting or preventing the accumulation of financial funds that students would usually expect to be able to use in the next academic year
2020 marked the 60th anniversary of the College receiving its Royal Charter and we chose to mark the occasion by launching our ‘Think Forward’ campaign both to celebrate the achievements of the past and to secure our future, by raising funds for student support and the College’s endowment. The pandemic may have forced us to cancel our plans to meet and celebrate together but we were still able to pick up the phones and connect with our alumni community, and raising money for our key Think Forward funding priorities was the aim of the Telephone Campaign in 2020.

The summer campaign was re-scheduled to run from the 16 September to 4 October, and thirteen Churchill students took to the phones in a socially distanced call room. It was a wonderful opportunity for the students to return to the College site after many months away and share their stories and experiences with a record-breaking 785 alumni, almost half of whom decided to make a gift in support of the campaign. A fantastic £200,000 was pledged over three years – rising to well over £400,000 when longer-term pledges are taken into account. However, thanks to the incredible generosity of our Telephone Campaign match donors the final total raised exceeded £700,000.

The matching pot comprised over £260,000 from an anonymous donor for any gift made during the Telethon to a student-related fund i.e. the Student Support Fund, Graduate Studentship Endowment Fund, Winston Churchill Top-Up Bursary Fund and Covid-19 Contingency Fund, whilst a further £30,000 in matching pledged from an alumni couple for gifts made to the Winston Churchill Top-Up Bursary Fund ensured the Think Forward campaign got off to a fantastic start.

Find out more about the campaign projects: www.thinkforward.chu.cam.ac.uk
Churchill College Rugby Club

‘FURNISHING THE FORTRESS’ CROWDFUNDING APPEAL

Churchill College Rugby Club (CCRFC) which was first established in 1961, launched its first ever crowdfunding appeal in November 2020. The aim of the appeal was to raise £2,000 to enable the purchase of a new set of branded flag and post protectors along with commissioning a double-sided branded scoreboard to be built in-house and shared with Churchill College Football Club. As well as giving their beloved ‘Fortress’ pitch the makeover the club felt it deserved, their appeal also had an over-riding aim of increasing the brand appeal of the club; encouraging new players to join and keeping existing players engaged.

‘Furnishing the Fortress’ ran as a four week crowdfunding project on the College’s ChuBacker crowdfunding website and hit the original £2,000 target within 24 hours of launching! The appeal went on to raise an astonishing £4,451 (excluding gift aid) from 45 donors, and also benefited from an additional major donation of £2,000.

This fantastic level of support has meant there are enough funds for a new honours board, recognising captains back to the club’s foundation as well as the creation of a kit fund that will allow players to buy their shirts from the club without the need for a full new kit order. The funds raised have also helped secure the long-term financial stability of the club by providing a buffer to manage any unforeseen repair or replacement costs as well as providing the potential opportunity of booking larger venues for significant events, such as celebrating the 60th anniversary of the club next year.

Very sadly, it was not possible to hold the Old Boys match this year due to the pandemic but Jack, Jo, Ethan and the rest of the CCRFC committee are very much looking forward to returning to play and walking out onto the newly spruced up ‘Fortress’ pitch as soon as they are able!

‘The response has been staggering and we can’t thank everyone enough for the opportunities they have provided us to improve the club. We are equally thrilled to see how engaged our alumni network is and look forward to ongoing communication and will hopefully see you all in College soon enough!’

The CCRFC Committee: Ethan Carley (U19), Joe Wherry (U19), Jack Salvesen (U18)
The Club was very sad to hear of the passing of Jim Cameron in summer 2020. Jim was the boatman for Churchill College Boat Club for 30 years, and a legend for generations of alumni rowers. He was a master craftsman and could repair all manner of broken boats and blades. Ross Tooley (U17), the current CCBC Overall Captain has written:

‘Churchill were entering the Free Press Head Race and had the idea to row in a 12+! When Jim heard, he threw himself into helping them build it. He took the hulls of two old 8s and spliced them together! As the story goes, the Churchill 12 won the head race against the top college 8s, although I have no idea how they managed to turn the boat around at the start line’.

