



## Inaugural Tayler Talks Dinner

Dear Alum,

Fabulous location. Check. Dizzying array of guests. Check. Inspiring speakers. Check. And delicious food. Double check.

The Tayler Talks Dinner at the House of Lords in February was hotly anticipated — it sold out just before Christmas — and it didn't disappoint! It was hosted by HMC Senior Research Fellow and Director of the Centre for the Resolution of Intractable Conflict, **Lord Alderdice** and chaired by **Principal Jane Shaw**. Our speakers, Distinguished Professor of the Legacies and Memory of Slavery at SOAS **Dr Olivette Otele** and HMC Research Fellow **Dr Janina Ramirez**, discussed their provocative books on people written out of the history books. Photos can be found [here](#).

Many thanks to colleagues HMC Fellow and Director of the Department for Continuing Education **Professor Matthew Weait**, Admissions Officer **Richard Molyneux** and JCR President **Jintong Han** (BA, PPE) for helping the Development Office host tables at this event.

You can read a blog by HMC MSc Global Healthcare Leadership students **Munad Akbari** and **Ryan Donnelly** [here](#).

I'm greatly looking forward to seeing you at one of our events in the coming year:

An inaugural **Law Reunion Dinner** on Saturday 13th May, for those who studied Law or work in one of the many areas in Law. Book [here](#).

And our **Annual Alumni Dinner** at HMC on Saturday 23rd September, with brilliant guest speaker **David Wienir** (1993, PPE). Book [here](#).

Sincerely,



Shona Nicholson  
Development & Alumni Relations Manager

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## Projects and Plans

Keeping the HMC community informed about our strategic initiatives

### Student Support: lifting financial barriers to postgraduate study

A university education is one of the greatest assets someone can have — it can aid social mobility, open up a wealth of career opportunities, and equip graduates with valuable skills that help societies thrive here and around the world.

However, there are many talented and ambitious people who face significant barriers to the life-changing opportunities on offer at extraordinary universities such as Oxford.

Harris Manchester students are selected from among the brightest minds in the world and are finding solutions to some of our greatest 21st-century challenges. Yet every year a significant number of the best candidates, handpicked by our Fellows to form part of their world-leading research team or to become the academics of the future, decline their offer of a place at HMC due to lack of funding. These stellar candidates are lost to other institutions that can provide funding, or in some cases they abandon postgraduate study altogether. In fact, 60% of graduate student places offered across the University are declined due to lack of funding.

### Facts and figures

As of 5th April 2023: 119 graduate students make up 51% of the total HMC student body of 234 students.

- 33% are UK students and 67% from overseas
- 37% are research (DPhil and MSc(R)) students, with 63% on taught courses
- 25% are studying courses in Humanities related areas, 25% in Medical Sciences, 9% in Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences, and 41% in Social Sciences.
- 50% are self-funding.



As an example, the total cost of a three-year DPhil ranges from around £74,250 for a UK student to around £135,540. For many of our applicants without independent means, a scholarship is critical to being able to accept the place at all.

### Encouraging bright students to apply

A gift to Scholarships means more students will be able to access post-graduate study at the University of Oxford and be part of the vibrant Harris Manchester College community, by reducing or removing the burden of tuition fees and living costs. One of the College's particular strengths is in bringing together a diversity of students and their academic disciplines, many of whom will go on to become leaders in their field.

Harris Manchester College is now eligible to benefit from generous 4:1 matched funding from the University aimed at establishing new graduate scholarships. These scholarships will fully fund students' fees and living costs, allowing them to flourish and focus on their studies. Your support will help us meet the target to release the funding and welcome more students to our lively MCR community.

To make a gift to graduate scholarships, please click [here](#).

For further information please contact:  
Shona Nicholson, Development & Alumni  
Relations Manager  
[shona.nicholson@hmc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:shona.nicholson@hmc.ox.ac.uk)

## My Story, My HMC

**Tope Folarin** (2004, MSc African Studies)  
(2005, MSc Comparative Social Policy)  
Rhodes Scholar  
Author of *A Particular Kind of Black Man*,  
winner of the 2021 Whiting Award for Fiction.



### What I'm doing now

Executive Director at Institute for Policy Studies and Lannan Visiting Lecturer in Creative Writing, Georgetown University. Novelist and Critic.

