



Dear Alum,

The College recently hosted the **Upton Lecture** with speaker **Edmund de Waal**, the internationally acclaimed contemporary artist, whose latest work is around the idea of migration – of people, ideas and objects. He spoke to a sold-out audience of alumni, academics, students and community friends. It was inspiring, emotionally charged and provocative. A powerful contribution to the academic discourse encouraged by the College and a splendid start to Trinity term. Very special thanks to Regent **Luděk Sekyra** and his Foundation for continuing to support the Upton Lectures at HMC.

It's been an emotional Spring, with the passing of beloved Music Director **James Whitbourn**. The Principal **Jane Shaw**, our Chaplain **The Rev Claire MacDonald** and Assistant Director of Music **Stephen Taylor** are organising a Chapel Service on 5th June that will celebrate his extraordinary musical legacy.

As a reminder, please don't forget to book for the **Annual Alumni Dinner** on Saturday 21st September! Tickets are available [here](#).

Sincerely,



Shona Nicholson  
Development & Alumni Relations Manager

### Inside this edition

- Page 2: **Projects and Plans:** JCR Trust
- Page 3: **My Story, My HMC**
- Page 4: **College News**
- Page 5: **Student Spotlight:** Catherine Digman
- Page 6: **Alumni News**
- Page 8: **Dates for Your Diary**



## Projects and Plans

Keeping the HMC community informed about our strategic initiatives

### The JCR Trust – Supporting HMC Students Facing Unexpected Financial Hardship

In June 2000, the Harris Manchester College JCR directed two of its members, Law students **Ike Nwafor** and **Philip Harper Oliver**, to begin the process of setting up a



trust to serve the needs of the members of the JCR. As HMC is the only mature student college in the University, the JCR Trust recognised that many of the students who arrived in Oxford

had more complex financial commitments than younger students. No hardship funds existed in the College at the time.

#### Original Trustees:

<b>Kellie White</b>	Trustee
<b>Philip Harper-Oliver</b>	Charities Commission Liaison Officer
<b>Franz Schaper</b>	JCR President and Treasurer
<b>Lisa Stokes-King</b>	JCR Secretary
<b>Tony Carrick</b>	Secretary & Publicity Officer
<b>Ikena Nwafor</b>	Development Officer
<b>Roger Harvey</b>	Chairman & Short-Term Fundraising Officer
<b>Matt Steenberg</b>	Treasurer & MCR Liaison Officer

Any member of the JCR and MCR trust can apply for a grant if they are facing hardship or unexpected expenses. Even modest grants are often lifelines for the students, and the JCR Trust has provided hundreds of grants over the decades since its creation.

As of the AGM on 16th October 2002, three members of the Governing Body were also included: **Professor John Brooke**, **Dr Lesley Smith** and **Dr Rowena Archer**. Over the years, Fellow Librarians **Sue Killoran** and **Kate Alderson-Smith** acted as advisers to the Trust.

At the time of the Trust's creation, the College didn't have a Development Office, which would traditionally have been the main source of fundraising. So, one of the primary purposes of the Trust was to raise funds from different sources, including private donations, as well as approaching charitable trusts for grants. Over the years it held a variety of fundraising events, including College dinners.

Our mature students can have more complex financial commitments than younger students.

The JCR Trust has always been independent of the College, and Trustees are HMC alumni who have given their time freely and generously over the years. With the establishment of the Alumni Relations and Development Office, the Trustees have decided to wind down the Trust over the next 12 months, transferring remaining funds to the College's ring-fenced student hardship fund.

#### Current Trustees:

<b>Martin Byrne</b>	<b>Sebastian Alsheimer</b>
<b>Stephen McMullin</b>	<b>Matt Bull</b>
<b>Stephen Jacobs</b>	<b>Martin Cox</b>
<b>John Henry</b>	<b>Dr Ignacio Silva</b>
	<b>Rupert Bell</b>

The College – and the hundreds of students the Trust supported each year – are hugely grateful to past and current JCR Trustees.

