



Johnian News

Issue 19

Lent Term 2006

Treasure on your Doorstep

The Old Library of St John's College holds a unique collection of books, manuscripts, personal papers, photographs and artefacts. This Collection has recently been Designated by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) as being of 'outstanding national and international importance'.



The Old Library Collection includes over 32,000 volumes, most published before 1800, 270 medieval manuscripts, the earliest of which dates back to the tenth century, and the papers of influential historical figures such as John Couch Adams (the co-discoverer of Neptune), Sir Cecil Beaton (the society photographer), and Sir Fred Hoyle (astronomer and author, and coiner of the term 'Big Bang'). Autograph poems by William Wordsworth can be found alongside the exceptional nineteenth-century photographs of the Victorian polymath Samuel Butler. Elsewhere on the shelves, the Library houses letters and papers belonging to anti-slavery campaigners William Wilberforce and Thomas Clarkson. The Collection is also rich in artefacts such as the Nobel Prize, won by the physicist Paul Dirac, and other medals.

Mark Wood, Chair of the MLA, said: 'Some of the nation's most important collections are in regional and independent museums, libraries and archives across the country. I hope that people will seize the opportunity to see this unique treasure right on their doorsteps.'

Johnians are welcome to visit the Rare Books Reading Room in the Old Library, by appointment between 9.00am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday, throughout the year. No appointment is required for visitors to the Exhibition Area. Details of the Collection can be found on the College website at www.joh.cam.ac.uk/library/old_library/. Both areas are on the ground floor and are easily accessed by the less mobile.



The mortar that binds together the Old Library Collections is the Biographical Archive, maintained by the College's Biographical Assistant and housed

with other special collections in the Lower Library. It is arguably the best of its kind for any Cambridge college, containing records for every Member of St John's – over 30,000 men and women in total – admitted to the College since comprehensive record-keeping began in 1629.

The Archive combines information about birth, parents, schooling and academic careers, drawn from both College and University sources, with notes on later lives and careers and an *ad hoc* collection of press-cuttings, letters and miscellaneous documents. Assembled by Fellows of the College and others, from the eighteenth century onwards, the Biographical Collection is actively maintained today. Together with a related collection of books and pamphlets held in the Working Library, the Archive provides material for genealogists and biographers alike, and is used by the College Development Office, Library and Archives to answer a wide variety of enquiries from Johnians, relatives of Johnians and members of the general public.



The Old (Upper) Library

For further details about the Old Library contact the Librarian, Dr Mark Nicholls (amn1000@cam.ac.uk; 01223 338661), or for information about the Biographical Archive contact Mrs Fiona Colbert, the Biographical Assistant (f.colbert@joh.cam.ac.uk; 01223 338772). ☺



College News

The Sound of St John's Online

For the Johnian community throughout the world, no trip to Cambridge would be complete without hearing the College Choir. We are therefore delighted to let you know about an exciting new project that will enable you to access the sound of the Choir at any time from anywhere in the world.

From March, beginning with *A Meditation on the Passion of Christ*, recorded in the Chapel on Sunday 12 March and directed by David Hill, Johnians can listen to the Choir singing in the Chapel, via audio-streaming and the Web. We believe that the Choir of St John's is the first Choir in the UK and Europe to embark on an innovation of this kind. We are especially pleased with the quality of the sound and are deeply grateful to John Rutter for the time and expertise given freely to the project.

The College has invested in this as a pilot project until July 2006 and, if successful, it is intended to make services available throughout the year. We are also hoping to raise funds in support of this exciting new venture. There is no cost to use this service. However, you will need to have a media player capable of supporting MP3 files installed on your PC to be able to listen online. For more information and to access this service, please visit www.joh.cam.ac.uk/chapel_and_choir/ and click on 'listen online'. ☼

It is anticipated that a **new CD** by the Choir will be available from the Johnian Office in May. *Mendelssohn, Sacred Choral Music by the Choir of St John's College* is the second CD to be produced under the direction of David Hill, Director of Music at St John's. ☼

In September a group of students from the SBR - David Conlon, Paul McFadden, Nicholas Ross and Frank Scheibe - crossed the finish line of the **32nd Berlin Marathon** in aid of Diabetes UK.



