

Summer 2024



# KING'S PARADE

THE MAGAZINE FOR MEMBERS & FRIENDS OF KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE



*In this issue*

**SPORTING BLUES**

**GIBBS 300TH  
ANNIVERSARY**

**REDISCOVERING A  
LOST TREASURE OF  
MODERN GERMAN  
LITERATURE**

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## Welcome

*from the Domus Bursar Polly Ingham*



**As the 'new' Domus Bursar here at King's, I have loved getting to understand the rhythms of College life.**

Nine months into the role, I can see how each term has its own momentum and impacts the teams I look after and work alongside. When I shared my news with friends, their response was 'so what is it you will actually be doing?' The word domus comes from the Latin for 'house' which is at the heart of what the Domus Bursar should be aiming to achieve at King's: to ensure that this College is your home away from home.

Whether you are working, studying, or visiting here, we want to make sure this feels like your place. Ensuring that everyone in the community has the best experience possible now, while looking after the College in perpetuity is a privilege that requires a delicate balance in decision-making. As such we have established some principles to guide the Domus work over the coming years. We will deliver new ways of working that support and galvanise our community of Fellows, staff, and students. We will address how we care for and restore our buildings such as the magnificent Gibbs Building, taking a sustainable approach directly aligned with our response to the climate crisis. As the College moves out of a pandemic-fuelled deficit to a more resilient financial position, we will ensure our staffing model matches our future ambitions. Above all we aim to create a sense of ease throughout the College experience.

These principles are designed to positively impact every facet of College life. They will also more profoundly impact how we move toward becoming a net-zero College by 2038, care for and conserve our iconic historic buildings, and develop holistic welfare provision available to all. The personal moments that make up your time here – what meals you enjoy and who you share them with, a seasonal walk through the Fellows Garden, feeling your oars on the water or your shoes stick to the Bunker floor, and slipping on your gown ahead of graduation – are inextricably linked to how it feels to be a member of King's.

By being thoughtful about our everyday we can make sure that each person in this community of thousands has their place here at King's for centuries to come, and I look forward to being a part of making this possible.

## 'TRUE, FOR ALAN TURING'

**A new sculpture by Sir Antony Gormley was installed in King's in January, honouring 'a man who was pivotal in changing the course of all our lives.'**

At 3.7 meters tall and made from 140mm thick rolled Corten steel, the new work by Sir Antony Gormley, *True, for Alan Turing*, celebrates the outstanding legacy of Alan Turing (KC 1931). It sits at the heart of the College between the Gibbs Building and Webb's Court, at the junction of routes through King's travelled daily by staff, students, members of the College and University and Cambridge residents – a visible, public recognition of Turing's life and achievements.

Alan Turing's work continues to have a huge impact on the world today. From the papers he published at Cambridge which are now recognised as the foundation of computer science, through his vital cryptanalysis work at Bletchley Park during the Second World War and cracking the German naval Enigma code, to his exploration of the idea of artificial intelligence, his importance is hard to overestimate. King's, where he was first an undergraduate student and then a Fellow, played a significant role in Turing's work and throughout his life.

The sculpture was made possible thanks to a philanthropic gift. It was commissioned as part of the College's programme to celebrate Turing. Speaking at the installation, Antony Gormley said: "Alan Turing unlocked the door between the industrial and the information ages. I wanted to make the best sculpture I could to honour a man who was pivotal in changing the course of all our lives."

Corten steel contains 1% of copper which means it will oxidise over time, forming a rich red rust surface. In the months since the sculpture's installation this process has already begun to take place. "*True, for Alan Turing* is even more lovely and moving than I had anticipated," says Professor Nicolette Zeeman, Keeper of the College Collections. "Subtle mutations of colour are now happening, as the oxidation process sets in, allowing the sculpture to reflect both the shapes and the hues of the stone buildings around it. People have said that it looks as if it has always been here; they certainly seem to enjoy having it in our midst and stopping for conversation near it. We're hugely grateful to everyone who helped make this happen – and above all to Antony for his extraordinary creation."



You can read more about the sculpture and Alan Turing at [bit.ly/TrueforAlanTuring](https://bit.ly/TrueforAlanTuring)

# SPORTING BLUES

**It's been said that King's isn't a sporty College. This generation of students is writing a different story.**

The Light Blues have had an undeniably good year. Victory on the water in the Men's and the Women's Boat Race, the Men's Reserve race and both the Lightweight races; triumph in the women's Varsity football match; beating Oxford comprehensively in both the men's and the women's Varsity rugby. And playing a proud part in helping Cambridge to these wins have been eight talented student athletes from King's.

Second year HSPS student Alissa Sattentau is Women's President of Cambridge University Association Football Club. "This year we had five King's students on the women's Blues team: Ella O'Connell, Fran Mangeolles, Izzy Winniffrith, Isobel Waldie and me. More than a quarter of the squad, and more than any other College. That's really impressive!" Alissa started playing for the Blues in her first year, and has found football rewarding beyond clocking up the wins. "A lot of my friends who don't do sport at Cambridge are surprised that I have time to do my degree alongside training, matches and socials, but in reality, it's how I cope with my work. If I'm feeling tired or stressed I step on to the pitch and instantly feel better. The emotional and physical effort that I've put into football has paid off in some of the most unforgettable experiences of my university life so

far." The women won the Varsity match 3-0; while down at the StoneX Stadium in London in March, first year Economics student George Bland helped propel Cambridge to the biggest victory in the history of the men's Varsity Rugby, beating Oxford 56-11.

In 2022 Classicist Luca Ferraro became the first King's student to represent Cambridge in the men's Blue Boat since 1953. This year he was selected for the third consecutive time, helping to extend a dominant run for the Light Blue boat that has seen them come out on top in five of the last six years. Georgia Golligly (third year Architecture) rowed in the triumphant women's Lightweight boat. "I only started rowing in my first year, drawn in by the tempting promise of a BBQ by the river on a sunny day. I was quickly convinced to stay! Being stroke of the King's W1 boat which won blades in both Lent and May Bumps last year, trialling for CUBC this year and winning the Lightweight Women's Boat Race has all been an incredible experience, one which wouldn't have been possible without the support of the College and the opportunity of learning to row with KCBC."