### Best memories of HMC

I remember that a fellow student, Toby Fell-Holden, screened films on Sunday evenings in the Quiet Room. I was a film lover by the time I arrived at HMC, but I learned a great deal more about cinema during those sessions.

### Favourite activities at HMC

I *loved* spending time in the Library. I remember that it was an aesthetic marvel, and I loved studying there, and working my way through plays and novels. I began to come to terms with my artistic ambitions in that wonderful space.

### Why HMC?

I read a great deal about the various Oxford colleges before arriving at HMC, and I was drawn to the idea of attending a college with mature students — some of whom had worked for years before pursuing higher education, and others who were attending college for the first time. I had this sense that HMC would be a diverse place, a space where I could comfortably explore my interests and interact with people who had emerged from similar contexts as me. As a son of immigrants who struggled financially, I felt I would find myself at HMC. I was absolutely correct.

### Why is giving to HMC important?

HMC is unlike any other college at Oxford. It possesses a unique and important mission: to educate mature students, many of whom would likely have a difficult time attending college otherwise.

**“Spend as much time as you can figuring yourself out and challenging yourself. And work hard.”**

This mission acknowledges a major challenge that countless students face in the United Kingdom and around the world — the difficulty of attempting to navigate a system that was not created for their benefit. HMC is an essential institution.

### My advice to current students

My advice is simple — spend as much time as you can figuring yourself out and challenging yourself. And work hard. I learned a great deal about myself at HMC, and I worked hard, and I benefited immensely from my time at HMC.



## College News



**Dr James Whitbourn**, HMC Director of Music and leader of the ongoing 'Music Egypt' research project supported by TORCH, premiered a new work for the Egyptian soprano Fatma Said, entitled *Zahr Al-*

*Khayal*. James has been commissioned to compose the music to mark several national and international events, and was music producer for the broadcast of the state funeral of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. For more information, please click [here](#).

In recent weeks, the **rowers of Harris Manchester** have strengthened their participation with our affiliate Boat Club at Wadham (WCBC). Harris Mancunians were recently

represented in both the Women's 1st VIII crew (W1) and Men's 2nd VIII crews (M2) at Torpids, with the M2 crew creating quite the storm by



consistently bumping other crews and successfully achieving blades. Read more on our website [here](#).

**The Oxford Biomedical Research Centre (BRC)**, which played a key role in developing the Oxford-AstraZeneca Covid vaccine, was given **Freedom of the City of Oxford** in



January 2023. BRC Director and HMC Senior Research Fellow **Professor Helen McShane**, said: "I am delighted and honoured to accept the Freedom of the City of Oxford on behalf of the NIHR Oxford Biomedical Research Centre. Ours is a

partnership that brings together the very best in academic healthcare research and NHS clinical excellence, and a key element in the thriving clinical academic ecosystem in this city." Read the full news article [here](#).

### College MCR President Jonas Schuff introduces himself:

I am a third-year DPhil student in the Department of Materials working on automation tasks for building quantum computers. Before coming to Oxford I studied Physics at the University of Tübingen in Germany.



During my time at HMC, I have been involved with College in various roles, first as the treasurer of the JCR, then as Peer Supporter and as the MCR Welfare Officer. The roles gave me insight into different aspects of student politics and the struggles that students face. I find the community that this College provides extraordinary, and it is an outstanding aspect of what makes an Oxford DPhil special. I would like to see the community at HMC flourish and reflect the experiences that I was fortunate enough to have.

I have been given the opportunity to make a positive impact and lead the community as the president of the MCR. During my term, I'd like to organise various events, such as low-threshold trips to local cafes or ice-cream shops, promote student well-being, and foster a welcoming and inclusive environment for all members of the MCR. It's important to listen to the needs and desires of the community and work collaboratively to achieve my goals. I look forward to working with all members of the MCR to create a vibrant and inclusive community that supports the academic and personal growth of each and every student.

Congratulations to **2022 Philip Leverhulme Prize** recipient, HMC Fellow **Dr Harrison Steel**, pictured here with the Chair of the Leverhulme Trust, Dr Niall FitzGerald, at the March award ceremony at the Worshipful Company of Drapers Hall in London.





## College News (continued)



HMC was pleased to host financial guru and author **Weijian Shan** at a special lunch in March. Weijian was in Oxford to speak at the Saïd Business School about his new book *Money Machine*, at the invitation of HMC students **Zehou Yang** (MSc, Economics for Development) and **Steven Allsopp** (BA, Experimental Psychology). **Principal Jane Shaw** and Weijian Shan took the opportunity to sign books for each other.

