



Johnian News

Issue 20

Michaelmas Term 2006

Clarkson and Wilberforce

The year 2007 will be the 200th anniversary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act of 1807. While the Johnian Lord Chief Justice, Thomas Denham, famously described slavery as 'the foulest stain that ever rested on the character of the country', several other Johnians were prominent in the ongoing abolitionist movement throughout the nineteenth century. Perhaps most remarkable were the Revd Thomas Clarkson (BA 1783) and William Wilberforce MP (BA 1781) who led the campaign to end the slave trade in Britain.

William Wilberforce and Thomas Clarkson could not have been more dissimilar, but what united them was an unshakeable belief in the moral rightness of the abolition of slavery.



Whilst Wilberforce (left) was not known for his studies at St John's, Clarkson was a diligent, disciplined student and won the Vice-Chancellor's Latin Essay Prize for Senior Bachelors. Its subject, 'Is it lawful to make slaves of others against their will?', affected him deeply. In 1787 he co-founded

The Committee to Abolish the Slave Trade. Clarkson was its organizer and researcher, 'a moral steam engine' as the poet Coleridge called him, and he set about mobilizing the growing public support for the abolitionist movement throughout the country.

The campaign needed a political figurehead and Wilberforce, a popular, independent MP who was friendly with the Prime Minister, was the perfect candidate. Public support backed Wilberforce's Parliamentary campaign but the spectre of revolution, and war with France, dampened enthusiasm. In 1804 the campaign was revived and in 1807 an Act of Parliament abolished the British slave trade. Clarkson and Wilberforce's role in the movement gradually receded but they both lived to see the passing of the Abolition of Slavery Act in 1833.

The College will mark this Bicentenary with a programme of events. A conference on Saturday 17 February, entitled *Campaigning – Then and Now*, will consider the consciousness-raising methods employed by the abolitionists and the issues of contemporary slavery. The anniversary will be marked with an exhibition in the Chapel, and with a musical collaboration between the Choir and a Gospel choir. A University Essay Prize will be awarded and various projects with secondary schools are planned.

A number of projects have been identified that we hope will become a lasting legacy to the achievement of these two Johnians. Among them, we hope to raise funds to support bursaries and travel grants to assist Johnian undergraduates to travel and work in developing countries during the long vacation, engaging in worthwhile educational or medical work. We are also looking to make a one-off capital grant in a selected country to assist with higher education, and to extend our existing educational ties with Africa in other ways.



Thomas Clarkson

If you would like more information about the anniversary and how you can help and take part, please visit the Chapel and Choir pages of the website, www.joh.cam.ac.uk. ☺

Donations to Corfield Matching Programme pass £900,000

In Issue 19 of the *Johnian News*, we reported that donations to the Bursary Scheme since the launch of the Matching Bursary Programme had reached £335,000. We are now delighted to be in a position to tell you that donations to the Bursary Scheme have exceeded £900,000 and we are well on the way to reaching our target of £1m by Christmas. If you have not already supported the Bursary Scheme we hope you will be inspired by the support of fellow Johnians and encouraged to help. All gifts, large or small, in support of the Bursary Scheme are welcome and will be matched until we reach our total of £1m. Many Johnians have taken this opportunity to establish a Bursary in their name, or in memory of a family member or someone who has been of particular significance in their life. If you would like to make a gift, you can download a Gift Aid form from the website, or if you would like to discuss your gift, please contact the Johnian Office. ☺



College News



*Simon Bamber (BA 2006), Jeremy Bamber (BA 1978) and
John Bamber (BA 1922)*

We were delighted to welcome to General Admission on 29 June 2006, three generations of the Bamber family, all of whom attended St John's College. Simon's great-grandfather (BA 1922), and great-great-grandfather (BA 1890), both named John, were also Johnians. Jeremy and John (younger) enjoyed their nostalgic visit back to College to watch Simon's graduation. ☼

Choir Tour to Venice, 8-15 April 2007

Imagine spending a week in Venice visiting wonderful churches and listening to sacred music by composers such as Gabrieli and Monteverdi for a few hours each day. The proposed tour to Venice in the Easter vacation of 2007 is more than just a concert tour. It forms part of a larger investigation led by Professor Deborah Howard, Fellow of St John's, into the relationship between architectural design and musical composition in Renaissance Venice. The project is a pioneering interdisciplinary initiative, involving an international group of architectural historians, musicologists and acousticians.

