

Spring 2026



Lincoln College  
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD



# THE GROVE

Lincoln College Murray Society Newsletter

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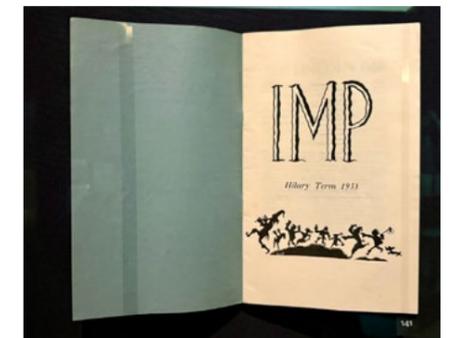
# Report from the President of the Murray Society

The members of the Murray Society are always delighted to see each other, whether in College or in some more distant venue. Last autumn's venture was to the Bodleian Library to visit two exhibitions, one of Bodley's treasures, and the other of Lincoln's own treasure, David Cornwell: *John Le Carré: Tradecraft*. Both were revelatory. It was a particular pleasure for Lincoln alumni to see his time at College recorded, and his debt to V.H.H. Green commemorated. Vivian's devotees were delighted by the photograph of him. After the usual splendid lunch in College, David Cornwell's biographer, Adam Sisman, was in conversation with Henry Woudhuysen, and we received an enlightening insight not only into Cornwell's life and choices, but also into the biographer's craft. Astute questions followed from the audience.

For the Spring Murray Day on 18 June 2026, we propose a visit to beautiful Canons Ashby, a National Trust property deep in the Northamptonshire countryside. We will repair to a local hostelry thereafter. Details will follow.

The Murray Society thrives as the College approaches its 600th anniversary. We hope to enroll six hundred members to the Society by 2027, so please extoll its joys to your Lincoln contemporaries. Partners are very welcome, too.

**Susan Brigden**



# Continuity, community and the future of medicine



Medicine is entering a period of profound transformation. Advances in biomedical science, digital healthcare and artificial intelligence are reshaping how we diagnose, treat and care for patients. Yet as the tools of medicine evolve, the essence of being a doctor has not changed. At its heart, medicine remains a human profession – one that depends on empathy, judgment, trust and the ability to connect with others in moments of vulnerability.

My work at Lincoln College as Director of Studies in Clinical Medicine is focused on preparing future doctors not only to cope with this changing landscape, but to thrive within it. This means equipping students to engage confidently with emerging technologies, while also leaning into the distinctly human skills that no algorithm can replace. In a world where more is mediated through screens and systems, preserving human connection has never been more critical.

Humans are, fundamentally, social and tribal beings. We learn best in relationship with others, we develop professional identity through shared experience, and we sustain ourselves through community – particularly in demanding and challenging professions such as medicine. Yet modern medical training is increasingly

fragmented. Clinical students are geographically dispersed, learning in high-pressure environments where time for reflection, mentorship and connection can be limited. Technology, for all its benefits, risks amplifying isolation if community is not intentionally cultivated.

At Lincoln, we have responded by building a medical and biomedical sciences community that places relationships at the centre of education. Alongside a growing cohort – soon to be the largest group of medical students in any Oxford college – we have developed a distinctive programme of college-based teaching delivered by a large, multidisciplinary body of clinical tutors. This teaching goes beyond examination preparation to explore leadership, professional identity formation, resilience, digital healthcare and artificial intelligence in medicine.

Importantly, this academic provision is embedded within a deliberately constructed community. Termly social events, hosted dinners, tutor-student networking and informal mentoring bring students together across years and across disciplines. These spaces allow students to share experiences, learn from one another, and feel seen and supported as individuals. In an era where technology increasingly outsources human

interaction, these moments of shared presence matter more than ever.

This work builds on Lincoln College's remarkable history. As the College approaches its 600-year anniversary, there is a strong sense of stewardship – of nurturing the brightest and best minds not only for the present moment, but for generations to come. Medicine today faces extraordinary pressures: a struggling healthcare system, workforce shortages and widespread uncertainty reflected in recent junior doctor strikes. For students entering the profession, the challenges are real and sobering. It is therefore more important than ever that we inspire, support and prepare future doctors who are resilient, compassionate and capable of leading change.

Legacy support plays a vital role in making this possible. Gifts left to Lincoln College enable us to invest in people, relationships and educational experiences that shape our students lives profoundly. In supporting the future of medicine at Lincoln, donors are helping to ensure that, even in a rapidly changing world, the human essence of medicine is not only preserved, but actively strengthened.