Both King's and the University are keen to encourage students to try new sports, at all levels of ability. A group of King's students who recently started boxing for the Cambridge team are hoping to take part in the Varsity match next year; *King's Parade* may soon have even more impressive student sporting successes to report.

*"The emotional and physical effort that I've put into football has paid off in some of the most unforgettable experiences of my university life so far."*

Right (clockwise): Isobel Waldie, Fran Mangeolles, Alissa Sattentau, Ella O'Connell and Izzy Winniffrith

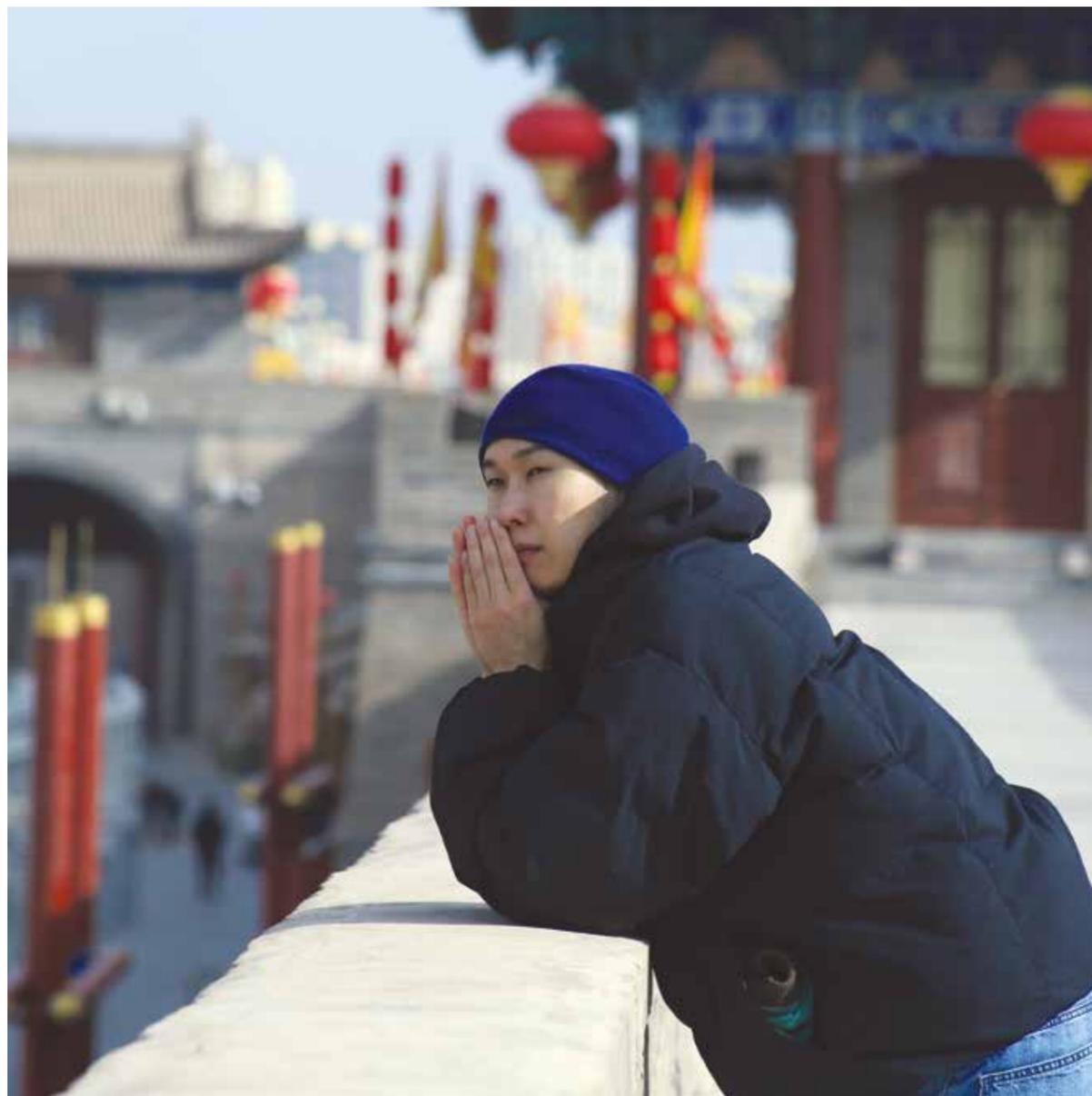




# MY PhD

with Ayur Zhanaev

**Ayur's research has taken him on a geographical journey from East to West, a journey which chimes with the spirit of the Silk Roads Programme, which he joined in 2022.**



I am currently in China for a year of field work. I am based at the University of Inner Mongolia in Hohhot and regularly travel to Bayanhot, the site of my fieldwork, for two weeks at a time. Bayanhot is the capital of the Alashaa league in westernmost Inner Mongolia and is beautifully located between the Alashaa Mountains on the east and the Gobi Desert on the west.

*“As I research Bayanhot, I continue to move within the Mongol and Inner Asian regions, with their shared history and culture. Due to the distant geographical, political, and cultural settings, I have been developing new skills.”*

Previously known as Dingyuaning, Bayanhot was established in the early 18th century as a Qing period garrison town and later became the centre of the Alashaa Mongol banner (administrative division). Located on the historical Silk Roads, Dingyuaning was the crossroads of long-distance caravans from Russia's border to Tibet and China proper on their way to Xinjiang. Due to its political importance, strategic location, and trade opportunities, the town flourished and earned the nickname ‘Little Beijing.’ With a multiethnic population of around 10,000 people by the mid-20th century, the town now has more than 100,000 residents. Still considered a small city by Chinese standards, Bayanhot continues to grow quickly, so even local people are not sure what their town looks like in some districts. The old part of the town and city walls, which were largely destroyed in the second half of the 20th century, were recently restored.

