‘I trust and believe that this College, this seed that we have sown, will grow to shelter and nurture generations who may add most notably to the strength and happiness of our people, and to the knowledge and peaceful progress of the world. “The mighty oak from an acorn towers; A tiny seed can fill a field with flowers”.’

Winston Churchill, 17 October 1959
The front of the College in May 1993.
Credit Nick Denbow (U64).
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This year 2020 was indeed both unusual and special in more ways than one.

Unusual because the COVID pandemic turned our world upside down. People had to isolate in their homes, unable to see family and friends – even when, gravely ill or dying on hospital wards, they were in most need of a familiar face, a comforting word, an encouraging smile – unable to go to work or unable to study. Our students left Churchill to go back home – whether in the UK or abroad. Churchill College looked like a ghost town with only a few international students unable to return to their home countries because of the closing down of borders.

Unusual also because following the death of George Floyd on 25 May 2020 in Minneapolis, under the restraining knee of a police officer, millions of people – black and white – took to the streets on every continent all over the world to protest at the harsh and unjust treatment of Black people by the police in particular and society in general under the slogan of Black Lives Matter.

Special because during the pandemic, people showed solidarity, empathy and togetherness by helping and looking after one another, caring for the most vulnerable and clapping enthusiastically every Thursday at 8pm to thank the NHS and Key Workers for the tremendous professionalism and humanity they showed in for example tending to patients or delivering parcels while often putting themselves at risk.

And very special for Churchilians because 2020 marks the 60th anniversary of the founding of College, to which this special edition of the Churchill Review is dedicated.

John Kinsella opens the Looking Back section with an affectionate vision of the College through its gardens in his poem, ‘Eclogue of Churchill College Gardens’. This is followed by Archie Howie Looking Back at the Creation of Churchill College and Mark Goldie asking the question, What did Churchill College not achieve? Richard Partington, fittingly as Senior Tutor, in his piece, Fighting for Excellence, argues that excellence at Churchill has its roots in the College’s foundation and especially its very strong sense of mission.
while Jonathan Padley, our Admissions Tutor, in Looking Forward assures us that Applicants are in the top two percentiles of ability and achievement and reaffirms Churchill's commitment to diversity in terms of race, gender and socio-economic background. Marcial Echenique jogs our memory in Building in Harmony by describing the constant evolution, adaptation and change of Churchill College. Tim Cribb, for his part, in Memory Theatre reminds us of the rich cultural life the College has always enjoyed and asserts that – despite its statutory 70% bias towards the Sciences – there is no problem of two cultures in Churchill. Barry Phipps, our Curator of Works of Art, vividly describes the many wonderful works of art we have in College that makes Churchill a truly modern College in his piece, A Commitment to Modernity. Ewan Campbell, our Director of Music Making, confirms that Music is Present in Everyday Life at Churchill and Paula Laycock takes us down memory lane of sixty years of grounds and gardens at Churchill in her piece Breathing New Life in Testing Times. Allen Packwood, the Director of the Archives Centre, muses that – despite holding the archives of three Prime Ministers as well as thirteen Nobel Prize winners – the Archives Centre may be best known for its Unsmoked Churchill Cigars and Mock Croc Thatcher Handbag. Gillian Secrett in Reflecting on the Last 22 Years at Møller outlines with pride tinged with melancholy The Møller Institute’s Contribution to the College’s 60 years. And finally, Fran Malarée tells us of the work of the Development Office in its contribution to the College’s 60 years.

In the Reminiscences Section, undergraduates and postgraduates of the last six decades reminisce about their times at Churchill. Peter Clarke (U61) tells us how much he enjoyed his time at Churchill both academically and socially, while Rosie Johnston (U73) remembers that the 70s were times of huge social change in the country and says how much she appreciated the friendliness and generosity of everyone at Churchill. Helen Mulligan (G81) recounts a particularly funny story about a cask of ale brought back to College with unforeseen consequences. Rick Warden (U90) recounts the love he feels for Churchill, and how cool Churchill is perhaps without knowing it! Kevin Tang (U06) tells us how he moved from Engineering to Linguistics and how he now tries to instil the very Churchillian values – that served him well – in his own students. And Tamara Williams (U11) closes this section by describing what is so special about Churchill and how Churchill with its guidance, support and encouragement made her achieve her potential.
From the above pieces it is clear that Churchill values – academic excellence, gender, race or socio-economic diversity and student care and support – are at the roots of the College’s foundation and are today more than ever at the core of the College’s decisions and activities.

I wish to take this opportunity to say how proud I am to be a part of this Churchill community.

I would like to thank Paula Laycock wholeheartedly for the tremendous work she has put in finding the photos or taking them for this special edition of the Review.

Anny King
‘It is wonderful what great strides can be made when there is a resolute purpose behind them.’

*Winston Churchill, 7 May 1947*
The College is proud to have reached this milestone: sixty years of transformative education and a strong, forward-looking community of students, fellows and staff, past and present.

In this special edition of the Review we celebrate all we have been and what has made the College the vibrant community that it continues to be. This is of course also a time to look forward, however impeded we are by the current restrictions imposed by the pandemic.

What will the College become in the next sixty years? We need constantly to reinvigorate our thinking to ensure we stay at the cutting-edge. Many talented sections of the community may feel that a Cambridge college is not the place for them. It must remain a key priority for Churchill to ensure that they see our College as relevant and a place to which they can aspire.

We are proud of what we have done to widen participation but the challenges in this space simply grow, as inequality – at least in the UK – seems to grow not shrink. We must never be complacent, but we look forward to the next sixty years with confidence and enthusiasm.
LOOKING BACK

First Advanced Students, 1960, CCPH/2/02

The Sheppard Flats

Cowan Court in 2019

UG matriculation, 2019
‘This is the lesson: never give in, never give in, never, never — in nothing, great or small, large or petty — never give in except to convictions of honour and good sense. Never yield to force; never yield to the apparently overwhelming might of the enemy.’

Winston Churchill, 29 October 1941
Eclogue of Churchill College Gardens
A Poem by John Kinsella

Professor John Kinsella, a poet and a Churchill Fellow, celebrates 60 years of Churchill College with this pastoral poem which gives us his affectionate vision of the College through its gardens, which for John, show the spirit of learning and engagement in the College in all its complexities.

A small drama a masque in the gardens —
so many scents have been absorbed,
so many de-wintering tree-limbs trembling
as we pass, whisper, shout — playing
out other lives as we make our
own lives in community — differences
and similarities, breaking spring bread
while challenging cosmologies — instances
of art out of science, science
out of art — the chemical composition
of paints, of swirls in landscape in representation
in the note-taking of musical interludes —
this astronomy this deepest space
of presence, where garden paths
guide us on walks of meditation,
pragmatics, personal distress, peace.

To have raised a child or children
in college is to see its grounds as
illumination and safety, as boundaries
and unravelling possibilities — colours,
fragrances, stories attached to each tree
to new beds and topiaries, to the moments
of wildness amongst the regulation —
all interactive, holding time and letting it free.
It takes a storm to immerse me — those troublings of limbs and roots, of design and care, the plannings ahead that can never fully take in what might be. But that's the wonder of growth carrying us upwards — the oak that urges towards agelessness, the elms that survive the disease, new gardens of contemplation and century-old fruit trees that still yield an abundance. John, the head gardener, always encourages us when we're in college at the time fruit is ripe and falling to gather all we can, and we do, and stewed it drifts out through thin-banded windows into courtyards, softening brutal edges to show what knowledge of plant and world can effectuate — share, increase while not depriving, the societies of blue tits and great tits, robins sticking like blackbirds to the changes in borders, the sunbursts from daffodils in the arboretum the orchids sweating the cold the jay we saw on first arrival denying ghosts in the silver birch saying it's all life here, this is living material this is every season and setting to come and all that have passed
are alive in this reaching up
as well — feather to branch, leaf
to claw, bark to skin; those brief
conversations had in crossing:

Archie, half-off half-on
his bike, saying, Haven’t seen
you for a while, like under-
statement, George talking

the glory of pigeons — outliers
on the playing fields, a skier
pushing along horizontal
after a blanketing, saying,

Don’t get the chance to travel
like this very often… with roughly
a mathematical certainty
it's worth memorising.

Or the librarian who is a swimmer
talking of the summer annuals
raging along the path’s borders,
and roses that know time

in ways the labs only wish
in all their precision, commitment,
systemising. Tim, Alison… remember… etc. Days spent
just staring at a bee orchid

as the sun has risen and stilled
and dipped, looking for answers —
a curl of the lip, a wink of the eye, a stir
of dark matter, an ability to interact with each

wing that alights, and no one
finding such immersion strange.
Like positioning to watch sky
as sky and something that changes

LOOKING BACK

15
though the mouth-eye of the ‘Four Square (Walk Through)’ and I do, I do. As I did when hedgehogs were more frequently seen, and squirrels

helped us save our responses by storing up, walking up to the observatories, embracing the Wellingtonia as witness,

or back on ‘homeground’, memories of seasons caught in chapel windows the endless diffuse light of drawing in, spectral, aspiring ecumenical. Testimonies?

There’s no easily separating shapes — if we do, we only have landscape and not the wonder that comes of nature’s taking over — it’s testament we care about in making, in collaboration (collusion?), as we do breathing and seeing and hearing the sounds of growth of habitation, the touch of a tulip-tree flower is a pleasure and a tremor of what it is to lose such moments, memories, prospects, and all the senses opened we can’t identify in a study, but know are present.

We come and go, though sometimes have been there for long stretches, and that’s when the owl call settles inside us, and we fall

into a responsibility that sits heavy on those who watch over such grounds — respite, sanctuary, demands for
owl-space for qualities
of tones and systems,
for rhizome and crowns
of tall trees over the grasses,

for the secrets amongst the pleaches,
for the smallest and largest creatures,
for carapaces and wings and fur,
for the nightlight and the mirrors

those spirits we rely on
whether we know it or not,
whether they appear in our research,
occupy corners in every garden.

I have heard poetry read in Farsi,
I have heard notes on a harpsichord
outside of the range of ‘tradition’,
I have heard Yehudi Menuhin talking

of playing when not playing, I have spoken
of Guyanese vegetation with Wilson Harris while eating my greens, I have seen
a hawk tear the sky and vanish to reappear

over the apex of the Møller Centre tower,
I have felt the warmth of hope flow
in cold concrete, I have celebrated friendship,
sci-fi, travel, and surfing with the porters.

All voices of difference
around the courtyards — sculptures
speaking and Bridget Riley’s greys proliferating
universal structures — universes —

forming a nexus of growth
even out of shadows — an oath
to let the bloom have its say,
to give each life a way through. Its way.
Creating a College
Looking Back at the Creation of Churchill College and Looking Forward

Professor Archie Howie has been a Fellow of Churchill since its foundation and has been a player in its many successes and an astute observer of its occasional stumbles. In this piece Archie reflects on where we have been and where we might go.