**Dr Arabella Simpkin Begin, Audrey and Lewis Cannell Clinical Fellow and Director of Studies in Clinical Medicine**



# Time to say goodbye: Reflecting on six years at Lincoln

Studying medicine has been an incredibly enriching experience, and the depth of knowledge and understanding I gained from my degree has laid a strong foundation for my career. Despite the warnings from students in the years above me, it was still hard to believe how quickly six years at Oxford passed.

I looked forward to the tutorials, to be challenged and pushed to think deeply about the topics we covered in lectures. It was a rewarding feeling to take an educated guess at an answer and not be afraid of being wrong. The freedom to explore ideas and ask questions, combined with the unexpected tangents in our conversations made these tutorials a memorable experience. I was always amazed by the wealth of knowledge and experience the tutors had, and it was an opportunity I never took for granted.

When Arabella joined as the Director of Studies in Clinical Medicine, her dedication to ensuring that Lincoln was the best place to study medicine was evident from the start. She provided us with opportunities to learn about medicine beyond the scope of our curriculum to make us more well-rounded doctors. In addition to the academic support, Arabella was keen to nurture the community spirit of Lincoln medics and encourage us to attend many social events to spend time with our peers. I have so many positive memories with medical students from across the years and it is such an honour to be a part of this community.



“  
I sang ‘Còn te Partirò’ by Andrea Bocelli. More famously known as ‘Time to Say Goodbye’, it felt very fitting to mark the conclusion of my six years studying at the College.”



I am very grateful for the financial support I received during my time at Oxford to help me make the most of my time here without worrying about finances. It meant a lot to know that alumni were so devoted to supporting students, investing in our education and making our time at Oxford so memorable and fulfilled.

Lincoln College Chapel Choir was a very significant part of my journey in Oxford and I met some incredible students from all walks of life. Ending my week in the beautiful, peaceful setting of the College Chapel was a very grounding experience and it was invaluable amidst my busy academic life.

In the last week of my final term, I sang 'Con te Partirò' by Andrea Bocelli at the inaugural choral scholars' recital I organised. More famously known as 'Time to Say Goodbye', it felt very fitting to sing to mark the conclusion of my six years studying at the College. It is one of my most treasured memories singing goodbye to this chapter of my life, and goodbye (at least for now) to Oxford itself. I reflect on my time at the College and think about how much I've grown in confidence. I could never have imagined myself singing a solo like that in my first year but it makes me realise just how much I have learnt to push myself and enjoy being outside of my comfort zone. The literal translation of "Con te Partirò" is 'I will leave with you'. In many ways, this sentiment holds true as no matter how far I leave Lincoln, it will always still be with me in its values, friendships and education, and it will always be a part of who I am.

**Ima Silver (2019)**

# Lincoln's painted rooms

Among the hidden treasures of Lincoln is its remarkable collection of early 17th-century painted rooms on Chapel Quad and on the High Street. Long hidden behind 18th-century panelling, they were rediscovered during 20th-century renovations and have been preserved for the future

**Chapel Quad** was built in stages between 1608 and 1630. The first-floor rooms, being lighter and warmer, were reserved for Fellows and it is here, on **Staircases 5 and 7** that we see different styles of decorative painting. A Fellow's chambers were part of his 'freehold' and choices of internal decoration could reflect his own tastes and interests.

The paintings on **Staircase 5** were discovered in 1931-32. The remains are fragmentary but, taken together, suggest a unified theme of Christian imagery on the theme of redemption, an appropriate choice for an early 17th-century scholar. The most striking element is a scene of a large peacock, its tail feathers splayed, looming over a serpent. The association of peacocks, snakes and salvation reaches back to the writings of St Augustine: the peacock, held to be immune to deadly snake venom, and whose flesh was believed never to decay, directed the contemplation of the viewer towards the resurrected Christ; the assurance of eternal life. A tantalising fragment of text accompanies the peacock, possibly "re ... ectio".





A second painted motif depicts what, at first sight, seems to be an ornamental pattern but, on closer examination, reveals a cross shape flanked by stylised peacocks; a further variant on the Christian imagery of redemption.

In 1970 a wall painting of a very different character was discovered in **Room 7.2**. Here, the painted scheme covers the whole north wall of the chamber and, it seems, would have continued around the whole room (a fragment remains on the south wall). It takes the unusual form of a single continuous landscape scene, with a narrow frieze of trees at the top and a dark base. It might have been intended to recall the grand tapestry hangings found in elite and noble houses of the time. The landscape is centred on the image of a castle, with exaggerated arrow loops, the whole suggesting a deliberately chivalric or romantic theme, a sensibility prominent in elite early Stuart culture. A fragment of the same theme also survives on Staircase 5.

