



Johnian News

Issue 4

Michaelmas Term 1998

Johnian EAGLE flies in Lambeth

On 10 July 1998, a new scheme was launched at the House of Commons by the Master and Dr Kim Howells, then Secretary of State for Lifelong Learning. The EAGLE Project has been set up to provide support for students in state schools to help them aim for a university education. The acronym EAGLE stands for 'Encouraging Ambition and Generating Learning Expertise' and the eagle has been chosen as the symbol of the project because of its links with St John's.

The Project has been made possible through the benefaction of an anonymous Johnian who wishes to ensure that school students are encouraged to be ambitious in their objectives for higher education and to help them to gain confidence in their own abilities.

This is a groundbreaking scheme and was described by Kim Howells as a 'tremendous' and 'imaginative' contribution. Professor Peter Goddard, the Master, began his own education in state schools in Lambeth, but the borough has been chosen for the Project following approaches by the benefactor. On launching the EAGLE Project, the Master said 'this scheme is about reaching out to students in Lambeth, and their teachers and parents, to encourage the students to aspire to a university education.'

The EAGLE Project has been set up in conjunction with the London Borough of Lambeth and the first EAGLE students have been identified by teachers at the schools and representatives from Lambeth Education. The scheme will be developed further this year and will involve all Lambeth schools. Should further financial support be forthcoming, it is hoped that the EAGLE Project will be extended to other areas of the country. ♻️

(Further information about the scheme can be found on pages 6 and 7)

Photograph by James Brabazon



EAGLE students at the launch of the scheme at the House of Commons with Suj Sivasadan, Dr Kim Howells, Councillor Ty Goddard (no relation to the Master), the Master and Lady David



College news

The memorial service for Professor Sir Harry Hinsley, former Master, was held on 2 May and was attended by more than three hundred people, including the Vice-Chancellor, representatives of the Government and Bletchley Park, Lady Hinsley and other members of the Hinsley family, as well as a large number of Fellows and College staff.

Photograph by Robin Glasscock



The College flag flying at half mast following Sir Harry Hinsley's death

A number of Johnians have enquired about making donations to College in memory of Sir Harry. Anyone who wishes to honour him in this way may be interested to know that there is a Hinsley Fund which was set up in 1991 and provides support for historians,

with a preference for those studying diplomatic history. For information about making a gift, please contact Catherine Twilley, Development Officer at the Johnian Office.

A video of Dr Henry Pelling, who sadly died late last year, talking about his life and work is available from the Institute of Historical Research. The cost is £25 and anyone interested should contact Mrs Joyce Horn, Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, Malet Street, London, WC1E 7HU.

Dr Mark Carrington, Dean of College, has been awarded a Pilkington Prize for his teaching in the Department of Biochemistry. He has taken the lead in redesigning the Department's new course, including a fourth year for those intending to go on to research careers.

Professor Pat Boyde, Fellow of the College and Serena Professor of Italian, has been awarded a Gold Medal for services to Italian Culture by the President of Italy.

The new **Choir CD** is now available on the Nimbus Records label. Entitled 'Fear and Rejoice, O People', it is a CD for Advent and Christmas. The CD takes its title from John Tavener's gripping and mesmeric new piece, but blends a rich range of English carols and anthems, alongside other pieces, including 'A little hymn to Mary' by Geraint Lewis (BA 1980). The CD is available from the Johnian Office at the special price of £9.50 plus postage and packing.

Jon Fowler (BA 1998) has built up a reputation as an actor. While at St John's, he combined being a Scholar with acting in various student productions. He was in a production which reached the finals of the National Student Drama Festival and went to the Edinburgh Festival this summer. He has won a place at the highly competitive Poor School drama school in London.

Following its successful tour to South Africa this summer, the **College Choir** will be visiting Japan in December. The tour has been organised by Tim Minton (BA 1980), a former Choral Student whose son, Edward, is currently in the Choir.