This was the sweeping topic which Mike Gregory, our energetic new SCR President, wanted me to address in a post prandial talk back in late January. It proved easier to adhere to my own less demanding title ‘Then and Now’ and so fortunately I may have ducked the ridicule falling on a seer who failed to appreciate the impending impact of COVID! Here, following the dramatic experience of recent months, I can select and develop some of the themes.

Early key appointments

Sir John Cockcroft, Master 1959–67

Professor John Morrison, Vice-Master and Senior Tutor 1960–65

Major-General Jack Hamilton, Bursar 1959–72

Dick Tizard, Senior Tutor 1965–75

The College started in the hands of Trustees who made the early appointments of Sir John Cockcroft as Master, John Morrison to transfer as Senior Tutor from Trinity as a sheet anchor, and Major General Jack Hamilton as Bursar. Teaching Fellows in key subjects were similarly recruited mostly on the grapevine system but proved remarkably successful. The appointment of Dick Tizard, our first engineer, with a link to the Master but not to the University Department was controversial. Later, however, he proved to be the most reforming Senior Tutor in Cambridge and a driving force in the admission of women.
Donations, initiatives and ideas

The early funding as well as more recent major donations such as those from Maersk Mc-Kinney Møller and Clive Cohen had massive impact on the development of the College, but there is still scope for other initiatives. Tizard’s College career is a prime example of how significant changes can be achieved by any member with a good idea and enough understanding of the system to drive it forward. Andrew Tristram, mentored in these skills by Tizard, shrewdly persuaded the Governing Body to rectify a vital missing element in the Møller Centre building by stumping up funds for the Study Centre. More innate skills enabled John Killen as a ‘mere’ JRF and Librarian to generate the solution to the ‘Chapel problem’ and to convince the influential Jock Colville of the merits of Stephen Roskill’s idea that the Archive could extend beyond the purely Churchill collection.

The MCR ‘Conference on Everything’ is an even more remarkable bottom-up innovation tackling the long-standing problem of what in addition to meals and accommodation a College can offer its graduate students.

Changing times

For undergraduate teaching, the College mission has generally seemed pretty clear but has nevertheless been changed enormously.

In 1961 the 18 Teaching Fellows, mostly with career grade University Lectureships, could handsomely supplement their salary of perhaps £2,000 p.a. with a College stipend for 120 hours of supervision. Incidentally, three or so years of these earnings could buy a house on Huntingdon Road! Reference to the situation a century or so earlier provides an even more striking picture of changing times. Maths teachers then, privately coaching would-be wranglers, could earn annual fees of £70,000 at today’s rates. With most University
Lecturers now getting swift promotion to Readerships and Professorships, Churchill’s massive teaching programme now partly depends on 16 Teaching By-Fellows mostly in non-tenured positions.

Changing face of Teaching post-COVID

It seems unlikely that the current system of University and College teaching will survive unscathed following the development of so much online instruction driven by the COVID crisis and the economic squeeze that will probably ensue.

At school level, the Isaac Physics programme, now directed by Lisa Jardine-Wright and named after the Cambridge student who worked from home last time the University closed down, may show the future. By providing detailed online problem-solving instruction and feedback to students and their teachers in over 3,000 schools, Isaac is addressing at root level the shortage of engineers more effectively than our earlier efforts with Industrial Advisers.
School students on the Isaac Physics Programme

The creative hub – a key part for change?

Even with my blinkered perception of late January, I expressed some concern about justifying our cosy social club to the taxpayer. We can indeed point to a number of research successes and collaborations that were assisted by College Fellowships and High Table discussions but, in both teaching and research, a stronger focus on what we can offer at the hands-on and personal level will now be required. The creative hub could be a key part of this picture and a new channel to get more Fellows actively engaged with the College. Revitalising the increasingly moribund Governing Body could also be a useful step supplementing other recently launched Gregorian initiatives.

Archie Howie
What Did Churchill College not Achieve?
Sixty Years of Churchill College

Professor Mark Goldie is an historian and a Churchill Fellow. His piece is an unusual celebration of the sixty years of the College as rather than asking himself the question ‘What did Churchill College achieve?’, he is asking ‘What did Churchill College not achieve?’ Here’s his answer.

Anniversaries are for celebration. But insider accounts of institutions marking important milestones can all too easily become merely self-congratulatory. I’m an historian, and historians are supposed to take a dispassionate view of the past. So, against the grain, I’m going to ask, what did Churchill College not achieve?

A bit of a curate’s egg

Right from the start the College was, as Britain’s first minister for science put it in 1958, ‘a bit of a curate’s egg’. He meant that, by placing the project within the bosom of Cambridge University, it was bound to be compromised. **Ambitious plans for a completely independent institute of advanced technology** now had to conform to the collegiate structure and curricula of an ancient university. Around 1955, the plans produced both in Sir Winston Churchill’s circle and by John Oriel at Shell had no thought of Cambridge. They wanted to avoid hanging on the coat-tails of an existing institution. An attempt at a semi-detached arrangement with Birmingham University hit the buffers because the academics wouldn’t allow sufficient autonomy. As for the dream of a ‘British MIT’, a Cambridge College could never be that, simply because there would be no labs. At best, the model might be Princeton’s Institute for Advanced Study.

Statutory distinctiveness and unfulfilled ideas

Even so, the College, in the early 1960s, did start out with ambitious hopes for something wholly new in Cambridge. I am not thinking here of the statutory and **successfully entrenched distinctiveness of the 70:30 science–arts ratio** or the one third postgraduates, but of several, now largely forgotten, **additional** schemes. These were scuppered chiefly by financial constraints, which hit hard by 1965. The records show at least three ideas afoot at the beginning.
(1) Jock Colville was very keen on *lifelong learning* and hoped that young men in industry, with or without university degrees, would come to Churchill College for top-up professional education. He also wondered about *sandwich courses* – a year in industry in the middle of a degree. Lord Fleck announced that a special mission of the College would be to provide study opportunities ‘for men already embarked on a career in industry’. These ideas bore no relation to the Cambridge Tripos. True enough, after 1992, the College’s Møller Centre provided continuing professional education, but that is outwith the core education provided in the College, which is tied to the Triposes. More broadly, the College has repeatedly experimented with schemes for closer industrial liaison, particularly through the Industrial Advisors groups. Sir John Boyd was the last Master to attempt a resurrection. Though there was much wining and dining of captains of industry, the problem was that it was never clear what could, in practice, be done to forge systemic connections with industry. (Of course, many individual Fellows have had close connections with manufacturing, but chiefly through their departments.) Perhaps the best sustained practical College-wide scheme for industrial connection was the *pre-university experience programme*. For many years we required engineering students to take a gap year in industry. But this scheme lapsed some time ago.

(2) The College hoped to set up research units in cutting-edge fields, and appoint junior and senior research fellows to work, synergistically, in groups. The College would thus set research agendas, rather than just follow the standard model of electing research fellows in whatever subjects the candidates presented. This was something like the Princeton Institute model; and it was achieved in one Cambridge College, King’s, which had a Research Centre with rolling five-year programmes of dedicated research topics, with funded fellowships attached. In the early 1960s, Churchill drew up a list of topics for research groups. But there was never endowment enough to fulfil this. And we haven’t been able to salary senior research fellows. In 1965, Sir John Cockcroft ruefully told the press of ‘pioneering projects in new subjects which the College had hoped to carry out.’

(3) Our Overseas Visitors scheme has been distinctive and successful. But, today, it is, let’s be frank, a revenue stream *inward to the College*, for we charge for our high-quality Sheppard Flats. Originally, the scheme was meant, in part, to be financially the other way about: to support
academics from less favoured parts of the world. In the early years large numbers came from behind the Iron Curtain, and from South Asia and Africa. The Ford Foundation provided funding for this, albeit that this was part of the ‘cultural front’ of the Cold War. Once the funding ended, the College was only intermittently able to subsidise such visitors.

And finally,

The College hit the financial buffers in 1965, when it made the big decision that it could not afford to build the final, fourth side of Great Court. (Actually, in retrospect, this was a mercy, for it provides our wonderful open vista to the west.) Building was eating up the original Appeal money. When Sir Isaiah Berlin was seeking funds to build what became Wolfson College in Oxford, Cockcroft’s advice was simple: ‘don’t forget the endowment’. At Churchill, other ambitions, as well as building, withered on the vine.

Mark Goldie
Fighting for Excellence
Sixty Years of Achievement at Churchill College

Richard Partington, the College’s Senior Tutor and a Churchill Fellow, looks back at sixty years of achievement at Churchill College. He reminds us that Churchill has always had a self-critical focus on excellence. Radical thinking, focus on diversity, together with academic and personal student support have resulted in Churchill being invariably in the top third of Cambridge Colleges. Richard pays tribute to the Churchill community – the DoSs, Tutors, Porters and students themselves (and many more) – for such a sustained achievement.

Churchill College’s historic and continued academic success – as indicated by undergraduate examination results – has its roots in the College’s foundation and especially its very strong sense of mission. Our desire to do things differently and better within the Cambridge context has transcended change across the College’s sixty years, continuing throughout as the platform on which we have built excellent academic outcomes for students.

These things have been, and continue to be, critical.

Radical thinking

First, a self-critical focus upon excellence has meant that our sense of excellence has in practice been stretching, not comforting. Every College says that excellence is fundamental to its mission, but not every College challenges itself when its supposed excellence begins to slough towards relative adequacy; and not every College then makes tough decisions to produce better outcomes. Cambridge is, overall, quite a conservative place, and it is only in an environment such as ours that necessary radical thinking, self-challenge and action are seen as normal and desirable.

Throughout its history, Churchill has been willing to challenge itself. What we have never been, I don’t believe, is blasé about excellence. The College has always recognised that excellence is something that has to be fought for afresh every year. This was obvious to me when I came to the College to be Senior Tutor in 2007. At that time the College was concerned about its academic performance, when that performance was clearly acceptable by Cambridge standards: comparable with that of most Cambridge Colleges.
Churchill colleagues were not satisfied by this: The College did not want to be merely acceptable.

**Focusing on diversity**

Secondly, our focus upon diversity, as the bedrock of real excellence as well as social justice, has served us fantastically well over the decades. Dick Tizard, that great Cambridge reformer, was fundamental to this, of course, and the College’s continued and substantial investment in recruitment, selection and student support has meant that we have had outstanding people to choose among, from every sort of background, all over the world, when we select undergraduate students.

**Hard work on recruitment and selection**

Thirdly, our colleagues’ hard work – in recruitment, in student selection, in teaching and in student support – has made excellent outcomes possible. Our Open Days for prospective students buzz – which is about time invested by colleagues, among other things. Every year during the undergraduate admissions round, the willingness of Churchill colleagues to put countless hours of work into careful and holistic selection humbles me. We can quantify
Over the last decade Churchill has invariably been in the top third of Cambridge Colleges in respect of numbers of undergraduate applicants, and often in the top quartile. But in every one of those years we have also made more offers to students who originally applied to other Cambridge Colleges – via the operation of the so-called ‘Winter Pool’ – than any other College has done. Churchill colleagues routinely make themselves available to undertake an additional three days of intensive student-selection work at a challenging time of the year – the very beginning of January. It would be easy not to make the effort to do this. In many Colleges, selection via the Winter Pool is something that is only done if absolutely necessary. In Churchill we choose to do it. Only this way can we be sure to find the young people in the wide and varied Cambridge applicant field with the very greatest potential – and bring them to Churchill.

