

fitzwilliam
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The Journal of the Fitzwilliam Society

Ex antiquis et novissimis optima

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**Booking forms for the
London Dinner on 9 May
and the Reunion Weekend
26–28 September are on
the centre pages.**

Cover photographs by the Editor

EDITORIAL

One of the great attractions of being a member of Fitzwilliam is that the College is – both from choice and from necessity – a dynamic institution, not one that can be complacent in its effortless superiority. So every year the *Journal* provides a record of development, not just in the physical fabric of the College – although, as usual, there is much construction to report – but in its operation as an institution and in the performance of its people.

On the physical side, the Bursar reports on the work that was undertaken to transform the College's presence on the riverbank from run-down traditional to sparkling modern in just a few months over the summer of 2007. The College now has a boathouse to be proud of – and the old members whose generosity made the project possible should be proud also.

The amenities in New Court have been improved substantially, although in the past period there has been no completely new construction on the main College site – but this is the lull before the storm, as from the summer of 2008 we will be embarking on the new Library and Information Technology Centre. Actually, 'lull' is a hopelessly over-optimistic description of the situation that exists as I write, since we are in the throes of the final stages of detailed planning before the construction starts; we have the design for a beautiful and spacious building, and we need to ensure that it is effective not only when it is complete but also that it is future-proofed so that it can form the academic focus for the College for very many generations of students.

Last year we celebrated the memories of two of the founding Fellows of the College – Dr Stephen Fleet and Dr Leslie Wayper. This year there have been no such deaths to report, but it is appropriate to draw particular attention to two obituaries later in the *Journal*. The highly successful and well-known broadcaster Nick Clarke, who had been President of the Fitzwilliam Society in 2001–02 and whose suffering from cancer and apparent recovery was reported last year, suffered a relapse and died. And Thomas Comfort died from a sudden and unexpected illness in the spring of 2007 – he was a prominent member of the undergraduate body of the College, and some of his contributions are reported in the College-sport section of the *Journal*.

The *Journal* shows that the undergraduate and graduate students of Fitzwilliam continue to be as active as ever both in their academic lives – shown in the Senior Tutor's report and by the accompanying statistics and prize lists – and in their sport and their music and drama.

It is not just the current members who are active. The number of alumni events increases year on year, and it is particularly pleasing to see the extent to which the far-flung alumni are coming together in their Regional Chapters. Not all the continents are represented yet – but maybe next year we will have reports from the missing regions, Continental Europe and South America. And have we any alumni serving in Antarctica?

JOHN R A CLEAVER



Old and New – The Grove and the Auditorium

THE PRESIDENT OF THE FITZWILLIAM SOCIETY

DINESH DHAMIJA

Dinesh Dhamija, founder of ebookers.com, is one of Europe's leading internet entrepreneurs.

Dinesh was born in Australia, into an Indian diplomatic family – travel was in his blood from his earliest years: he grew up in India, Mauritius, Afghanistan, Czechoslovakia and Holland but was educated in England, at The King's School, Canterbury. His first contact with Fitzwilliam had an element of déjà vu about it – he was interviewed by Dr Walter Wyatt Grave (the last Censor of the House and the first Master of the College) who had been his father's tutor at Emmanuel. Grave told him 'You are not to play tennis if you are accepted', but retired at the moment that Dinesh came up – so Dinesh went on to captain the College team; in his final year they won Cuppers, dislodging Downing's fourteen-year winning run. He was a keen golfer and played for the University. In College, he started the Snails Dining Club (known in later years for the intensity of its cocktails!). Between these activities, he read Law.

He graduated in 1974 and then worked for 5 years for different businesses, even selling insurance door to door for about six weeks, and eventually joining IBM; however, he was keen to establish his own business and identified the travel industry to be his chosen sector.

Dinesh and his wife, Tani, founded their first travel agency, Dabin Travel, in 1980 – selling cut-price flights from a kiosk in Earls Court Road tube station. From that small beginning the business developed, and by 1983 they had established Flightbookers, an IATA travel agency which soon expanded into three premises. Over the next ten years Dinesh was appointed as General Sales Agent for a number of airlines, and was eventually made Regional Director for Europe for Royal Nepal Airlines.