The tour begins on Sunday 13 December with a concert at Tsukuba Nova Hall. Other venues include Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall, Kyoto Concert Hall and Izumi Hall, Osaka. Further information can be obtained from Tim Minton by email minton@xb3.so-net.ne.jp or by telephone on 044-945-5546.

The Choir Association has set up a new Bursary scheme to support members of the Choir, past and present. The scheme provides one-off sums of money to assist with a musical project, activity or piece of equipment, which applicants are unable to entirely fund themselves.

The first award has been given to Adam Green (BA 1997) to help towards his fees at the Royal Academy of Music. Adam read music at St John's and was a Choral Student.

Anyone wishing to find out more about the scheme and the Association should contact Alastair Roberts, Chairman, The Choir Association, St John's College, Cambridge, CB2 1TP.



College news



Phillip Harrall and Andrew Ridgeway

Lieutenant Commander Phillip Harrall (MPhil 1997) and Brigadier Andrew Ridgeway (MPhil 1989) met in Kuwait City during the troubles earlier on this year. In true service traditions they met on board HMS Nottingham and were photographed by Corporal John Cassidy of the Royal Air Force - tri service support at its best!

The College was visited by more than 100 Year 9 pupils from Margaret Beaufort Middle School on Friday 2 October as part of their project on the Tudors. The school wished to visit St John's because of the links with Lady Margaret.

The Archivist welcomed the schoolchildren to St John's and told them about the founding of the College and Lady Margaret. They then visited various parts of College including the Library, the Master's Lodge and the Chapel. All the children were very impressed by the College and many of them left saying that they hoped to come here as students. It is never too early to introduce them to the delights of the College!



The Archivist, Malcolm Underwood, addressing the school children

Earlier this year, the Lady Margaret Boathouse received some visitors from Australia. The four grandsons of Frank Foister, Boatman from 1888 to 1941, returned to the Boathouse with their families to present a photograph of their grandfather's retirement to Roger Silk, the current LMBC Boatman. Two of the brothers had travelled from Australia to visit the Boathouse, while two of them still live in the UK.



Three of the Foister brothers and two of their grandchildren with Roger Silk outside the Boathouse

Dr Andrew Macintosh, President of College and long-time supporter of the LMBC, thanked the Foisters for their gift and read the obituary of Frank Foister which was printed in the LMBC history. Roger Silk took the family on a tour of the Boathouse and showed them a photograph which included their grandfather. As a token of their appreciation for the visit, the Foister family made a donation to the College's Appeal for the LMBC.

Johnian News aims to keep Johnians in touch with the College and with each other. It is published twice a year by St John's College, Cambridge.

Articles, letters and photographs to be considered for inclusion in *Johnian News* should be sent to The Johnian Office, St John's College, Cambridge, CB2 1TP. Fax: 01223 338727



Working for Oxfam

I graduated in Architecture from St. John's in June this year. Three weeks later, 'flew to Kakuma, in Northern Kenya to take part in the 'Camp Sadako' awareness programme with UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees). This programme is aimed at raising awareness about the plight of refugees around the world, and particularly in those countries whose Governments could be doing more to support those in need, such as Britain

I have been interested in the Developing World for some years now, and spent a large part of my final year at Cambridge working with OXFAM Emergencies Department designing shelter systems for use in hot and arid climates.

The need for effective emergency shelter was highlighted in 1994 during the Great Lakes Disaster, when upwards of 250,000 people fled their homes on a single weekend. The aid community needs cheap, transportable and durable shelter that can be supplied quickly to displaced populations. There could be further substantial population movements in the coming months if clashes in the Congo or the famine in Sudan worsen as predicted.

I have been working on a number of systems using a variety of materials, but among the most successful is a

'poly-tunnel' shelter that uses plastic water piping also being used for camp infrastructure. These designs are being taken by OXFAM to the world aid conference at Merignac in France at the end of September. I also hope to run my own shelter tests later this month with prototypes that have been manufactured and flown to Kenya from the UK by Monarflex, a major European plastics manufacturer that has been supporting my research. I will be working with the new arrivals to the camp from Sudan, many of whom have walked phenomenal distances to get to Kenya and have lost many of their family on the way.