Supporting students

Once students are admitted, our Directors of Studies are relentless in their search for the best available teaching. Both Directors of Studies and Tutors are super-attentive and resolute with regards to student academic and welfare support. I believe that they – brilliantly assisted by our academic support staff – identify and act on student difficulties with extraordinary promptness. Alerts are frequently provided by the wider College community: The Porters, for instance, who are highly dedicated to
student welfare support. A final dimension of student support is passive, one might say, rather than active, but vital none the less: exceptional and affordable accommodation, food and other student facilities and services. These things make studying easier and happier for students.

The Churchill community

Finally, the Churchill community – students and Fellows alike – has been central to our success. This is a serious and ambitious place, but also a humane and supportive one. People do so well here precisely because, while placing great value upon high academic achievement, our community does not place it above every other consideration. Academic excellence matters and is fundamental to our existence, but examination results are not the be-all-and-end-all. Nor do we regard academic brightness as a sort of overarching moral quality, which is a grave error too often committed by academe. In other words, excellence exists here because our students are very bright and interested, but have perspective and look after one another; and because colleagues do their best to encourage that balance in them.

Richard Partington
Looking ‘Forward’
Our Sixtieth Undergraduate Intake at Churchill

Dr Jonathan Padley is Admissions Tutor and a Churchill Fellow. Here he looks ‘forward’ rather than ‘back’ at admissions because he was unable to access the archives needed to reflect on 60 years of admissions at Churchill due to the COVID lockdown.

Sixty years is not long in Cambridge. In a University whose origins date back centuries, Churchill is unusual in having a foundation that is within living memory. Our global community still includes members who were admitted to the College when its doors first opened, who can report how it has changed across its lifetime. To have such connections with our roots is an honour, and humbling.

Reflecting on Churchill’s 2020 undergraduate intake
When Anny first asked me to write for this issue, we envisaged an article on the history of Churchill admissions: a sixty-year retrospective on the evolving makeup of our remarkable membership. Since that conversation, world events have somewhat overtaken us, and the archives necessary to do justice to such a piece have become inaccessible. With regret, therefore, we have agreed to defer it. Instead, we want to take this opportunity to reflect upon Churchill’s 2020 (our sixtieth) undergraduate intake and its place in twenty-first century Cambridge admissions, because the self-same world events which have overshadowed the start of this decade will also make this group of students especially extraordinary. In true Churchill fashion, let us look ‘Forward’.

In the top two percentiles of ability and achievement
Getting into Cambridge is, as it ever was, a hard ask. Our offers are searching and our entrants are impressive, not least because they typically arrive with grades that comfortably exceed the University’s normal offer conditions in their target subjects. For 2020 entry, Cambridge had on average more than six applicants per place, and in many subjects – sciences particularly – most were predicted to achieve three or more A* grades in relevant A-Levels.
Churchill’s guidance to potential candidates is that we look for students whose academic record places them in the top two percentiles nationally of ability and achievement. In practice, our entrants often present at the pinnacle of these upper echelons.

Increasing the proportion of students from disadvantaged groups

Cambridge admissions operates under intense scrutiny – understandably, since it is a process that unashamedly seeks the best of the best. The University has an agreement with the Higher Education regulator which commits it in the medium term to achieving an intake that is representative of UK society, and which will therefore see it in coming years continuing to increase the proportion of students who come from the most under-represented and disadvantaged groups. At Churchill, such intentions are in our DNA, as those who remember Dick Tizard and others like him will attest. There is now a veritable army of us here who thrive on explaining our admissions process to potential students, their parents, and teachers, then administering it accordingly. We tell it like it is, both because we are proud of what we do and what we offer, and because it is in our, and most importantly our candidates’, interests for us to be transparent. The more applicants can make informed choices about their university aspirations, the better for all concerned.

The Churchill’s 2020

What, then, may be said of this year’s Churchill offer-holders? Statistically, two thirds of them are from the UK, and over 40% of them are female. Of those from the UK, over three quarters have been educated post-16 in the state sector, and over 40% have one or more contextual data ‘flags’ which identify that they have likely experienced some relative educational and/or geodemographic disadvantage. Uniquely, because of qualification changes in the wake of COVID, most of them will be unable to take exams at the end of their post-16 education. Instead, their A-Levels, International Baccalaureates, and other certifications will mainly be awarded using a
combination of their empirical achievements across their courses and teacher assessments of their abilities. Whether or not these awards are ultimately sufficient to see them admitted to Churchill, none of them is any less deserving than their predecessors. Indeed, those who we admit later this year will be a remarkable bunch within an already exceptional community, precisely because of the educational changes and challenges they have faced. We look forward to welcoming and working with them; to demanding the best from them as they will no doubt demand the best from us.

Predicting the future?

Last year, the Senior Tutor and members of the Admissions Office wrote a new summary of Churchill for the Cambridge University prospectus. Part of that text is now published as follows:

In the mid-twentieth century Winston Churchill created this College to confront through technology the challenges facing Britain and the world. Today this vision is more relevant than ever. Students in the arts and humanities as well as in science and technology will become the researchers and policy-makers of the future, urgently responding – dynamically, logically and creatively – to great global questions […]

When we penned this, we could not have known its prescience. As Churchill admits its sixtieth undergraduate cohort later this year, we celebrate our amazing membership of global questioners and urgent responders. We remember the Churchill community that has been, appreciate the Churchill community that now is, and anticipate what will be achieved by the Churchill community that is to come.

In true Churchill fashion, let us look ‘Forward’.

Jonathan Padley
Building in Harmony – The Evolution, Adaptation and Change of Churchill College
Sixty Years of Architecture at Churchill

Professor Marcial Echenique is an architect and a Churchill Fellow. He has witnessed the evolution of the layout and buildings in College over the years. Here he takes us back on a journey of sixty years of change for the College as Churchill expanded and adapted to new needs.

Just over 60 years ago the competition for the College design attracted wide national interest resulting in Richard Sheppard and Partners winning and developing the design which we have today. The College has stood the test of time becoming an exemplar of the best 1960s architecture as illustrated by

Bird’s Eye view of the College (Google Earth)

1  Wolfson Court 1965
2  Chapel 1966
3  Archives Centre 1971
4  Møller Centre 1991
5  Pepperpots 2001
6  Study Centre and Music Rooms 2006
7  Cowan Court 2015
8  Graduate housing 2018
Mark Goldie\textsuperscript{1}. However, the most internationally famed part of the College is the Sheppard flats which were very innovative. Certainly, in my case, it sparked my interest in coming to Cambridge for post-doctoral studies in Architecture and Town Planning and… I stayed ever since!

The College, today

During the last sixty years the College has evolved – expanding and adapting to new needs –\textit{whilst at the same time safeguarding the architectural qualities of the original design}. The interventions in the original fabric have been subtle and have improved the quality and usefulness of the College’s buildings. The bird’s eye view (as illustrated on p. 32) shows the additions to the College since the original design was built.

The original competition design was later modified, as seen below, by opening a view from the main central spine towards the playing fields which was initially blocked by residential courts. But, unfortunately, the view from the main entrance Concourse is blocked by the JCR rooms. It would be great to see the Hepworth sculpture and the sport fields behind. The illustrated design was later further modified by rationalising the court system as it is seen today.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{evolution_of_winning_design}
\caption{Evolution of the winning design by Sheppard Robson (Churchill Archives)}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{1} Mark Goldie (2012) \textit{Corbusier Comes to Cambridge: Post-War Architecture and the Competition to Build Churchill College}, available from the Porter’s Lodge.
Additions to original design

The big addition to the College was the building of the Wolfson Court (1) in 1965, designed by David Roberts, to accommodate postgraduate students. This was followed by the excellent Chapel (2) in 1966 designed by Sheppard Robson. Notice that the original design, as illustrated on page 32, had the Chapel next to the main entrance enclosing the court. We all know the story of why the Chapel was banished from this location².

The building of the Archives Centre (3) in 1971, designed by Sheppard Robson, later extended by David Thurlow in 2001, fitted well within the complex of the central buildings which included the Bracken Library and the Wolfson Hall Auditorium.

The Møller Centre

The next big addition was the building of the Møller Centre for Continuing Education in 1991, designed by the Danish architect – Henning Larsen – who won the limited competition as illustrated below. The design was bold and reinforced the shift of the College from a purely undergraduate to one which included a strong graduate education.

Graduate Accommodation

The building of the graduate accommodation in 2001, known as the ‘pepperpots’, designed by Simon Tucker of Cottrell and Vermeulen, was the

product of another limited competition run by the College. The design took clues from the existing Whittingehame Lodge, changing the no-concession modernist approach to design, as exemplified by Sheppard Robson and Larsen, to one which respected the surrounding environment. Notwithstanding the design was highly original, as seen from the illustration below.

The Study Centre and Music Rooms

The Study Centre and Music Rooms were designed by Deborah Saunt of DSDHA in 2006, after another limited competition. It managed to fit a lot of accommodation in a restrictive site and not appear too intrusive by the use of mirror glass that reflects the surrounding trees, as illustrated below.

Cowan Court

The bold design of the Cowan Court by Tom Emerson of 6A in 2015, after another competition, completed the undergraduate accommodation of the College. It respected the traditional court design, so typical of all Colleges in Oxbridge, but with innovations which permitted disabled students to access every room in the building, and it was built in a sustainable manner by the use of renewable material, as illustrated below.
The Graduate Housing – latest addition

The latest piece of development of the College is the Graduate Housing by Simon Tucker and Priscilla Fernandes of Cottrell and Vermeulen, who won the competition in 2018. The design continued with the same approach as in the ‘pepperpots’ in terms of materials and volumes, as illustrated below. The corner of the Churchill site is now like a graduate village with interesting designs from the original Sheppard Flats through Wolfson Court and Graduate housing all fitting nicely together but reflecting different periods of construction.

Alterations to the original building

In contrast with the new buildings which are built in different styles than the original Sheppard Robson buildings, the alterations within the original fabric have been subdued and sympathetic to the original design. The interventions have improved the comfort of the circulation as well as providing much needed accommodation. The enclosure of the windswept
entrance colonnade has created a luminous Concourse. The transformation of the buttery space, which originally resembled a railway café, became a more sedate space and provided a much-needed circulation space for accessing the Fellows’ area, as illustrated below.

And finally,

All in all, the evolution of the College fabric and new buildings has been very successful in adapting the accommodation to evolving needs and to higher standards without been subservient to the original design but sympathetic to it. The College is a great example of **how to build in harmony for over half a century** and to reflect the needs and aspirations of different generations.

Marcial Echenique
Tim Cribb, a Churchill Fellow, shares with us his memories of the many cultural events that took place over the years at Churchill College. Let us just cite the Colloquium *The Power of the Word / La Puissance du Verbe* organised to mark the millennium, the exhibition of art works from Benin, Ghana and the Caribbean in the Jock Colville Hall, without forgetting the world’s first production of Akin Euba’s opera, *Chaka* – proof that the two cultures are alive and well at Churchill.