As well as giving two public concerts, the Choir will carry out experiments into the acoustic properties of a selection of important Venetian church interiors under the direction of its Musical Director Dr David Hill. Pieces from the repertoire of sixteenth-century sacred music will be performed in different locations and recorded in sound and video for future analysis. The project, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Centre (AHRC), is known as the Centre for Acoustic and Musical Experiments in Renaissance Architecture (CAMERA) – see www.camera-ve.org.

Johnians are welcome to participate as listeners. The public will be invited to fill in questionnaires about their reactions to different positions of singers, various combinations of voices and environmental variations. The two celebratory concerts, consisting mainly of Venetian choral music, will be held in the beautiful Gothic churches of Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari and Santo Stefano. Please visit the College's website for further information about the project, www.joh.cam.ac.uk/johnian/events/regional. ☼

St John's: Excellence and Diversity is a handsomely illustrated and thoughtful evocation of every aspect of the College: its history; architecture and gardens; Chapel, Choir and Library; hidden corners and treasures; its people past and present, and the vast range of their interests.

It looks at the daily life of the College today and within living memory, drawing on many, often humorous, recollections of Johnians. It shows how the College community of over a thousand people is actually run. It details the College's impressive achievements in science, humanities, economics, engineering, law and medicine; its great sporting tradition; and its contribution to the wider world of business and public affairs. Not least, it shows how the College has met, and continues to meet, the pressure of change while preserving its character as a single, lively community.

The book will be published in 2007 and there is still time to subscribe at a special advance price of £37.50. Please contact the Johnian Office if you would like to subscribe. ☼



College News

Honour for the Prime Minister of India, Dr Manmohan Singh (BA 1957)

Dr Manmohan Singh, the Prime Minister of India, who was a student at St John's between 1955 and 1957, received an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Cambridge on 11 October 2006. The ceremony was followed by a reception and lunch in St John's.



Dr Manmohan Singh

Dr Singh studied Economics as an undergraduate, gaining a First Class Honours degree. He was awarded an Honorary Fellowship by the College in 1982.

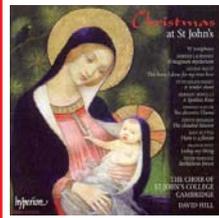


Dr Singh chatting to students in the Master's Lodge

In his speech in the Senate House, he said: 'In the beginning was St John's... My teachers and peers in Cambridge taught me to be fearless and lucid in the expression of one's opinions. These virtues and a relentless desire to pursue intellectual truth were inculcated in me at Cambridge.' ❀

The Johnian Society Committee has recently drawn up a short questionnaire for Johnians to help determine the Society's objectives for the future. We believe there are many ways in which we can become more proactive in the interests of Johnians and also in support of the College itself, and we feel that it is essential for us to know what members of St John's think. When the questionnaire was launched there were a few technical difficulties and we apologise to those who were inconvenienced by this, and particularly to the Johnian Office staff who had to deal with the problems. We are grateful to those Johnians who have already supported this initiative and would urge those who have not yet completed the questionnaire to go to www.thejohniansociety.org.uk.

Colin Greenbalgh, Chairman, The Johnian Society. ❀



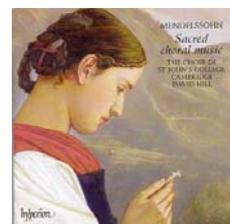
With Christmas fast approaching, what better way to get into the festive mood than to purchase the new College Choir CD, **Christmas at St John's**? This record should appeal to all those who love choral music, with its unusual breadth of musical styles and moods, from spare, atmospheric plainsong, anthems composed by those with special St John's connections, to the popular 'O Come, o come, Emmanuel', and 'O Come all ye faithful'. Christmas at St John's is available from the Johnian Office for £13.00, or by post for £14.00 (inc UK postage/packing). For overseas postage costs, please contact Amanda George in the Johnian Office.

Another ideal Christmas gift is the new St John's College **business card holder**, which is laser engraved with the College crest and the wording, 'St John's College, Cambridge'. These can be purchased for £6.00 from the Johnian Office or for £7.00 by post (UK).