You can make a gift to the Student Hardship Fund [here](#). Contact the Development Office for further information via [alumni@hmc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:alumni@hmc.ox.ac.uk)

## My Story, My HMC

### Mary Jean Chan

(2012, MPhil Development Studies)

Poet and author

#### What I'm doing now

I'm a poet and the author of two books, *Flèche* (Faber & Faber, 2019) and *Bright Fear* (Faber, 2023). I was a co-editor of the poetry anthology *100 Queer Poems* (Vintage, 2022) with Andrew McMillan.



In 2023, I served as a judge of the Booker Prize.

I'm currently the 2023-24 Judith E. Wilson Poetry Fellow at the Faculty of English, University of Cambridge.

Previously I was

Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing at Oxford Brookes University for five years, and I am now also a tutor and supervisor on the MSt in Creative Writing at the University of Oxford.

#### Best memories of HMC

I loved spending my days in the Tate Library. The light there is mesmerising as it filters in through the windows, and the space is so beautifully designed and welcoming (we were allowed to bring food and drink; some students even brought pillows and blankets!) that I never wanted to leave.

#### Favourite activities at HMC

The lovely formal dinners that I'd attended with friends in Arlosh Hall, which felt both convivial and intimate. I also really enjoyed attending events in the College Chapel. It's a quiet and sacred space that often made

me feel calmer after visiting it, even on stressful days during term time. It was also nice to step into the College for a quick stroll and a moment of quiet in the courtyard on days when I had multiple classes in the Department for International Development, just opposite HMC.

#### Why HMC?

HMC is a welcoming and diverse college where the faculty and staff know your name, where intellectual conversations take place organically, and where your potential as an individual is recognised and nurtured. It is also a very queer-friendly college, which I find comforting and inspiring.

#### Why is giving to HMC important?

HMC is the sort of intellectual community in which being mutually supportive feels natural and right. As such, it makes sense to give to College however one can. I would be delighted to speak to anyone at HMC who is interested in poetry or creative writing, or to anyone who is contemplating switching from a different discipline into Humanities.

**“Be open-minded and curious ...  
enjoy the wealth of opportunities  
HMC offers you.”**

#### My advice to current students

Nurture the friendships that will continue to define you even after you've left the College. Don't forget to take care of your physical and mental wellbeing, and to explore your non-academic interests – these might become what you pursue as a career instead of the subject you are currently studying! Be open-minded and curious, and enjoy the wealth of activities and opportunities that being a student at HMC offers you.

## College News

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of our Director of Music, **James Whitbourn**. James was also a composer of considerable renown, and a producer at the BBC for many years. His work received four Grammy nominations, a Royal Television



Society Award and many other international accolades. He produced the BBC's *Carols from Kings*, and BBC Radio 3's *Choral Evensong* for a number of years

and was responsible for the global music coverage by the BBC of many royal events, including the funerals of Queen Elizabeth II, the Queen Mother and the Duke of Edinburgh. A memorial service will be held in due course, following a private family funeral.

The College congratulates colleagues in the **Wellbeing Research Centre** on their publication of the **2024 World Happiness Report**, published in March to mark the UN's



International Day of Happiness. Oxford's Wellbeing Research Centre is based at Harris Manchester, under the direction of **Professor Jan-Emmanuel De Neve**, the College's Vice-Principal

and Fellow and Tutor in Management. The Centre is an interdisciplinary research group focused on the empirical study of wellbeing, and took over responsibility for publishing the Report this year. You can read the report [here](#).

Wonderful **Oxford Literary Festival** session by Senior Tutor and Professor of Intellectual History, **Professor Lesley Smith** speaking at The Bodleian Libraries Weston Lecture Theatre in March. She was joined by the Bodleian's Head of Publishing, **Dr Samuel Fanous** and Head of Early and Rare Collections, **Dr Martin Kauffmann** to discuss a selection of inspiring



people from her new book *Handwritten*. Attendees were treated to manuscripts from JS Bach, William Wilberforce, Ada Lovelace, Queen Elizabeth I and many others, and some stories of the people behind the writing.