I am interested in the urban lifestyles of the Mongols throughout history. Mongols were commonly defamed as those who destroyed cities rather than built them, whereas the much-romanticised word ‘nomadism’ has become the standard keyword in conceiving their history and culture. Mongols were primarily nomadic people, but there is a great deal of historical evidence linking cities with Mongols; and in modern times, most Mongols live in urban areas. Compared to other urban centres associated with Mongols, there has been little anthropological and historical research on Bayanhot. Using archival materials, travellers' accounts, local memories and interviews, my project seeks to introduce the lesser-known historical instance of Mongol urban life to Inner Asian and Silk Road studies.

A Qing-period document I recently discovered describes how Alashaa elites travelled between their banner and the distant capital. In around 1764, Alashaa Prince Luvsandorji went to Beijing to visit the Imperial court and his entourage consisted of four noblemen, 12 women and children family members, 16 officials, three lamas (spiritual leaders), and 52 soldiers – a total of 87 people. They travelled with 110 horses and mules, 121 camels, and were armoured with four arrow cases, three guns, and four swords. The caravan must have been an impressive sight!

My previous research project, supported by The Robert H.N. Ho Family Foundation Program in Buddhist Studies, looked at Buddhist didactic literature written for Buryat-

Mongol laity between the 18th and the beginning of the 20th century. Lamas compiling and distributing these texts intended to ‘improve’ the society according to their vision of the Buddhist order. By the second half of the 19th century Buryats were increasingly concerned about their ‘traditional’ way of life. Their social and economic reality was rapidly changing due to the disadvantageous land reforms and increasingly assimilative policies from the Russian state. These texts provide fascinating insight into how Buddhism spread in Inner Asia and influenced local forms of social reflexivity.

During this period, Inner Asia, like many other regions, experienced the emergence of new ideas and institutions in response and sometimes in opposition to what we generally call modernity. To fully understand them today we need to trace their history and interconnectedness.

As I research Bayanhot, I continue to move within the Mongol and Inner Asian regions, with their shared history and culture. Due to the distant geographical, political, and cultural settings, I have been developing new skills. While I rely on my knowledge of Mongolian (including classical script) and Russian, I am also spending time improving my Mandarin Chinese and have even started learning Manchu.

My academic journey started in my hometown Ulan-Ude, continued in Warsaw, and for the past couple of years has been associated with King's College and the Mongolia and Inner Asia Studies Unit (MIASU) in Cambridge – and now also Hohhot. MIASU is an internationally important centre for Inner Asia studies, and I have been familiar with the research work of the unit for a long time. My own academic outlook developed taking research by MIASU'S specialists as inspiration. In the spirit of the Silk Roads, I maintain connections with all those academic centres and value the experience I gained there, moving back and forth (often virtually) to pursue my research interests.

I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of the Silk Roads Programme, which has broadened my understanding of this extensive region and the world at large. I have been given the chance to gain a comparative perspective, which deepens my understanding of the wider interconnectedness and distinctiveness of my fieldwork site. I humbly hope my research project will bring a new facet to the Programme.



# Q & A with Becky Heath

*Inspired by the life sciences, computer science, and machine learning, College Research Associate Becky Heath looks at how oil palm plantations in Indonesia can balance environmental sustainability with socio-economic welfare.*

## **You've spent the last few months in the tropics of Indonesia. Can you tell us more about your current research?**

I've had the honour of working out in the countryside with local research teams from Indonesian industry and academia, and over 50 farming families to try and understand how we can manage palm oil plantations better. Specifically, we're trying to document how families manage their farms, why and how they make decisions, and what impact those decisions have on ecosystem health and the yield and financial security of the families. It's mostly climbing through undergrowth and trying to avoid walking into giant orb weaver webs though.

## **Palm oil and its extensive use in most of the products we consume every day has been 'in the eye of the storm' for years. Do you see farming practices finally changing and do you believe the palm oil industry can ensure long-term sustainability in the not-too-distant future?**

I think if palm oil could be grown anywhere else, it'd be seen almost as a miracle crop. When we think of other oil crops like rapeseed, soy, or sunflower, you can imagine countryside fields with hip-height monocultures for around six months of the year but bare ground and seedlings for the rest. Conversely, oil palm grows steadily over a 25-year period to create successional pseudo-forests over 10m tall with a semi-closed canopy, all this whilst producing over four times the oil per metre than the next best crop. The problem with oil palm, though, is that it's a tropical crop, meaning very often the land that's lost to grow it is tropical rainforest. Oil palm is by no means on par with an actual forest in almost any metric, but it is full of opportunity to be grown with impressive sustainability. Encouraging that in real life are sustainability bodies such as the RSPO who use evidence-based findings to develop guidelines and assessment protocols for farmers to join 'sustainable palm oil' markets to sell the oil at a premium. These schemes are on the up with most major industry producers signed on and the guidelines developing with the science.

## **This is not your first time doing fieldwork in Southeast Asia. How has your PhD project in ecological soundscapes helped you prepare for the work that you are doing today?**

My previous research was in a much more remote area of Malaysian Borneo where the nearest settlement was a four hour drive across rickety old logging paths. The sites I worked at in Borneo were a couple of hours hike through uncut logged forest trails. We'd often need to slash through undergrowth

with machetes, whilst carrying everything we needed on our backs up the sides of steep hills and valleys. Not to mention, each night sleeping on a mattress on the ground with holes chewed by rats! So working where I do now, being driven farm to farm and stopping off for *kopi hitam* [a sweet black coffee] on the farmers' porches between sites is luxury – I also get to sleep on a proper bed and everything now ... I do miss the orangutans, though!