Most of the team finished in under four hours, each overtaking approximately 28,000 runners en route to the finish line. In doing so, they recorded a competitive time going into the next race, in Paris. ☼

Corfield Matching Programme - A Progress Report

In November last year, the Master wrote to Johnians to announce the magnificent benefaction from Nick Corfield (BA 1981, Honorary Fellow 2001) to set up a **matching programme for the Access Bursary Scheme**. Under the matching programme, donations to the College for the Bursary Scheme will be matched, £ for £, until the £1,000,000 fund is exhausted.

From September 2006, to accommodate the introduction of top-up fees for UK and EU students, the maximum bursary in the University of Cambridge will have to increase to £3,000 per year. The College, always in the forefront of open access, must therefore raise additional funds to support bursaries at this new level. The cost of endowing a bursary of this amount is £75,000, and a donor can name a fund as he/she wishes. A gift of £37,500 by an individual donor will be doubled by the Corfield benefaction, thereby providing the full endowment to fund one bursary. The Corfield benefaction is similarly available to match larger or smaller gifts for bursaries; in the case of the latter, the donation will be added to our general bursary fund.

Since its launch three months ago, the response has been very positive. To date we have received almost £335,000 for the Bursary Scheme, generating a matched total of nearly £670,000. Donations have come from Johnians throughout the world, ranging from some who matriculated in the 1930s to others who matriculated as recently as 2002. We are deeply grateful to Johnians for this encouraging support. We note that these gifts have come from just under 2% of the Johnian population. If we could raise the participation level to just 5%, we would achieve and even surpass our target of turning £1 million into £2 million by the end of 2006. This would be a big step towards the £7 million that we know we will need to fund the programme in full.

We hope that those of you who have not yet given will be encouraged by the progress made, and inspired to help maintain a long tradition of attracting the widest range of talented junior members to a great College in one of the world's highest-ranking universities. It is a privilege all Johnians share. If you would like to support the Bursary Scheme, please send your donation with a gift aid form (if applicable) to the Johnian Office, St John's College, Cambridge, CB2 1TP. A gift aid form can be downloaded from the College webpages, www.joh.cam.ac.uk/johnian/support/. ☼

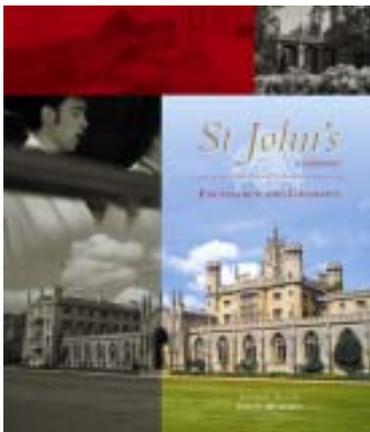


College News

St John's – Excellence and Diversity

Very good progress is being made with the **book on St John's**. Many Johnnians have already subscribed, and many have sent in interesting and often amusing reminiscences and photographs of their time in College.

The shape of the book is now almost complete, and drafting will begin soon. Now is a good moment for people to send in any further material – reminiscences of dons, porters, sport, escapades etc – that they would like to be considered for inclusion. There is an obvious place for anecdote in a book that will view College life in all its aspects.



The **complimentary choral CD** that will accompany the book is also making good progress. This will illustrate the story of the College Choir over three quarters of a century, and will be a unique production that Johnnians of all vintages will be glad to possess. If you would like to subscribe, please complete the form (attached to the brochure) and return it with your payment to TMI Publishing, 2-5 Benjamin Street, London, EC1M 5QL. Alternatively, you may subscribe online at www.tmltd.com. Names of those who subscribe before 1 July 2006 will be included in the book. ☺

The College elected **three new Honorary Fellows** in November 2005. Sir Richard Aikens (BA 1970), has been a Judge of the High Court, Queen's Bench Division, since 1999 and was formerly Presiding Judge of the South Eastern Circuit. Professor Sir John Ball (BA 1969) is Sedleian Professor of Natural Philosophy at the University of Oxford, and a Fellow of The Queen's College, Oxford. Sir Jack Beatson (MA 1994, LLD 2001) has been a Judge of the High Court, Queen's Bench Division, since 2003, and is a former Fellow of the College (1994-2003). ☺

LMBC Sponsorship puts Club on new winning platform. October 2005 was a landmark month for the Lady Margaret Boat Club, embarking on a new

partnership with Bank of America in a three-year sponsorship deal. The Club's sponsorship proposal coincided with Bank of America's increased recruitment drive from Oxbridge and London-based universities. The company was drawn to LMBC's startling red blazers and kit, which complemented their brand.