Although initially sceptical, he introduced a pioneering travel-booking engine on the internet in 1996 and when the resultant on-line business took off – from about \$100,000 of sales in 1996 to about \$7m in 1998 – he was convinced by the internet much earlier than most people. It was in 1999 that he spun out the internet arm of Flightbookers as a separate company – ebookers.com. After an Initial Public Offering on Nasdaq and Neuer Markt raising \$61 million, ebookers expanded across the Continent and quickly established itself as the leading online travel agency in eleven countries. ebookers raised a further \$45 million in July 2000 even though the internet bubble had burst,



because of the excellent results achieved. In January 2004, he was adjudged Entrepreneur of the Year (2003) by *Business Today*.

The internet highs in 2000 were followed by the bursting of the bubble, with valuations falling and investors taking shelter. Then followed a string of occurrences all deleterious to the travel business: in 2001 the events of September 11 caused extensive disruption to world air travel, and this was compounded by Mad Cow Disease in the UK and by SARS in Asia and Canada. The Iraq war, too, gave travel a tumultuous time. So it was essential to turn round the organization and the people within it so as to pay very close attention to costs – and gross sales at ebookers went from \$25 million in 1999 to \$1 billion in 2004.

In February 2005, ebookers was sold successfully to Cendant Corporation in a deal worth just under \$500 million, almost one hundred times the original \$5 million investment from an 'angel investor' in 1999.

After a brief stint in India dabbling in property and private equity, Dinesh has entered property development in Romania (where his brother-in-law was the Indian Ambassador in 2005). In advance of Romania joining the EU, Dinesh's new company made its first investment in Bucharest in June 2006 and since then has bought 1,800 acres of land to build 17,000 residential dwellings.

Dinesh is married to Tani, and has two sons, Biren and Darun. Amidst all his business activities, his enthusiasm for golf persists and he still occasionally finds time for a round.

A CAMBRIDGE ECCENTRIC

Do they exist today? Surely there must be some. However, one that I knew well was much loved by his 'chaps' or 'boys', depending upon their ages. Some 58 years ago, I was one of his 'chaps'.

My first encounter with the then University Professor of Music, Dr Patrick Hadley, was knocking on his door in Gonville for my first supervision with him. Through the slightly open door a rather gruff voice said, 'Who's that? Come in.' I entered, not to find him in his sitting room or study but in his bedroom sitting up in bed in his pyjamas. 'Ah! Doyle, what have you got for me?' I told him that I had brought the third movement of my string quartet that I was preparing for the portfolio of orchestral, chamber, choral and instrumental music required for the new Music Tripos. The first and second movements had gone reasonably well, but this third was not working out as I had hoped. He looked at it for a while, then looked at me and said, 'When in doubt, write a fugue – it always works.'

All of a sudden he said, 'Ah, Doyle, get me some breakfast will you'. I gulped. 'I'm sorry, but I'm no cook'. He barked back. 'Don't be silly m'boy – in that cabinet, two glasses and the bottle!' Sure enough, there was a half bottle of claret which we emptied and enjoyed whilst working on that third movement – what a first supervision! Later that day I worked on that fugal movement. He was right, it worked.

In the lecture room he was always Doctor, Professor or Sir, but as soon as he left the Music School, then in Downing Place, he threw off his gown and outside joined the groups of chaps or boys who always seemed to be loitering or waiting outside. I soon found out why when I joined them. He took them all down to The Eagle in Bene't Street, and treated them. He then became 'Paddy' to them all! He would never let any one of them buy him a drink, saying, 'When you earn my money then come back and treat me.' Only once do I remember him accepting a drink from an obviously older former chap. 'Double brandy Paddy?' he was asked. 'No, make it a treble – can't taste it otherwise.'

As I said, outside the Music School, he was always Paddy but once inside and in a lecture room – watch out – he became Doctor, Professor or Sir again.

An organ scholar at Jesus once told me, 'As I left him in bed after a supervision he suddenly said, "Ah, before you go, hand me my leg will you?" I said "Your leg, sir?", "Yes, under the quilt." I lifted the quilt and there was a wooden leg which I handed to him. I later discovered two more in his bathroom'.

Several times when his boys or chaps turned up for supervisions at ten o'clock, they were told through a closed bedroom door, 'Buzz off, I'm not awake yet, come back at twelve.' I heard that when one day two Girton girls arrived at ten they were told to — off, come back at twelve. They were very upset and reported it to the College Mistress who took the matter further, but I don't remember any serious outcome. His choice of words and language was quite exceptional at times but was always to be expected.