The paintings had been concealed in 1706 when the occupying fellow was granted £8 5s by the College “for ye improvement of ye chamber” by panelling the entire room.

**118 High Street.** Discovered in 1970, the painted room on the first floor could well be the oldest of Lincoln’s painted rooms, but the building itself, whose origins reach back to the 15th century, is a very recent addition to Lincoln, having been acquired in 1988. This room presents yet another style of painting. The design is painted

onto smooth elm boards, not directly on to the wall plaster and it imitates wall hangings, suggesting, in a flat plane, layers of pelmet and tassels over delicately embroidered cloth. The date of the painting has been disputed; to the later 16th century, or to the 1620s, as the work of the Oxford goldsmith who lived in the house at that time.

We are thankful for the foresightedness of previous generations who conserved these precious survivals through careful cleaning, and, in Chapel Quad by the happy device of creating openable doors within the panelling to enable succeeding generations to view them.

**Dr Louise Durning,  
Supernumerary Fellow**



# Events 2026

To see the full list of events, please visit our [website](#).

11-18 April

Rector's USA Tour  
– Washington DC,  
NYC and Boston

Saturday 30 May

Family Day

Sunday 31 May

Drinks at the  
Boat Club

Saturday 17 October

Murray Day and  
Rotherham Circle  
Luncheon

Saturday 13 June

Benefactors' Garden Party  
in Grove Quad

Thursday 18 June

Spring  
Murray Day

Saturday 19 September

2017 Gaudy

Saturday 26 September

2018 Gaudy

Thursday 22 – Sunday 25 October

Lincoln Trip to Rome

# Leaving a legacy

Leaving a legacy to Lincoln enables you to invest in the future of the College with a gift that endures beyond a lifetime. Making a bequest to Lincoln in your Will is a lasting contribution to the College, which will support the generations to come. Lincoln takes great care of the legacies it receives, recognising the trust that donors place in us.

Over the centuries, bequests have had a tremendous influence on the development of the College. They have supported scholarships and bursaries, funded academic posts, redeveloped rooms and buildings, and helped us grow our endowment for the benefit of future generations. As part of the 600 Campaign, the College aims to increase membership of the Murray Society to 600. As needs increase, we are grateful for every legacy, regardless of size. The [Development Office](#) team is available to provide further information.



# How to leave a legacy to Lincoln

It is easy to remember the College in your Will. Our official name is 'the College of the Blessed Mary and All Saints, Lincoln, in the University of Oxford, commonly called Lincoln College', but it is acceptable to shorten this to Lincoln College, Oxford. UK tax payers are advised to include our charity number (1139261).

There are a number of different ways of making a legacy. The most common are to leave a residuary bequest (a percentage share in your estate) or a pecuniary bequest (a specific amount of money). You can also make a reversionary legacy, which will enable you to provide for members of your family in their lifetimes, and then revert to Lincoln or another charitable organisation. It is also possible to nominate Lincoln as a beneficiary of your pension or SIPP (Self Invested Personal Pension).

When making or adjusting your Will, we recommend you seek professional legal advice from a qualified solicitor. If you are interested in making a specific gift or legacy to the College, for example to establish a scholarship, we recommend that you talk to us first to ensure that we can honour your wishes.





## Benefits to you

Inheritance tax is payable following your death if your estate is worth more than a certain net amount after the deduction of any liabilities. At present, the threshold is £325,000 (or up to £650,000 for married couples or registered civil partners), and anything above that may be taxed at 40%. If you leave 10% of your estate to a charity in the UK, your estate will qualify for the reduced inheritance tax rate of 36%.

Lincoln is recognised by the Inland Revenue as a charity (number 1139261) and pays no tax on gifts of money or property received either during your lifetime or on your death. Bequests made to tax-exempt beneficiaries, such as the College or other recognised charities, can be deducted from the net value of your estate, thus reducing the amount on which your estate is liable to pay inheritance tax.

When you remember the College in your Will, you will be playing a part in the future of Lincoln. **In recognition of this, you will be become part of the Murray Society.** As a member, you will receive the following (subject to change from time to time):

- invitations to exclusive Murray Society events, including the annual Murray Day luncheon and talk
- an annual issue of this newsletter, *The Grove*
- an exclusive Murray Society tie and/or scarf in Lincoln colours

For more details and information about legacies or planned giving, please contact [Susan Harrison](#).

## Photo credits

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