Sponsorship has contributed to new equipment for the Club, including a new boat for the 1st men, subsidised student kit and race entry fees, allowing more rowers to compete in off-Cam races such as Bedford Head and the major Tideway Heads. The mighty 2nd men's boat was celebrating notable success in the Lent Bumps, bumping four crews to earn their 'blades' and ending the week in the 1st division for the first time since 1998. Bank of America was keen to follow the Lent Bumps race results and enthusiastic to support the 1st men's challenge for the Headship in June.



Bank of America is one of the world's leading financial services companies providing investment banking, equity and debt capital raising, research, trading, risk management, treasury management and financial advisory services. The company is truly global, with offices in more than 30 countries. Bank of America is the second largest bank in the US in terms of revenues and the fourth largest bank in the world. For more information on career opportunities, visit www.bofa.com/careers. ☺

Johnnians will be delighted to hear that a baby daughter, Susanna Claire, was born to **Catherine Twilley** and her husband Richard on 12 February 2006. ☺

The Sir Lionel Whitby Medal has been awarded to Dr Mark Roberts (BA 1991) for his work 'Characterisation of the immune response to vaccine antigens that exacerbate disease in a murine model of cutaneous leishmaniasis'. His work on the development of a vaccine for the life-threatening disease Leishmania was carried out at the Cambridge Institute for Medical Research. ☺



Anchors Aweigh for the Brightside Trust

Sam Davies (BA 2000, MEng 2000) studied Engineering at St John's and was also involved in swimming, waterpolo and the Lady Margaret Boat Club, which she captained in her final year. She is now an ambassador for the Brightside Trust, a charity that helps widen access to education.

Imagine sailing in winds of over 50 knots, with spray coming at your face so hard that you can be burnt by it. Add to this the less than glamorous living conditions, having to sew names onto clothes to identify crew members, eating mainly freeze-dried food, sleeping for only a few hours at a time, having minimal contact with family and friends, and with disaster beckoning at the slightest loss of concentration. At other moments, you could find yourself up a 130ft mast surrounded by albatross, utterly confused at your presence in their neighbourhood. This is how Sam Davies has spent her time since leaving St John's.

Life after Cambridge for Sam began when she flew to New York the morning after the LMBC annual dinner. She joined Tracy Edwards as the youngest in an all female crew training for the Jules Verne Challenge and a round the world 71 day record. A bad storm in the Southern Ocean, halfway between Cape Horn and New Zealand, damaged their vessel



beyond repair and dashed their chances. The crew did not walk away empty handed, however, smashing the Channel Record by 40 minutes at an average of 22.7 knots, which remains the fastest worldwide ocean sailing speed.

Shortly afterwards, Sam joined Dame Ellen MacArthur's Shore Crew for the 1998 Rhoute de Rhum, which encouraged her interest in solo sailing. The sailors have a lot to organise before even crossing the start line, including finding sponsorship, a boat and a race in which to sail, and then getting down to training. On gaining a three-year sponsorship with Skandia, one of her first big races was La Solitaire Affletou. Sam learned to sleep in 5-7 minute stretches through each of the four 500-mile legs, and discovered that pacing herself would enable her to compete effectively in all four stages. Maintaining concentration is paramount as sleep deprivation and adrenaline running high can create a dangerous environment.

At the end of her Skandia contract, ROXY approached Sam to ask her to be their skipper for the Vendée Globe, the race that made Dame Ellen MacArthur famous. With no contact with the outside world, each physical and personal challenge is to be faced alone. As Sam put it, 'Once the ties are cut from civilisation, there's no going back.' Small wonder that more people have been into space than have sailed round the world single-handed. On races Sam takes with her a bottle of John Frieda shampoo, a duck mascot, some oranges, pot noodles, energy bars and a little reading... Last time it was a Robbie Williams biography!