Thinking again about his wooden leg I was reminded of his asking, 'Anyone got a drawing pin?' If no-one in his immediate company could produce one, he would do so from his pocket, then lift his trouser leg slightly and press it in firmly saying, 'That'll hold it, it's always coming down.' The effect on those who were not aware of his false leg was often very interesting to see!

He was a stickler for punctuality – a minute late for one of his lectures and you were for it! The Saturday nearest 11 November in those far-off days was always students' Rag Day – in aid of the British Legion Poppy Day Fund, when students in all kinds of odd gear were perched on trucks and lorries all loaned by local farmers and traders. They rattled tins and buckets at all the townspeople as they passed through the streets but always gathered many hundreds of pounds for the Fund year by year.

On one of those Saturdays we found Paddy was due to give a lecture on 'False relation in the Music of Henry Purcell'. A Saturday lecture was quite unusual but the room was full at five minutes to eleven waiting for him to sweep in. But he didn't. Two minutes past, no Paddy. Five minutes past, still no Paddy. About ten minutes later, two 'chaps' left the room to look outside – perhaps he had been waylaid. A few minutes later they burst back in shouting, 'No need to wait, we've just seen Paddy on a cart in Regent Street, playing a French horn with a band collecting money for poppies.' The following Monday, he appeared somewhat apologetically – 'Sorry, gentlemen that I wasn't here on Saturday, I'll put it in next week free!' He had done his bit for the British Legion, having lost a leg in the First World War.

Some apparently found his lectures dull and uninspiring and often attendances dropped alarmingly, but I enjoyed them and found them perfect for my chosen periods in music – Medieval and Tudor. We were often warned about writing our own works in a bogus modal idiom or 'bogal' as he called it. 'You will never be able to equal RVW (his friend Ralph Vaughan Williams); he knew just how far to go.'

Yes, a truly loveable eccentric but – as I asked at the beginning – do they exist in Cambridge like him today?

DENNIS DOYLE (Music 1946)

ACROSS THE DECADES

Sixty years ago – 1947

W.S. Thatcher reported in the 1947 *Journal* on the post-war restoration of the operation of Fitzwilliam House; as the student numbers built up, academic issues arose as did more practical matters – and bureaucracy increased:

Most of the problems before us To say they have been solved would be inaccurate. ... Pressures have been maintained. We finished the academic year with 288 in residence and shall begin the new one with well over 300.

One also hopes that there may be more teachers and supervisors. They naturally can appear only slowly as they are trained and as money is found with which to pay them. There is no doubt that the Cambridge system of supervision in addition to lectures is a fundamentally good thing. It makes a vast difference in the quality of scholarship

Dining is a constant difficulty. ... I do not think our men are adequately fed, but what can we do with 1d¹. worth of meat per man. At the beginning of the Michaelmas Term we were curtly told by the Food Office that our 'fats' would cease as there had been an over issue in the Easter Term. With difficulty we had the 'docket' modified. In the Easter Term came the order to reduce bread and potato consumption. All very difficult to do when there is nothing to fall back upon save grass. ...

One grave drawback of all this greatly increased administration is that we have little or no time to meet and know the men. This, I consider, to be a very grave matter. In University education it is essential that seniors should meet and know their men. No real education is possible without it.

The war continued to cast its shadow in other ways. For instance:

M.F. Smith called in December 1946. He was Medical Officer with the Cambridgeshires when they were captured by the Japanese in Malaya and had a long experience as a prisoner. He was Medical Officer to the men working on the 'Death Railway'.

But normality was returning, and the Debating Society and the Historical Society resumed their meetings, as did the Music Society (with a certain N.G.J. Pounds as President – he maintained his musical interests throughout his long life and, following his death last year, there is now an annual concert in his memory) and several sporting clubs.

Fifty years ago – 1957

The first open entrance awards offered by Fitzwilliam were established, funded by a benefaction and by a livery company, perpetuating a name and reinforcing a link that has persisted over half a century – the lists later in the *Journal* show the award of Clothworkers' and Clough scholarships in the summer of 2007. But note that this private generosity has long outlasted student support from Government sources especially since, at that time, it was possible for an undergraduate to live comfortably on a State Scholarship!