Every Churchillian knows the Wolfson. You are first marshalled there for orientational addresses during Freshers’ Week, you then frequent it for more addresses, talks, films, music and plays over the next few years, and you finally troop into it to rehearse the bizarre rituals for graduation. How could you forget it! Let me now make it into a memory theatre and populate it with the **ghosts of three remarkable Fellows and friends** who have now passed away: the first, **Abiola Irele**, back in the summer of 2017, the others, **George Steiner** and **Akin Euba**, only a few weeks before this time of writing.

**The colloquium**

What I see in the mind’s eye are the dynamic parts they played together on the Wolfson stage in a colloquium that Anny King, Irele himself and I convened to mark the millennium. It was called *The Power of the Word / La Puissance du*
Verbe and was **designed to overcome the boundaries inherited from imperialism**, and bring together writers from Francophone and Anglophone Africa and the Caribbean who otherwise would have little chance of meeting.

### Art exhibition and Euba’s opera

In the Jock Colville Hall, there was a **spectacular exhibition of art works from Benin, Ghana and the Caribbean**.

Equally spectacularly, in Hall itself, the College choir and orchestra, massively augmented with African drummers, staged **the world’s first production of Akin Euba’s opera, Chaka, sung in English, French and Yoruba**, conducted by our Australian maker of music, Peter Tregear. Wole Soyinka specially arranged his international flight pattern so that he could both see it and meet with Assia Djebar from Algeria during the Colloquium.

### Innovation – in the College’s DNA

None of this would have happened had not the founding concept of Churchill been as innovative as it was. One of the innovations was a programme for Overseas Fellows. Soyinka himself had been one, as had Octavio Paz from Mexico, Tamas Ungvari from Hungary, Vargas Llosa from Peru, Chaman Nahal from India and many more. **The horizons of the arts in Churchill are thus as international as for the sciences.** They are similarly oriented to the future rather than the past. Their cultural reference point is not Romanticism but the international Modernist movement, which embraces the sciences.

When Akin Euba led a discussion of Chaka, we discovered that it was dodecaphonic. Similarly, when Peter Tregear staged another opera in Hall, it was Max Brand’s 1929 Futurist factory opera, *Maschinist Hopkins*, combining twelve-tone with jazz, a work suppressed by the Nazis and subsequently forgotten.
Steiner and the Two Cultures

Internationalism was of course conspicuous in George Steiner, who set the Colloquium on a roar with scandalously hilarious accounts of the venalities by which Nobel Prizes might be acquired in the Arts, though not in the Sciences – so scandalous that he would not permit his talk to be printed in the proceedings.

He had been inured to controversy since the founding of the College because of C.P. Snow’s Rede Lecture in 1959, *The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution*, which attracted an immense amount of attention in the UK and America – and then even more when Leavis delivered his notorious attack on it in *The Two Cultures?* Snow was one of the Trustees who enabled the recruiting of Fellows for the College and Steiner was a friend. Leavis’s lecture was intended for Downing undergraduates but a contingent from Churchill turned up, only to walk out after the first five minutes.

Snow asked his friend Melvin Lasky, who edited *Encounter*, to come to his defence and Lasky asked Steiner to suggest some writers. They included not only the historian J.H. Plumb, but, surprisingly, an artist, Michael Ayrton. Steiner has given the College an ink drawing of Snow by Ayrton in which the incisiveness of line defining the amplitude of Snow’s flesh verges on caricature; Steiner himself described it to me as merciless. His own supportive contribution to *Encounter* was similarly ambivalent: a fine appreciation of Leavis’s literary criticism, only saved for Snow’s purposes by its conclusion that in Snow’s case Leavis had betrayed his own standards.

Talks, films, plays, poetry

The lectures are still in print but there is no problem of two cultures in Churchill. The Wolfson’s stage has been open to films from Nazi propaganda to *Half of a Yellow Sun* introduced by the director, Biyi Bandele, to plays from Neruda’s *Splendor & Death of Joaquin Murieta* to the premiere of John Kinsella’s *Crop Circles*, to talks from the Cambridge Society for the Application of Research to Peter Mandelson. There are many ghosts.

Tim Cribb
A Commitment to Modernity
Sixty Years of the Visual Arts at Churchill

Barry Phipps is Curator of Works of Art and a Churchill Fellow. Here he tells us how, over the years, the College has managed to amass the many works of modern and contemporary art – many of them donated or on long loans – and how this makes Churchill a truly modern College and again proves that the two cultures are not in competition but alive and well in our College.

Over the past 60 years Churchill College has amassed an impressive and important collection of modern and contemporary art. While there was no distinct theme or policy for collecting works of art at its founding, as with its academic aims, the College did make a commitment to Modernity from the outset.

Early donations

The collection was initiated by donations to the College by notable figures around Sir Winston Churchill. These included one of the earliest paintings of a motor car in the history of art by Maximillian Luce gifted by Brendan Bracken, the former Minister of Information, which is befitting of a College aimed at ‘training the elite technologists of the future’. As the National and Commonwealth Memorial to the former Prime Minister, a number of other significant donations were also made, for instance
Images of the College's founder are well represented, for example the monumentally impressive bust by Oscar Nemon, which matches the scale and ambition of the architecture of the College. Moreover, the College is unique amongst Oxbridge Colleges in having **paintings by its founder**; ‘Atlantic Coast of Biarritz’, another gift from Bracken, and ‘Orchids’ given by Churchill himself following a request from Sir John Cockcroft.

## Sculptures

In the early 1960s, during the construction of the College, the pioneering British sculptor, Geoffrey Clarke was commissioned by the architects to design the **Gate** at the front entrance. The resulting work is both a sculpture cast in aluminium and a functioning piece of architectural design, produced to manoeuvre students through the Porters’ Lodge after dark. This period also witnessed **works by Henry Moore**, one of the most famous artists in the world at the time, and also an Honorary Fellow, being loaned for display at the front of the College. Other large-scale outdoor sculptures by his contemporaries, Bernard Meadows and Denis Mitchell, were to follow.
The Hepworth

In the grounds of our 42-acre site, Barbara Hepworth’s ‘Four-Square (Walk Through)’ stands as an icon of the College. However, ‘Four-Square (Walk Through)’ was not the first piece by Hepworth to occupy the College grounds when it was installed in the late 1960s. In fact, it succeeded ‘Square with Two Circles’, which had been given to the College as a temporary loan. When ‘Square with Two Circles’ was removed, the students, displaying a deep appreciation for the work, decided to reconstruct their own ‘mini-Hepworth’ made of bricks. Hepworth was so moved that she offered a new work to replace the previous one.

The Maisonneuve Collection

The 1980s saw the largest single donation of works of art in the College’s history, the Maisonneuve Collection. A dealer and collector of early 20th-century French landscape paintings, Pierre Maisonneuve, offered, amongst 50 or so works, a drawing by André Derain, prints by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, as well as watercolours by Maurice Blond and sculpture by Antoine Bourdelle. Maisonneuve was a great admirer of Winston Churchill and this admiration was the reason for his decision to leave his art collection to the College where he believed, ‘it would bring pleasure to those interested in this period of history’.

New acquisitions

More recently, the strategy for displaying the most engaging works of art has become increasingly ambitious and long term. Through gifts, loans and minor purchases, the College’s Hanging Committee has been particularly active in the period 2008 onwards, with new acquisitions for the collection. Highlights include works by Patrick Caulfield and Louise Nevelson. These hang alongside the earlier efforts of the Committee, including prints by Bridget Reilly and Andy Warhol.
At the Møller Institute we have works of art by established artists, such as Albert Irvin whose big, quasi-abstract, brilliantly coloured blobs and lattices are built up in complex layers to create a sense of depth and energy. We also support emerging artists such as Ragna Mouritzen, winner of the Danish Embassy Art Prize 2014, whose works are a product of material process and intense labour.

A special environment

The voluntary origin of many works of art at Churchill is an important factor for the collection, which does not have a dedicated fund for new acquisitions. In fact, the collection has been able to grow thanks to the interest of students and Fellows, who over the years have either donated new works or catalysed the collaboration between artists and the College. Sculptures, paintings, prints and textiles serve to enhance the buildings and create an environment of engagement, reflection and inspiration.

Barry Phipps
Ewan Campbell, Director of Music Making and a Churchill Fellow, gives us a full account of music at Churchill over the past 40 years or so and we learn that the first establishment of a regular Churchill Choir was in 1973, following the admission of women to the College. Ewan reminds us of the many innovations and successes music has had at Churchill through Hugh Woods, Mark Miller, Mark Gotham and (although he is too modest to admit it) himself without forgetting student initiatives such as Peter Nickalls’ Churchill Jazz. And finally, he reflects on how ‘present music is in the everyday life of this “STEM” College’.

When social distancing will allow, perambulating through College today reveals how present music is in the everyday life of this ‘STEM’ College: pianos occupy most communal spaces and a further two dozen keyboard instruments are loaned to student rooms, largely thanks to a programme of second hand-purchases by Richard Partington. Whereas in most Cambridge Colleges the Chapel is the musical core, in Churchill a non-centralised and student-led approach to College music making goes back several decades.
The Eighties

Since at least the 80s the College has appointed a student Music Sizar who, with the enthusiastic support of several musically talented College Masters, orchestrated College musicking, particularly the College Choir. The informal singing dinners with John Boyd are legendary, and a long-lost tradition of Carols sung by candlelight at the Fellows Christmas Dinner owed much to the singing prowess of then Senior Tutor Alan Findlay.

The Nineties

In 1993 the Music Centre was built in partnership with the Møller Centre and, following a recent update of the recording setup, this may still be Cambridge’s finest recording studio. It immediately provided sanctuary to two fantastic College instruments: the Steinway Grand and Rubio Harpsichord, and hosted regular recitals, which have now become a weekly schedule during term time.

The Noughties

The longest standing Director of Studies has been the esteemed composer Hugh Wood who held the post for 22 years. Hugh’s music is fiendishly difficult and has only been sporadically performed in College, but there are reports of him conducting Johann Strauss’s operetta Die Fledermaus in Hall, and his 80th Birthday concert in 2012 prompted a joyful reunion of musical alumni. The College acquired the taste for opera, and when Nigerian composer Akin Euba came as an Overseas Fellow in 2000, a performance of his opera Chaka was undertaken combining professional soloists with a student choir and orchestra. Thanks to Tim Cribb’s enduring support Professor Euba also established the Centre for Intercultural Musicology at Churchill College in 2004, which hosted its third International Conference last Michaelmas. Peter Tregear (DoM at Fitzwilliam) conducted Chaka, and in 2001 also brought the CU Opera society to Churchill hall (as dress rehearsal for the QEH) with the UK premiere of Max Brand’s anti-capitalist Machinist Hopkins.