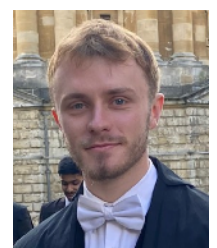
**Dr Sarah Ogilvie**, HMC Senior Research Fellow in Linguistics has a 'Word of the Month' column in *Prospect*, Britain's leading current affairs monthly magazine. You can read her latest column [here](#).

HMC was the site for a culinary reunion between **Steve Ramli-Davies** (Head Chef at Harris Manchester College), **Neil Mahon** (Head Chef at Wadham College) and **Jay Gjoci** (Second Chef at Harris Manchester College).



*Oxford Fun Fact:* Neil trained under Steve, and Jay trained under Neil (and now Steve).

Current student **James Critchley** (MSt, English 1900-present), recipient of the **English Faculty – Cathcart Foundation – Harris Manchester College Studentship**, is working with the Cameron Mackintosh Visiting Professor of Drama and Former Artistic Director at the RSC, **Sir Gregory Doran**, as the Assistant Director on his production of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, to be performed at the Oxford Playhouse in May 2024. Tickets are available [here](#).



## College News (continued)

### Congratulations to...

- Former Research Fellow **Dr Aroop Mozumder**, who has been elected Master Apothecary by **The Worshipful Society of Apothecaries** for the year 2023-24. Dr Mozumder had a career as an RAF doctor, ending up as an Air Vice Marshall running medical services for the entire British Armed Forces. A specialist in disaster medicine, he has been recruited by the **RNLI** to be their first Medical Director. Acknowledging the difficult conditions in which RNLI crew treat injured and distressed people, he says that practising 'good medicine in bad places' is a tough job and can have traumatic consequences
  - something that he is working hard to address. Listen to his [podcast](#) *Calm Hands-on Deck: Aroop Mozumder*, part of the 200 Voices RNLI Podcast Series.
- Current student **Isaac Hordiyuk** (BA, Jurisprudence) who has been awarded the **Prince of Wales Scholarship**, a Major Scholarship from Gray's Inn, enabling him to complete the Bar Course next year.
- Current student **Nicholas Stone**, awarded a **Sir Thomas More Scholarship** by Lincoln's Inn. He was also awarded a **Lord Bowen Scholarship** for the Senior Status Jurisprudence degree here at HMC.
- Research Fellow **Dr Hana Navratilova** on recently becoming a UK citizen, with a special ceremony at Oxford Town Hall.

## Student Spotlight

My name is Catherine Digman. I am a second year BA History student, fine artist, and writer. Coming from a working-class background in Kent, being in academia always seemed an unobtainable dream. I spent my teens and twenties juggling multiple jobs and studying part-time when I could.



While working with SEN children in the county, I did a lot of historical research into painting techniques. I started making oil paintings on reclaimed wooden panels, as well as using chalk and charcoal from the landscape, and exhibited at shows alongside Grayson Perry and Anthony van Dyck. While researching local history, landscape and mythology, I was inspired to write a semi-autobiographical novel based on the area.

When volunteering with local museums and heritage sites, I decided to learn more about history, and in 2018 started part-time study at OUDCE in History and in English Literature. I was subsequently accepted for the History BA, which I enjoy because of its

broad range, from political history to the lives of working-class people. My degree has opened up a lot of pathways for me, and introduced me to many inspiring people. I have been involved with outreach work encouraging a wider range of students to apply for Oxford, and raising awareness of the issues faced by working-class and other potentially marginalised students.

Building on my earlier research, I am currently planning my dissertation for next year, which will look at life in medieval towns in Kent. As well as working on my course, I have been publishing short stories and poems in *The Vanity Papers* and the HMC Environmental Society anthology. I'm also taking the next steps in preparing some longer works for publication, including a series of literary novels, and a non-fiction book on decolonisation.