Working in the camp has been emotionally as well as physically demanding at times, but I am getting used to the heat and the razor wire and have good friends in the camp as well as inside the compound. There are refugees here from all over East Africa and from a broad spectrum of life - professors from Addis Ababa University, the Sudanese basketball team and even Somali pop stars mix with nomads from Sudan and those from Rwanda, Burundi and the Congo. I find myself continually amazed at people's ability to make the best of life when all they have left is their pride. However, conditions will become more difficult in the coming months as the Kenyan Government shuts down camps on the coast and moves their inhabitants to Kakuma.

I am now working for a major NGO in the camp designing a number of public facilities and preparing for the construction of the next camp - Kakuma-3. I am planning to return to Cambridge next year to do an MPhil in Environmental Design in Architecture. ☺

Pete Mansfield graduated in June 1998. As part of his course he worked on a project with OXFAM designing tents. He won the College Art Prize in 1996 and was given a Larmor Award in 1998.

If you would like to support OXFAM's Sudan Crisis Appeal, please contact them directly on 01865 313131.



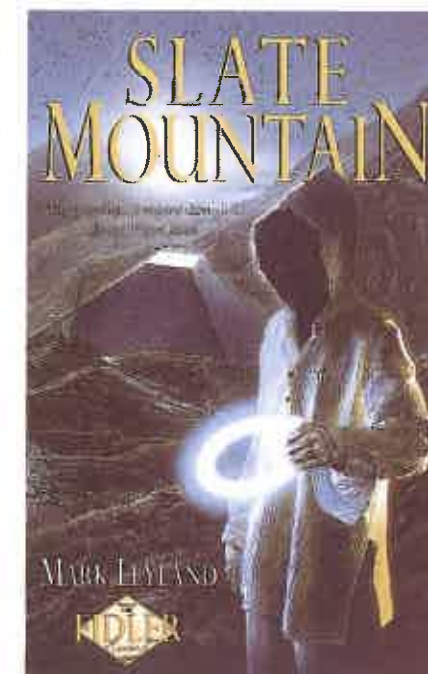
A novel life

When I left St John's in 1971, I had no thoughts of becoming a writer. Now my novel, Slate Mountain, has won a major competition, and is published by Hodder in October. How did it ever happen?

At John's I got a 2.1 in Natural Sciences, specialising in psychology. Fascinated by the subject and very much into student life, I went on to research, completing an MA at Dalhousie University in Canada and a PhD at Sussex. Following a spell in the Scientific Civil Service, I spent a decade developing a career in commercial computing with Unilever, Mars and Whitbread. After 15 years in the UK, I wanted to live abroad again, so I took a contract in Papua New Guinea, managing data processing for the national airline. When that finished, I headed home, stopping off to visit some places I had not yet seen.

I'd never seriously considered writing, but book ideas flitted around from time to time in the back of my mind. One day, in Dacca, Bangladesh, I felt slightly unwell, so I stayed in my room and made some notes. The next day, I started to write, and I've never stopped! When I got back to the UK, my first book was complete - 250,000 words of SF-fantasy epic.

There were many good things about this book, but the fact was I didn't really know how to write fiction. Convinced I'd never want to do anything else, I set out to learn, reading how-to books and attending evening classes. As a result my second novel reached the shortlist of six (from over 600 entries) in a prestigious competition, run by Gollancz and the BBC, but even so, no-one wanted to buy it. I had always known that trying to publish novels would be the greatest challenge of my life. Markets were declining, publishers only wanted sure-fire money-spinners, and I couldn't write the formulaic stuff which offers the best opportunity for newcomers. If I'd had any sense, I would have abandoned the struggle, but I wasn't used to failure and I wasn't ready to accept it. I wrote more books, got shortlisted in other competitions and was represented by literary agents, both here and in the USA. Still I sold nothing.