An examination was held in February for the award for four Entrance Exhibitions, valued at £40 per annum for three years to Fitzwilliam House. These awards qualify for supplementation by the Ministry of Education to State Scholarship level. Of these Exhibitions, two have been provided by a bequest from the late Mr R.H. Clough and the other two by the Clothworkers' Company. The Exhibitions may be awarded in any subject taken in the Entrance Examination and the Censor of Fitzwilliam House has the final decision about the awards.

Forty years ago – 1967

Fitzwilliam College had recently moved to full collegiate status and at the 1967 New Year Dinner the Vice-Chancellor (Mr A.L. Armitage, President of Queens') spoke:

It is my privilege as Vice-Chancellor to propose the toast of the College on this historic occasion – the occasion of the Foundation Dinner to celebrate the incorporation on the ninth of September [1966] of Fitzwilliam College as a College in the University. It is now a matter of history that Fitzwilliam College has become in order of foundation the twenty-first College of the University. ... It is a fitting testimony to the strength, the growth and the adaptability of the Colleges that in the near seven centuries partnership of College and University in Cambridge, it is the twentieth century that is likely to see the establishment, or the completion of the establishment, of the largest number of new Colleges. That is to say the incorporation of at least nine new Colleges of which Fitzwilliam College is the fourth There has been no such movement in collegiate development in the University since the foundation of the six Colleges of the sixteenth century.

Not every aspect of the development pleased everyone, and the then Editor of the *Journal* (John Adams, who has maintained a lifelong association both with the Fitzwilliam Society – retiring last September as Honorary Secretary – and with the Billygoats) reported:

¹ £1/240; adjusting crudely with the RPI, about 12p today

It may be appropriate here to ask 'What's in a name?' There are many who have already expressed their regret that the new title is Fitzwilliam College – the objection being to the latter half. ... There are those who knew Fitzwilliam in its earlier days who maintain that 'Fitzwilliam Hall' would be the better choice. Whilst others think that 'House' it was and 'House' it should remain. They cannot understand why it should be anything else. But 'College' it is – and the name ... will tell the world of Fitzwilliam's new status.

As well as the change in status, material progress continued. The first phase of the buildings designed by Sir Denys Lasdun had been occupied by Fitzwilliam House on Midsummer Day 1964, the dining hall being used for the first time for the Degree Day lunch. The

residential ranges continued under construction, and the Master (Walter Wyatt Grave, who was also the last Censor of Fitzwilliam House) wrote:

Other news is of buildings. The second stage of the building programme, designed to provide accommodation for something over two hundred men, was due to be completed in July [1966]. Considerably before then, however, it had become plain that a shortage of bricks during the winter of 1964–65 had meant that the second stage would not be ready in time; and in the result it was only by a narrow margin that the South Wing was finished, or nearly enough finished, and occupied at the beginning of the Michaelmas Term. The remainder is due for completion at the end of March, and as I write a pneumatic drill is performing its spasmodic task just outside my door



Lasdun buildings – forty years on

JRAC

THE MASTER'S LETTER

JRAC



There are many pleasures associated with the current role I have the honour to play in the life of the College. One of them is to witness, at the Annual Reunion, the pride and awe on the faces of those who have not seen Fitzwilliam for many years. For they register a mixture of admiration and envy at the physical transformation of the place. They remember the more limited facilities of their own student days, whether in the years when the present College was only an aspiration or during those, not long after moving to its post-1960s location, when it probably seemed distinctly unfinished. In that respect, and by contrast, the Library and IT Centre now being built will bring to triumphant completion the full potential of the site, with its beautiful grounds so much more captivating than the squared-off turf characteristic of the Cambridge collegiate landscape. Yet mere buildings are only the most visible dimension of the College in its modern form. For what the September visitors do not see is what is recorded in the *Journal*: the exceptionally hard work of the Fellows and staff; and, above all, the astonishingly rich collective talents of the students of today, active both within the College and across the University, in every

field, and, indeed, further afield, taking their energy and enthusiasm on European tour or to distant parts of the globe. That they are able to extend their horizons in this way is often as a direct result of the personal generosity of alumni. And integral to the changing culture of UK higher education are the repeated reminders, at a local level, of how much this generation of Fitzwilliam students owes to their predecessors.