## **Growing up, did you ever imagine a life dedicated to research and a job that would take you on such a journey, so far from the outskirts of southeast London?**

Every new step I've taken has been a surprise and I'm constantly pinching myself that this is all real. Obviously, I'd seen scientists on TV and in films, but I didn't know it was a real job that real people did until it was a job that I was doing. I always loved the idea of the jungle and since I was a kid dreamed of somehow getting out there, but until I went to university I thought my best bet was to get myself invited on *I'm A Celebrity ... Get Me Out Of Here!* I am relieved to say I found another way.

## **You recently joined King's as a College Research Associate, could you tell us what the experience has been like for you?**

Being admitted to the College by candlelight in the Chapel while people were speaking Latin was unlike anything I'd ever experienced, and very special – the food is undeniably great too! Mostly, though, it's been really inspirational to see the spirit and resilience of King's student activists and I hope they continue to be a force for good and change in the College and beyond. I'm also very much looking forward to working more closely at King's, especially with Cicely Marshall where I'll get to apply some of my acoustic analysis methodologies to the wealth of data she's collected from the King's meadows over the years.

## **As your research is so multidisciplinary and your interests so diverse, where would you like your journey to take you after Cambridge?**

My ambition is to keep doing this for as long as I keep loving it. I think that ecological methods are due a bit of a revolution and I find looking for the technologies that are going to take us there really exciting. I hope that through continuing collaborations with all sorts of people, especially people on the ground like the researchers and families I work with in Indonesia, I can keep on the pulse of technical developments while making sure the work I do revolves around the people most likely to be affected.

# A ROOM OF THEIR OWN

Behind its imposing Portland stone façade, Gibbs Building, which marks its 300th anniversary this year, is where King's Fellows research, teach – and talk. Professor Charlie Loke and Professor Ashley Moffett have shared a set on G staircase, working on aspects of the immunology of human reproduction, for more than three decades.

In G3, Charlie Loke and Ashley Moffett are talking about trophoblast. It's a conversation that's been going on for more than 35 years, here and in the lab, with exceptional results.

"Ashley came to ask me if she could join my research group in the Department of Pathology in 1987", says Charlie. "She was a consultant clinical pathologist at Addenbrooke's Hospital and wanted to study a population of cells she had seen in the uterus, which she thought might be Natural Killer (NK) cells, a type of immune cell. I wasn't sure about her, as she was a clinician with no lab experience – but I decided to give her a trial!" They were NK cells, and the collaboration which began then has led to groundbreaking discoveries concerning the biological mechanisms behind serious conditions associated with pregnancy, including pre-eclampsia and unexplained stillbirth.

Charlie arrived at King's in 1953 to read Natural Sciences. When he was made a Fellow and Director of Studies in Medical Sciences twenty years later he moved in to G3, beginning an occupation by medical Fellows that has continued ever since. "I was the first, with Tom White; then James Fawcett arrived, and Ashley, then Francesco Colucci and now Sarah Crisp and Ben Ravenhill." Medicine at King's has a history of strong teaching by Fellows, and supervisions take place in the large outer room overlooking Front Court, with the two inner rooms looking out onto the Backs used for study and seeing students individually at the beginning and end of term.

It's also where applicants to study Medicine come for interview, waiting in the outer room faced by a large, disconcertingly fleshy painting of Drunken Silenus, by Rubens' Studio – "They hate looking at that picture!", says Ashley – and where the College's medical



students from all six years are invited for drinks on the first evening of full term. It's an important occasion, where students can meet their future supervisors and freshers have an opportunity to talk to clinical training stage medics, and the close King's medical community is forged.

Three decades in Gibbs Building have been important to both of them. Charlie refers to it as his home from home. "I've never stopped appreciating how lucky I am. When I go to international scientific meetings, people often show a picture of where they work at the start of their lecture, and usually it's a dull modern building. Then I show a photo of Gibbs from the Backs and point at G3 and say 'that is my office.' And nothing can compare."

When Charlie retired in 2002 he created the Centre for Trophoblast Research in the University to encourage future study of the placenta. He's now slowly starting to move things out of G3, ready for new King's Fellows to carry on. "My time is pretty much over – I'm leaving it to the next generation. Advances in trophoblast research will continue – we have the techniques now. Things are in good hands."

In April this year Ashley was awarded the Karolinska Institutet's prestigious honorary doctorate for a lifetime of research. She has just had published a paper partially answering the question she asked when she joined Charlie Loke's research group. "What do these NK cells do to trophoblast? It's taken 35 years to answer that question!" In G3, the conversation will continue.

**Charlie Loke (KC 1953) is Emeritus Professor of Reproductive Immunology and a Life Fellow of King's. Ashley Moffett (KC 1997) is an Emeritus Professor in the Department of Pathology and an Emeritus Fellow at King's.**



**As part of the 300th anniversary celebrations, alumni have been sharing memories of Gibbs Building:**

Adrian Cowell and I were the last undergraduates to live there, in H6, top floor next to the Chapel. In the very dry summer of 1959 you could see the foundations of medieval Cambridge on the back lawn, a paler brown in the brown grass.

**Hugh Johnson (KC 1957)**

I came up for interview on a cold and misty day in November 1962 in the Gibbs Building with the Senior Tutor, John Raven. I remember nothing of the interview, except for the fact that I had been overwhelmed by the beauty of the buildings, and the almost tangible sense of 500 years of learning that emanated from the College. I desperately wanted to be accepted.