Law students **Bertie Broomfield** and **Isaac Hordiyuk** are this year's winners of the **Maitland Chambers Undergraduate Cuppers Mooting Championship**. The team beat New College in the finals, clinching the title with outstanding advocacy. This is the second win in a row for HMC students — last year, **Diane de Young de la Marck** and **Joseph Foye** won the championship. More information [here](#).

Special thanks to artist **Peter Sparrey** for his generous donation of an outstanding example of modern studio pottery, now on display in the SCR. Fired using a traditional anagama kiln, it was originally part of the exhibition 'Ash, Ember, Flame: a Japanese Kiln in Oxford', which was opened by the Japanese Ambassador in June 2022 and organised by **Dr Robin Wilson**, (2011, MSc Visual Anthropology). See also Alumni News.



Student **Anna Donaghy** (2018, BA Philosophy and Theology, 2021, PGCE — Religious Education), now reading for a MSc Higher Education, was one of the winners of the prestigious **Peter Kirk Travel Prize**. For more information on her project, click [here](#).

HMC Law Society President **Nicholas Stone** (BA, Jurisprudence) won the **BPP Advocate of the Year 2022/2023 Award**. Read more [here](#).

## Student Spotlight

My name is **Khansa Maria** and I am currently studying for an MPhil in Development Studies. I am originally from Pakistan but spent four years at Georgetown University School of Foreign Services in Qatar pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Foreign Service, focusing on culture and politics.

Coming to Oxford has been a dream come true. I relish every part of this experience, from the cold, rainy, long walks to the cosy libraries. I am profoundly grateful to the Rhodes Trust for this transformative opportunity. Beyond the emotional and financial support I've received, I have engaged with thoughtful mentors and peers who challenged my world view on a daily basis and encouraged me to broaden my horizons.

I am deeply passionate about advocating for inclusion, diversity and equality, with a particular focus on disability rights. As someone with a visual disability, I have first-hand experience of the social barriers and discrimination that people with disabilities experience, particularly in the global south.



My research delves into the educational experiences of students with disabilities and the employment barriers these individuals face. I hope to combine what I've learnt through personal experience with my research to construct policy solutions to reduce inaccessibility.

In the past, I have worked with various organisations, including Rhodes House, the US Embassy in Qatar and the United Nations, to promote accessibility and inclusivity. I also served as the disability officer at Harris Manchester and hope to work with the College to make it even more accessible and inclusive.

In the future, I hope to continue working in the equality, diversity, and inclusion field and am open to working with corporations, policy makers, and educationists to give opportunities to more people with disabilities.

## Alumni News

**Dr Jessica Ogilvy-Stuart** (2019, PGDip Theology and Religion) has donated £20,000 from her family's trust towards graduate scholarships at HMC. Named for The Cathcart Foundation, this gift along with the newly announced University fund that provides a 4:1 match, means a pool of £100,000 is available to fund scholarships for graduate students in the Humanities. (See Projects & Plans on page 2). We are so grateful for her generosity and vision to encourage students to apply. For further information about supporting scholarships please contact Shona Nicholson, Development & Alumni Relations Manager at [shona.nicholson@hmc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:shona.nicholson@hmc.ox.ac.uk).



On 19th March, **Dr Jessica Barton** (2017, DClinPsych) joined 80 runners in the Barcelona Marathon to raise £40,000 to support the work of TRIBE Freedom Foundation. In her words: "The Foundation is a small but mighty charity on a mission to

fight modern slavery and human trafficking which works with a number of frontline partners to increase access to long-term survivor support and safe house accommodation. As a clinician on the frontline in homelessness services, I understand that homelessness is both an outcome and a driver of modern slavery." Find out more about their work at [tribefreedomfoundation.com](http://tribefreedomfoundation.com).

During Women's History Month, the University of Cambridge profiled **Mona Jebril** (2005, MSc Educational Studies) as part of 'Celebrating Cambridge Women' series. Mona is an interdisciplinary social scientist, currently working as a Research Fellow at the Faculty for Education on the project, 'Close the Gap: Fair Admissions in Postgraduate Research'. This is a joint project between Cambridge and Oxford universities which aims to transform doctoral student selection to develop a socially and epistemically just and inclusive environment for world-leading research. To read more, click [here](#).

