

# Chapel and Music Diary 2010-11

## The Platnauer Concerts

Named in honour of Maurice Platnauer, Principal of Brasenose 1956-60, the concerts are held in the College Ante Chapel at 9pm on the Sunday of 3rd week each term. Guests are invited to join the Principal and Fellows for refreshments afterwards.

24 October 2010

## VOCES8

Featuring the winning entry in this year's competition to score the College Grace for choral voices. The rest of the programme ranges from Gibbons' 'O clap your hands' to the James Bond theme song *GoldenEye*

30 January 2011

## Phantasm

The viol quartet gained international fame when its debut CD won a Gramophone Award for the Best Baroque Instrumental Recording of 1997. In 2005 Phantasm was named Consort-in-Residence at Oxford University and they regularly appear at the Holywell Music Room and other University venues.



15 May 2011

## Terence Charlston harpsichord

One of Britain's leading early keyboard players and professor of harpsichord at the Royal College of Music Terence Charlston will play J S Bach's Goldberg Variations.

# Music Society Concert

21 November 2010 at 8.45pm

Victor Yoran accompanied by Louisa Harmer

Taught by Rostropovitch and lauded by Yehudi Menuhin, the Russian cellist Victor Yoran gave a highly successful concert with

Louisa Harmer at Brasenose last April. They will be playing Beethoven's Sonata in C for cello and piano among other pieces.

5 February 2011 at 4pm

Brasenose College Choir, evensong in Southwark Cathedral

## Forthcoming events

All events in College unless otherwise noted. If you would like to register interest in attending or would like further information on these or any other events, please email [development.office@bnc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:development.office@bnc.ox.ac.uk) or telephone 01865 287275

13 November 2010

Ellesmere Society  
Annual Dinner

26 November 2010 at 12.30pm

Alexander Nowell  
Circle Lunch at The  
Athenaeum Club,  
London

19 March 2011

Gaudy 1965 – 1969

23 January 2011 – 6:00pm

Runcie Sermon - The  
Bishop of Wakefield

23 May - 28 May 2011

Arts Festival

4 June 2011 – from 12.30pm

Eights Week lunch and  
family day

2 July 2011

Gaudy 1985 - 1988

## Mentioned in Dispatches

Sir David Akers-Jones (1949)

received a Distinguished Friend of  
Oxford Award

Professor Vernon Bogdanor,  
Professor of Government, Tutor  
in Politics,

received an honorary degree from the  
University of Kent

The Rt Hon David Cameron (1985)

became Brasenose's first Prime Minister  
since Sir Henry Addington, Viscount  
Sidmouth (1774) who held office from  
1801 to 1803.

JG Farrell (1956)

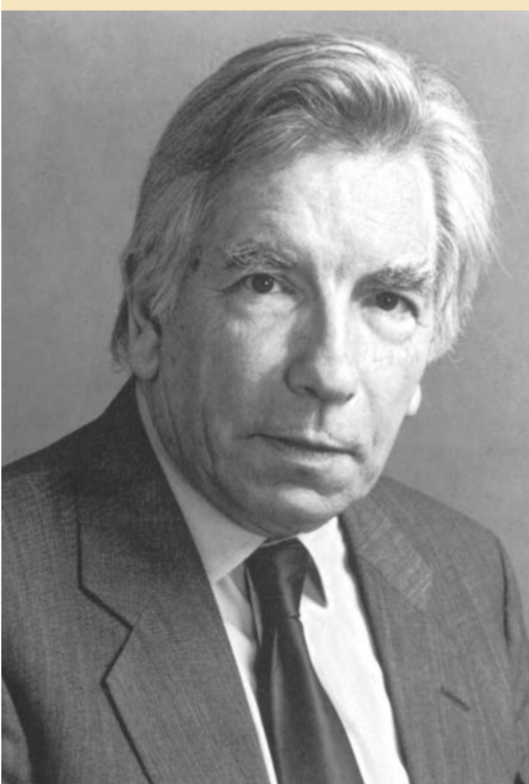
won the Lost Booker Prize with his 1970  
novel *Troubles*

Simon Sprague (2006)  
DPhil in organic chemistry,

becomes the AstraZeneca Research  
Scholar at Stanford with an award from  
the Fulbright Commission.