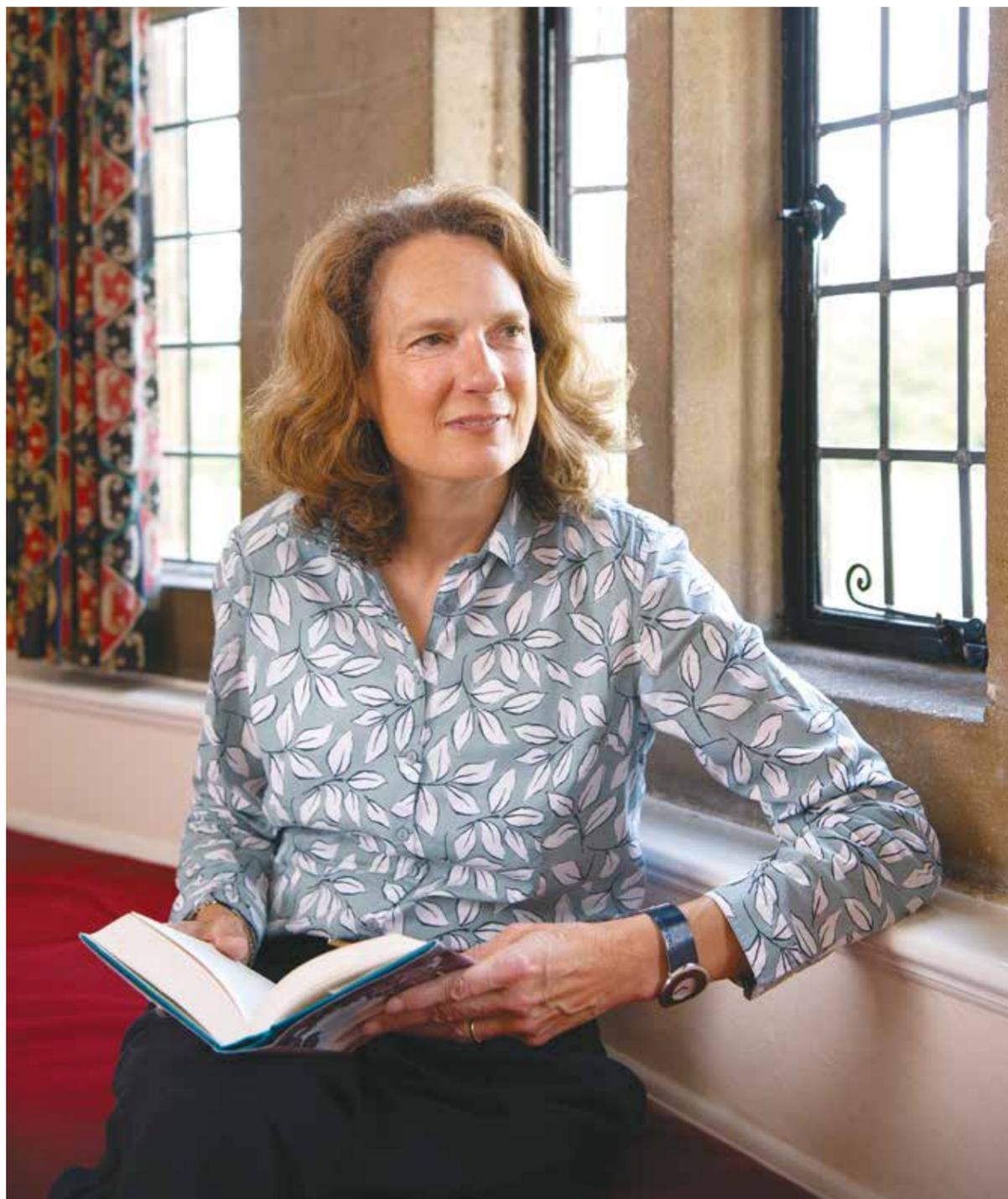
**Tony Lonton (KC 1963)**

I arrived at King's in 1982 as a postgraduate student from Dublin. When I first met him I told Nick Bullock that Gibbs Building was my favourite building in King's. He said he was not in the least bit surprised as Gibbs was so like other buildings in Dublin. Of course he was right! I now even have an engraving of the Gibbs Building, drawn and engraved by J. Greig, hanging in my house.

**Kathleen Shields (KC 1982)**

For more alumni memories, the history of Gibbs Building and the Gibbs 300th Anniversary Challenge, visit [www.kings.cam.ac.uk](http://www.kings.cam.ac.uk).

To share your own memories email us [communications@kings.cam.ac.uk](mailto:communications@kings.cam.ac.uk)



## GODELA WEISS-SUSSEX

*on rediscovering a lost treasure of modern German literature*

Georg Hermann – often dubbed ‘the Jewish Theodor Fontane’, in reference to one of Germany’s greatest Realist writers – was one of the most popular novelists in early 20th century Berlin. His exile following Hitler’s rise to power and his subsequent death in Auschwitz resulted in the disappearance of his last major novel, which bore witness to a German Jewish family being torn apart in the 1930s. Hermann scholar and King’s Fellow Godela Weiss-Sussex tells King’s Parade about solving a decades-old literary mystery.

Hermann (real name Georg Borchardt) was born in Berlin in 1871 into a German-Jewish family. He worked as an art critic and then novelist, with his novel *Jettchen Gebert* (1906) making him famous almost overnight. Hermann’s gently humorous and melancholy voice stood out and quickly established him as one of the most popular Berlin novelists of the time; in the words of a contemporary critic, Hermann’s work was soon regarded as “*der Ausdruck*” (the expression) of the city of Berlin.

After Hitler’s ascent to power in March 1933, Hermann’s books were burned and he was forced into exile. He was killed in Auschwitz – and with his death, the memory of his work was almost extinguished, too. However, having stumbled over one of his early novels quite by chance in the 1990s, I was so captivated by Hermann’s style and the atmospheric density of his texts that I wrote my PhD thesis on his work. Throughout my career, I have come back to revisit and research his work, but there was one book that neither I nor anyone else could access.

In 1939, living in exile in the Netherlands, Hermann had started writing what he considered to be one of his most important works: a four-part novel, to be called *Die daheim blieben* (Those Who Stayed at Home, or Those Who Stayed Behind). Telling the story of the fictional Simon family, and what he called “*das jüdische Schicksal in Deutschland*” (the fate of the Jews in Germany), each part of the novel would offer a *Momentbild* (a momentary record or snapshot) to reflect the family’s reactions to a particularly incisive historical event, in the period 1933–38, crucial years for the German Jews.