Whether it was this flurry of over ambitious operatic performances, or the need to keep up with the Jones’ at Fitzwilliam, Dominic Wyse – already a College Fellow in Education and graduate of the Royal Academy of Music – became the first Director of Music Making. During Dominic’s tenure
the Orchestra on the Hill was collaboratively established with Fitzwilliam and Murray Edwards Colleges, and Dominic conducted one of their notable early concerts including a cello concerto by Graham Waterhouse (U81) featuring Graham himself as soloist.

Churchill Jazz Band

In 2008, pianist fresher Peter Nickalls demonstrated the potential of strong student leadership. Rejected from other university big bands he setup an ad hoc group, and the following term efficiently organised auditions a week before any other group, picked up all the best players and, seemingly overnight, established Churchill Jazz band as one of the College’s finest musical exports.

Mark I

The Chapel at Churchill has a marvellous acoustic and since 1973 has housed a decent organ. Chapel music has been largely separate from College: an orbiting satellite sharing many musical participants but never quite gaining the critical mass to unite. Mark Miller, who joined the College as a JRF in molecular Chemistry, was already Chair of the Chapel Trust and busy establishing Organ Scholarships when in 2010 he accompanied, to great acclaim, a Churchill reunion choral performance of Fauré’s Requiem. That summer Dominic moved onto the Institute of Education, and Mark I (as he later became known) took on the DoMM role and provided that critical mass to unite the College and Chapel choirs.

Mark II

Edward Lilley, soon to complete a Computer Science PhD, was the first organ scholar in 2012, and Mark I gave way to Mark (II) Gotham in 2013. The choir continued to grow, joining the intercollegiate Choral Scholar scheme In 2017 Mark formalised the relationship with Murray Edwards College to establish the Inter Alios choir. Ambitions and horizons have expanded, and the choir ventured to London for a memorable performance in St Martins in the Fields with the Brandenburg Orchestra. Since 2018 I have perpetuated this intent with trips to Ely and London, and we would have enjoyed our first tour this Easter were it not for COVID.
And finally,

The immediate future of College music is hard to predict. The choir successfully released a video of a remotely recorded *Music & Words* performance in May, but a return to live performance must be the priority. Whatever the future holds, College music of all genres will always aim to provide for a wide audience both within and outside of Churchill.

Ewan Campbell
Breathing New Life in Testing Times
Sixty Years of Grounds and Gardens at Churchill

Paula Laycock, College Records Officer and previously College Registrar (1991–2014), is a Churchill By-Fellow. She gives us a retrospective of the many people involved and all the work needed in making the grounds and gardens the beautiful environment that we all enjoy today.

By the time the first students arrived in College in the autumn of 1962, the landscaping of the original 42-acre site was well underway. The sports fields had been seeded and the cricket square laid. Tree planting had started on the boundary with Madingley Road and borders planted around the Sheppard Flats and along the Private Road. Though many newly planted trees and shrubs were to perish in the ‘Big Freeze’ of 1963, the grounds were rapidly transforming from a building site into something more congenial.

Testing times

Of course, there were challenges along the way. During the 1970s, there were problems with waterlogging of the grounds, the unfavourable ground conditions and the ongoing threat of Dutch elm disease. Within College there was lively debate over the landscaping at the front of the College on Storey’s Way. A parterre in box hedging had been proposed or maybe a line of trees. On the Madingley Road frontage, questions were raised on how best to shape and plant the mound. The Bursar, Major-General Hamilton, and the Master, Sir John Cockcroft, held strong views – as did the landscape architect, Sheila Haywood. These were testing times.
The 1980s were dominated by yet more adverse weather conditions – the ‘Big Snow’ of 1981–82 and the ‘Great Storm’ of 1987. Grounds and gardens staff endeavoured to retain the integrity of Sheila Haywood’s landscape master plan, of planting for foliage and form and repeat planting of a limited range of plants. But as the years progressed, some shrubs had become woody and overgrown. The planting was looking tired.

Gordon Patterson, College Consultant Landscape Architect

In 1992, the new Møller Centre was opened. Its first garden was created by the landscape architect, Jamie Buchanan. The appointment of Gordon Patterson as College Consultant Landscape Architect (1992–98) was to follow.

His achievements would include the first stage of the boundary path, the planting of the avenue of lime trees alongside the Møller Centre (now Institute) and the first refurbishment of the borders on the Private Road (now Churchill Road). More changes were on their way, too. The year 1996 saw the appointment of John Moore as Head Gardener. Just twenty-four years old, he was destined to make his mark at Churchill College.

John Moore, Head of Grounds & Gardens

A quarter of a century later, as Head of Grounds & Gardens, John Moore has acquired a deep understanding of the original landscape master plan and the intentions of his predecessors. He has worked his way across the site breathing new life into the borders while retaining the integrity of the original design. From the raised brick bed in Great Court, the Møller Institute parterres, a further redesign of the 500 metre border along Churchill Road, the Sir Winston Churchill Border, and the new Xiaotian Fu Garden (on next page), he has woven his magic.
In 2020, with the College in lockdown due to the COVID Pandemic, some grounds and gardens staff remained on site progressing work on budgeted projects. Their great achievement, despite the testing times, the completion of the Boundary Walk. With plans for a crab apple walk, a possible stumpery and additional planting, one thing is for certain: **The grounds and gardens are flourishing.**

Paula Laycock
Horticultural Chronology

1959  Sir Winston Churchill plants an oak and a black mulberry to mark the start of the building work; Sheila Haywood, landscape architect, draws up landscape master plan

1960  First planting on site with perimeter trees; sports fields terraced and grass seed sown

1961  First planting along the ‘service road’

1970  New herbaceous border created on south side of North Court

1976  Birch and mountain ash trees planted along front of College on Storey’s Way

1992  Area around Møller Centre landscaped by Jamie Buchanan

1994  Planting of avenue of lime trees near Møller Centre by Gordon Patterson; creation of first stage of boundary path; ‘Churchill Mulberry’ in East Court keels over

1996  John Moore appointed Head Gardener

1998  Møller Centre parterres created by John Moore

2000  Wolfson Flats play area created

2002  *Prunus* ‘Tai Haku’ trees planted at the ‘Pepperpots’

2009  Lady Soames plants a weeping white mulberry to mark fifty years since her father planted the oak and the black mulberry; the grounds and gardens are opened for the first time under the National Gardens Scheme (NGS)

2010  *Rosa* ‘The Churchill Rose’ launched at Chelsea Flower Show

2011  College receives five bushes of *Rosa* ‘The Churchill Rose’ and the Sir Winston Churchill Border is created

2014  Orchid House (Frank Maine G60) and Arboretum (Michael Lewis U64) established

2016  Twenty-six silver birch trees planted within Cowan Court (Michael Cowan U60)

2019  New Xiaotian Fu Garden (Xiaotian Fu G06) formally opened

2020  Boundary Walk completed
Francisca Malarée, Development Director and a Churchill Fellow, reminds us of the importance of philanthropy – through many benefactions and donations – not just when the College was built 60 years ago but also today in raising much needed funds for additional housing for our graduate students, scholarships, grants and bursaries for our students.

Churchill College, unusually amongst the institutions of this University, was funded as a memorial for a former Prime Minister and not to glorify a monarch, God or religion. **Philanthropy was important in its very inception**, because appeals were made from the 1950s onwards to raise funds to establish a College specialising in Science and Technology to honour Sir Winston’s vision of a ‘British MIT’. The sum of £3.5million (equivalent to over £50million today) was raised from British Industry, including from companies that still exist like Shell, and those that have disappeared, such as Metropolitan Vickers, plus many Guilds and individuals. The Ford and Rockefeller foundations funded early Fellowships and student funding at the College. Various countries of the Commonwealth contributed timber, furniture and other articles as well as funds. The *College Record* of 1960–65 (which predates the *Churchill Review*) noted that in 1964, a second appeal for £600,000 was launched, which a year later had reached its objective. By the mid-1960s, over £4.5million (£64million in today’s prices) had been raised.
Alumni and the Association

Due to the youthful nature of the College, there was of course no ‘old boys’ network’ for the first students. The College was always more accessible to those with no prior experience in their families of University education, but it only took a short time – and maturity of its very first alumni – before the Alumni Association was founded in 1965. The 1970 Churchill Review provides notes of the fifth meeting of the Alumni Association committee at which Sir William Hawthorne was elected Honorary President and Kenneth McQuillen and Canon Duckworth as Honorary Vice-Presidents. In fact, the Association had its own subscription and produced the Churchill Review for many years, so that is a very significant contribution in its own right.

For a modern College there was an effort made to involve alumni very early on, with dining rights and accommodation being offered, emulating the offers made by the older Colleges. The Association Weekend, now firmly established, involved alumni in the College with the alumni Association Dinner having become a fixture from 1965 onwards – the first one was, however, held in London, and not in Hall.

Benefactions and donations

Churchill College has been successful in terms of attracting support since its earliest days. It has rarely had to borrow large sums in order to build, being able to raise funds from many generous supporters, alumni and foundations amongst them. The Wolfson flats were named after significant funds were donated by the Wolfson Foundation between 1962 and 1967 for the new ‘married accommodation’ on site. One of the most significant benefactions received by a Cambridge College in modern times, from Maersk Mc-Kinney Møller of £10million (equivalent today to over £21 million) to found the Møller Centre, was donated in 1992. That gift was a tribute to the liberation of Copenhagen by the British navy, and was the result of conversations arising from the College’s 25th anniversary appeal, where the need for more student accommodation was noted as pressing in Cambridge’s ‘boom town’.

Fundraising for graduate housing

Fast forward 25 years and the literature is similar, an ever-pressing need to house students since in the Sciences four-year degrees meant that Churchill began to run out of undergraduate rooms. Thus the 50th anniversary appeal
was focused on celebrating Churchill’s legacy and also **fundraising for a new Court at a cost of £10million** – this court became Cowan Court, named after its principal benefactor, Michael Cowan, and was opened in 2016.

The provision of housing for graduate students was also a feature of Churchill College from its earliest days, as the fundraising for the Wolfson flats in the 1960s shows. Recently, as well as having built Hawthorne, Bondi and Broers houses, ‘the pepperpots’ on site for graduates in the noughties, a **donation from the Pinchin-Luckevich family** enabled the refurbishment of Pinchin-Riley house, in memory of Donald Pinchin (G73). The graduate housing at 36 Storey’s Way, opened in 2019, includes Wallace and Boyd houses. It has enabled the housing of all graduate students for two years, and enhanced the graduate community within the College’s campus within a campus.

**Donations for the College’s Archives Centre**

The College’s Archives have long been another beneficiary of donations, not least from **heritage lottery funding, but also from many private donations** of funds and material. The immense support from US ambassadors is writ large on the walls of the Jock Colville Hall, and the extension housing the Thatcher papers is a striking reminder of her influence on the late 20th century.
Fundraising for scholarships and research

So that is the material part of the College—an equally significant contribution has always been to scholarships and research, and to ensure that the College has drawn in the best minds from all over the globe. The Winston Churchill Foundation of the US (WCFUS) was set up by Lewis W Douglas (a former US ambassador to the UK) in 1959 with Carl Gilbert of Gillette as its first chairman to bring the brightest scholars from the USA over to the College, as Overseas Fellows. In this category there have been 9 Nobel Prize winners, including James Watson. The WCFUS also funded a number of stellar research students, and many of Churchill’s distinguished academic alumni in the USA came to the College through this programme, which now focuses on funding one-year Master’s students. Most recently, the WCFUS scholarship in science and public policy has been added by Warren Kanders.