Sioban Healy (1983),  
Robert Peel (1984)  
and Sean Wilken (1986)

were appointed QC



## The Queen's Birthday Honours

Sir Fergus Millar  
(Emeritus Fellow 2002, pictured)

received a knighthood for services to  
scholarship.

Marcia Hutchinson (1982)

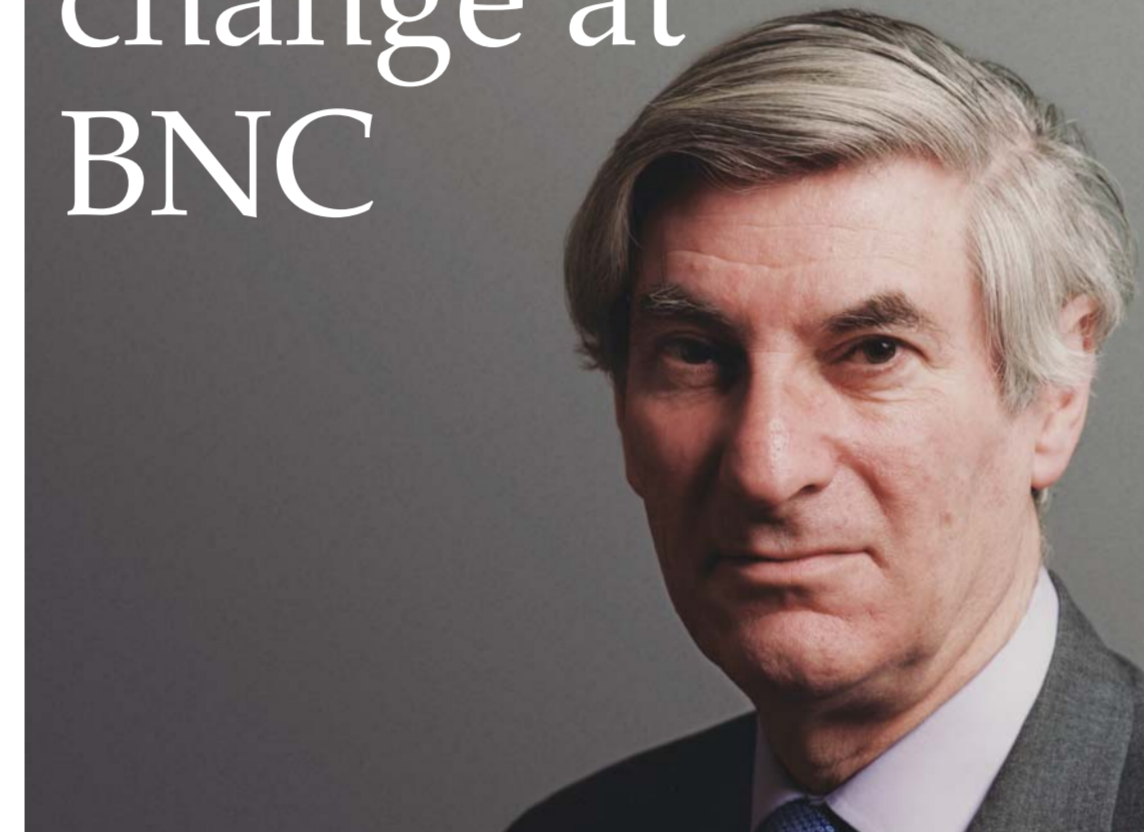
received an MBE for services to cultural  
diversity



# Brazen Notes

Issue 11 | Autumn 2010

## Constitutional change at BNC



In the year that one of his pupils becomes Prime Minister, it seems fitting that Vernon Bogdanor should announce his retirement as a Fellow of Brasenose – what more can a Politics tutor do?

Vernon came to Brasenose as Fellow and Tutor in Politics in 1966. He had gained a first in PPE at Queen's, and over the next 44 years was to help transform PPE at Brasenose into one of its strongest subjects. With colleagues such as Michael Woods, John Foster, Tony Courakis and Peter Sinclair, Vernon made 'Modern Greats' into a real test of breadth and depth in undergraduate learning: and David Cameron is not the only eminent pupil to have benefited from his teaching.