Although it has not been easy, I have been lucky to have many great tutors, including Lesley Smith and Catherine Jackson at HMC, and Oxford is proving to be somewhere I can really get my career together.

## Alumni News

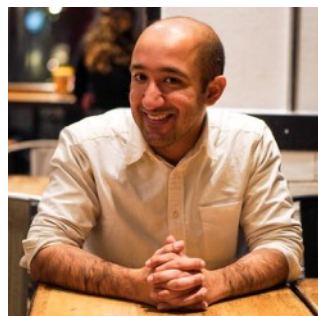
It's not every day one of our alumni comes up in a **BBC2 University Challenge** question. Last year, Avanti West Coast installed the mural featuring alumna **Karen Harrison** (2007, Jurisprudence) in Euston Station. She was the first woman to be accepted to train as a driver on Britain's railways. In addition to her role as a driver, she fought for the rights of other women, and minorities, in the rail industry.



Karen came to HMC to study Law, hoping to work as a barrister specialising in labour law and human rights. Unfortunately, she died before she was able to complete her studies. Karen holds a special place in the hearts of all those who knew her. It's fitting that she continues to inspire people today.

**Piyush Ahuja** (2014, BA PPE) has scooped a national award from **Innovate UK**, the UK's Innovation Agency – a competition that saw over 2,100 entrepreneurs applying for funding and business mentorship. The prestigious award will support him to grow his innovative business idea which aims to build the world's first **learning web**. Piyush's mission is to

unlock dormant value in a person's skills, as Airbnb and Uber did with spare rooms and space in cars. "I am incredibly thankful to receive not just the funding and recognition but also the support from Innovate UK, which has an incredible network with some of the brightest minds in business. To have our product recognised and championed by such a competitive scheme means so much to me and my team."



Alumna and lead singer in the punk band is **Lisa (née Stokes-King) Pataridou** (2000, BA English Language & Literature). **The horMones** is an over-50s all-female group that aims to inspire and encourage others to pick up instruments and form bands. The horMones had not sung or played instruments before forming last year. As one band member said: "Older women tend to be unseen, unheard, a bit invisible. They're expected to behave at a certain age. But ignore that, get on, enjoy yourselves, make music, and dance." You can read more about them on the [BBC website](#).

Medical technologies over the centuries – anaesthetics, pacemakers, IVF, infusion pumps, dialysis machines, antibiotics, heart valves, prosthetics, MRI scanners, even hand washing stations – have transformed our whole approach to illness, health, and wellbeing, but not always without controversy in their time. One assumes that future advances are going to have benefits and implications that are hard for us to predict today.

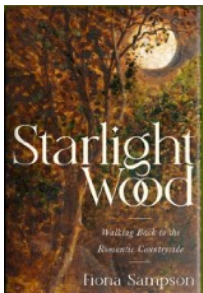


Enter **Dr Aron D'Souza** (2009, BA Jurisprudence), who has launched **The Enhanced Games**, with the express purpose of challenging the existing the sporting mindset. According to Aron: "We believe that science is real and has an important place in supporting human flourishing. There is no better forum for highlighting the centrality of science in our modern world than elite sports." For more information, [visit their website](#).

## Alumni News (continued)



Many thanks to HMC alumna **Professor Fiona Sampson** (1989, BA PPE) for visiting HMC in March. Pictured with her recent book,



*Starlight Wood: Walking back to the Romantic Countryside*, which she has signed for the alumni-authored section in our Library. Later that day, Fiona was a speaker at Oxford Martin School, part of the **Oxford Literary Festival**.

**Sebastian (née Riedl) Engler** (2018, BA PPE) has been offered a fully funded (4-year) PhD position in Political Theory at Central European University in Vienna. He's currently finishing his MA in philosophy CEU, under the supervision of renowned moral and political philosopher, Dr Anca Gheaus. His PhD focus is on topics such as children and migration, paediatric medical research, and educational justice. He also occasionally works as a teacher, singer, cellist, and ensemble leader.