This year we have decided to replace the *New Court* Christmas card design taken by Dona Haycraft with another of her stunning photographs. **The Wedding Cake** measures 18cm by 12cm and comes in packs of five, costing £2.50 per pack, or £3.00, including UK postage and packing. Like the other Christmas card designs that we sell, the cards are blank inside so they can also be used all year round as notecards.

The recently released **Mendelssohn - Sacred Choral Music** CD, features sixteen tracks, including 'O for the Wings of a Dove', performed by the Choir under the direction



of the Director of Music, Dr David Hill, and produced by Hyperion Records. *Mendelssohn* can be purchased from the Johnian Office for £13.00. Please send a cheque for £14.00 (inc UK postage/packing), made payable to St John's College, to the Johnian Office. For overseas postage costs, please contact Amanda George in the Johnian Office.

To order any St John's College gift items, please complete the enclosed order form and return to the Johnian Office or telephone 01223 338700 for more information. ❀



Unearthing the past in South America

Emma Pomeroy (BA 2003) studied Archaeology and Anthropology at St John's. Here she tells us about her excavating trips in South America, the first of which was partly funded by College travel grants. Most recently she has been studying for an MA in Osteoarchaeology at the University of Southampton, under the supervision of Dr Sonia Zakrzewski (BA 1996).



A single burial chamber, Pitakilla, Peru

My first experience of archaeological research in South America was in the summer of 2002, when I travelled with Alex Herrera, an Archaeology PhD student, into the remote highlands of north-central Peru. For my undergraduate dissertation, I measured skulls in open pre-Inca burial chambers at Pitakilla and Paucarmas, which look out over the steep Andean valleys and are filled with disarticulated skeletons. Their heads had been physically reshaped as babies using special head-dresses, to create a permanent marker of the group to which they belonged.

The modern communities live in extreme poverty in this hostile environment without road access or electricity, and yet are supremely generous even to a stranger. I was embarrassed when my host family stopped asking if I wanted sugar in my herbal tea (which I didn't), and put it in the tea before giving it to me. As sugar is very expensive for them, they probably thought I had declined it for that reason.

The following summer, I helped on an excavation in the same region run by Kevin Lane, also an Archaeology PhD student. We spent a week excavating a residential site perched on a 4,800m-high mountaintop, where finds included beautiful carved stone Inca offerings. This made the difficult living conditions entirely worthwhile: subzero night-time



Alpacas on the Inca Road, Peru

temperatures, altitude sickness, limited food, only enough water for cooking and drinking (and digging is dirty work!), and catching fleas from sleeping on sheepskins. From there, we went to

a lower site to record a ruined stopping place on the Inca road, along part of which alpacas (a relative of the llama) are still herded to higher grazing grounds.

Through both Archaeology Department and College contacts, I helped on summer excavations in the Argentinean Andes from 2003 to 2005, and on the hunter-gatherer site of Lapa do Santo in southern Brazil in 2003 and 2005. In north-west Argentina, I excavated with Dr Elizabeth DeMarras (Archaeology Department) on the pre-Inca and (as we discovered) early Inca site of Borgatta, where ruins of walls were interspersed with two-metre tall cacti. Finds included huge pots set into the floor of the houses, in some of which babies and young children had been buried. Each day before we excavated human remains we made offerings of coca (the leaves of which are often chewed by locals in Andean regions to give stamina, stave off hunger, and cope with altitude sickness) and wine to appease Pacha Mama (Mother Earth) for what we were taking from her, as local people had advised us to do.



Emma, measuring crania, Paucarmas, Peru

Excavating in the savannah-like *cerrado* of southern Brazil with a São Paulo University team offered a very different experience. Human skeletons, thousands of years old, had been buried within the mouth of a large cave. The flesh had been removed from the bones (sometimes incompletely) before they were collected and buried in a pit about 30cm in diameter under a small heap of stones. This was painstaking work, each taking at least two weeks to excavate, with numerous detailed scale drawings to record the relationships between the jumbled bones.