The French Government Fellowship scheme was set up in 1975, though it was the brainchild of the first Master, Sir John Cockcroft, and has brought the ablest scientific scholars from French institutions since then to Churchill—it is mostly funded by the French government. It has given scholars over the last 45 years the chance to work in an interdisciplinary environment and looks to be even more important as the UK leaves the EU in bringing a European perspective to the College. The fields represented are both from the science and technology side as well as from the arts one and are varied. Long may this entente cordiale continue!

Many other foundations and benefactors have funded generations of students—the human element of the contribution the College has made to science and society. There have been students funded by the Gulbenkian Foundation, Fellows and research by Bodossakis Foundation, and the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations as previously mentioned. Hamid Jafar’s (U64) benefaction to engineering was significant, funding research students at the College. There have been various corporate donations, including from Schlumberger and Toshiba, funding research students too. City liveries also funded various research Fellowships and studentships. More recently the Gulbenkian-Yuval studentship was established in 2015 in gratitude by a beneficiary of the original Calouste-Gulbenkian studentship, Gideon Yuval (G66). In the apartheid era, student and Fellows funded the South African (now the Southern African) bursary scheme to bring students to Cambridge and alumni of the scheme include Njabulo Ndebele, a
former VC of Cape Town University, and now an honorary Fellow. Mr Woon Wing Yip was also a funder of the Wing Yip scholarships – one of the scholars, Xiaotian Fu (U06) is now a significant donor herself, and funded the landscaping of the garden that bears her name.

**Fundraising for undergraduate funding**

In terms of undergraduate funding, since fees were introduced funding bursaries has become even more important, and there have been substantial donations to do so, including the creation of the Lock bursary fund in 2015, thanks to Greg Lock (U66) and his wife Rosie. There are now over 20 named bursaries funded by alumni and friends of Churchill, helping to ensure the College is accessible to those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

We also have benefited from the Winston Churchill top-up bursaries which were initially set up by the Churchill Foundation, but since 2019 have been mostly funded by donations to the College from individuals. The top-up bursaries give an additional £2,000 to the students with parental income at less than £25,000 per year, and therefore give students some financial wiggle-room to be able to study in the College in the vacations, or be able to buy equipment to enable to study effectively.

As well as the Association Committee, the College has had many committed volunteers to steer its external engagement for fundraising – there was an established Development Committee that led the celebrations for the 50th anniversary from 2010 onwards.

More recently the College’s development board, chaired by Michael Cowan (U70) and a Benefactor Fellow, together with Tony Wild (G68) and Greg Lock, have ably advised on fundraising strategy. Additionally, Benefactor [Credit: CCPH/10/24](#)
Fellows, including Lydia Luckovich, Eddie Powell (U67) and the late Jeff Rubinoff have made huge contributions to the endowment and student activity.

On the latter point, College sport (particularly the Boat Club), music and other student and College cultural activity has long been supported by alumni and friends of the College, but another article needs to be written to do this justice.

The success and to a large degree the building of the College were based on donations and support first from external actors and latterly from those who benefited from its education. It has produced many leaders in their fields, thanks to the vision of Sir Winston, and the collective efforts and funds of many to bring the vision to fruition.

Francisca Malarée

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Mark Goldie for his book, *Churchill College: The Guide*, in helping to write this article, also to the current and past editors of the *Churchill Review*, as an invaluable record of what went on in fundraising and alumni activity.
Unsmoked Churchill Cigars and Mock Croc
Thatcher Handbag
Sixty Years of Archives @ Churchill College

Allen Packwood is the Director of the Churchill Archives Centre and a Churchill Fellow. Allen reminds us that the Archives Centre will be celebrating 50 years in 2023. Here he tells us how the Archives came about and reveals that ‘the College had already started collecting archives long before the arrival of the Churchill Papers’. Today, the Churchill Archives Centre holds a rich collection of papers, amongst which are found those of three Prime Ministers as well as thirteen Nobel Prize winners.

The Churchill Archives Centre will celebrate its half centenary in 2023. It was built and opened in 1973, once it was known that Churchill’s papers were coming to the College. The wall of the Jock Colville Hall commemorates the names of the original American donors.

What is less well known is that the College had already started collecting archives long before the arrival of the Churchill Papers. **One of our very first deposits came from the former Labour Prime Minister Clement Attlee in April 1965.** He gave a small collection of personal correspondence and papers, including a wonderful exchange with Winston Churchill from early 1945 on the correct way to run a Cabinet.
Encouraged by Sir John Cockcroft, Jock Colville and Stephen Roskill, other leading figures of the Churchill era soon followed suit, and by 1970 the College had already recorded its first 100 archival accessions (as I write we have reached 2,120).

A major centre of historical research

By that point, the idea of creating some form of research centre on site was already well advanced. Sir John Cockcroft set out the mission statement very clearly in July 1967, when he wrote: ‘The aim of this venture is to make the College a major centre of historical research into what might be termed the Churchill Era, where scholars will be able to find a great mass of inter-related material gathered together under a single roof’. It was a vision that was shared, developed and delivered by Michael Hoskin, Correlli Barnett, Piers Brendon and their teams over the course of the ensuing decades. A fuller history of the Centre is available on the College website at https://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/archives/about/history/.

Archival wealth

Today we are proud to hold the archives of three Prime Ministers (while awaiting the arrival of a fourth) as well as thirteen Nobel Prize winners. We are strong in politics, science, diplomacy, military history and the social sciences. Within the student community we may be best known for our unsmoked Churchill cigars and mock croc Thatcher handbag, replete with accessories, but the real strength is in the body of interconnected material: from Mark Abrams to Michael Young, Fenner Brockway to Enoch Powell, James Chadwick to Lise Meitner.

A complex operation

The focus of the Centre has always been the preservation and presentation of the unique collections in its care. Over the years, the size of the team and the range of services required to do this has increased. Today we employ two conservators, five archivists, one records manager, three archives assistants, an administrator, a part time records officer and a director. It is a complex operation which relies on the support of the College and on a network of dedicated committee members, trustees, patrons, donors, depositors and friends.
Sometimes the Centre has found itself making the news rather than collecting it. The purchase of the Churchill Papers collection for the Nation with Heritage Lottery funding in 1995, the deposit of Lady Thatcher’s personal archive in 1997, the American President (George W. Bush) opening an exhibition at the Library of Congress in 2004, and the release of material smuggled out of Russia by former KGB archivist, Vasili Mitrokhin, in 2014 have all been particularly high profile moments.

Firmly entrenched in College life

The Centre sits right at the heart of the College campus and is now firmly entrenched in College life. Over the years we have organised the prestigious biennial Roskill Lecture, brought a wealth of Archive By-Fellows to Cambridge, loaned material around the world, and supported teaching and research in Cambridge and beyond. The collections of Winston Churchill, Margaret Thatcher and Rosalind Franklin have all been digitised.

The Archives Centre has grown to become one of the largest repositories for modern personal papers in UK and, in the words of our excellent social media team, a place where the modern history of Britain is open to all. And we have no intention of stopping now!

Allen Packwood
Reflecting on the Last 22 Years at Møller
The Møller Institute Contribution to the College’s 60 years

Gillian Secrett left the Møller Institute (previously Møller Centre) after twenty-two years at the helm as CEO. In this piece she reflects back on her exciting and challenging years and the joy of working with so many wonderful people at Møller and in the Churchill College community. She describes what her main objectives were on joining Møller and how she went about achieving these and more. In 2017, Gillian was bestowed with the Danish honour of the Knight of the Order of the Dannebrog in recognition of her support for Denmark and Danish–British business relations. In her final words Gillian tells us that she will miss many things and above all ‘the feeling of warmth and engagement of the Møller team’. This is a fitting contribution to the College’s 60th anniversary.

I was delighted to join the Møller team in January 1998, having relocated from the University of Exeter. I brought with me the experience of managing three campus sites, student residential, catering, commercial and conferences services and their financial control, together with several new building projects. With a turnover of £14million, and a team of 600 staff, I remember that we were one of the first Universities to achieve the Investors in People standard following my spearheading a comprehensive development programme for the team. Møller was a much smaller operation, but I was excited by the opportunity to shape the business with my own experience and values to create an enterprise that we could all be proud of.

My main objectives on joining Møller

First, establishing a commercially viable year-round business that would operate independently. Dr Andrew Tristram had done a great job
establishing the building and the business was beginning to grow. College had already resolved that student accommodation would need to be relocated and I could see from my own experience that the needs of students and clients were not always complementary. I set about this first task, rehousing the students with some anxiety knowing that it was not going to make me popular on campus! I then worked to implement an all year-round commercial business model and develop a strong culture of customer service. My earlier graduate management experience in the international hotel sector had taught me what worked and didn’t work, when it came to people management and customer service. I also needed to heed the planning agreement attached to the Møller Centre which focused the use the facilities on education and made it impossible to operate as a hotel.

**Second, achieving a premium position in the marketplace,** as a purpose-designed Residential Training Centre for executives. We had an amazing building designed for learning, so I focused on developing a strong team of talented people with the attitude to deliver first class service. My own values and purpose to support people development, served well and we created a loyal client base with the customer at the heart of our work. We established a high quality, consistent operation, with external assessment and client feedback on our delivery, recognised with many awards along the way from Hospitality Assured and Meetings and Incentive Travel for best practice and client satisfaction.

**Bringing revenue and reputation to Churchill College**

My key objective was to bring revenue and reputation to Churchill College for the long term, and all my endeavours throughout my 22 years were in service of this goal. I identified a niche positioning and we created a values-based culture of service to support staff and delegates alike to do their best work. Once the venue was profitable, I set about building the education element of our work as Maersk Mc-Kinney Møller had originally intended.

I made efforts not to duplicate or interfere with work elsewhere in the University. My research of the University’s provision and the global market lead me to focus on high quality practical executive education programmes for senior leaders, bringing together the best academics and practitioners to meet the bespoke learning needs of our clients. There was no room for educational tourism if we were to establish a reputation
and reach commensurate with that of the College and practical leadership development was complementary. Some of our earliest education work was with Japan, brought to us by Churchill alumnus Miles Craven. Following which, we extended our global reach to China, UK and beyond, establishing an international reputation for executive education recognised by the Queen’s Award in 2012.

Embodying the values and vision of our Møller Founder

On arriving, Maersk Mc-Kinney Møller took me aside to explain his vision for the Møller Centre and the Maersk values which he believed should underpin our work. Resonating with my own values, his vision, ‘to bring academia and business together’ for executive education at the Møller Centre, to extend the reach of the University of Cambridge’, inspired and empowered my own purpose and commitment. All was aligned enabling a long-term business strategy of growth that generated profits to College, whilst honouring Maersk’s vision to bring all that the University of Cambridge had to offer to business and the wider society.