An obituary of Jim was published in the 2020 Churchill Review but we may have to wait a few more months before a memorial gathering can go ahead due to Covid restrictions.

The women’s side of the club is progressing well, possibly reflecting a large intake of women students (for the first time, 50% of Churchill’s first years are women). W1 won Christmas Head against a field of top crews including Jesus and Queens.

The CCBC OC also writes, regarding Covid-19 rowing:

“Unsurprisingly, there were plenty of new restrictions to get used to. For example, all ergs had to be done outdoors, and I can report that a cold, autumnal evening is a great incentive to pull a little harder. The coxes also had to wear a visor during outings, which was great until a rainy morning rendered all coxes half-blind! So, we invested in some water-repellent spray after that.”

Additionally, thanks in part to a legacy being received from Timothy P F Drake (U71), we have now set up an endowed fund to support rowing, and will try and grow it every year. Our aim is to reach at least £250,000 of endowment which would generate £8,000 per year when invested. The fund will be formally launched this year, which is also the 60th Anniversary since CCBC was founded. We sincerely thank all our donors who enable enjoyment of rowing to continue!

Fran Malarée
CCBC Senior Treasurer
Yasmin Mustafa (U20) is a first year NatSci at Churchill. She plans to specialise in chemistry and is particularly interested in quantum chemistry and quantum computing; ‘I believe the future applications are tremendous and it’s a dream of mine to be included in the cutting-edge research in this field in the future.’ Yasmin is the beneficiary of a Lock Bursary – financial support that lifted a significant burden of worry from herself and her family.

Yasmin is mixed race – English and Sudanese. Most of her high school education was in Sudan, but she’s lived in Wales for the last four years where she attended St Cyres comprehensive state school. Unfortunately, St Cyres did not offer further maths but she secured a full academic scholarship to attend Howells School before coming to Churchill.

Yasmin really loves the College and took long walks with someone in her household nearly daily last term so she really enjoyed her first term despite lockdown restrictions. She also enjoys art, painting and reading. Looking beyond her current studies, Yasmin intends to pursue a masters degree, and hopefully a PhD in computational chemistry to open the door to chemistry research and quantum computing.

“I can’t explain how much I appreciate the bursary as finance at university has always been a worry of mine. My mother is a single mother and hasn’t got the means to support me at university at all. She was worried about my finances and the financial support from the Lock Cambridge Bursary really helped put her at ease as well as allowing me to enjoy my time at Cambridge rather than just pushing through it.”
Faizaan Perviaz

Third Year Engineering student Faizaan Pervaiz (U18) has been fascinated by fast and powerful machines for as long as he can remember. He hugely enjoys learning the fundamental theory that underpins their design and allows engineers to continuously make them more effective; ‘learning about supersonic flight and watching a supersonic flow and shock wave form in a wind tunnel right before my eyes for the very first time was a highlight of the year.’

Faizaan was born and raised in Hyderabad, India and moved with his family to the UK at the age of seven before going on to attend a state secondary school in Gloucester. Since coming to Churchill he has received a Cambridge Bursary and a Winston Churchill Top-Up Bursary. This extra financial support has enabled him to cover his living expenses and focus on academic work whilst also providing him with the ability to make the most of other opportunities available to him; for example, taking part in extra-curricular activities and pursuing career boosting internships.

Faizaan greatly values the community spirit and relaxed atmosphere at Churchill. He has also enjoyed taking part in outreach events to help improve awareness of engineering among young students. Looking ahead, Faizaan hopes to build on his internships to secure a full-time role as a software developer and also aspires to work with fellow engineering students to launch a start-up idea of their own.

The bursaries have supported me in countless ways. Most notably, the financial support has allowed me to complete internships during the last two summers, helping with travel and accommodation costs which I would have otherwise found difficult to cover, and will achieve the same this summer as I undertake a 10-week internship as a software engineer at a London-based financial firm. My previous internships, one at the Bank of England and another at a fintech start-up based in London, were incredibly useful as they helped develop my technical skills and my career in general and are a very strong base for future progression.
The Stuart Warren Studentship Fund

In September 2020 the College launched a fundraising drive in memory of Stuart Warren (1938-2020), one of our longstanding fellows in Chemistry who sadly died earlier that year. Alongside the Chemistry department we wish to provide an opportunity for an outstanding PhD student from sub-Saharan Africa to undertake research in chemistry at Churchill College.