I am very grateful for the opportunities these projects have given me: to discover landscapes of indescribable beauty; to see daily life in a very different view from the tourist trail; and to gain fascinating insights into the peoples, both past and present, that inhabit these difficult but breathtaking environments. ☺



Building Bridges: Science meets Parliament

Dr Tamsin Mather (BA, MSci 1999), a recent post-doctoral researcher in the Department of Earth Sciences, University of Cambridge, and currently working in the Department of Earth Sciences, University of Oxford, talks about her experiences in the Royal Society MP-Scientist Pairing Scheme 2005-2006, in which she was teamed with Mr David Howarth, Liberal Democrat MP for Cambridge.



Dr Tamsin Mather with Mr David Howarth (photograph taken by the Royal Society)

How should politicians use science? How do scientists engage with politicians? Recent crises such as BSE and bird flu have brought these questions into focus in the UK and different schemes have sprung up to try to bring the worlds of science and politics closer together. Hence I found myself with twenty-five other UK scientists in the heart of Westminster for a week on the Royal Society MP-Scientist Pairing Scheme. After a morning of briefing about the scheme and the parliamentary system, it was time for lunch and meet-and-greet with our MPs, generally our local MPs. The lunch itself had elements of social experiment about it with MPs turning up, identifying ‘their scientist’, grabbing a plate of food and huddling in a corner to get to know each other, with the Royal Society photographer skirting around us all trying to get photos.

‘My MP’ was the local Cambridge Liberal Democrat David Howarth, a fresh face in Parliament having taken Cambridge the summer before. Trained as a lawyer, he is no stranger to the University, as he is currently on leave from being a Reader in Land Economy. This meant that we shared plenty of common ground, and I found his very legally- and economically-influenced way of viewing issues extremely interesting. The rest of the week’s shadowing ranged from attending receptions, seminars to broaden our knowledge of the political process, and select committee and other

parliamentary working group meetings. Highlights of the week included: witnessing first hand the banter of Prime Minister’s question time; chatting about volcanoes and climate change with Clare Short; discussing UK nuclear policy with David over coffee and then later watching him put related questions to Sir David King at the Environmental Audit Committee; and seeing TV news coverage of things that I had witnessed that day almost every night on return to the hotel – I guess that in some professions this is common place but my latest paper has yet to make it to the headlines!

I was impressed by the amount MPs are expected to know about a huge diversity of issues, although the party system does allow them to specialise to some degree, and also by the Pavlovian response to the division bell calling them to vote, clearing the room on many occasions! After Westminster, the next stage was to arrange a reciprocal visit to the Department of Earth Sciences. We put David through his paces, meeting scientists at all stages of their careers at an informal lunch; a session on



(Photograph taken by Cambridge Liberal Democrats)

volcanoes with seven-year olds visiting the museum; separating microscopic foraminifera (ocean organisms collected in marine sediments, which give us information about climate change over millions of years) from mud with a paint brush; and donning a full body suit to enter the clean labs. Overall, it was fascinating to gain an insight into the world of politics and I even fell prey to the press when a local paper (the *Cambridge Town Crier*) covered his visit, sporting the headline ‘University talk a lot of hot air!’ 🌪️



Sing Joyfully!

Suzanne Szczepnikowicz (BA 2005) is currently studying Law at BPP, Holborn, and has a training contract with Shearman and Sterling. An accomplished musician and singer herself, here she brings us up to date with the exciting careers of her fellow musically-gifted Johnians, Iestyn Davies (BA 2002), Allan Clayton (BA 2003) and George Humphreys (BA 2004).



George Humphreys (left) and Allan Clayton

The words *Souvent me s o u v i e n t* (Remember me often), can be found on the green gates separating St John's from Bridge Street. This could not

be more true for many a Johnian and especially for those hundreds of boys and young men who have passed through them on their way to rehearsals or services in Chapel. They recall a rare camaraderie, a high level of musical understanding and sensitivity, together with varied experiences from almost daily evensongs, tours and recordings. And what a transformation occurs as St John's continues to turn out some of the finest male singers and musicians that this country has to offer!

Three recent products of this exceptional environment - already destined for great things - are Iestyn Davies (counter-tenor), Allan Clayton (tenor), and George Humphreys (baritone). All three began their lives as Choristers at St John's, Worcester Cathedral and Christ Church, Oxford, respectively. And on graduating from St John's they all chose to pursue solo voice and operatic training at the Royal Academy of Music, before going on to professional music careers.