As well as teaching in college, Vernon has been remarkably active in writing and research, and in public life. An acknowledged expert on the British constitution, Vernon has published or edited over 50 books in his time at Brasenose. Looking through the list, one is tempted to wonder if his most famous pupil read his 1986 pamphlet for the Constitutional Reform Centre: "No overall majority: forming a government in a multi-party parliament." Certainly many students over the years have read his work on devolution, the constitution, the monarchy and political history.

But these ideas have not been solely propounded within the academy. Vernon has been a regular contributor to political programmes on TV and radio, often bringing calm elucidation to quite heated political debates. He has also given advice to many governments around the world, often helping to shape new constitutions, and smooth the way for democracies taking their first steps. He was made CBE in 1996, for his contributions to constitutional history; and last year was appointed Chevalier in the Légion d'honneur. In all his work, he has not only promoted his subject and earned praise for himself; he has also contributed to the esteem in which Oxford and Brasenose are held by the wider world.

No doubt in retirement he will continue to be productive. Nobody has ever accused Vernon of having a retiring character; and he will be busy at King's College, London as Professor and founder of a new centre for the study of the constitution. But we hope that he will also continue to find time to play the piano and enjoy the music that he loves; and that he will often return to dine in Brasenose. We wish him well.

## Star turns

Congratulations to two undergraduates who received special recognition in the last academic year. Third year law student Richard Hoyle (2007) was named TARGETjobs Law Undergraduate of the Year and Tim Ramsey, a second year classics student, took prestigious prizes for Latin and Greek.



Rick Hoyle receives his award from Rt Hon Michael Portillo and William Chamley of Mayer Brown.

Rick Hoyle, who is currently on an Erasmus scholarship at the University of Bonn, faced stiff challenges from 300 highly qualified candidates in the four stages of the national competition. He wins a place on international law firm Mayer Brown's Summer Work Experience Programme, including a trip to their Brussels offices.

Rick said: "Brasenose has a great legal tradition and I'm very pleased to be a part of that."



Tim Ramsey received two prizes for his top ranked performance in the Honour Moderations: the Hertford Prize for his Latin paper and the Harold Lister Sunderland Prize for his Greek paper. Classics Fellow Dr Llewelyn Morgan called winning the two prizes "a rare and remarkable achievement".

Tim is now spending a year learning Arabic (his subsidiary subject) at the University of Damascus and also plans to volunteer in refugee camps outside the city.



## Catering for the 21st century

Visitors to Brasenose over the summer will have noticed a change in our dining habits! The Hall has been housed in a handsome marquee on Old Quad with a temporary - but very modern - kitchen and buttery alongside.

This is all part of an ambitious building project to revitalise some of the oldest community areas in BNC and the kitchens and buttery which support them. Domestic bursar Mel Parrott explained: "It's going to provide fantastic new facilities for students, staff and fellows alike. It's also essential to bring working conditions up to date to comply with health, safety and environment standards."

With the new kitchen scheduled to be finished in spring 2012, we asked our head chef Lorraine Watkins (pictured with Marta Kowalska from the servery) what the move will mean for kitchen staff and prospective diners. "When I heard about the planned renovations I thought

it was fantastic. The old kitchen equipment couldn't last much longer, the oven, fridge and air conditioning were constantly breaking down and it was either stifling hot or freezing cold. The galley style provided very little room for the chefs to move about."

