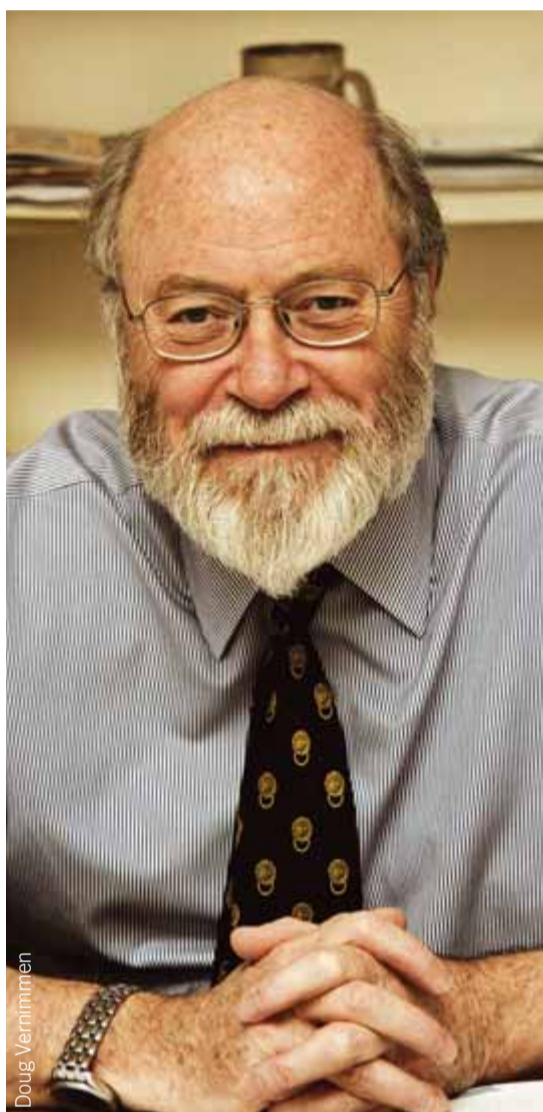


# Brazen Notes



Issue 8 | Autumn 2008

## A new year for Brasenose



Doug Vermimmen

As I begin to write this contribution for the Brazen Notes, the new undergraduates and graduates have already arrived. In fact, today is Matriculation Day, and they are all being carefully manoeuvred around Old Quad so that they can be recorded in photographic form for posterity. Seeing so many new faces coming into Brasenose is always fantastic. This year we have an even larger number of graduate students arriving and fortunately we have the newly-finished Hollybush Lodge in which to accommodate many of them. It is a great addition to the facilities we have for our student body.

I want to bring you briefly up to date on developments in the Alumni Relations and Development Office. Robin Sharp, our first Development Director, is now moving on to become the Development Director at the RSA. She has done a splendid job for us and we now have our programme to create links with our alumni and to raise funds for BNC up and running. We will miss Robin but have already taken steps towards recruiting a new Director.