When I was close to giving up hope, Slate Mountain, a fantasy adventure for children aged 9-13, won the Fidler Award, and was published by Hodder Children's Books on 14th October. I am now working on the follow-up, while my agent talks confidently about screen conversions. But I keep fingers firmly crossed. Writing is a crazy business: it's a nightmare getting started, even established authors have problems selling their books and hardly anyone makes decent money. None of that matters, of course. Once you discover you're a writer, nothing else will do. ☺

Mark Leyland, BA 1971



Mark Leyland with the Fidler Award (left); the book cover (top)



The EAGLE Project

The EAGLE Project has been developed over the last two years in conjunction with the Department for Employment and Education and Lambeth Education. It is a much-needed scheme to provide extra tuition and advice to students in schools in inner city areas facing problems which can lead to under achievement in education. Its objective is to encourage students in such schools to be ambitious in their objectives for higher education and to help them to gain confidence in their own abilities.

St John's has been able to develop this scheme thanks to the generosity and foresight of an anonymous Johnian. Once up and running, the scheme is expected to cost in the region of £150,000 per year.

St John's has long been involved in initiatives to foster diversity and widen access to the University of Cambridge. This project is an important addition to these and its objectives are wider-reaching in encouraging access to university in general.

The College was among the first in Cambridge to set up arrangements, agreed with state maintained schools serving less privileged communities, by which educational and social disadvantage would be explicitly recognised and allowed for in the Admissions process. Subsequently St John's was prominent among the colleges which set up the Special Entry Scheme, extending the principle to a larger number of schools, and this led to the formation of the Group to Encourage Ethnic Minority Applications, known as GEEMA.



Dr Kim Howells launching the scheme

The EAGLE Project is just beginning and the first set of students have been involved in the scheme since February this year. There are nine students from three Lambeth schools: La Retraite Roman Catholic Girls' School, Charles Edward Brooke School and Archbishop Tenison's School. As the scheme develops, students will be involved in the scheme from Year 9 and the

scheme will be open to all secondary schools in Lambeth.



The Senior Tutor and Master visiting one of the Lambeth schools

Earlier this year the Master and Senior Tutor visited the three schools already involved in the EAGLE Project to meet the teachers and students. They were impressed with what they saw and returned to Cambridge confident that the scheme would be a success.

The students already on the scheme are being given extra teaching and have all been given a laptop by Lambeth Education to use while they are still at school. Graduate students of St John's have been trained as mentors and have each met with their students several times. The mentors are able to give the EAGLE students guidance about applying to university and information about life at university and the benefits of going on to higher education.

Suj Sivadasan (MEng 1997), one of the mentors, said 'I am very pleased to be a part of the EAGLE Project. The students are very keen, both to be involved in the Project and in their desire to continue their education. My role comes in the form of giving guidance about applying to universities, and acting as a general point of contact.'



Starting in School Years 9 and 10, it is intended to run workshops in Lambeth schools to raise awareness about university education in general. Members of St John's, both students and Fellows (members of the teaching staff of the College), will visit the schools. Visits to Cambridge are also planned and it is intended to involve parents at this stage as their support will be crucial to the success of the EAGLE Project.

From this basis, students will be identified for the EAGLE project, which will run through to Year 13. The students selected for the scheme will have been recognised as having the potential to benefit from the scheme. They will be given extra teaching from local teachers, designed to extend their educational horizons, to foster their enthusiasm and to increase the chance of their continuing to higher education.

A feature of the scheme is that EAGLE students will have the opportunity to meet and get to know current undergraduate and graduate students at St John's College, as well as Fellows, to find out what it is really like to be at university, and more particularly at Cambridge. The mentors will have close contact with the EAGLE scheme participants and visits to Cambridge will give further opportunities for advice and finding out about university life.

The EAGLE Project has recently appointed an administrator, based in Lambeth, who will co-ordinate the scheme. Elizabeth Peasley has worked for Lambeth Education for a number of years and has a great deal of experience in running mentoring schemes and introductions to university.