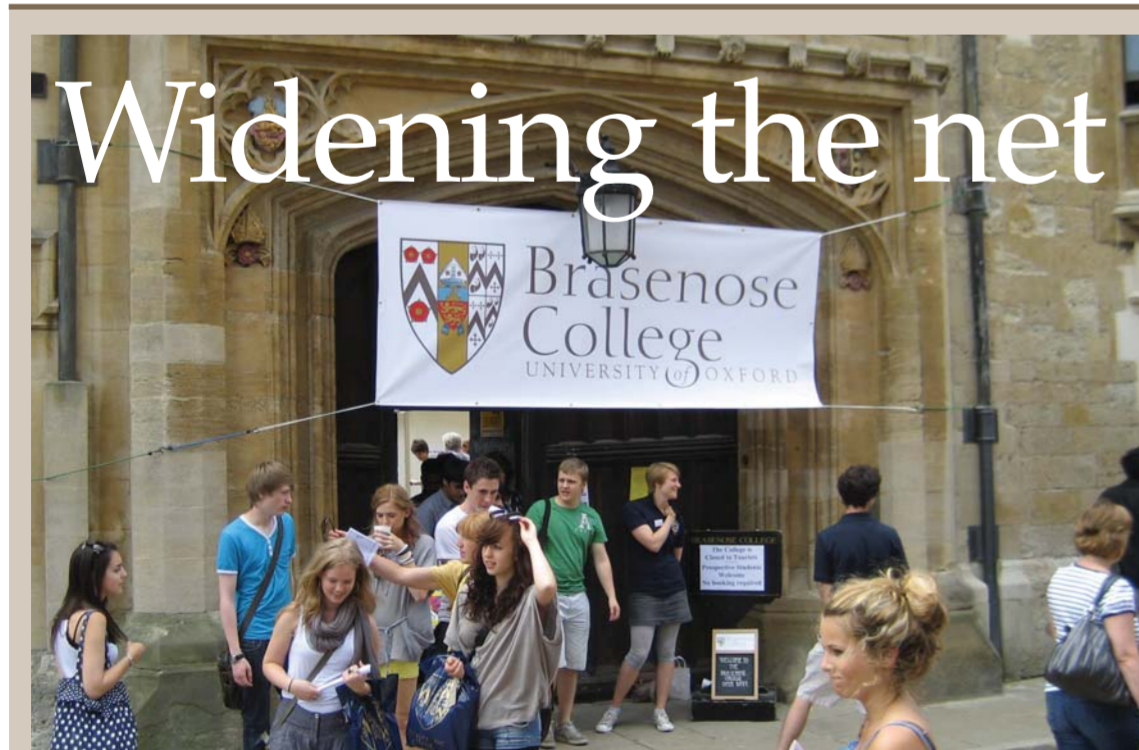
Lorraine is delighted at the progress the college is making with its menus. "We've introduced a modern take on food and I'm a great believer in fresh, seasonal produce. The covers have doubled in the last five years and we'd really outgrown the old kitchen."

She and steward Alan Bennett worked with the contractors and design teams on both the temporary, and new, kitchen and buttery. The former will boast the latest equipment and

much more space, while diners will benefit from under-floor heating in the Hall and an even wider choice of hot and cold dishes.

Lorraine and Alan are very proud their teams managed the move to temporary accommodation after serving lunch on a Thursday, ready to open for business at breakfast the next morning. Two days later they were well into their stride, catering for 150 at dinner. Alice McCormack, assistant steward, said: "We had to get the silver valued for storage off site and move the entire stock of white, dessert and vintage wines from the cellars."

Mel congratulated everybody on doing a brilliant job and all agreed they can't wait until the new kitchen and buttery are ready.



## Widening the net

Since his appointment in January, schools officer Joe Organ has embarked on a range of activities and projects to increase our level of contact with schools. Whether visiting schools or welcoming pupils to Brasenose, Joe's been in contact with over 1,000 prospective applicants. He introduces the College and the University, and provides advice and tips on the admissions process.

Joe has also organised BNC's highly successful summer undergraduate Open Days. This summer 38 current students - and many tutors - helped guide and inspire over 2,000 visitors during the two-day programme. Joe gave a twice-daily general talk highlighting some of the benefits of studying at Oxford and outlining the admissions process. Tutors were also on hand to talk to prospective applicants about courses and answer

any questions. BNC puts considerable energy into giving Open Day visitors a warm welcome, and an excellent insight into academic and social life at the College.

As well as routine contact with schools, teachers and prospective applicants, Joe ran a number of special projects. In June 2010, the College held an English Access Day, for prospective applicants and teachers from all over the UK. In the same month we hosted a presentation ceremony for youngsters who completed an online course on *Lord of the Flies* by alumnus William Golding (1930).

When physics and maths sixth formers from Bexley Academy in London visited in May they had the chance to tour the Physics Department and the College and, after lunch, met physics students and had a Q&A session with Professor Jonathan Jones. Joe also launched a Science Pen Pals scheme where Brasenose undergraduate science students exchange letters with local school children.

BNC is committed to encouraging the most promising and agile minds to apply, regardless of background. Through the generous funding of our alumni, the schools officer can reach out to highly promising young people who might not otherwise consider applying to Oxford, as well as maintaining and strengthening existing links with schools.