The seeds of stardom were sown from a young age with George when he recorded the title track to the *Vicar of Dibley*, aged twelve. The life of a Chorister is quite unlike that led by other boys of their age. Iestyn suggests that the rigour of regimented daily life helps teach the young boys to read and learn quickly, to develop a discerning ear for their music, and to give the highest levels of performance and professionalism on a daily basis. 'St John's instils in those who sing there that music and singing are rarely, if ever, about yourself, rather about those around you, whether singing with you, playing with you or listening.' Much of this magic lies with those at the helm of the Choir. Their batons become wands both to encourage and direct those singing for them and simultaneously to move and elate those listening to the performance.

The last three Directors of the Chapel Choir have arguably been among the finest choral musicians of their time, namely George Guest, Christopher Robinson and David Hill. Of Christopher Robinson, one of the boys recalls that he 'approached even the smallest of occasions with as much verve and passion, because not to do so would be impossible for him.'

It is hard to believe how quickly George, Allan and Iestyn are making names and admirable reputations for themselves in the musical world so soon after graduating. Their various musical and operatic encounters in Cambridge are almost a distant memory. You may remember Allan singing the national anthem for the FA Cup Final of 2005. And to think he would only have been watching it at the Maypole one year earlier! He was a recipient of one of the inaugural Sir Elton John Scholarships and was also given the Star Award from the Countess of Munster Musical Trust. His prolific operatic and concert engagements have included appearances at the Perth International Arts Festival in Australia performing Britten's *Canticles*, and most recently in his Wigmore Hall debut. He is due to make his Glyndebourne Festival Opera debut in 2008 as Albert Herring.



Iestyn is a similarly well-travelled award-winning operatic and concert artist. His most significant engagements include Purcell's *King Arthur* and the role of Apollo, alongside Ian Bostridge, in Britten's *Death in Venice* for English National Opera. He can also be heard on the soundtrack of the Ridley Scott film epic *Kingdom of Heaven*.

George has just finished playing Masetto in a successful British Youth Opera production of *Don Giovanni* at The Peacock Theatre. In 2005 he sang in the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment's performance of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* at the Barbican and with the Monteverdi Choir in Haydn's *Nelson Mass* at The Proms. He has since been awarded a BBC Fame Academy Bursary and continues to study with David Lowe at the Royal Academy of Music. ❀



Rugby Stars Score for Charity

On Saturday 9 September, St John's College Playing Fields played host to an exciting and poignant tournament. Polly Miller, founder of Dan's Fund for Burns, a charity dedicated to raising money to support burns victims in the UK in memory of her husband Dan, put together an all-day event which saw several international rugby stars playing against an Oxbridge team.

Dan Miller (BA 1993) was killed in the Bali terrorist attack in October 2002. A law graduate of St John's and a keen sportsman, Dan had been with his friends in Bali on a rugby tour, making the Day of Rugby that his widow Polly organised in his memory a very appropriate tribute.

The day began with a Sevens Tournament held on St John's pitches, where the atmosphere was that of high spirits and good fun. Thirteen teams from around the world competed, many representing those lost in the bombings. The Cup Final was played on the University Rugby Ground as a pre-main match teaser with the Aardvarks, a team made up of ex-Edinburgh University students, declared overall winners.

However, the crowd of several thousand had bought tickets to see the many high-profile players who had made the journey to play for the International Legends side against a team of former Oxbridge players - a journey of half-way around the world in the case of the New Zealander Chad Eagle who flew 12,000 miles for the event. The Oxbridge team, with no less than seven ex-Captains on the pitch, unfortunately faced a side coached by England's Matt Dawson, and



The International Legends

including many big names; Nick Beal, Darren Garforth, and Jason Leonard, the world's most capped rugby player, all took part. Although the Oxbridge boys were said by all to have put up a good fight, Matt Dawson saw his team win 29-15. The large crowd certainly went home happy and, delighted with the success of the day, Polly Miller observed, "The boys and girls from Bali would have loved the atmosphere."