As Hermann explained in a letter to his daughter Hilde, the first part, *Max und Dolly*, was set in Berlin on a Sunday morning in March 1933, shortly after Hitler’s rise to power. This was followed by *Ilse und Liese*, also set in Berlin on the afternoon and evening of 15 September 1935, the day the Nuremberg Race Laws were passed at the Nazi Party Congress. The third part, *Georg der Doktor*, was to be set in Florence in September 1938, capturing the atmosphere among German exiles after Mussolini’s declaration of the *Manifesto della razza* (Italian race laws) but before they were made legal in October 1938. The conclusion, called *Heinrich und Agnes*, was going to reflect the events of the

pogrom night of 9 November 1938 and to end the narrative with the death of the oldest family members, the ones who had stayed behind in Berlin.

Taken together, through the many conversations among the members of the extended and vociferous Simon family, the novel was to discuss the burning questions of the time: ‘How seriously is this situation to be taken?’, ‘What does it mean to be a German Jew now?’, and ‘Should we leave or shall we stay?’

From his correspondence with his daughters Eva and Hilde, who had emigrated to Britain and Denmark respectively, we know that Hermann completed the first two parts by late 1939. Despite his best efforts, however, he was unable to find a publisher for the text, noting “Emigrant literature is rejected here [in Holland] because it is too pessimistic and not uplifting.”

He repeatedly urged his daughters to pursue any publication opportunities that might arise abroad, mentioning possible avenues and tenuous connections to translators and publishers in Sweden and Britain, among others. The urgency of his request is unmistakable, but none of the attempts to interest publishers was successful.

By mid-1940, Hermann, who was seriously ill and despairing at his situation after the German invasion of the Netherlands, had to abandon the novel project.

Hermann was forced to leave his exile home in Hilversum for Amsterdam (and then ultimately for Auschwitz) in January 1943. He left behind numerous boxes of published and unpublished material, which his youngest daughter Ursula, who had come to live with him with her baby son, took great pains to save. Given 48 hours to prepare for the move to Amsterdam, she loaded her son’s pram with papers and in numerous trips to friends’ houses made sure many of them were saved through the war years.

After the war, Eva travelled to the Netherlands, collected the remaining estate and brought it to England. In the 1970s, Eva and Hilde then donated ‘a huge box’ of Hermann’s papers to the Leo Baeck Institute. These included a number of unpublished works from the exile years, .... but not the



typescripts of this last unfinished novel. The manuscripts of parts 1 and 2 thus had to be considered lost or destroyed.

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But the story does not end here. In September 2001, I organised a conference on Hermann's work at the University of London, in collaboration with the Leo Baeck Institute, which drew a small circle of researchers, mostly known to one another. Surprisingly, it attracted two attendees none of us had met before. They introduced themselves as George Rothschild and John Craig-Sharples – Hermann's grandson (Eva's son) and great-grandson (Hilde's grandson)! At the end of the conference, they handed me a bag containing many pages of densely typed text and reams of sheets covered in notes, asking me to look through these papers, see whether they were of interest and perhaps might be published. Even if at first I didn't quite realise how valuable the contents of this bag were, I was convinced of the importance of looking into it.

And indeed, the papers included the complete typescripts of the first two parts of *Die daheim bleiben*. It was incredible to be holding Hermann's own drafts in my hands – a total of 219 densely typed pages, with hand-written annotations – and many notes – all of this on very fragile paper, but (mostly) perfectly readable. These papers had remained in the hands of Eva, and then George Rothschild. Presumably,

they had been considered too important and the desire to see them published too strong for them to be stored away with the other papers that are now held in the Leo Baeck Institute. Strictly speaking they were never 'lost' but well-looked after.

George Rothschild generously invited me to his house in the south of England and allowed me to rummage through further papers from Hermann's estate and thus to draw on a number of notes that shed light on the last two planned but unwritten parts of *Die daheim bleiben*.

The material was fascinating: apart from the manuscripts of the first two parts of the novel the notes within George Rothschild's collection contained pages and pages of quotations, individual sentences, snippets of dialogue. The sheer quantity of notes indicates how intensely Hermann was steeped in this project. Often annotated in thick red or blue pencil, Hermann had allocated many of these fragments of speech and description to his various novel characters. All of these puzzle pieces were to have been shaped into parts three and four of the novel.

I am hugely grateful to George and to his nephew John for making these papers accessible to me, and entrusting me to realise Hermann's vision. Work on this material was hugely enjoyable. The detective work of deciphering Hermann's handwritten annotations brought with it a real sense of discovery, and the adventure of bringing to light an extraordinary text, one that is beautifully written and enormously moving in its immediacy and poignancy, was simply exhilarating.

The Wallstein publishing house enthusiastically embraced the project and allowed me to publish the completed first two parts as well the beginning of the third part in autumn 2023. I've done this belatedly, but with an acute awareness of the importance of this novel as a text that vividly bears witness and gives a voice to the many Jewish Germans who lived through the ever-worsening conditions after January 1933. I am now seeking funding for an English translation of *Die daheim bleiben* with the hope of making the text available to readers in this country.

The reception of the book has been very positive in Germany. The German daily paper *Die Welt* referred to it in their December 2023 roundup as one of the year's best books. The Berlin daily *Der Tagesspiegel* devoted almost a full page to it, calling it "a sensational find" and in view of the current climate of rising antisemitism "the book of the hour".

The review closes with the words: "The fact that Hermann's last work has now been published is cause for celebration. The only sad thing is the circumstances that make it so topical."