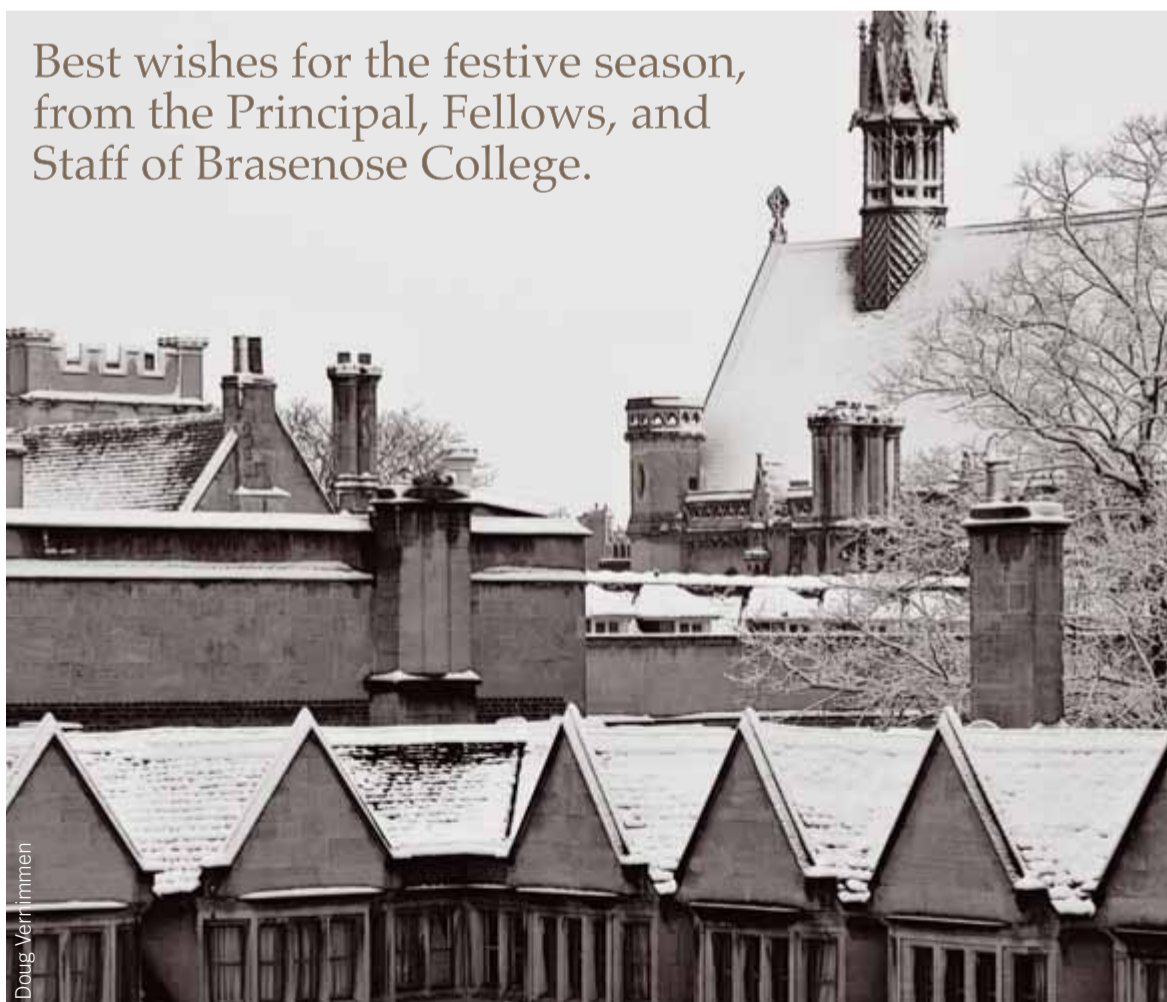
The cloud that hangs over all of our heads at the moment is the current economic climate. It will affect all of our fundraising activities both in the College and in the University. However, as many of you will have heard me

say, development is not only about fundraising, it's also about getting in contact with our alumni and seeking their help in promoting the interests of the College and the University in the long term. A positive, supportive alumni community is absolutely vital for the future of Brasenose. Of course, contributions to the Annual Fund are important to us too and as you will know have already made a tremendous difference to what we are doing for the students. Sustaining that by hopefully increasing the number of alumni participating will stand us in good stead for the future. Every contribution, however small, really makes a difference. Many small contributions add up to a large impact.

You should by now have received the programme for BNC500 and the catalogue of BNC memorabilia. I do hope we will be seeing you at some of those events and in College through the year. I believe it is a good programme covering many aspects of our existence, and I hope there is something there for everyone. In the meantime Annie and I would like to wish you all a very happy festive season and a good New Year.

*Roger Cashmore*

Best wishes for the festive season, from the Principal, Fellows, and Staff of Brasenose College.



Doug Vermimmen

### Recent awards for Fellows

In October 2008 The Recognition of Distinction Committee conferred the following titles on Brasenose Fellows:

**Dr Laura Herz**

Reader in Condensed Matter Physics

**Dr Thomas Johansen**

Reader in Ancient Philosophy

**Dr Susan Lea**

Professor of Chemical Pathology

**Mr William Swadling**

Reader in Property Law

**Dr Giles Wiggs**

Reader in Aeolian Geomorphology

We offer our congratulations to all of them.



The Barge in 1901

# The Brasenose Barge

Brasenose has a strong history of rowing, and has been a significant player in Oxford since winning the first ever Headship in 1815.

The BNCBC tradition has doubtless proved a rock of stability and continuity for many generations of crews as they face the annual challenges of Torpids and Summer Eights. A recent discovery by Brasenose Fellow, Professor Guy Houlsby, has thrown light on a glorious boat club tradition of the past, sadly now lost in the currents of time.

Many old members will recollect that Brasenose used to be the proud owner of a boat club barge, the last of three Brasenose barges used as a floating boathouse before any of the modern college boathouses were built. The last barge, sold to a Berkshire youth association in 1952 and moored down-river at Littlemore and Abingdon, now resides at Henley, fully refurbished for private use. The second barge was in service from the early 1880s to the mid 1920s. Prior to that, the Brasenose barge tradition began sometime around the 1850s, with Brasenose taking over ownership of the first OUBC barge, though records are unclear.