Congratulations to alumna **Karolina Wisniewska** (2003, MSt History of Art and Visual Culture) who has been made Chef de Mission for Team Canada at the **2024 Paris Paralympic Games** this Summer. Karolina is herself a three-time Paralympian and winner of eight Paralympic medals in Para alpine skiing and has been inducted into the Canadian Ski Hall of Fame – the first Paralympian to receive this honour.

Fantastic news about alumna **Madeline Tatum's** (2021, MSc in Translational Health Sciences) new role as Arts in Government Fellow with the National League of Cities promoting Arts and Wellbeing in



municipalities throughout the US. This builds on her previous efforts here in Oxford, working with colleagues at the Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust and Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences to evaluate arts-in-health interventions at NHS community hospitals.

Archivist **Julia Donaldson** is appealing to the HMC community to help fill in gaps in the College's Archival Collection, particularly



when it comes to material that documents the history of student life here. She's asking anyone who wishes to make a donation of photos, books or artefacts to fill out [this form](#). For further information, please contact her directly at

[archive@hmc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:archive@hmc.ox.ac.uk)

## Dates for your diary

**HMC's Annual Alumni Dinner** – Saturday 21st September 2024. Join your fellow alumni and their guests for our annual dinner. Our speaker is alumna **Dr Mary Jean Chan** (2012, MPhil Development Studies), author of *Flèche* (Faber & Faber, 2019), which won the Costa Book Award for Poetry and was shortlisted for the International Dylan Thomas Prize, the John Pollard Foundation International Poetry Prize and the Seamus Heaney Centre First Collection Poetry Prize, among others. She is the 2023-24 Judith E. Wilson Poetry Fellow at the University of Cambridge and served as a judge for the 2023 Booker Prize. [Book here.](#)

**Alumni Weekend Meeting Minds** – 20th-22nd September 2024. More information [here](#).

**Alumni Carol Service** – 7th December. [Booking open](#) for members of the HMC Community and their families.

### Other HMC Events

**Public Lecture at HMC: *Ancient Wisdom and the Future Self – Towards a New Paradigm*** – 24th June 2.00-4.00pm. Speakers include alumna **Adina Bezerita** (2021, MSt Theology) and Dr Mervat-Abdel Nasser. More [here](#).

**HMC Chapel Services** – led by our Chaplain, under the theme *Gathering Light*, at 5.45 to 6.25pm every Wednesday in term. Mid-week services use elements of Evensong as our guide, with music from our College choir.

- 5th June – *Farewell*: Our Principal **Professor Jane Shaw** and our Chaplain **The Rev Dr Claire MacDonald** will speak about the legacy of James Whitbourn, HMC's Music Director, who passed away in March.

HMC Senior Research Fellow **Dr Sarah Ogilvie** will be touring internationally, speaking about her book, *The Dictionary People: the unsung heroes who created the Oxford English Dictionary*, in New Zealand at the **Auckland Writers Festival** on 17th May ([book here](#)), and

in Australia at the **Sydney Writers' Festival** on 23rd May ([book here](#)) and the **Brisbane Writers Festival** on 30th May ([book here](#)).

A walk and vigil will be held on 1st June for Iranian prisoner and HMC alumnus **Johan Floderus** (2011, BA PPE), with guest speakers including **Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe**.

**College events** – Visit [hmc.ox.ac.uk/events](http://hmc.ox.ac.uk/events) for more information and to book.

**Open days** – be an ambassador for the College! (check our website for these events: [hmc.ox.ac.uk/visits-and-open-days](http://hmc.ox.ac.uk/visits-and-open-days)).



### Enjoying a special anniversary – why not come and visit us?

We're always pleased to see returning alumni (and the next generation of alumni, hint-hint). **Charles and Samantha (née Hunsicker) Hyde** came back to celebrate their 25th anniversary of meeting each other here! They were American College students, at HMC for a year abroad from 1998-99. Pictured here with their sons Alexander and Benjamin.



### 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.