Congratulations to **Shweta Gandhi** (2019, MSc Sustainable Urban Development), who was awarded **Young Talent of the Year** at the Architecture Leaders Awards in Autumn 2022.



A mural celebrating one of the UK's first female train drivers, alumna **Karen Harrison** (2007, BA Jurisprudence), was unveiled in January 2023 at London's Euston Station. The mural is part of Avanti West Coast's current campaign for a fifth of new recruits to be women, with the aim of reaching a 50:50 gender split by 2030. To read the BBC article, click [here](#).



Courtesy: Avanti West Coast

On International Women's Day (8th March), Avanti West Coast and Network Rail announced that the image, designed by renowned street artist Akse, will not be removed as originally planned but will remain indefinitely. A photographic record of the mural, which recognises the importance of Karen Harrison's story and her wider impact on the rail industry, will also become part of the National Railway Museum's collection. Congratulations to **Dr Robin Wilson** (2011, MSc Visual Anthropology), Director of the University Kilns at Wytham Woods, who received a **Commendation from the Ambassador of Japan** for his work at the kilns to promote and raise awareness of this ancient Japanese technique. A ceremony to bestow the Commendation was hosted by the Ambassador of Japan and Madame Hayashi at the Ambassador's residence in London. Robin has over recent years led an innovative and unique project that brings together established artists, community groups and school students to explore the techniques and distinctive decorative effect of Japanese anagama firings.

## Alumni News (continued)



Many thanks to alumnus **Henry Chong** (2011, BA PPE) for sharing this recent reunion photo in Hong Kong. From L-R, Henry, **James Yip** (2008, BA Jurisprudence), HMC Honorary Fellow and former Chief Justice of Hong Kong **Dr the Hon Geoffrey Ma**, **Eva Leung** (2009, BA Jurisprudence), **Ruby Chik** (2011, BA Jurisprudence) and **Jonathan Kao** (2010, BA Jurisprudence).

**Deborah Frances-White** (1997, BA English Language and Literature) joined historian and broadcaster Lucy Worsley on the radio show *Lady Killers*, which looks at the crimes of Victorian women from a contemporary, feminist perspective. Download [here](#). If you missed Deborah in January at the **Oxford Union**



(‘This House Regrets the Rise of Hook-up Culture’) you can listen [here](#). Her first play, *Never Have I Ever*, is on stage at the **Minerva Theatre** from 1st-30th September, and you can book [here](#).

Principal **Jane Shaw** and alumna **Jasmine Sahu-Hough** (2017, BA Classics with Oriental Studies) met over coffee at Yale University earlier this month. Jane was at Yale Divinity School to give the inaugural Annand Lecture: ‘Mysticism and Social Justice’.



Jasmine is currently a first-year PhD student in the combined programme in

Classics and History, having received the prestigious **A. Bartlett Giamatti Fellowship**, awarded only to the very best of their candidates.

Congratulations to **Muloongo Muchelemba** (2002, BA PPE) who has been promoted to National Secretary for the Global Rhodes Scholarships at the Rhodes Trust. Inspiring timing indeed, given the 120th anniversary celebrations of the Scholarships this year.



## Recent Alumni Publications

**Luke Austen** (2012, Clinical Medicine) has a book due out in May 2023 – *The Bleep Test: How Can New Doctors Can Get Things Right*. The book focuses on the experiences of, and the issues facing, recently qualified medics, and will be of interest to anyone who manages them, works with them, cares for them or may one day depend on them. You can find more information about it [here](#). Alumni are invited to Luke’s book launch at HMC on Wednesday 3rd May at 4.30pm in the Warrington Room, by emailing [alumni@hmc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@hmc.ox.ac.uk).

Alumnus and HMC Early Career Fellow and Tutor in Theology **Dr Tobias Tanton** (2012, MPhil Theology) published *Corporeal Theology: The Nature of Theological Understanding in Light of Embodied Cognition* in January 2023. This study explores how theological understanding is accommodated to the bodily nature of human cognition.



Drawing on her personal experience as an autistic scientist-practitioner, **Eloise Stark** (2010, BA Experimental Psychology) explores how we can empower neurodivergent populations in academia in her article ‘Empowering Autistic Academics’ in *Nature Human Behaviour*. You can download it [here](#).