The first definite mention of a Brasenose barge is to be found in the BNCBC Minutes Book 1837-57, held in the College archives. The record for Torpids in 1857 notes how, 'a well contested race, most gallantly rowed by our crew,

ended in bumping Balliol opposite our barge' to the delight of the spectators gathered on its roof. A note from 1860 records: 'Brasenose, after a splendid race ran into University at the Brasenose barge.' Furthermore, an entry in 1862 writes that, presumably after another success, 'Brasenose were of course received at the barge with loud cheers'. Crowds of Brasenose supporters were invited for morale raising purposes and the barges were strategically positioned for spectation during races.

Almost all the space on a typical 70 ft. barge was devoted to the use of the rowers, since until colleges began to build boathouses in the late 1930s, boats and equipment were hired or stored at one of the boatyards along the Isis. Each barge had a twelve person punt and 40 in. boating platform. Clubs employed bargemasters to maintain the vessel and occasionally to train novice rowers. The BNCBC Minutes from 1862 show that the bargemaster of the time was paid £12-15 per annum for his services in ensuring the smooth running of his College's barge.

College barges were more than functional platforms, however: they were the centre of rowing life. Descending from the colourful and ornate barges of the City of London livery

companies, they represented collegiate prestige. Some of the Oxford barges would have made their way up the Thames after service in the livery companies as is likely to be the case for the first Brasenose barge, which was amongst the first of the College barges, whereas others were commissioned specially for Oxford. Furnished as floating club rooms with changing areas, the barges offered a range of facilities: boat clubs typically provided a range of periodicals and comfortable surroundings in which to read, but importantly, refreshments such as port would often have been found filling barge shelves.

For much of their history, college barges offered a home away from college for the crews. They played an important role in shaping rowing at Oxford, the effects of which can be seen in boathouses, including Brasenose's own, with its range of facilities being a fine example. The college barge provided a much needed base for rowing in an era before the rather more prosaic fixedness of the modern day equivalents, but it is this sense of accessibility and tradition that continues to be at the heart of college rowing. It is remarkable that the Brasenose barge has now served elsewhere for more than fifty years, as it did BNCBC before that.



A watercolour of the Barge, 1891



The modern day Barge

# The Harpist

Our congratulations to **Doug Vernimmen**, many of whose excellent photographs have appeared in past issues of the Brazen Notes, for coming Highly Commended for his photograph of Charlotte Hutchinson, 'The Harpist', in The Royal Photographic Society's 2008 International Projected Image Exhibition. In his spare time, Doug is a post-doctoral student working with BNC's Senior Kurti Fellow, Dr Douglas Higgs, in the John Radcliffe Hospital's Weatherall Institute of Molecular Medicine.



## Refurbishments

As alumni who attended our September Gaudy and the BNC Society Dinner will know, the College Bar and Gertie's café are currently undergoing major refurbishments. This is the the second phase in a project to upgrade and modernise many of the central social areas of the College for the benefit of our students in the 21st century. It follows on from the establishment of the new HCR in Old Quad, and the initial phase of restoration of the Hall, including cleaning of the panelling and the instalment of new lighting which took place earlier this year. Further work on the lighting, heating and sound system in Hall is planned, as well as the restoration of the historic tables and benches. There will also be a much larger programme of works to modernise the kitchens and servery, which will provide our staff with the much-improved working conditions that they deserve.



Doug Vernimmen

We are currently using the old HCR under the library as a temporary bar and social area until the refurbishment of the bar is completed. We look forward to showing off the new and improved bar and café when alumni visit the College for the BNC500 celebrations in 2009. Our architects (Berman Gueddes Stretton) have created a much more attractive and open space, which we are confident will be much appreciated by the whole College.



# BNC Net Community

We are pleased to announce the planned introduction of a new section to the College website. Brasenose Net Community, an online alumni networking facility, will be launched in spring 2009. Members of the Net Community will be able to register for membership online, manage a personal profile, select topics of interest, and more. Our aim is to provide a fully interactive online presence for Brasenose alumni. All information held on a profile will be at the discretion of its creator; members could decide to display much or very little information. Once registered, members will have access to a complete user network, including the ability to send messages, make friends, form groups, and upload photos; users will also be able to link their Brasenose Net Community profile to other social networking sites.