Sam Davies shared these past experiences, and future plans, alongside a captivating set of images at a talk given for the Brightside Trust. This charity was set up in 2000 by two pharmaceutical entrepreneurs to offer opportunities to those experiencing social barriers to education, by providing them with the necessary information, skills and confidence to apply successfully for science courses at university. Cambridge University Medicine and Veterinary Medicine students volunteer to mentor Year 10 pupils to help them achieve their dream. Sam believes that education can make a terrific difference to your life, even if it is not directly applicable to your career. Studying engineering gave her the technical knowledge to understand her boat's mechanics and how to carry out repairs. Her



impressive self-belief, drive, fearlessness, tenacity and love for the sport continue to propel her and make

her a name to watch out for in the future. No surprise that the Brightside Trust chose this inspiring and motivated individual as ambassador for their cause. For more information see www.thebrightsidetrust.org and www.samdavies.com. 🌐



Cycling the Silk Road

In January 2006 Dave Wilson (BA 2005), Chris Taylor (BA 2005) and George Wallis (BA 2004, MEng 2004) set off on a gap year with a difference, planning to cycle 10,000 miles from London to Beijing in aid of medical relief charity Médecins Sans Frontières and the Oxford Children's Hospital Campaign. Here they write about their experiences so far...



George Wallis and Chris Taylor near Trieste (Adriatic Coast)

Having graduated from St John's, we decided that a spot of travel was in order before heading out into the real world. Eschewing the traditional 'backpacking round South East Asia' plan, we opted for something a touch different: a 10,000-mile bicycle ride from London to Beijing, crossing two continents, numerous mountain ranges and some of the world's hottest deserts. Our route takes us across Europe to Istanbul, then along the historic Silk Road through Turkey to Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan before finally entering China for the final 3,000-mile dash to Beijing.

An important goal of our trip is to raise money for charity; we have selected international medical aid charity Médecins Sans Frontières, which is active in many of the countries we are visiting, and the Oxford Children's Hospital Campaign, to build a specialist medical facility for children in Oxfordshire and the surrounding counties.

After months of planning and frantic kit buying, we finally set off on our journey from Trafalgar Square in January 2006. We had anticipated a relatively uneventful trip as far as Istanbul, but so far it has proved to be anything but. After battling through blizzards in Bavaria and passing over the Alps in the depths of winter, we found ourselves in the sanctuary of Croatia's sunny coastline, which we followed as far as the magnificent city of Dubrovnik. Heading inland through Bosnia and the canyons of Montenegro we were stunned by the friendliness of local people,

some of whom even took pity on us camping in the snow and invited us in for the night, giving us food and shelter.

From Montenegro we took a quick trip through Serbia before entering the UN-NATO protectorate of Kosovo. It was somewhat surreal to be waving at smiling children one moment, then dodging a Danish armoured personnel carrier the next. Kosovo is an area very much in transition, with masses of new development uneasily juxtaposed against the gutted shells of war-damaged buildings. Perhaps not an idyllic summer holiday destination just yet, but certainly a unique experience.

Moving out of Kosovo into the rolling hills of Macedonia, we were again struck by people's hospitality: a quick stop at a bike shop for a routine repair ended up with an invitation for coffee, ouzo and a short summary of Macedonian politics. They sent us away with a further litre of homebrew ouzo, refusing to take any money either for the repairs or the drinks. Try that in your local Halfords!

We are currently enjoying a return to the coast in Greece, and looking forward to arriving in Istanbul. We are particularly excited about the upcoming Iranian leg of the tour; despite the impression created in the British press, every account we have seen of travel in Iran is overwhelmingly positive - particularly with the universal icebreaker of heavily-loaded bicycles! By the time you read this, we should be well on our way through Turkey; you can follow our latest progress, view our photos or make a donation to our charities, by visiting our website at www.chinacycle.co.uk. ☸



Chris Taylor, George Wallis and Dave Wilson in Serbia



Dreamtime in the 21st Century

Victoria Nowak, a 3rd year medical student, travelled to Darwin, Australia, in summer 2004 to work on an aboriginal health project with Menzies School of Health and Research (MSHR). Working amongst indigenous communities, she gained a unique insight into aboriginal health, social and cultural issues and kindly discussed her findings with us.



Victoria, Injalak Hill

Could you tell me about your project with MSHR? MSHR is the only Australian research centre with a primary focus on indigenous health. The Healthy Skin Program is treating outbreaks of scabies and skin sores, which will prevent infection and consequent heart and

kidney disease. Continual assessment and treatment is successfully taking place and if this continues can then be applied to other aboriginal communities across Australia.