# KING'S POPS UP AT THIS YEAR'S RHS CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW

*King's staff and alumni have put their green fingers to good use at the annual gardening spectacular.*

## David Rankin (KC 1963) shares his Chelsea Flower Show journey

"On family holidays in the Alps and Pyrenees we fell in love with mountain flowers, from tiny treasures scattered on rocks and scree to masses in the alpine meadows. We learned to grow them, and in 1999 my wife Stella retired from teaching and started an alpine plant nursery, Kevock Garden Plants. From 2010, when I retired from my academic career, I worked full time for the nursery – and we were free to display our plants at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show.

Each year the project involves designing and constructing the rock structure (a complicated 3D jigsaw puzzle), and then on site 'clothing' it with the plants that are looking good at the time. It has to be botanically and ecologically sound, and to make it more of a challenge we combine art with science, with colour and form playing major roles.

We aim to share something of what we have seen on mountains all round the world, particularly the Sino Himalaya. It is theatre, not gardening: hundreds of plants in a rocky setting, all on a table just a few metres long. Our gold medal this year is the tenth for the nursery (which we no longer own), with the President's Award for his personal favourite

display as a bonus last year. But the real reward is the appreciation of the thousands of visitors – and occasionally meeting old acquaintances from King's."

**Head Gardener Steve Coghill** joined a crew of dozens to install "Imagine the World to Be Different", a Gold Medal-winning Show Garden for St James Church, Piccadilly. It was designed by Robert Myers who also designed the gardens at Stephen Taylor Court accommodation off Barton Road.

Reflecting on the experience, Steve commented "Having installed a dozen Show Gardens at Chelsea in the 1990s, coming back in 2024 was a trip down memory lane. I got to work alongside Robert Myers again who is one of the UK's foremost landscape designers and I was incredibly heartened to see how the RHS and Chelsea Flower Show now encompass the concerns about our environment, namely sustainability and biodiversity. Plants and hard landscape features will be relocated to St James and their partner church St Pancras Euston Road. For me it was a celebration of everything horticultural that typifies our approach to the environment."

Closer to Cambridge, the Gold Medal-winning 'Bridgerton garden' will be relocated to Maggie's cancer support centre at Addenbrooke's Hospital.





# Cellar Notes

**If you bought a bottle of wine from the King's Pantry any time in the past four decades, it's likely that you'll have met Mark Smith, who retired as College Butler at the start of this year. Mark joined as Assistant Butler in 1982, aged just 22. Much has changed in the College since then; but as he hands over to Guido Felici, the role of managing the King's wine cellar remains as central as ever.**

"I took over as Butler when George Brownstone, who had been in post since before the Second World War, retired in the late 1980s. It was a very traditional College Butler role then - looking after the Fellows' lunches and dinners and so on, as well as the wine cellar. But when Pete de Bolla became Wine Steward in 1993, things changed a lot."

One of the main changes introduced then was the expansion of sales from the College's wine collection to alumni; King's is still the only Cambridge College to share its wine buying expertise in this way. If you'd been used to buying wine from the Pantry as a student, you could now continue to do so long after Cambridge days were becoming a distant memory. It was a development enthusiastically welcomed by King's members, many of whom have made a point of looking Mark up when back in College for events. "There are some alumni I've known for over 40 years - I've helped them select wine when they were a student then been involved with special occasions such as their children's weddings. The best part of the role has always been meeting people."

And then of course there's the wine. Under Professor de Bolla the range in the College cellar has widened and evolved in recent years, which in turn has made the role of Butler more interesting. Student interest has grown too - "A lot of students genuinely want to know more about wine - although many, especially some of the graduate students, are already extremely knowledgeable!" Less enjoyable was when essential work in the cellar was undertaken, which was a logistical nightmare. "But it did give us an opportunity to rearrange things so as to make it a lot easier to find specific wines."

For the year leading up to his retirement in January Mark worked together with Guido Felici, who has now taken over in the new role of Cellar Manager. Previously the College's Events Manager responsible for the smooth running of everything from Formal Halls to the College Feast and alumni reunion dinners, Guido is passionate about sharing the knowledge he's



*"A lot of students genuinely want to know more about wine - although many, especially some of the graduate students, are already extremely knowledgeable!"*

built up over the years. "I love chatting to students when they come in to get wine - encouraging them to try something new, or think about what they're going to be eating and what the wine will be paired with". He is hoping to arrange more events for the wider College community, and has been busy cataloguing the wines currently held in the cellar. The tradition of being there for alumni will remain unchanged however. "I'll happily change my schedule to be available to meet a King's member when they're back in College, and give advice. And we can ship anywhere in the UK - if alumni can't get to King's, we can come to you!"

**The King's Pantry can be contacted at [pantry@kings.cam.ac.uk](mailto:pantry@kings.cam.ac.uk)**



# Summer Reading

If we're lucky, summer can bring with it warmer weather, a more relaxed schedule and time to enjoy the particular pleasure of losing yourself in a book – whether it's the chance to read something just for fun, or to be able to finally pick up that volume you've been meaning to read for months. Here King's Fellows, staff, students and alumni share some of their top summer reads.

## Patricia McGuire

College Archivist

I've just re-read a classic of psychiatric insight, *The Drama of the Gifted Child* by Alice Miller ('gifted' meaning everyone whose hardest struggles are emotional) which has helped understanding myself and others. I'm looking forward to my next in the series of Ben Aaronovitch's magical *Rivers of London* series which are diverting, readable and amusing. If Caimh McDonnell had written anything I hadn't already read I'd be reading that. Robin Wall Kimmerer's *Braiding Sweetgrass*, it is hoped, will deliver some inner peace (early indications are promising). There is also some American Lit loaded on my Kindle: Carson McCullers short stories and Sinclair Lewis' *Main Street*.

## John Dunn (KC 1959)

Emeritus Professor of Political Theory

I'm planning to read a new book by my oldest academic friend Michael Cook, *A History of the Muslim World: From its Origins to the Dawn of Modernity*, the prequel to his masterly *Ancient Religions, Modern Politics*, for the stern perspective of history, and Anthony Seldon and Raymond Newell's *Johnson at 10: The Inside Story* to remind me of recent political horror. More calmingly I'm hoping at long last to complete the third and final volume of Robert Musil's *The Man Without Qualities* (mislaidd on the plane back from Vienna and recaptured recently on the market stall), a weird masterpiece which still seems well ahead of the curve.