Our plans for the Community are also to make it easier for alumni to communicate with the College. We aim to offer the convenience of self-service tools, such as online event registrations and the option to update details (address, name, event types of interest etc.) online. This information will allow the Alumni Office to better communicate with alumni and to respond more effectively to their interests.

We hope that you will be as enthusiastic about the Brasenose Net Community as we are, and we would welcome your feedback. Details about how to join the network will be circulated early next year.



Arthur George 'Peter' Wilson

## From Trench to Sky: Brasenose Men in WWI

In January 1920 a young and battle-scarred young man reported to BNC to read Medicine. That young man was Arthur George 'Peter' Wilson. He had just been demobbed after five years in the West Yorks Regiment followed by the Royal Flying Corps after being badly wounded on the Somme. This did not prevent him thoroughly enjoying his rugby at BNC, and although he initially found his study very hard (to the extent that one morning his Scout found him asleep, fully dressed, under the table in his room – exhaustion, not alcohol!), he was taken under the wing of 'Sonnars' (Vice Principal Stallybrass), and soon set on the right track.

By a remarkable set of circumstances, a clutch of Peter's letters from the trenches has recently been reunited with his son, Michael Wilson, who followed his father to BNC in 1948. The letters were tucked away in an old portmanteau found in a London police station. They provide such a graphic description of life on the Front Line that Michael has decided to publish them. A copy of the book, *From Trench to Sky: Letters Home 1915-1918*, has been kindly presented to the College Library by Michael.

The College Archivist, Elizabeth Boardman, notes that 'It's a bit difficult to work out how many Brasenose men served in the War. People like A. G. Wilson aren't included in the official lists, because they didn't become part of the College until later. There are over 400 BNC men in the University list published in 1920, and there are 114 names on the War Memorial. So of those who had matriculated or been accepted by Brasenose before the end of the war, about a quarter were killed.' Copies of Michael's book can be purchased from the publisher, Roundtuit Publishing ([fromtrenchtosky@roundtuitpublishing.co.uk](mailto:fromtrenchtosky@roundtuitpublishing.co.uk)), from bookshops, or from online booksellers.

## Brasenose Society Dinner

This year the annual dinner was held on Saturday 20 September, a week earlier than usual, and coincided with the University reunion weekend when alumni and their families would be in Oxford. So for the first time, the dinner invitation was extended to include wives and partners of old members which in the event increased the sociability of the occasion and, given a fine autumn evening, the gathering between dinner and dessert in the Front Quad had a distinctly party air. Including Fellows and College guests about one hundred people attended and enjoyed

an excellent meal, followed by the President's speech which this year, indicating another break with convention, was given by Alexandra Marks, the first woman to be elected President of the Society. The evening was altogether a very convivial and successful one.

Next year the BNC500 Anniversary Weekend will be celebrated on 26-27 September, and there will be no annual Society dinner; and, with the Anniversary celebrations taking place throughout the year, neither will any of the usual Society events be held during 2009.



Place cards presented as a gift to the College by the outgoing Brasenose Society President, Alexandra Marks.

# BNC500 Tanner Lectures in Human Values 2009 Meeting the Challenges of the 21st Century

20-21 February 2009

The 500th year of Brasenose College coincides with the 30th year of the annual Tanner Lectures in Human Values. Brasenose is one of the handful of distinguished seats of learning at which the Tanner Lectures are held, chosen in recognition of the international reputation in relevant fields of its then Principal, Herbert Hart.

In February 2009 we shall be holding a special Tanner Lecture weekend to celebrate our 500th year and to look forward to the continuing role of the College as an academic institution which helps shape and inform the future through the efforts of its men and women. There are many challenges to be met. The founder of the Tanner Lectures, Obert Clark Tanner, stated their purpose thus: "I hope these lectures will contribute to the intellectual and moral life of mankind. I see them simply as a search for a better understanding of human behaviour and human values. This understanding may be pursued for its own intrinsic worth, but it may also eventually have practical consequences for the quality of personal and social life". Tanner lecturers are drawn from amongst the most distinguished of academics or leaders in the field of human values, broadly conceived.

The list of past Tanner lecturers includes, among many others, John Rawls, Saul Bellow, Freeman Dyson, Michael Walzer, Bernard Lewis, Simon Schama, Francis Fukuyama, David Kennedy, Joseph Stiglitz, and Robert Winston.