The scheme will be built up gradually over the next five years. Eventually it is expected to have at least 80 full participants in the scheme spread over the various school years. The financial plan for the scheme provides for an

expenditure of up to £150,000 per annum when it is fully developed. The College very much hopes that further funds will be forthcoming to allow the EAGLE project to be extended to other areas of the UK.

Already the EAGLE Project has been a success: two of the students have decided to apply to university as a direct result of being involved in the scheme. It is hoped that, perhaps, in the future we might see one or two of the EAGLE students at St John's, but the success of the Project will be judged more broadly on the number of students able to make an informed decision about higher education. ☼

If you would like further information about the EAGLE Project, or are able to support the Project, please contact Helen Watson, Admissions Tutor, at the College.



The EAGLE students outside the House of Commons



News

The College has developed a small range of merchandise in response to requests from Johnians. A rugby shirt and sweatshirt are available, as well as an umbrella in the College colours. Choir CDs are for sale and a selection of Christmas cards. Further details are available from the Johnian Office. ❀

The College has recently agreed to become involved in an exchange with **Caltech**. An initial pilot scheme is scheduled to take place in the Lent Term with one or two Caltech students coming to St John's. In the Long Vacation Johnian undergraduates will go to Caltech to take part in the Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship programme. This new exchange will complement the existing schemes with Pavia, Heidelberg and Uppsala. ❀

The **Oxford region group** continues to flourish and held an event in the Ashmolean Museum Cafe earlier this year. Another dinner is planned and details will be circulated in due course.

In the meantime, the Oxford Region Girtonians have invited Johnians to attend any of their events. The next one is a musical evening which will be held on 2 December at St Anne's. Further details can be obtained from Mrs Margaret Pinsent on (01865) 557631.

Anyone interested in becoming involved with a Johnian group is asked to contact the Johnian Office at the College. ❀

For the rest of term there is an **exhibition** in the College Library called 'The Tale of a Tub: James Wood (1760-1839)'. The exhibition is open from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday and Johnians are welcome to visit. For details of this and future exhibitions please telephone the Library on (01223) 338661. ❀

A **reunion** for Johnians who matriculated in 1978 is being held at the United Oxford and Cambridge Club in Pall Mall on Saturday 28 November. It is being organised by Mark Runacres and Andrew Short to celebrate the 20th anniversary of matriculation. Professor Malcolm Schofield will be representing the College. Tickets cost £15 for wine and canapes and partners and spouses are welcome. For further information, please contact Catherine Twilley on (01223) 338700. ❀

The Johnian Society

The Johnian Society, which helps Johnians maintain a link with the College and with each other, is holding its **annual dinner** on Saturday 12 December 1998 in the Hall. The cost of the dinner, which includes a reception in the Combination Room, is £22 for those aged under 25 and £32 for others. Sir Christophor Laidlaw, President of the Johnian Society, will be in the Chair.

Application forms were sent out with The Eagle earlier this year and the closing date for their return is Friday 13 November. If you have not received an application form and wish to attend the dinner, please contact the Johnian Office on (0)1223 338700.

The Johnian Society **Lecture** will take place on 23 February 1999 at 6.00pm in College. Sir Percy Cradock, Former Foreign Affairs Adviser to the Prime Minister, will be speaking about Morality and Foreign Policy. All members of the Society are welcome to attend the lecture and to bring guests and there is no need to book. The lecture will be held in the Palmerston Room in the Fisher Building. ❀

Can you help?

Thank you to those Johnians who have already offered work experience or careers advice to students. We have managed to match up a small number of students with career opportunities and we hope the numbers will increase next year. We have a particular need for Johnians who are able to offer placements (paid or unpaid) in PR, journalism and marketing. If you can help, please contact Catherine Twilley, Development Officer, St John's College, Cambridge, CB2 1TP, indicating the kind of work you are able to offer. ❀

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