## Railway puzzles

In 1924 the Great Western Railway produced a jigsaw puzzle for the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley. This was the first of a million GWR puzzles in 44 designs which were produced until 1939. The puzzles were sold at prices barely covering the cost of making them, as the object was publicity and not profit. They were all made by Chad Valley in Birmingham.

The Brasenose jigsaw was available between 1933 and 1939. Most of the jigsaws were 150 pieces and cost 2/6 (12½p), but the Brasenose design was one of seven puzzles of 400 pieces.

It seems obvious that the aim was to portray Oxford as a destination for leisure. Several couples are strolling around the College (at a time when there were no women at Brasenose), and there is no student in sight.

## Jigsaw for sale

Peggy Verrall, widow of Douglas (1959), would like to find a good home for one of the Brasenose jigsaws. It's wooden, in its original (rather battered) box and is complete although three pieces appear to have been chewed by a dog at some point!

Peggy is selling her jigsaw collection to raise money for a school in The Gambia where she plans to volunteer as a teacher next January. For sentimental reasons she'd like to give Brasenose alumni the first chance to buy.

Please send offers in excess of £25 to [peggy.verrall@btinternet.com](mailto:peggy.verrall@btinternet.com) by Monday, 11 October

## Travelling Fellows



Dr Owen Lewis, Fellow and Tutor in Biology, won the British Ecological Society's Founders' Prize awarded biennially to an outstanding early career ecologist making a significant contribution towards the science of ecology. Dr Lewis has published widely on biodiversity and conservation and he is currently developing a new undergraduate field course on tropical forest ecology in Borneo.



Professor Giles Wiggs, Fellow in Geography and University Reader in Aeolian Geomorphology, received a Natural Environment Research Council grant together with colleagues at Oxford and other universities. The £1.2 million grant funds a project to model dust emissions in the Namibia and Kalahari deserts. Fieldwork starts next July but he's off to Botswana this September for a recce.

## Sadly departed

Three serving Brasenose members of staff died in the first half of 2010: Doreen Wright, Carmen Perez and Mike Taylor. Their work for Brasenose made them known not just to current students and Fellows, but also to recent graduates and older members; and so it seems right that we should remember them here in the *Brazen Notes*.

**Doreen Wright** died on 3 February this year. She had worked at Brasenose since August 1996, becoming a well-loved scout and very much at the centre of the college family. Whether it was the difficulty of dusting whilst trying to keep your balance standing on a water-bed, or the impossibility of finding a student's carpet under mounds of undergraduate debris, Doreen approached her job with humour and practical good sense.

She was especially valuable as an experienced scout working with some of our younger members of staff - to many of them she was more than just a colleague. That much was evident from the numbers of college staff who visited her at the hospital in her last illness; and who were there when she received the Last Rites. She is survived by her husband Peter.

**Carmen Perez** was an Assistant Steward at Brasenose - she joined us in 2004 and rapidly became an invaluable member of the Buttery staff, helping Alan Bennett in organising dinners and service in Hall. She was clearly an inspirational person to work with. Like Doreen, she was not just a friend but also a mentor to some of our younger members of staff. What she particularly enjoyed was the provision of hospitality as part of her job. If you have dined at High Table, or attended Gaudies or conferences, Carmen will have served you with warmth and friendliness and you will have been made to feel looked after, and very much at home in Brasenose.

When Carmen was diagnosed with cancer in the summer of 2009, it was a terrible shock. But she fought the illness with remarkable courage, always thinking more of others than of herself. She died after a hard battle on 6 May, at the dreadfully young age of 46. She is survived by her partner Chris and her son David.

**Mike Taylor**, our Head Porter, had a heart-attack in the lodge in 7th week of Hilary term, and died in hospital in the early hours of 8 June. Mike had been with us since 1992, and became a much-loved (even iconic) figure in college life. He was generally the first person visitors and freshers met; and upheld the dignity of his position without ever losing his sense of humour at the occasional absurdities of lodge life. Brasenose provided Mike with many long and tall stories: as many will remember, he was particularly entertaining about the College Ghosts. He is survived by his wife Pat, daughter Juli, son Joe and granddaughter Annabel.

Doreen, Carmen and Mike were all very important to this College, and it was good that their funerals could be held in the College Chapel. It is said many times, but is none the less true: a college is not made up of buildings but of people. Doreen, Carmen and Mike were three well-loved friends of this college: and they will be greatly missed.