I am indebted to Maersk Mc-Kinney Møller, Ane Uggla his daughter, and the Foundation CEO’s, Ove Hornby and Henrik Tvarno, for their advice and support, sharing their delight in our achievements with two further donations for building projects to further extend our reach and reputation for international leadership programmes. Our purpose as a business is thus encapsulated:

‘To inspire individuals to be the best that they can be, to accelerate the performance of the organisations which they serve and have a positive impact on society and the environment. Through our work to covenant all profits to Churchill College to support the education of future leaders’.

Our key successes

These are in many different areas as mentioned below.

Financial – We repaid the outstanding loan to the College for the building of the Study Centre in the early years, and grew the annual contribution to
College, even during the financial crisis of 2008, and covered our costs during times of investment and disruption to business through building works. During my time as CEO we covenanted well over £10 million to the College through our high impact work building reputation internationally for the long term.

**Executive Education Programmes** – Once established as a provider of high-quality education, and with much negotiation, we were delighted to be made an approved provider of executive and professional education for the University of Cambridge. Programme certificates carrying the quality mark of both the College, through the approval of Møller Education Standards Committee, and the University.

With the support of many talented associates and partners, our education portfolio enjoyed much success in the China banking sector and piloting of Chinese healthcare reform, our international reputation grew with senior leaders of global corporates and professional services firms. We also developed young leaders through the Churchill Leadership Fellows and Churchill Students Future Leaders programmes, and British Council Future Leaders Connect.
In 2017 we distilled our experience over the last fourteen years to design and deliver our first open enrolment programmes, the ‘Explorer Mindset’ to build agility and resilience in senior leaders to navigate uncertainty and change, and ‘Cambridge Advanced Executive Coaching’. Reputation in key sectors, finance, healthcare, engineering, media, professional services, consumables, pharmaceutical continued to grow.

To secure our position it was important for Møller to connect with leadership research to underpin our work. In 2017 the Møller Centre became the custodian of the James MacGregor Burns Academy of Leadership, the founder of leadership studies in the USA. Brought to us by Professor Georgia Sorensen, (who became our Leadership scholar and Møller By-Fellow of Churchill College), she connected us to ten leadership scholars, and an evidence base for the study and practice of leadership. She agreed to act as editor of the Cambridge Elements Leadership series, an online Journal launched by Cambridge University Press, which gave us the final piece that we needed to create an Institute.

We became the Møller Institute in January 2018, a significant milestone for me – the achievement of our vision and culmination of much hard work to secure the long-term financial contribution to the College.

Møller Centre’s Extensions

It was exhilarating to deliver the two major extensions to the building, carefully designed in consultation with users and executed by a talented team, maintaining the integrity of the building whilst meeting changing needs of clients and the growing business. The Study Centre extension in 2007 was exciting, creating a floating pavilion with large flat-floored collaborative learning space and milling area. I was delighted that Maersk Mc-Kinney Møller agreed to officially open the extension. When I explained to Maersk that the building loan would be repaid from our profits he was delighted and gave a donation of £500K to improve the bedroom air conditioning to enhance the comfort for international delegates alongside the new extension.

The second extension was officially opened in 2015 by Ane Uggla, Maersk Mc-Kinney’s daughter at a splendid occasion run as a practical leadership workshop with our clients and joined by the Foundation board. This significant extension was part funded by a generous donation from the Maersk
McKinney Møller Foundation to ‘future proof’ the Centre and provide additional bedrooms and office space. All carefully designed to be seamless with the original building with the guidance and support of Henrik Tvarno the Foundation CEO, and the architect who had previously worked in Henning Larson’s practice. Ane Uggla had announced the Foundations gift at The Møller Centre’s 25th Anniversary dinner, to the delight of us all. I remember it was a bittersweet time for me, we held the memorial service for Maersk Mc-Kinney Møller that same weekend, and I had also lost my father the previous month.

**The Møller people**

Of most significance to me are the wonderful team of people working at the Møller Institute, past and present, who have given of themselves often beyond the call of duty to establish the Møller Institute as it is today. I salute them for their professionalism and skill and their humility and dedication to our clients to deliver profits and reputation for the College.

To underpin my leadership responsibility for sustainability and equip me with knowledge to incorporate this important agenda into our work at Møller, I undertook to study – in my own time – the University of Cambridge Master in Sustainability Leadership. This led to the achievement of another important mark of excellence for Møller – ISO 14001 and the integration of sustainability into our leadership programmes.

**After Møller**

After 22 years at the helm, I have now moved to specialise on this important agenda, combining my experience and study of leadership and sustainability at the University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability. I am excited about
my new role and the potential for impact. I look forward to continuing as an Associate with the Møller Institute and the opportunities to collaborate.

Looking back, I am proud of what we have achieved, but could not have done it without the exceptional support of the Møller team and associates, the College Fellows, staff and alumni, too many to name and the Møller Foundation members including Maersk Mc-Kinney Møller himself. Much appreciation to the board Directors, including notable College alumni – David Dutton (U62) and David Woods (U65); the Churchill Masters – and in particular Lord Alec Broers, Sir John Boyd and Sir David Wallace; and Fellows – Archie Howie, Boping Yuan, Tony Kelly, Richard Partington, Anny King, and Allen Packwood for their support and engagement throughout.

I will miss the scent of lavender as I walk up the colonnade, the exhilarating feeling when you walk into the Møller Institute with its stunning architecture, floods of daylight, and views across the campus. Most of all I will miss the feeling of warmth and engagement of the Møller team, who are the heartbeat of the Møller Institute.

Gillian Secrett
REMINISCENCES

The Fountain in the Buttery Pond, c. 1997,
Churchill Archives CCPH/10/003
‘The empires of the future are the empires of the mind.’

Winston Churchill, 6 September 1943
Peter Clarke (U61) read Mechanical Sciences at Churchill. He was one of the first intake of undergraduates to the College. He tells us why he chose Churchill over Trinity, recounts through two anecdotes the warm and respectful relationship between staff and students and finally concludes how much he enjoyed his time at Churchill both academically and socially.

Churchill College was new, not even built, when I came up in 1961. As there were no previous undergraduates, we were able to chart our own path, which was my principal reason for choosing Churchill, rather than Trinity where I also had a place. College was a friendly environment full of mostly successful experimentation with no one putting on airs. College Clubs were created, while others were more closely linked with University ones, such as mine – rifle shooting and water skiing.

College culture

Let me relate a couple of anecdotes which accurately reflect the culture of the College in the early 60s. In my third year I bought a motor car, which was not allowed, in those days. I bought it from one of our lecturers in the engineering labs, an enormous Jaguar Mark 7 saloon, for £150. I spoke to Mr Piercy, the Head Porter and asked whether he would be kind enough to do me favour. And he said, ‘What would that be Mr Clarke?’ I said: ‘Well I have to admit, Mr Piercy, I have purchased a motor car.’ And I said: ‘Would you be so kind as to perhaps turn a blind eye to my motor car?’ So, he looked at me
with a twinkle in his eye and said: ‘Well, which car would that be Mr Clarke?’ I pointed up the road at this gleaming Jaguar Mark 7 and I said: ‘It’s that one there, Mr Piercy.’ And he smiled and said: ‘I don’t think that will be a problem Mr Clarke. No one would ever believe that belonged to an undergraduate.’ A lovely man, as you can tell.

Another will illustrate the really **warm and respectful relationship between the Porters and the undergraduates of those days**: As I recall, visitors were required to leave College no later than 9pm but it is well known that Churchill does not have fences or secure gates like other Colleges. There was a young lady who was in my rooms after 9pm one day. I discovered later that her suspicious mother had telephoned the Porters’ Lodge to ask them to investigate. The Head Porter advised her that it was completely out of the question as Mr Clarke would NEVER be involved with anything of that nature!

**Great time**

Under the warm-hearted guidance of my Tutor, Dick Tizard, and Supervisor, Ken Livesley, I had an immensely enjoyable time academically, reading Mechanical Sciences. It was a privilege too being involved with the University Engineering Society, which had the prestige to be able to attract the top engineers and politicians to speak at our meetings.

**I also had an immensely enjoyable time socially.** The enduring friendships established in those first years are demonstrated by the strong attendance of the 1961 group at all the subsequent Association Annual Dinners.

Peter Clarke
Friendliness and Generosity
Reminiscences of an Undergraduate from the 1970s

Rosie Johnston (U73) read Law at Churchill. Years later she returned to Churchill as a member of the Churchill Association and was its President from 2014–18. She is a celebrated poet, author, journalist and mentor. Here, she recalls her arrival at Churchill in 1973 and remembers that the 70s were times of huge social change in the country; she tells us of her love for rowing and how much she appreciated the friendliness and generosity of everyone at Churchill.

The first time I saw Churchill College was from a taxi in Storey’s Way in October, 1973 after a long, solo journey from Belfast. Two gangly mathematicians rushed to help me up the steps with what luggage I had, to welcome me into my new home.

Times of huge social change
In 1973/74, we females lived together on ‘girls-only’ staircases and lifelong friendships grew fast. They were times of huge social change: 1967 had brought an Abortion Act for the first time, the Equal Pay Act came in 1968, a Divorce Act in 1969, and in 1970, perhaps most significantly for us, the age of majority was reduced to 18 years of age. We undergraduates were, and insisted on being treated as, adults, which was probably as big a shock to the Cambridge way of life as having more females around. By October 1974, Churchill rooms were allocated regardless of gender.

Reading Law
I was reading Law. The College had no Law staff then, so my supervision group was fostered out to other Colleges. This could sometimes have a slightly disjointed, orphan feel, but meant that we had the honour of being taught by some top dons. Tony Weir taught me contract and tort at Trinity (his goldfish were Donoghue and Stevenson) and his Christmas sherry party in Neville Court glittered like a scene in Brideshead.
Love for rowing

Much of my first term was shared between Freshers’ parties on the staircases and rowing. At school, I had been studiously anti-sport (being shortsighted and averse to violence), but my College mother, Lorna Anderson (then Montgomerie), encouraged me to try the river. By my second term, I was in the College women’s first coxed four; we won a University regatta which entitled us to row against a crew of four Oxford women, and won that too. In the following year, I made it into the university’s second eight (which we christened Blondie at the boat house as Goldie glided by) and later rowed, with Lorna, in May Bumps.

By the third year, the fun had to stop. I had no contacts to help me find a job (and no money for post-grad) so it was a year of lectures in the East Room and Silver Street, and long hours ‘sponging’ in the Squire Law Library.

Churchill – a forward-looking College

Graduation was in that scorching summer of 1976. We sweltered in our hired gowns and smart, new shoes pinched like mad. We knelt to hold the Vice-Chancellor’s fingers as graduands had for centuries and it wasn’t until my own children graduated thirty or so years later that I realised what a novelty our mixed College had been in the mid-70s, and how proud I was to have been at the first Cambridge College to take that decision.