The quincentennial celebration lectures will take place at the Saïd Business School and will pursue four themes:

## Friday 20 February

**Morning session, 9.30 am to 1 pm:**

### The Challenge of Emerging Infection

Speakers to include: Professor Robin Weiss, FRS (Professor of Viral Oncology, University College London); Professor Jane Cardosa (Institute of Health & Community Medicine, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak); Professor Eddie Holmes (Centre for Infectious Disease Dynamics, Penn State).

**Afternoon session, 2 pm to 5.30 pm:**

### Terrorism and International Security: What have we learned from Afghanistan and Iraq?

Main speakers: Lt Col John Nagl (Centre for a New American Security); Tanvir Khan (Director General, Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad); Leo Docherty (author of *Desert of Death*, former serving officer in Iraq and Helmand); Paddy Docherty (author of *The Khyber Pass*).

Further contributors: Susi Varga Nagl; Alan Macdonald (UN Mine Action Centre Afghanistan [UNMACA]); Ana Rodriguez Garcia (Society for the Protection of Afghan Cultural Heritage [SPACH]); Joanna Buckley (Office of the Special Representative of the EU for Afghanistan); George Noel Clarke (NGO operative in Afghanistan); John Bingham (Reuters).

## Saturday 21 February

**Morning session, 9.30 am to 1 pm:**

### Human Rights in the 21st Century

Speakers to include: Professor Vernon Bogdanor, FBA (Professor of Government and Politics at the University of Oxford, Fellow of BNC); Sir Nicolas Bratza (UK Judge on the European Court of Human Rights); Kate Allen (Director of Amnesty International UK, Honorary Fellow of BNC); Prof Julian Savulescu (Uehiro Chair in Practical Ethics, Director, Oxford Uehiro Centre for Practical Ethics University of Oxford).

**Afternoon session, 2 pm to 5.30 pm:**

### Environmental Challenges in a Warming World

Speakers to include: George Monbiot (Guardian Columnist, author and environmental commentator); Sir David King (Director of the Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment at the University of Oxford, former Chief Scientific Advisor to the UK Government); Professor Dieter Helm (Professor of Economics at the University of Oxford, Chairman of the Academic Panel at Defra); Professor Robert Watson (Chief Scientific Advisor for Defra, former Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [IPCC]).