Another pleasure has been to meet former students either in this country or overseas. Their careers often may have prevented them from enjoying first-hand experience of the College's recent development. They rely on the *Journal*'s photographs, or a travelling PowerPoint presentation, to see what has been achieved. But their reactions mirror those of their peers able to attend a Reunion. And they too display an abiding interest in, and affection for, Fitzwilliam. In the year ahead, I shall be meeting many more of them: firstly in North America this coming autumn, when our coast-to-coast itinerary allows my wife and I to host occasions in a dozen different cities; and then, next spring, in the Far East and Australasia.

The timing is not fortuitous. Careful readers of the *Journal* will pick up passing references to the imminent launch of the 150th Anniversary Appeal. Every college is now engaged in a similar quest for financial self-sufficiency in order to sustain what is unique about a Cambridge education. But our task, given our shorter history and relatively less secure funding, is comparatively greater. So we shall have to garner support from our most valuable asset, precisely that loyalty and affection which our students, wherever they now live, retain for Fitzwilliam long after they have moved on to pastures new.

For the *Journal* also reminds us what an extraordinarily competitive place Cambridge remains. Reports from the societies and sports-teams speak of the 'largest-selling events', the 'highest profile', the vicissitudes of semi-finals, Novice victories over the opposition and league positionings. This is equally true of academic performance. The Senior Tutor refers to a record number of Firsts; and, in league-table terms, that meant we were just in the top half, the best-placed modern college and well ahead of some more famous institutions now urgently engaged in seeking to overtake us again. 2007 was a pretty good year. But Fitzwilliam must go on from strength to strength. So we are now planning for the future and the continuing challenges ahead.

ROBERT LETHBRIDGE

COLLEGE NEWS

This year, there are several personal promotions and appointments for members of the Fellowship. Chief amongst these is the appointment of Dr David Thompson, now the Senior Fellow of the College, as Professor of Modern Church History in the Faculty of Divinity with effect from 1 October 2007.

From the same date, Dr Pietro Liò has become a Senior University Lecturer in the Computer Laboratory and Dr Émile Perreau-Saussine has been appointed to a Newton Trust CTO Lectureship in the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences. Dr Kourosch Saeb-Parsy has been appointed Clinical Lecturer in Transplantation at the School of Clinical Medicine.

Amongst the Honorary Fellows, Professor Brian Johnson, who was Master from 1999 to 2005, was elected into the European Academy of Sciences. Dr David Starkey, whose election to an Honorary Fellowship was reported last year, was awarded a CBE for services to History in the Queen's Birthday Honours in June 2007.

The College was strongly represented at the Cambridge University alumni weekend, with three members giving lectures to the alumni and their guests. The Master lectured on *Between the Disciplines: Reading Manet's Paintings*, Life Fellow Professor Sir Anthony Bottoms lectured on *Going straight – What hope for persistent young offenders?*, and the President of the College, Dr Michael Potter, lectured on *Wittgenstein in conflict: How the Tractatus was born*. Dr Potter also gave the William Reinhardt memorial lecture at the University of Colorado at Boulder in March 2007, with the title *Does set theory need replacement?*



Dr David Starkey, CBE

Dr David Cardwell was appointed Deputy Head of the Department of Engineering, with responsibility for graduate students, and also was elected to the board of the European Society of Applied Superconductivity. Dr Rachel Camina was on the local organising committee of the 13th *General Meeting of European Women in Mathematics* in September; there were more than eighty delegates, and they stayed in Fitzwilliam.

In political life, two members of the College received ministerial appointments in the summer of 2007. Mr Andy Burnham, MP for Leigh, Greater Manchester, was appointed to the Cabinet as Chief Secretary to the Treasury and has become a member of the Privy Council; in January 2008 he became Secretary of State at the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. He read English and received his BA in 1991, and formerly was Minister of State for Delivery and Quality at the Department of Health. The MP for South Dorset, Mr Jim Knight (who read Social and Political Sciences and received his BA in 1987, and was formerly Minister of State to the Department of Education and Skills), was appointed Minister of State for Schools and Learners in the new Department for Children, Schools and Families.

We congratulate Sebastian Westenhoff, who held a Research Fellowship at Fitzwilliam and now has moved to the University of Gothenburg, in Sweden, on the receipt of his Ph.D.; his research at the Cavendish Laboratory into the physical properties of semiconducting polymers has resulted in a dissertation on *Excitonic coupling in polythiophenes*. Another Research Fellow, Thomas Smith, received his Ph.D. from the University of London for his dissertation on *The Metaphysics of Social Groups*. We congratulate him for this, and also for his appointment to a Lectureship in the Department of Philosophy, University of Manchester. With the passage of time, two further Research Fellows, Dr Luke Robinson and Dr Matthew McCullach, have also moved on from Fitzwilliam, as has Dr Eran Guse (Research Associate in Economics) who from January 2008 holds a Visiting Assistant Professorship at the Krannert School of Management, Purdue University.