**Dr Christy Edwall** (2010, BA English Language and Literature) has published her first novel *History Keeps Me Awake At Night*, which asks: is it possible to recover what is lost without losing oneself?



## Dates for your diary

### Trinity term

#### Moulin Rouge Summer Event

— 21st April, 6.00pm to 2.00am.

HMC Ball Committee '23 invites

you to a magical evening of

entertainment in the College

grounds, transformed into the  
neon-red streets of Rue Blanche, Paris.

Alumni tickets are £80 (maximum of one  
guest per alumni). Tickets are very limited  
and can be booked [here](#).



**HMC Chapel services** — led by our Chaplain,  
alumna **Rev Dr Claire Macdonald**, under the  
theme Creative Encounters at 5.45 to 6.25pm  
every Wednesday. Special guest preachers:

**3rd May:** May Day celebration of William Morris

**10th May:** Visiting Unitarian minister Rev Sue  
Sinnamon, from Richmond VA

**24th May:** Jim Harrison, actor, arts historian  
at the Ashmolean Museum and Lay Minister

**31st May:** Visiting HMC Fellow Rev Elenie Poulos

**7th June:** Multi-Faith Service with Wendy  
Fidler MBE, member of the Council of  
Christians and Jews.

**Law Alumni Reunion Dinner** — 13th May,  
6.15pm for drinks and dinner. Whether you  
studied or work in Law, come back to  
College for a special dinner and the  
opportunity to see friends and network with  
Distinguished Guests, Fellows and Current  
Students. You can book [here](#).

**Arts at HMC — Poetry Event** — 22nd May,  
5.15pm in the HMC Chapel. We are delighted  
to be hosting Senior Research Fellow  
**Professor Michael Symmons Roberts** and **Dr  
Mary Jean Chan** (2012, MPhil Development  
Studies) for a poetry reading and conversation.  
Michael is Professor of Poetry at Manchester  
Metropolitan University, and has been  
awarded the Forward Prize, the Costa Poetry  
Prize and the Whitbread Poetry Award for  
his work. Mary Jean is Senior Lecturer in  
Creative Writing at Oxford Brookes University.  
Her first collection won the Costa Book  
Award for Poetry, and she has just been  
appointed as a Booker Prize judge.



**The Oxford Alternotives Reunion** — 23rd Sept,  
2.30pm in the HMC Chapel. Co-founder and  
HMC alumnus **David Wienir** (1993, PPE) will  
celebrate the 30th anniversary of the oldest  
a cappella group at the University of Oxford.  
Booking is via the **Annual Alumni Weekend  
Meeting Minds** website, open soon.

**HMC's Annual Alumni Dinner** — 23rd Sept,  
6.45pm. All alumni are invited to meet up  
with friends and tutors, and hear our brilliant  
guest speaker, **David Wienir** (1993, PPE), who  
is Assistant General Counsel at HarperCollins  
Publishers, head of business and legal affairs  
at HarperCollins Productions and an  
entertainment law instructor at UCLA  
Extension. Book [here](#).

**Annual Alumni Tayler Talks London Dinner**  
at Middle Temple — 24th January 2024.  
Our speaker is **The Rt Hon. the Baroness  
Scotland of Asthal KC**, who is a British  
diplomat, barrister and politician, serving as  
the sixth Secretary-General of the  
Commonwealth of Nations. She is the second  
Secretary-General from the Caribbean and  
the first woman to hold the post. Booking  
open soon.

### Reunion in Switzerland

Alumnus **Jim Dwyer** (Junior Year Abroad,  
Philosophy) invites all alumni from **1982–83**  
academic year at Manchester College to join  
fellow classmates at a 40th anniversary  
reunion in Switzerland in August. If you were  
at Manchester College that year and would  
like to join, please contact Jim at  
[jgdwyer@wm.edu](mailto:jgdwyer@wm.edu).

**Open days** — *Check our website for these  
events at [hmc.ox.ac.uk/open-days](http://hmc.ox.ac.uk/open-days) and  
contact [richard.molyneux@hmc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:richard.molyneux@hmc.ox.ac.uk) to  
sign up as an ambassador for the College.*

*For updated information about HMC events  
visit our website [hmc.ox.ac.uk/events](http://hmc.ox.ac.uk/events).*

### Stay in touch

Please scan the code to  
make sure we have the  
most up-to-date details  
to enable us to stay in  
contact with you.