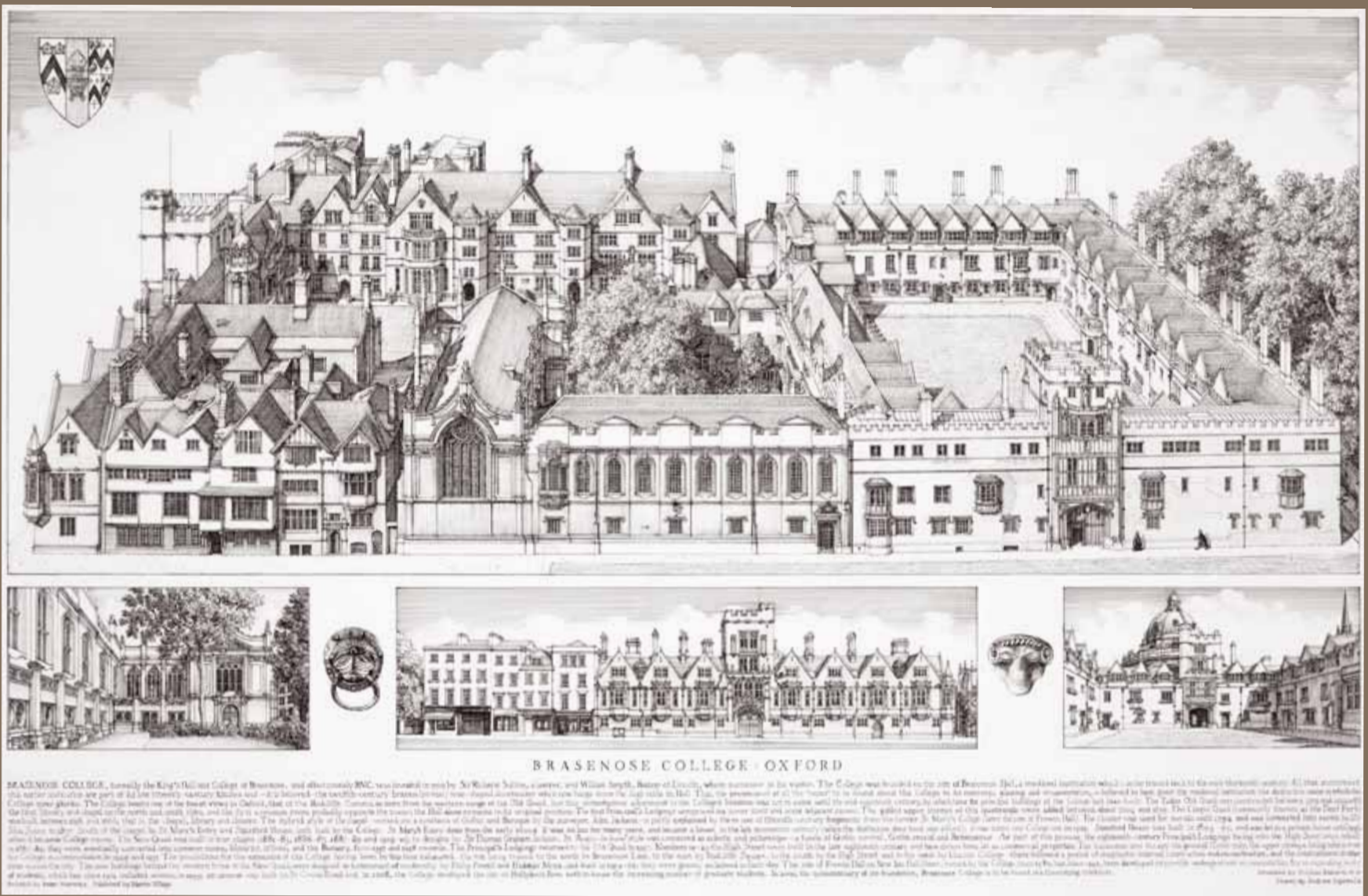
Chair: **David Shukman**

(Environment and Science correspondent for BBC News).

Light refreshments will be served at the end of each session. The Tanner Lectures are public lectures, open to all, but we expect a large audience and wish as many alumni to be there as possible.

To reserve a place please visit the BNC500 website and click on the link to register. Those wishing for advice about accommodation should contact Merry Donati ([merry.donati@bnc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:merry.donati@bnc.ox.ac.uk)).

# Last orders, please!



The new etching of Brasenose has almost sold out its limited edition run. From an original drawing by the renowned artist Andrew Ingamells, this beautiful print conveys magically the spirit of BNC's architecture, and includes a detailed architectural description. It is the first engraved print of the College from an aerial perspective since Loggan's version of the 1670s. A lot has changed since Loggan's day! Thirty-five of the 175 numbered etchings remain available for purchase at a price of £225. A sum of £50 from the sale of each etching is being donated to Brasenose.

The original drawing from which the etching is produced will be auctioned as part of the BNC fundraising auction taking place on 12 September 2009 at Sotheby's, New York. Please see the back cover of this edition of *Brazen Notes* or visit the BNC500 website for further information.

Andrew Ingamells is best known for etchings of classical architectural subjects such as The Tate Gallery, The Royal Academy, The Paris Opera and The Duomo, Florence, and is represented in collections as diverse as English Heritage, The Museum of London, The Guildhall Library and the Paul Mellon Collection of British Art. He has recently completed an etching for The Bank of England. Illustrations of his work can be found at the Capital Prints website at: [www.capitalprints.com](http://www.capitalprints.com)

Please allow 28 days for delivery from receipt of your order. Subject to return undamaged within two weeks of purchase Capital Prints will refund any dissatisfied customer. VAT is included. All major credit cards are accepted.

## To purchase an etching...

Please call 020 7704 6808,  
email [brasenose@capitalprints.com](mailto:brasenose@capitalprints.com)  
or write to:  
Capital Prints, PO Box 6293,  
London W1T 6WD.

The price of £225 includes the cost of recorded delivery in a strong cardboard tube worldwide.

From a signed numbered edition limited to 175 etchings only.

Sheet size: 22 x 29 in (560 x 740mm)  
Image size: 15 x 23 in (390 x 590mm)  
on white Hahnemühle etching paper.

## BNC500 Merchandise

Please see the enclosed brochure for information about this high-quality range of limited-edition merchandise designed in celebration of Brasenose's 500th anniversary year. Each item has been individually designed, with the majority being sourced and made by British artisans and craftsmen.



# The Alexander Nowell Circle

Brasenose College owes its existence to the generosity of its benefactors. Since it was founded, it has been the recipient of many transformational gifts that have helped it to become the successful and vibrant place that it is.