Stuart was a leader in his field and passionate about his subject – he taught generations of Churchill chemistry undergraduates. He was a supervisor and mentor to outstanding academics including Professor Varinder Aggarwal FRS, Professor Jonathan Clayden and Professor Kelly Chibale. His colleagues at Churchill and the Cambridge University Department of Chemistry wanted to honour Stuart’s memory to enable a student from the South African development area countries to come to study for a research degree in organic or physical chemistry at Cambridge.

The Stuart Warren PhD studentship hopes to fully fund a student from Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia or Zimbabwe, which constitute the Southern African development region. This requires approximately £50,000 per year; £29,000 to cover the annual fee for an overseas PhD student, and £21,000 to cover living costs. We aim to raise at least £25,000 per year, or £100,000 over four years for one student to be fully funded, with matching funding from the Cambridge Trust to make up the difference. If this initial fundraising target can be reached, we could be even more ambitious: the endowment required to generate £25,000 annually is at least £625,000 (based on a 4% drawdown), so if we could reach this higher target we could hope to endow the studentship in perpetuity.
So far we have raised over £50,000. We need to raise £90,000 in order to be able to advertise the studentship. All funds are being doubled by the Cambridge Trust.

We are grateful to all our donors who have supported the studentship so far.

“Thank you for providing a way to be able to help to keep the memory of Stuart Warren alive. A wonderful supervisor, lecturer and teacher. I was lucky enough to benefit from his wisdom and knowledge in my time at Churchill.

N Adams (U88)
Many of those who come from disadvantaged backgrounds are extremely creative and great problem solvers, but they can be over-looked or feel the opportunities available are not open to them. I only wish that more funding could be made available so that others like me can access the incredible opportunities available here at Churchill and Cambridge.
Ayanda Mhlongo
CAMBRIDGE TRUST AND CHURCHILL SOUTH AFRICAN STUDENTSHIP HOLDER 2020-21

Ayanda Mhlongo (G20) is from Kwazulu Natal in South Africa and is studying for a one-year MPhil in Multi-disciplinary Gender Studies at Churchill. She is the current holder of the Cambridge Trust and Churchill South African Studentship. The Studentship is joint-funded by the Cambridge Trust and Churchill College and covers course fees and an annual maintenance grant for living expenses.

Ayanda was born at a time when university was not an option for her parents who were both involved in the fight against apartheid. She attended a government high school with forty in each class, with very limited resources, and it was often a struggle to pay the fees. She vividly recalls going to school hungry and learnt how to fast to concentrate when she experienced hunger.

Driven by a deep motivation to escape poverty, Ayanda secured a scholarship at the University of Cape Town and achieved a distinction for her BA in Social Sciences and an MA in social development before arriving at Churchill in October 2020. Her MPhil course has a taught element but it is through her research focus of understanding menstrual management and period poverty within the refugee population that Ayanda plans to make a lasting difference.

Ayanda loves the peace and calm of the College site and the people she has met thus far. She can’t wait to explore Cambridge more widely and very much hopes to continue on with a PhD at Churchill in the future. Above all, she is driven to succeed by the trauma of not wanting to experience deprivation and a strong desire to help others.

Read Ayanda’s full story: www.thinkforward.chu.cam.ac.uk/people/ayanda-mhlongo

“Firstly, this studentship will not only be helpful for me – it will also benefit other women whose voices are not heard. Secondly, it will provide me with the opportunity to sharpen my skills and knowledge and meet people who can help me be the ground breaker and leader that I aspire to be."
James Brown Kinsella
SIMON HENRY STUDENTSHIP HOLDER 2020-21

James Brown Kinsella (G20) is from a small, rural community in upstate New York and is currently undertaking an MPhil in Asian & Middle Eastern Studies at Churchill College. His research focus is classical Chinese with a particular interest in the philosophical significance of music.