## Gillian Tett

Provost

I just read Joseph Stiglitz's fantastic new book *The Road to Freedom*, which makes an obvious but simple point: one person's freedom is often someone else's constraint, and it is often the weak and marginalised who are constrained; so when people say "I am fighting for freedom" we should always say "For whom?" and "Who loses?" I also recommend a new book by Fareed Zakaria about the nature of revolutions and innovation, *Age of Revolutions: Progress and Backlash from 1600 to the Present*. This is very thought-provoking as we head into elections. Another book I hope to read this summer is something I spotted in a friend's hand recently: *Eve: How the Female Body Drove 200 Million Years of Human Evolution*, by Cat Bohannon. This points out the degree to which female biology has been marginalised in recent years, and argues that our vision of science needs to be rebalanced – precisely what some King's Fellows are doing now, with their research!

## Mervyn King (KC 1966)

Economist; former Governor of the Bank of England

Planning one's summer reading can sometimes be more enjoyable than the actual experience. So do not include only new books on the list. Mine includes *Politics on the Edge* by Rory Stewart (he writes well) and *No Way Out* by Tim Shipman (he listens well) both covering a depressing period in UK politics; *The Lion House* by Christopher de Bellaigue (a gripping story of Sultan Suleyman's pursuit of power and war five hundred years ago), *Super-Infinite* by Katherine Rundell (the award-winning life of one of my favourite poets John Donne), the new novel *Caledonian Road* by Andrew O'Hagan, and for light relief a couple of thrillers: *Invasion* by Frank Gardner and *The Cuckoo* by Camilla Läckberg (for when the mist and rain descend on the Baltic coast). Remember, one can always avoid the plane cancellations and passport queues by staying at home and reading.

## Dvija Mehta

MPhil student in the Ethics of AI, Data and Algorithms, Leverhulme Centre for the Future of Intelligence

As someone deeply interested in consciousness, *Being You* by Anil Seth is one book that beautifully encapsulates the enigmatic essence of consciousness and what it is like to be oneself. A philosophically rich work I have found myself returning to time and again is Plato's *Symposium*. It really is one of those books

that lets one discover something new each time. This discourse prompts the reader to re-assess their beliefs on the ever-present, primal phenomenon of love – that remains as mysterious as consciousness. Lastly, coming to the realm of AI, Kazuo Ishiguro's masterpiece *Klara and the Sun* is a page turner. It blends speculative fiction with deep emotional insight, exploring themes of artificial intelligence, love and what it means to be human.

## Eleni Courea (KC 2013)

Political correspondent, *The Guardian*

I love introducing people to three novels written by Rachel Kushner: *Telex from Cuba*, which follows an American family's life in Cuba during the run-up to the revolution; *The Mars Room*, which draws on extensive research to tell the story of a young woman sentenced to two consecutive life sentences in a California prison; and the *Flamethrowers*, a critically-acclaimed book that tracks a female artist's journey from Nevada to New York and Italy and her immersion in 1970s radicalism. All have an immersive, cinematic quality that makes them enjoyable summer reading. Kushner has a new book out in September.

A friend recently gave me a copy of *Pereira Maintains* by Antonio Tabuchi, which I devoured in its entirety one sunny afternoon. Set in Portugal during the Salazar regime, it's the story of a middle-aged widower whose encounter with a young writer leads him to commit an extraordinary act of rebellion. Simultaneously sensitive, funny and urgent, I've been buying it for whomever I can think of.

## Sharath Srinivasan (KC 2009)

David and Elaine Potter Professor, Department of Politics and International Studies

What first comes to mind is two autobiographies, one read, and one to read this summer. Recently, I finally read JG Ballard's autobiography, *Miracles of Life*. Exquisitely vivid and humane, Ballard applies his skills of dissection and sparing style to his own fascinating, deeply poignant life. It's also a new window into his disturbingly portentous fiction. Ballard was a Kingsman, but don't go looking for fond memories of King's in the early 1950s! Another autobiography I want to read is Lea Ypi's 2021 memoir, *Free: Coming of Age at the End of History*. I'm a fan of her academic work, and this is a missing piece for me. From her childhood in Albania through studies across Europe to becoming one of the most exciting political thinkers of our times, I want to get to know the lived experience behind her ideas.



# IN CASE YOU MISSED IT...

Catch up with events from Lent and Easter terms on our YouTube channel.

This year's Alan Turing Lecture, given by Professor Jude Browne, was a fascinating and wide-ranging exploration of the ideas of AI and political responsibility.

In May we welcomed former US Vice-President Al Gore to deliver the annual Sermon before the University and to take part in a "Conversations at King's" fireside chat with the Provost.

This event series has already welcomed several eminent speakers in its first year. Plans are now underway to expand into a podcast series in 2025.



You can watch or listen to previous events and lectures on our YouTube channel.



## Save the Date

### 2024

#### 27 September

50th Anniversary Reunion

#### 28 September

35th, 40th & 45th Anniversary Reunion

#### 26 October

1441 Foundation Dinner

#### 9 November

Economics Dinner

#### 13 November

Alumni Drinks in London

#### 1 December

Procession for Advent

#### 24 December

*A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols*

#### 25 December

Christmas Day Eucharist

### 2025

#### 22 March

Foundation Lunch

#### 29 March

20th, 25th & 30th Anniversary Reunion

#### April (date tbc)

Alan Turing Lecture

#### 17 May

King Henry VI Circle Event

#### 31 May

10th Anniversary Reunion

#### 21 June

Members' Afternoon Tea

Find details of alumni events in Cambridge and beyond, including upcoming reunions, at [www.kings.cam.ac.uk/members-friends](http://www.kings.cam.ac.uk/members-friends)

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