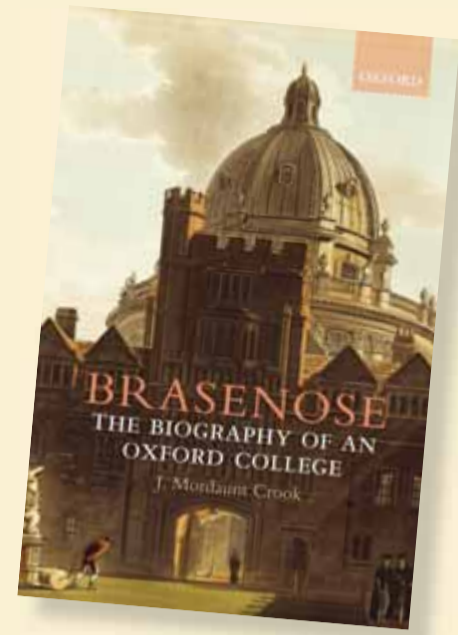
Now, as ever, legacies are an extremely important source of income for BNC. In the 2007/8 academic year, we received £160k from people who had left money to the College in their wills, mostly in £10k and £20k bequests, but some larger and smaller sums as well. Leaving a legacy to a charity like Brasenose can make a great difference to the life of the College, while simultaneously reducing inheritance-tax liability.

All legacies, large or small, are warmly received and,

in recognition of those who have let us know that they are leaving a bequest in their wills, we have established the Alexander Nowell Circle, and hold an annual luncheon so that we can meet legators and thank them in person.

If you would like to leave a gift to Brasenose in your will, our recommended wording is as follows: 'I give to the Principal and Scholars of the King's Hall and College of Brasenose in Oxford [bequest] to be used for the general purposes of the College. The receipt of the Bursar of the College shall be a good discharge of the Executors.'

You may, however, have a specific project which you would like your bequest to support, and if this is the case, we would be pleased to discuss this with you.



## A new history of Brasenose

### Brasenose. The Biography of an Oxford College

In *Brazen Notes* Issue 6, we introduced to you Joe Mordaunt Crook's new history of Brasenose, to be published by OUP late this year. Many alumni have already pre-ordered a copy of this impressive volume, the first full-scale history of BNC, commissioned to mark the College's 500th anniversary. The book brings to life 500 years of learning, conversation, sport, food, drama, and personality that have made BNC what it is today.

Alumni can order a copy at the reduced price of £50 (RRP £75) plus postage and packing (£5 UK, £8 Europe, £12 rest of the world) by sending a cheque, payable to 'Grayling UK Limited', to Heather Clubb at RS Live, 1 Bedford Avenue, London WC1B 3AU. Please contact Heather for further details or to pay by credit card: [heather.clubb@rslive.co.uk](mailto:heather.clubb@rslive.co.uk).



## Runcie sermon

The next Runcie sermon will be delivered by the Reverend John Witheridge, Headmaster of Charterhouse, formerly Chaplain to the Archbishop, on Sunday 1 March 2009 at 6 pm.



Photo: Dimitri Gujajhr

## Platnauer Concert

The next Platnauer Concert will be given by **The Cardinal's Musick**, directed by Andrew Carwood (Director of Music, St Paul's Cathedral, London). It will comprise music composed during the reign of Elizabeth I. The concert will take place at 9 pm on Sunday, 1 February 2009.

# Arrivals and Departures in the Development Office

The past few months have seen some major changes in the staffing of the Alumni Relations and Development Office. BNC's first Director of Alumni Relations and Development, Robin Sharp, left the team at the end of November to join the Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce as Director of Development. Robin's time at BNC has been very fruitful in many ways as she has overseen the establishment and growth of an inclusive alumni relations programme and of a fundraising strategy for the College.

The Principal and Fellows are working hard to ensure that a new Director can be recruited as soon as possible, to take BNC forward into its second quinquennial and to expand on the many exciting things that have been started.

Laura Wu also left the Development Office in October to pursue a Masters in Music at her own alma mater, New College. The Office remains in very capable hands, however, with Tina Hill and Margaret Molloy continuing to hold the fort, joined by two new members of staff, Chris Hurn and Saira Uppal.

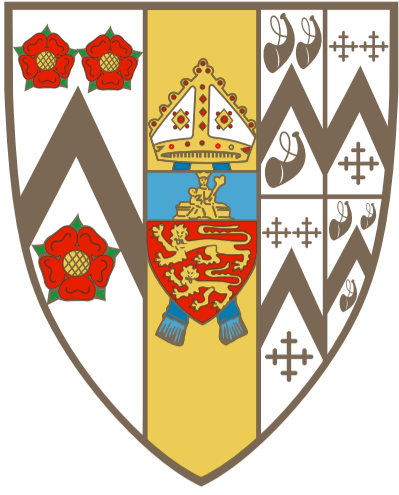
Chris has joined the team as Development Assistant, having just completed a degree in English at Pembroke College, Cambridge. Chris grew up in Oxford so he has a great deal of local knowledge about where to park, which pubs to visit and so on.