James first developed an interest in philosophy whilst at Princeton studying liberal arts. The courses he took kindled a growing fascination with Chinese philosophy and he went on to spend a summer in China studying the language. After Princeton, James won a prestigious fellowship at the Yenching Academy of Peking University, where he studied early Chinese philosophy in an interdisciplinary, contemporary, and Chinese context.

Eager to continue with his studies in the field, James was attracted to apply for the MPhil course at Churchill because of the funding opportunity it offered via the Simon Henry Studentship. The fees for his course alone are £27,000 so he was delighted when he was awarded the Studentship which provides funding of £25,000, the majority of which comes from a donation from Churchill alumnus Simon Henry (U79).

James lives in accommodation on-site and has enjoyed bonding with the other postgraduate students in his bubble, who come from all over the globe. He has also kept busy as an Alto choral volunteer with Jesus College choir.

Looking ahead to beyond his current studies, James is applying for a PhD in Chinese Philosophy and ultimately hopes ‘to introduce the next generation of Western leaders to the next global superpower’s influential ideas; and through collaboration, to draw Chinese and Western scholars together as our leaders drive us apart.’

Read James’ full story:
www.thinkforward.chu.cam.ac.uk/people/james-brown-kinsella

“Coming to Churchill would not have been an option without the Simon Henry Studentship due to the paucity of funding available for MPhil courses. I am very grateful to have been given the chance to pursue my dreams and fill in the holes remaining in my education in Chinese Culture as the final stepping stone to a PhD.”
Elre Oldewage

SCHLUMBERGER STUDENTSHIP HOLDER 2018/19 ONWARDS

Elre Oldewage (G18) is from Victoria, South Africa and is in the third year of her PhD in the Engineering Department, researching ‘protecting machine learning systems from adversarial attacks’. An interest in computer science runs in Elre’s family – her grandfather ran a pioneering programming school – but her school didn’t offer Computer Science as an option. Undeterred, Elre found an after-school club in a different neighbourhood and went on to complete a Computer Science degree at Pretoria University.

Computer Science struggles with gender imbalance in South Africa, just as it does elsewhere, including the UK. When Elre started her UG course a quarter of the intake were female but this figure dropped to 14% by the time she graduated. Her dream was to continue her studies overseas and she was overjoyed when she was awarded the Schlumberger Studentship to take up her PhD studies at Churchill. As an overseas student it would have cost £92,000 to fund three years of her PhD – but the Studentship funding covers Elre’s course fees and maintenance costs. She lives on-site in the Wolfson Flats with her partner, who works from home as a programmer. Having now been at the College for several years, she is in no doubt about the incredible opportunity this funding has provided.

Elre has aspirations to help combat the inequality that exists, both in her field and in her country and she would love to help develop programmes that challenge diversity and open doors.

Read Elre’s full story:
www.thinkforward.chu.cam.ac.uk/people/elre-oldewage

“Without the Studentship there is no way I would ever have been able to experience the incredible opportunities for learning and development that have been open to me since coming to Churchill. It is particularly mind-boggling that I am regularly able to speak to people at the forefront of the field. For example, I found myself casually talking to someone who was a key figure in the development of fibre-optics at an event run by ChuEng, Churchill College’s Engineering Society.”
Leaving a Legacy to the College

Creating a Will can often feel like a daunting prospect but it can be an opportunity to reflect on your life as well as thinking of how you can make a difference to the future.

With so many options emerging to make a Will, from online providers or the more traditional format direct with a solicitor, the process itself need not be so intimidating.

Many alumni have already made the decision to support the College with a gift in their Will, and for this we are extremely grateful. To date we have been notified of over 130 planned gifts that range in size, with each gift having the potential to make a real difference. The income stream from legacies is becoming more vital to the College and in the last financial year we received a total of £694,500 for a variety of funds including capital projects and student support.