What were your initial impressions 'out bush'? It felt like a third world country. There are no roads in the villages, only dirt tracks. Houses are ramshackle and poorly maintained. Non-indigenous Australians have built these houses in a western style that is completely inappropriate for an aboriginal community with the extended family all living under the same roof. Most communities are close to water in very remote areas. Water appears in many aboriginal creation stories called the Dreamtime and, practically, it is a source of fish, a place to wash and a means of transport.

What problems are communities facing? Their whole way of life has changed. Prior to colonisation they lived a semi-nomadic existence. Since European colonisation, aboriginal people have tried to marry their traditional way of life with modernity, which has resulted in high rates of mental health problems, vandalism, alcohol and drug abuse. I think this is symptomatic of the fact that their traditional way of life has almost completely gone.

Is there any hope of communities maintaining their traditions whilst adapting to a first world country's demands? Aboriginal art is a major endeavour to make these communities self-sustaining and has been created for millennia. It's done in a very culturally sensitive way in that all proceeds go back to the artists themselves. Music and ceremonial dance feature strongly in aboriginal culture and I took part in a rehearsal for a festival partly funded by Telstra Telecommunications, an opportunity for groups over a wide area to perform their dances in Darwin.

What efforts are being made to improve social and economic problems? In terms of alcohol many communities have opted to be dry so no alcohol is brought into the community or sold in the shop. Communities are trying different schemes,

for example, regarding petrol sniffing, some have opted for diesel-controlled cars instead of petrol.

Attendance and literacy rates at primary and secondary school level are poor and it is difficult to get aboriginal people enrolled on further study courses. If you are aboriginal and you've completed secondary school, money is potentially available for further education but at the grass-roots level much still needs to be done. Effort is being made to employ more vocational teaching methods, and incentives, such as the use of swimming pools, to encourage school attendance are proving somewhat successful.

Do you think this 'no school no pool' philosophy will encourage indigenous adolescents to gain an appreciation of the value of work? Is education the key to the future? Absolutely. If parents are used to living off welfare, the government, perhaps irresponsibly, gives handouts without trying to improve employment in these areas. If they feel there's nothing for them to do then they'll slip into the same cycle but showing them an alternative I think is ultimately crucial in breaking the cycle and improving long-term prospects in all communities.



What was the most outstanding experience of your trip? Viewing a 40,000 year old piece of rock art, protected by caves for millennia, was a particularly memorable experience.

Finally, I understand you will be presenting some of your work from the MSHR at the British Association of Dermatologists' 86th Annual meeting in July? I am really looking forward to going; however I am a little apprehensive because I'll probably be the youngest person there! ☺

Victoria would like to thank the Johnian Society for their travel award and also her tutor, Mr Dormor. For more information, see Victoria's article published in the SBMJ: www.studentbmj.com/issues/05/11/life/432.php



Galwin'ku Community, taken from a 7-seater aeroplane



Johnnian Events

The College's programme of events for Johnnians has increased over the past few years. These events are always well supported and in many cases wouldn't happen without the help of 'local' Johnnians, for which we are very grateful.

In November 2005, **Cambridge in America** organised events in San Francisco and New York to launch the University's 800th anniversary campaign in the USA, which aims to raise £1 billion for Collegiate Cambridge. A diverse and inspiring selection of distinguished academics from the University assembled in both cities to provide an insight into their subject areas, giving alumni a sense of what it is like to be a student at Cambridge today.

David Starkey, a Bye Fellow of Fitzwilliam College, gave the keynote address in both cities and discussed other anniversaries and events that have or have not changed the course of history. His address, which highlighted the influence of both Lady Margaret Beaufort and St John's College, will be published in this year's edition of *The Eagle*. Other speakers included Professor Stephen Hawking and Dame Gillian Beer.

Following both the Cambridge *in America* Days, Johnnians and their guests joined the Master for drinks receptions, which were kindly hosted by Dr Marylyn Djie (PhD 1995) in San Francisco, and Sir Philip Thomas (right) (BA 1970) in New York.



Mr Colin Smith, Dr Marylyn Djie, The Master and Dr David Brown in San Francisco

Many Johnnians, including the Master, Professor Perham, attended these events and we would like to thank you for this support.

Following the celebrations in San Francisco and New York, the Master travelled to Boston to join New England Johnnians for dinner at the British Consulate-General.