A black-tie dinner at St John's for the rugby players and families of those players who lost their lives in Bali concluded the day. Drinks in the beautiful setting of the Backs preceded a dinner in Hall for over 300 guests. Former British Lion Martin Bayfield was guest speaker and kept the large crowd entertained with rugby anecdotes, while a lively auction saw the 'Bali Mars Bar' finding a new owner. Brought back from Bali by one of the survivors, this bar has become a star fundraiser for the appeal. Mounted on a plaque and auctioned five times already, it was sold again for £8,000 with £2,000 being donated by Mars, making this highly expensive chocolate bar worth a total of £25,000!



Polly Miller (right)

With every penny from tickets going to the Fund, over £60,000 has been raised from the day. Polly commented that this impressive total was, 'an amazing tribute to the boys and girls who died in Bali. Certainly it's a way in which they would have wanted to be remembered - with sun, laughter, rugby and beers.'

Johnians interested in finding out more about the charity, or making donations in Dan's memory can do so at www.dansfundforburns.org. ☘



Dates for your Diary

In 2007, the College will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the admission of women to St John's. The College will be marking this anniversary with a Symposium at which three distinguished alumnae have agreed to speak: Judith Slater (BA 1987), the British Consul-General in Houston, Texas; Louise Makin (PhD 1986), Chief Executive Officer of BTG; and Gemma Farrell (BA 2005) who is training to be selected for the British Olympic Sailing team that will compete in Beijing in 2008. The Symposium will take place on 20 April 2007 and invitations will be sent out in the New Year. Please contact the Johnian Office if you would like more information and to receive an invitation. ☼

A reminder is given that the annual **Johnian Society Dinner** takes place on Saturday 16 December 2006. Application forms were sent out with this year's edition of *The Eagle* but if you have not yet applied to come please contact the Johnian Office at the College. ☼

Regional Events 2007

The programme of UK regional events continues to expand. This year, successful inaugural events have taken place in Dorset and Manchester. The programme for 2007 is being worked on and details will soon be available on the Johnian Office events webpages: <http://www.joh.cam.ac.uk/johnian/events/>.



Classic Latino, a piano trio comprising Ivan Guevara (MPhil 1998), Lizzie Ball (BA 2002) and Graham Walker (BA 1999), toured Colombia last March, giving concerts in the Teatro Colón and the William Shakespeare Institute in Bogotá, and teaching for two days at the Conservatoire in Ibagué. The trip, partly funded by the British Council, was intended to raise money for the Fundación Monseñor Isaias Duarte, a Colombian charity that helps to educate poor children in Cali and Bucaramanga. Whilst there they were offered a contract by Sony-BMG, and a return trip is planned for March 2007. For more information please see www.classicolatino.com. ☼

Lady Margaret, A Celebration, Saturday 8 September 2007. In the Lent term edition of *Johnian News*, advance notice was given of a **Dinner** to commemorate success and show support to current LMBC members. Earlier this year, the Women's Second Eight won their blades in the May Bumps, and the Men's First Eight have managed to stay within striking distance of the Headship for 2007. This could be a timely occasion to renew past friendships (the last occasion was the retirement of Roger Silk on 17 August 2002), but will also be an opportunity to launch an **Appeal** to fund a new boat with all the latest technological advances. It is proposed to announce details of such an Appeal at the Dinner on 8 September, and to provide an occasion in the afternoon for some reminiscent boating from The Penny Ferry (formerly Pike and Eel). It is very much hoped that contemporaries will feel able to contact one another and form a few crews to hold a mini-Regatta in the Long Reach. Aspiring crews are invited to contact their respective LMBC Captains at the College, who will ensure that all necessary information is passed on to their successors. Further details and invitations will be sent out early next year. ☼

A holiday drinks party is planned for Johnians and their guests in New York on Thursday 7 December. Details will be emailed in due course. ☼

The Master and his wife, Dr Nancy Lane Perham, will be visiting Australia and India in March 2007. A programme of Johnian events will be organised, details of which can be found on the Johnian Office events webpages. ☼

Johnians are reminded that next year's Johnian Dinners will take place in March and June. The first will take place on 31 March for matriculation years 1967, 1968, 1983 and 1984. The second will take place on 30 June and matriculation years up to and including 1947, and 1974, 1975 and 1976 will be invited. ☼

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