Dr András Zsák, formerly a Research Fellow and recently at the University of Nottingham, has been appointed to a Teaching Fellowship for 2007–08 at the Department of Pure Mathematics, University of Leeds. He will be a member of the Functional Analysis research group where Jonathan Partington (who was a Fellow of Fitzwilliam from 1984 to 1989) is Professor.

Other Fellows have moved on to higher positions. Dr Alan James, who was an Associate Lecturer in the Department of Geography, is now University Lecturer in Human Geography at Queen Mary, University of London. And Dr Tom Warke, formerly College Lecturer in Economics, has moved to China, where he is Freeman Foundation Professor of Economics at the Hopkins–Nanjing Center, which is run jointly by Johns Hopkins University and Nanjing University. Dr Amy Morris, who was a University Assistant Lecturer in the Department of English, has also left the Fellowship.



Professor Derek Fray

And there have been several retirements. Professor Derek Fray retired from the Department of Materials Science, and is now Emeritus Professor of Materials Chemistry. He was elected to a Life Fellowship of Fitzwilliam from October 2007. Derek joined the College in 1972 and has given it long and committed service – contributing particularly on the bursarial side through an era when the College was under considerable financial pressure. He was Junior Bursar from 1975 to 1983, then Tutorial Bursar and Tutorial and Estates Bursar, and was Bursar from 1986 to 1988. He served also as Librarian and directed studies in Materials Science.

Another Fellow who has retired after many years of association with the College is Professor John Willis FRS, who is Professor Emeritus of Theoretical Solid Mechanics. John joined the College initially in 1966, but was away from Cambridge from 1972 to 1994 as Professor of Applied Mathematics at the University of Bath, which recently has awarded him an Honorary D.Sc. Professor Graham Stanton has now retired as Lady Margaret's Professor of Divinity. He joined the

College in 1998. Both Professor Willis and Professor Stanton maintain close links with the College, with the formal titles of Bye-Fellows.

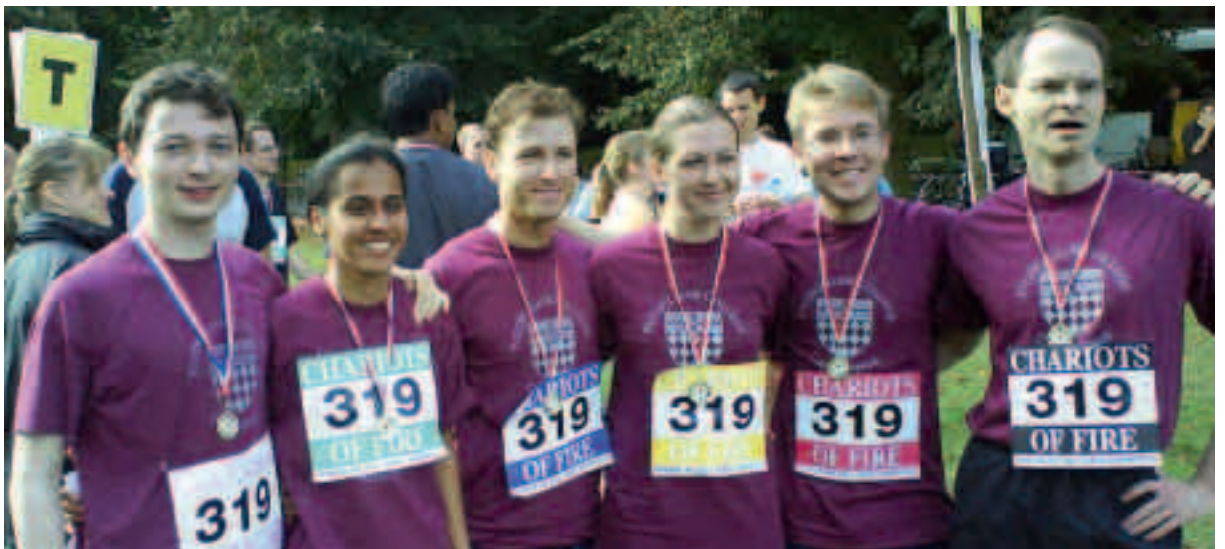
Also appointed to a Bye-Fellowship from 1 October 2007 was Iain Reid, to coincide with his post of Development Director; himself an alumnus, he will be much engaged in raising funds from alumni.