Dr Nadia Godin-Heymann and Mr Terry Heymann in Boston



Over forty Johnnians and their guests were joined by alumni of Girton and Christ's College. Our thanks go to Dr Neil Law Malcolm (right) for organizing this event. ☘

Back in the UK, on 12 December 2005, over 120 Johnnians and their guests attended a **drinks reception at Goodenough College, London**. This event was kindly hosted by Roger Llewellyn (BA 1986). ☘





Dates for your Diary

Henley Royal Regatta takes place from 28 June to 2 July. As usual, John Durack (BA 1970) will generously provide a picnic lunch on each day (except for Sunday) for members of the LMBC in the Cricket Club car park. We would like to encourage members of the Club to attend on the Friday for a 'Club Day'.

As in previous years, we would be grateful for Stewards' Enclosure badges for any day so that we can provide entry to current students and recent graduates. Please send your spare badges to the Johnian Office, St John's College, Cambridge, CB2 1TP, as soon as possible or by 21 June at the latest. If you require tickets, please contact the Johnian Office. ☼

The **Johnian Dinner** for those who matriculated up to and including 1946, and in 1954, 1955, 1959 and 1960 takes place on **1 July 2006**. ☼

The next **Golf Meeting** of the Johnian Society will take place on Friday 21 July 2006. Those who wish to participate should contact John Loosley (BA 1962) at john@loosleyj.freereserve.co.uk. ☼

Advance notice is given that the **Johnian Society Dinner** will take place on Saturday 16 December in College. Application forms will be sent out with *The Eagle* in the summer. ☼

Poole, Monday 8 May 2006. Johnians living in the South West have been invited to join the Master for dinner from 7.15pm for 8.00pm at the Haven Hotel, Sandbanks, Poole, Dorset, BH13 7QL. The cost of the dinner is £42.00 per person. If you would like to attend and have not received an invitation, please contact the Johnian Office. ☼

Dr Bob Jordan (BA 1961) will give an illustrated talk entitled '**Sir Edmund Hillary's Schoolhouses in the Clouds: their first inspection in 1968**'. The talk describes the trek that he undertook to visit seven primary schools, which were funded by Hillary for Sherpas in Solu Khumbu. The talk will take place on Monday 23 October 2006 at 5.00pm in the Palmerston Room (Fisher Building). Tickets are not required and no fee will be charged but there will be a retiring collection for the Sir Edmund Hillary Himalayan Trust UK (Reg Charity No 1000153). ☼

Advance notice is given that there will be a **regional reunion** for Johnians living in the North West in **Manchester** in September. Please keep an eye on the College webpages for the date and further details. ☼

The University Alumni Weekend takes place from 22 to 24 September 2006. Detailed information can be found on the University Development Office's website at www.foundation.cam.ac.uk/weekend.php. The College is holding a dinner for Johnians and their guests on the Saturday night and a drinks party on the Sunday. Bookings for the College events should be made through the Johnian Office, while bookings for the weekend as a whole should be made through the University Development Office. ☼

Lady Margaret - A Celebration in 2007

It is just over 50 years since the Lady Margaret Boat Club completed five years as Head of the Mays. The vintage years of the late 40s and early 50s included: winning, at Henley, the Ladies' Plate in 1949, breaking the course record; the Visitors' in 1950; the Grand and, with Pembroke, the Silver Goblets in 1951 and the Ladies' in 1952.

LMBC has had subsequent vintage years, with the men being Head of the Mays on ten further occasions and having a seven-year stretch as Head of the Lents. LMBC women have been Head of the Mays twice (1991 and 1992) and Head of the Lents twice (1992 and 1993). They won the College VIIIs 'B' Division of Henley Women's Regatta in 1990 and the College VIIIs in 1991. There has been a clutch of Blues, Goldies, and national representation by both men and women in the Olympics, World and Commonwealth Games. The last May Headship was in 1989 and they are now 2nd on the River.

There will be a **Dinner in 2007** to commemorate success and show support to current LMBC members. In a tangible form we may wish to commemorate the Club by contributing, for example, to a 'Lady Margaret' boat. A date will be published later this year. ☼

Johnian Office Contact Details

Telephone: +44(0)1223 338700

Fax: +44 (0)1223 338727

Email: Development-officer@joh.cam.ac.uk

www.joh.cam.ac.uk