I still treasure the welcome I found at Churchill and my secure, friendly home there. Friendliness, generosity and lack of snobbery were chief among the College values then and when I returned to join the Association Committee in 2011, I was delighted to find them still flourishing. They still do.

Rosie Johnston
Helen Mulligan (G81) did her Diploma in Architecture at Churchill. She went on to do an MBA and then a PhD. Dr Mulligan has been a director of Cambridge Architectural Research Ltd since 1990. Here she recounts a particularly funny story about a cask of ale brought back to College for a light relief party and also a birthday celebration with interesting consequences.

The age of punk was ending; New Romantics were the coming thing. But we had to mark the passing of the era of Mohican haircuts and safety pins, and I had a birthday to celebrate. This was a couple of weeks before our final exams – even more serious for architecture students, a couple of weeks before the final hand-in of our portfolios of completed projects for the year. We had all worked into the small hours for weeks.

Partying for light relief

So, my party would be light relief from our labours. I managed to book the Pavilion and sweet-talk a mate into taping a couple of hours of the Damned, the Stranglers, the Clash and other bands with punkishly threatening names. I bought bags of twiglets and wotsits from Sainsbury’s – catering sorted. But what about the beer?

Beer – to be taken seriously

Beer was taken very seriously: it was the age of the Campaign for Real Ale. A typical lunch at the Spread Eagle – the nearest pub to the Department – consisted of a pint and a ploughman’s (doorstep of white bread, chunk of rattrap cheddar cheese, and a pickled onion) for a total of £0.51. A non-Churchill friend – let’s call him A – boasted that he’d got into Cambridge by stunning the Admissions Tutor with his arcane knowledge of brews.

Naturally I co-opted Friend A in the hunt for an acceptable beer. We needed to transport a cask (technically a pin, the smallest possible size) from the Greene King warehouse off Newmarket Road, back to College. He had a car, a wonderful half-timbered Morris Traveller, and volunteered it for the job.
A cask of beer and a Morris Traveller

Three days before the party, we bought the cask and loaded it into the Traveller. The Greene King chap handed us the spigot, and the spike – with detailed instructions on how to spike the cask and serve the beer in optimum, CAMRA approved, condition. We drove the cask back to College, and I went to get the Pavilion key from the porters.

However, the Pavilion was not available until the day of the party. Disaster! It was imperative that the beer should have a couple of days to settle after spiking. The only solution was for Friend A to leave his car in the carpark until the party, with the cask set up in the back. We would have to spike it there and then.

The spike went in with one blow of the mallet. In half a second, the entire inside of the Traveller was coated with a mixture of hops and froth.

Did the party go well? Of course. Was the beer satisfactory? More than satisfactory. Did the Traveller ever recover from that baptism of booze? No.

College – like a family

College was so supportive, so like a family in many respects, but unlike it in others. It was wonderful to have a room of one’s own, with a lock on the door. I was free – free to plaster my walls with shocking posters and work all night if necessary. I found it was necessary, within the week. That’s Architecture for you: long, long hours and being thrown in completely at the deep end. But Churchill helped me through, with the kind support of Kenneth MacQuillen (Tutor) and exacting standards of Marcial Echenique (DoS). There was also the fine exemplar of the College buildings themselves, and beautifully designed furnishings such as the wonderful fabrics of Lucienne Day. If all else failed, there was the fun to be had with the Gods – productions such as the Insect Play, the White Devil and Alcestis will live long in the memory.

A final note …

Friend A and I have been married for more than 30 years. For some reason, he’s gone off beer entirely.

Helen Mulligan
I have a confession to make. One balmy night during Easter term in the summer of 1993, when the Møller Centre was under construction, I took a friend up the scaffolding and ladders of its tower to sample the view across College towards the Backs. It wasn’t my smartest idea, but I’ve never forgotten that hazardous adventure because from up there I could see all of Churchill in a rare way, and the truth is I felt a swell of love for the place; the library with its lights still on, that awesome Hepworth which even in shadow cast its spell, the quiet quads, seemingly all the same but actually all very different (right?) – the place had a character of its own and I felt proud of it all of a sudden, standing with my friend from Emmanuel who’d braved the journey out of twee town.

Appreciating the College’s beauty
Maybe it takes such a lofty vantage point, some distance, to appreciate the College’s beauty (I have ‘that’ Churchill postcard – perhaps you do too – of a photograph taken from precisely the same spot, though in daytime, that I use as a bookmark). And by a similar token maybe it takes nigh on thirty years to really appreciate my three years spent there.

Because that windy tower we’d climbed felt ambitious and unashamedly modern – a statement of intent on Churchill’s part. And I know now that those attributes are precisely what twenty-year-old me needed in a College.

A quiet way of growing on you
It was a thrilling surprise to get my offer in January 1990, and I worked harder than I’ve ever worked to get the grades, but because I didn’t apply to Churchill,
I arrived with a mixture of feelings; on the one hand some reservation – hadn’t I wanted dusty corridors and medieval oak panelling? – but on the other (and chiefly) immense gratitude, for proving that The Pool does exist, and that with effort one can swim out of it. And the College has kept surprising me. Not in any obvious way, but in the unexpected. Churchill you see, has a quiet way of growing on you. It has on me anyway.

I’d mentioned somewhere (at interview perhaps) that though I was no music scholar, I played the piano a lot. And there was one, in my room on arrival a year and a half later in September 1991. Every year I didn’t expect it, and every year there it was. A belated thank you to whoever thought to supply it. It made a huge difference.

I did so much student drama out of College that I always felt I short-changed Churchill undergraduate life, but I was JCR Welfare Officer for a bit, and almost scored a hattrick (twice hit the bar for that elusive third…) for the 3rd Eleven in a famous (well, to me anyway) win over Peterhouse up on the playing field.

Cool art iceberg

Curiously though, the pull of the College began to grow on leaving and I came back to speak in the FDR about the connection between my History degree and the acting work I was doing. The talk was going OK until I noticed a full set of Warhol ‘Marilyns’ on the wall, which completely threw me. Why was I so surprised? A modern College with great modern art. But what other secrets did those brutalist walls hold…? I asked to be taken around Churchill’s art collection by its art curator Barry Phipps and if like me you didn’t know, the Warhols are the tip of an incredibly cool art iceberg.

Indeed as I write this, sitting on one of the College’s original Robin Day dining chairs that some of us were lucky enough to get our hands on a few years back, the realisation strikes me that Churchill – supposedly a ‘sciencey’ place – is more full of creative surprises than I was open to believing in the 1990s. Churchill College might even be cool without knowing it.

Rick Warden
Forward
Reminiscences of an Undergraduate from the Noughties

Kevin Tang (U06) read Engineering at Churchill then went on to do a Master’s and a PhD in Linguistics at UCL. He is now Assistant Professor of Computational Language Science at the University of Florida. He tells us how he moved from Engineering to Linguistics, how Churchill has forwarded not just his field of interest, but also his career and mindset. He now tries to instil the very Churchillian values – that served him well – in his own students.

‘Forward’, the motto of the College, neatly reflects the College’s influence on me threefold: in interest, career and mindset.

Churchill has forwarded my field of interest

Churchill helped me discover my current academic field, linguistics – a field that is virtually unheard of by most. While the College has a strong focus in STEM areas, it does have a good representation in the Social Sciences, and Arts and Humanities. It was because of this unique representation of Churchillians, I was able to learn and interact with students of other Tripos beyond engineering (my Tripos), and ultimately discovered linguistics. I have many memorable interactions with fellow Churchillians, from discussing the speech organs and fine-motor control needed for articulation with medics, debating the mental representation of linguistic units with psychologists, to learning about language technology from engineers and computer scientists.

Churchill has forwarded my career

I am forever thankful to my mentors at Churchill for their incredible support. My Director of Studies, Dr Christopher Hicks, provided me the unconditional academic support that I needed to forward my studies in Engineering. When I was struggling the most, I benefited from his critical advice and valuable time with extra hours of tuition even during the holidays. My tutor, Ms Anny King FRSA, provided me the clarity I so desperately needed when I was at a crossroad of my career from being an engineer to a linguist.
Churchill has forwarded my mindset

Fast-forward to 2020, now working as an assistant professor in computational linguistics, I see myself as an engineer without borders. By applying the forward-thinking approach and the ingenuity I learnt from Churchill in my research, I conduct interdisciplinary research with academics from a wide range of fields – law, human genetics, speech pathology, psychology and, of course, engineering. Without a doubt, my four years at Churchill College will not only transform my next 40 years but also many more generations to come, since, now being an educator myself, I strive to instil the very Churchillian values that shaped the course of my life and career in my own students.

Kevin Tang
Tamara Williams (U11) read Natural Sciences at Churchill. Today she is a successful Research and Development Manager at Procter and Gamble. She tells us what is so special about Churchill, how its guidance, support and encouragement made her achieve her potential, and recounts the many memorable moments she had at Churchill. She concludes by saying ‘thank you’ to the College and its people.

Its people is what makes Churchill special

Recently returning to Churchill College to meet up with friends for a formal dinner gave me the chance to reflect on my time there. The first person I bumped into was Annie, the Porter who helped calm me down when I attended for my pre-admission interviews, and who was subsequently there during my four years in the College. Annie always seemed to have time for a chat, and a joke and once again she seemed truly happy to see me, wanting to hear about my life since leaving. This is what makes Churchill special: its people and their ability to make you feel at home, providing a ‘family’ for
the time you are there, during your best and worst times; they genuinely care about your health and wellbeing.

Guidance and support

Achieving a Cambridge degree sounds like a daunting undertaking for anyone, but the people of Churchill made it possible for me to realise my potential, providing guidance and support at every stage. They did not let me give up when I found it tough, but equally were encouraging when things were going well too, helping me to appreciate my achievements and not concentrate on what I felt I could not do, which I now know was so very important.

Many memorable moments

As I look back, I remember the wonderful events I attended with newly made friends, ranging from an inspiring formal dinner with Stephen Hawking; Churchill garden parties when we once dressed up as sumo wrestlers; four fantastic spring ball evenings and hilarious and uplifting Ceilidh evenings during exam terms. I still don't think I have ever laughed as much as I did during the Ceilidhs we had at Churchill! I cannot imagine a better way for us all to come together and unwind during a stressful period of time in the university calendar. Churchill was the place where I learnt it is OK to let go and have fun, and where I met friends for life.
Lessons learnt at Churchill

Of course, my four years there were filled with hard work and dedication, studying hard towards my end goal: a Cambridge Degree. Along the way, I learned to believe in my own abilities, to apply myself to work hard for what I wanted. It taught me to be resilient, how to deal with challenges head on, how to cope with stress, and how you can achieve what you set your mind to if you try your best. These lessons have shaped my life post-Churchill and have led me to have a successful career so far, as a Research and Development Manager at Procter and Gamble.

To quote Sir Winston Churchill himself: ‘Continuous effort – not strength or intelligence – is the key to unlocking our potential.’

My time at Churchill truly defined who I am today. I am grateful to all those who helped and supported me along my journey and for that, I say ‘thank you’. Churchill College, and its people, will forever hold a special place in my heart.

Tamara Williams