We greatly regret to report the death of Tom Comfort, who matriculated in 2004 and was reading Economics and Social and Political Sciences. Tom died on 28 March 2007 following an unexpected illness and a memorial service was held in the College a month later; his obituary appears elsewhere in the *Journal*.

The musical life of the College continues at a very high level and in 2006–07, as usual, the Fitzwilliam String Quartet played a prominent part. We note with regret the death from cancer of Dr Christopher Rowland (Trinity 1965–68) who was the leader of the Fitzwilliam Quartet from 1974 for ten years and subsequently became head of chamber music at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester.

Many activities of the graduate and undergraduate students are reported in the *Journal*, but it is appropriate to mention here some particular achievements. The 2007 College Mooting Competition was won by Eleanor Goodfield, who came up in 2004 and read Music and then Law. In the Brewster Debate, set up in memory of Rev Lester Brewster (1948), Eleanor Goodfield was again prominent as the best speaker, followed by first-year Law student Eleanor Whiteway, with Richard Benwell as the best speaker from the floor; Richard came up in 2001 and was at that time taking a Master of Studies in International Relations prior to embarking on his Ph.D.

Outside the College, Francisco Monteiro, a third-year PhD student working with the Digital Technology Group of the Computer Laboratory, and his supervisor Dr Ian Wassell received the €3000 best-paper award during the 10th European Conference on Wireless Technology for a paper at the European Microwave Week 2007. Matthew Neal (who in 2006 was Scholar of the Year and winner of



The Chariots of Fire team. L to R: Richard Benwell, Kiran Singh, András Zsák, Laura Frost, James Adams (captain), Murray Brown

the University's Gladstone Memorial Prize for the best Part 2 dissertation in History) was runner-up in the Royal Historical Society and History Today competition for the undergraduate dissertation of the year. One of the winners in the Cambridge University Entrepreneurs £1K Business Ideas Competition was second-year Engineering undergraduate Christina Zhang, for her multi-functional handset charger. And Edmund Ward, a third-year Ph.D. student in Materials Science, won first prize in a science news writing competition run by *Materials Today*.

The College Silver has gained from a donation from Professor Norman Pounds, whose obituary was published last year – the salver was a gift to him from his Tutorial pupils in his days at Fitzwilliam House. In addition, a large candelabrum and a pair of candelabra have been loaned by John Keatley.

And finally, the College runners in the Chariots of Fire relay race did not quite maintain their traditional placing at the top of the inter-college competition this year, being merely second-fastest. One of the star performers from previous years, Dr Peter Tregear, has returned to the Antipodes and was much missed – but he has maintained his links with the College and can be found elsewhere in the Journal reporting on the activities of the Melbourne Chapter of the Alumni.

JRAC



N.J.G. Pounds, from the staff and Students of Fitzwilliam House as a token of their esteem and in appreciation of all that he has done during his six years as Tutor to foster and encourage not only the academic but also the common life

EATING A HAT, EN-SUITES AND OTHER PROJECTS

Summer 2007 was a busy time. At the end of it, the College had a new Boathouse and 86 rooms in New Court had full en-suite facilities. And the Bursar had to eat his hat, having promised to do so if the funds for the Boathouse were raised.

Both these projects had very tight timetables – six months for the Boathouse and three for New Court. The old Boathouse was vacated after the Lent races, boats and racking going to different storages, and was demolished in April (with some difficulty, because disconnection of the gas supply took an age, and one corner had to be left standing while new piled foundations were put in for the rest of the footprint). By the Reunion at the end of September, boats and racks were back and rowing from the new Boathouse was a reality. The design had been considered carefully to promote speed, with a steel frame and an industrial roof cladding, so that internal work



The old boathouse

could begin before the walls were complete. Thank goodness, because there were plenty of hitches – not least the need to replace the site manager, who became seriously ill. The Bursar donned his hard hat (College crest on the front, of course) cycling frequently to chivy and encourage the Contractor, Marriott, who pulled out all the stops to recover lost progress and delivered in time – just – and was rewarded by the plaudits of assembled companies at the three ‘openings’. At one of these, Graham Nutter (1966) and Ken Olisa (1971) presented a monstrous mortar-board with black icing to ensure that the Bursar’s promise was kept. Luckily, there were plenty of hungry Billygoats in the vicinity to help!