Saira moved across to BNC from Magdalen, and has joined the team as BNC's first Major Gifts Officer. Her role is to help those who are considering making a significant gift to BNC, which she describes as her 'dream job'. We are delighted to have them both on board!

Clockwise from top left: Robin Sharp, Laura Wu, Saira Uppal, Chris Hurn, Margaret Molloy, Tina Hill



Doug Vermimmen



# BNC 1509-2009 500

## BNC500 on the Web

The BNC500 website went live in November. You can use this website to purchase merchandise, to register your intention to attend any of the BNC500 events, to search for further information about the events, and to book tickets once booking has opened.

Please visit the BNC homepage [www.bnc.ox.ac.uk](http://www.bnc.ox.ac.uk) and click on the links for BNC500.

## BNC500 Events

### The Tanner Lectures

**20-21 Feb '09** Please see the article on page 5 for more information.

### Champagne Tea in the Long Room at Lord's, MCC Cricket Ground

**19 March '09** An opportunity to celebrate BNC's 500th anniversary at the famous home of the MCC.

### Brasenose College Quincentennial Student Ball

**9 May '09** The main event for current BNC students. Tickets for alumni may be available if space permits.

### VIII's Week Family Day

**30 May '09** An opportunity to bring the family to Oxford to celebrate Eights Week in College.

### BNC500 at Sotheby's, New York

**12 Sep '09** See Sotheby's transformed as it welcomes BNC alumni and guests for one night only. There will be a fundraising auction of exclusive items. (Event to be confirmed.)

### BNC500 Weekend

**26-27 Sep '09** Spend the weekend in Oxford for the main event of the BNC500 calendar, and participate in the University Alumni Weekend. There will be an event in the Sheldonian, a Champagne reception, and the opportunity to have lunch or dinner in College and to stay overnight on the Saturday.

Please visit the website [www.bnc.ox.ac.uk](http://www.bnc.ox.ac.uk) and click on the links for the BNC500 pages for further details, ticket prices, and information about how to book.

## Getting to Brasenose

As many of you will be aware, getting to Brasenose has become increasingly difficult in recent years, following the City Council's decision to withdraw permission to park cars in Radcliffe Square.

There are, however, a number of alternative car parks in the city centre. The Westgate Car Park, located next to the Westgate Shopping Centre, is a 24-hour car park with 1225 spaces, and is patrolled by a security guard. The car park at Gloucester Green is a secure status underground car park, but closes at midnight. If you wish to leave a car overnight, Oxford City Council must issue you with a permit at least two weeks beforehand. There is also a Pay and Display car park at Oxford Railway Station, which is open 24 hours and has daily rates for non-rail users.

In addition, Oxford has an extensive Park and Ride network, with five car parks situated around the city's ring road. Car parking is free but there is a bus fare. The bus services are frequent and stop in the heart of the city. See [www.parkandride.net](http://www.parkandride.net) for more details.

Finally, for those travelling from London, the Oxford Tube and Oxford Express bus services, departing from Victoria and going via Marble Arch, Notting Hill, Shepherd's Bush, and Hillingdon, stop conveniently on the High Street opposite Queen's Lane. Details can be found at [www.oxfordtube.com](http://www.oxfordtube.com)/[www.oxfordbus.co.uk](http://www.oxfordbus.co.uk).

## BNC500 Hotels

A limited number of rooms have been reserved at the following hotels by Brasenose for alumni. Please telephone them directly to enquire about availability and rates, and to book. If you wish to take advantage of the preferential rates, you must confirm your booking by 1 June 2009.

**The Randolph Hotel**  
0844 8799 132 or 01865 256 400

**The Old Bank Hotel**  
01865 799 599

**Linton Lodge**  
(please quote reference Alumni09)  
01865 553 461

**Paramount Oxford Hotel**  
01865 489 988

**Malmaison, Oxford**  
0845 3654 247 or 01865 268 400

**The Old Parsonage Hotel**  
01865 310 210



### Contacts

Alumni Relations and Development Office, Brasenose College, Oxford OX1 4AJ. Tel: 01865 287275. Email: [development.office@bnc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:development.office@bnc.ox.ac.uk)