In 2006 we established the Winston S. Churchill 1958 College Society to thank all individuals who pledge, or indicate that they will give, a gift in their Will to the College. We hold an annual event to celebrate these planned gifts.
The process of making a Will inevitably leads to reflection on life so far: which experiences provided the greatest benefits and most important influences? Several stages of my education were significant, but my time at Cambridge is the stage I would most regret having missed and therefore the one I would most wish others to experience.

I have rose-tinted memories of the week I spent deliberating the details of my Will. Everyone was so nice to me. But not everyone I contacted was efficient in following up my request for information. The Development Office at Churchill was superb at explaining procedure and also providing details of their various Appeals. Reading the stories of students who have benefitted from the Student Hardship Fund, Winston Churchill Top-up Bursary and Palestinian Scholarship was inspiring. I recommend this to anyone considering making a legacy. Feeling connected to the current generation of students at Churchill was a strong motivator to provide in my Will for the needs of future generations.

R Stott (U87)
Looking forward

We are pleased that thanks to fantastic alumni support, over £4 million has been raised for the Think Forward campaign so far. As previously noted, we had substantial support to mitigate against the economic effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. This year, as we hope to leave the worst of the pandemic behind, our priorities focus on continuing to support students who have been very badly affected by the crisis.

Student Support Fund

This fund supports all students who have financial difficulty – both undergraduates, whose bursary support is means-tested and postgraduates facing hardship. The University and Colleges are also expanding the Cambridge Bursary scheme for undergraduates, so that there is an extra amount given to students who have indicators of deprivation, such as needing Free School meals. Those in middle-income households will get smaller amounts of additional support. This is being underwritten by a central fund for one year, but thereafter Colleges will need to pay for the extra provision from their own resources. Churchill has a larger number of students who will be eligible under both categories, therefore it will need to find an extra £50,000 per year to fund the extension of the scheme.

The student support fund is also used to support postgraduate hardship, which we anticipate will increase because many PhDs have had to extend their studies due to having to travel home during the pandemic.

All donations to this fund (or the other student support needs) will also release matching for the Harding Intercollegiate fund, which funds a central University fund for student support matched by David and Claudia Harding. Therefore, donations by lapsed or new donors to the fund will help students at Churchill and across collegiate Cambridge.
The Black Students’ Support Fund

Recognizing that Black British students of African and African-Caribbean heritage are underrepresented at Churchill, we are fundraising for a support fund to provide a bursary and more funding for MPhil students from this group. This support will be provided for those home (UK) registered students of this background and support will be means-tested according to Student Finance data, as it is for the other bursary funds for undergraduates.

Postgraduate Support

Churchill continues to support students who wish to continue to a master’s or PhD but who do not have private sources of income to fund their studies. In this report you can read about various named funds that are already helping students to become future academic leaders. Our future thinking is enriched by different perspectives, but in certain subjects postgraduate study is becoming unreachable to all but the privileged. To continue to offer the opportunity to research to the brightest and best, regardless of financial constraints, is an important part of our mission.

The Creative Hub

Due to Covid-19 we had to postpone our launch event for the Creative Hub, our interdisciplinary space for collaboration which will be housed in the former boiler room. We plan to relaunch the fund to convert the space within the next year and are fundraising to endow the posts associated with running the hub.

The Wellbeing and Mental Health Fund

This new fund will support counselling hours for students as there has been an increased demand for mental health support, made more acute by the effects of Covid-19. The fund will also help to cover other forms of support for wellbeing such as information sessions and training for Fellows and staff who support mental health within College.

The Think Forward Fund

The Think Forward fund is our unrestricted funding, which may be used for any College purpose, or added to the unrestricted endowment. This funding will enable Churchill to help weather any future storms. The current crisis has shown the immense value of the endowment fund to continue producing income when funding from student rents or conference income is affected.

Sixty years ago, the College was founded with the vision to contribute to innovation, knowledge and research in science and society and to make the world a better place. In these uncertain times, where we face crises in society and the climate crisis, the need to educate the next generation of scientists, artists, engineers, innovators, educators, policy-makers and journalists is stronger than ever. Your support will enable us to continue to provide the best education in the world, to open minds to new ideas, and to Think Forward.