If six months was tight for the Boathouse, three was frantic for putting full en-suite facilities into every student room in New Court. It had been carefully planned, the two different types of ‘pod’ (one French, one English) being given trial installations at Easter. It needed to be, because they had to go in at the rate of one a day. And then there was the little matter of replacing the IT wiring and installing smoke detectors in every room as well as upgrading fourteen kitchens, twenty-four bathrooms and a similar number of store rooms. It was a bit exciting at times, but at the Reunion members stayed in three of the four staircases and by 1 October all the rooms were ready for student occupation. The net effect was a doubling of the number of fully en-suite rooms in the College and real progress towards the goal of 250 such rooms to complement the capacities of the Hall and the Auditorium as conference revenue generators.

What next? It is bad for Bursars to be idle, so preparation is under way for the start of the new Library



Construction proceeding – fast enough?



JRAC

The new boathouse

JRAC



The Master and Ray Kelly at the first opening ceremony, in September

Open or not?

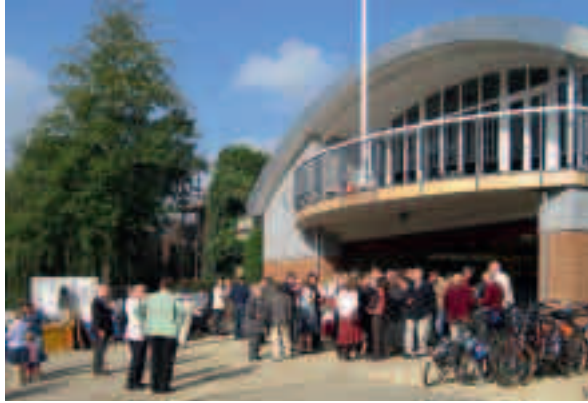
‘Where were you yesterday?’
 ‘Up at Fitzwilliam College for one of the openings of the new boathouse’
 ‘One of the openings?’
 ‘Oh yes. Fitzwilliam always does more than the other Colleges. Any College could have staged only one opening and that would have been a bit boring.’
 ‘What differentiated these openings then?’
 ‘Well, the first opening, which I attended, was The official opening by the former Master on 22 September. However, the boathouse wasn’t finished at that time’.
 ‘So?’
 ‘Well, work continued and yesterday, 14 October, we had The celebration of the completion of the boathouse.
 ‘Now I understand. All is clear. So that’s it then.’
 ‘No it isn’t. The boathouse wasn’t actually completed. There’s still work to be done’.
 ‘So there could well be at least a third opening of the boat house when the work is actually all done.’
 ‘Quite possibly’
 ‘Will you attend?’
 ‘Wouldn’t miss it.’

DEREK READ (1952)



JRAC

Boathouse benefactors



The second phase of opening, on 14 October



The Bursar's hat, and other refreshments

and IT Building on 30 June 2008, for completion on 30 September 2009. In 2003, archaeologists, to their dismay, had found nothing on the site, so they have been given another chance with lowered expectations, only to prove Fitzwilliam the oldest College in Cambridge – sort of. Continuous occupation of the College site since the Bronze Age has been proved, with the discovery of worked antler, followed by pottery fragments from the Iron Age, Roman cattle bones and Mediaeval pottery too. All this without raising the Bursar's blood pressure, because the archaeological work is out of the way well before construction in earnest is to start. Next, the myriad services criss-crossing the site need to be diverted so that the life of the College can continue without disruption.

Architecturally, the new building promises to rival the Chapel and the Auditorium as a winner of awards, with a stunning circular reader stair-tower – an idea derived from the Château de Blois – and providing a great boost to the academic aspirations of the College with a very modern marriage of IT and books. A beautiful addition to the gardens is also planned in the treatment of the court between The Grove and the oak-clad façade of the Library.

For good measure, the College has purchased 1 Halifax Road (opposite us across the Huntingdon Road) where Planning Consent is imminent for a fifteen-room hostel for graduate students to be built, which will address half the current graduate housing shortfall. So, summer 2008 sounds busy too.

CHRISTOPHER PRATT



A New Court room, with an en-suite pod unit fitted