



The Grove

LINCOLN COLLEGE MURRAY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2020

Lincoln in the season of Covid-19

Welcome to the first electronic edition of *The Grove*, our newsletter for members of the Murray Society. As you may well imagine, this is the result of circumstances rather beyond our control; however we hope it will still be of interest to you, and would appreciate your feedback.

On behalf of the Rector and all my colleagues, I hope that you and your family and friends are keeping safe and well. These are difficult times for all of us, and while for some it may be an inconvenience, for others the illness itself and the subsequent changes to our lives are extremely challenging. At Lincoln, these changes are considerable, and touch all members of our community.

For our students, this has been a sudden and radical alteration to the course of their studies. A considerable number of our graduate students come from outside the UK, and we are fortunately able to accommodate those who wished to stay in Oxford; however the facilities of the College have been drastically pared back, to conform with new government requirements. Our finalists are particularly affected. Most left Oxford at the end of Hilary term, and will not return as students. They will complete their courses by remote teaching and study, and finals will be taken online, in a variety of formats. While we are doing our utmost to support them through this, we are very conscious

that this makes an already stressful experience even more difficult to manage. And yet, their resilience is impressive. We are particularly proud of our medical students at this time. They have graduated early, and in absentia, and most are already working in or providing support for the NHS, either in clinical or laboratory settings. Many other students have signed up to volunteer locally.

Our Fellows and tutors meanwhile have been on a crash course to learn new software, and are ready to begin online tutorials in Trinity. The great advantage of the collegiate system is that our size and shape enable us to be supportive and to respond quickly to new developments. Our Covid-19 task force has been meeting online three times a week to ensure that we are making the necessary arrangements, determined either by our own requirements for teaching and so on, or by government advice.

Meanwhile our staff, who contribute so much to the smooth running and familial atmosphere of Lincoln, are now either working from home or on what we hope will be a short furlough. Those on furlough are receiving a full salary, with the College contributing the remaining 20%. This will be a strange season of unmowed lawns and empty Hall, and we all very much hope that it will end in short order, and that we will be able to welcome you back and to remember happier times.

Susan Harrison
Development Director

The Mitre: Past, Present, and Future

The Mitre is an iconic Oxford building: familiar, unforgettable, and beloved by generations of Oxford students and residents alike. The Lincoln students and Fellows who lived in the building and knew it more intimately, have fond (and some less fond) memories of the winding corridors and crooked floors that came to define it.

The Mitre is not one building of course; it is a complex of buildings (in more ways than one) that includes the inn on the corner of the High Street and Turl Street, the adjacent buildings to the west and north, and Turl Yard to the rear. The College acquired the property in 1475 as part of Thomas Rotherham's benefaction, although the building itself is much older, with some parts dating back to the thirteenth century. It was an important coaching inn, and as early as 1671 there were coaches running between London and the Mitre on three days a week. Behind the Mitre was a courtyard and stables, although this was rebuilt in the early 1920s and became part of Turl Yard and the Turl Bar. Adjacent buildings on Turl Street were commercial properties and remain so today; in fact, remarkably, the Mitre buildings today are still commercial and residential premises, just as they were when they were constructed centuries ago.



Above: Engraving of the Mitre Inn by J. Fisher, c. 1825, shows the *Defiance* coach, which ran between Oxford, Henley, and London.

As Grade II* and Grade II listed buildings, much of

the Mitre is of historical significance, but it is the inn that is the oldest part of the site. Underneath the inn there lies a network of medieval vaulted cellars from the thirteenth or fourteenth century (capable, in 1803, of holding nearly 12,000 gallons of beer). Other important historical features include the building's sixteenth- and seventeenth-century timber panelling, the stone fireplaces, and the decorative plasterwork. The surviving fabric of the Mitre illustrates the evolution of the building as a prominent Oxford inn.



Above: The cellar of the Mitre in 1938 (Historic England).

In 1969 the rooms above the Mitre were acquired by the College and turned into student accommodation, along with a couple of rooms for Fellows and an alumni guest room. For 50 years our undergraduate students, and a few Fellows, have called the Mitre home.

The College decided to embark upon a complete renovation of the site and work started at the end of Trinity term 2018. The project will substantially increase the number of en-suite bathrooms, create two new accessible rooms, improve fire escape routes, create a laundry room and a new alumni guest room, as well as enhancing the overall quality of the accommodation. A new entrance and Lodge will be created on Turl Street, along with a communal room and reading room. The refurbishment will also improve the heating and hot water systems in the building to make it more energy efficient. All of this will be done

while still preserving (and conserving) the listed buildings and their unique features, restoring the historic aspects where possible. The rooms will retain their quirky character and original features, but they will be modernised with new and improved furnishings and fittings. While this work is taking place, a renovation of the Mitre inn is also being carried out by the College's current tenants, Marston's.

With the Mitre out of action until 2021, the College has leased accommodation next to Carfax tower for graduate students, and undergraduate second-years have moved in to the graduate rooms in Bear Lane.

We hope to reopen the Mitre in the first half of 2021. The new rooms will be used for B&B guests over the summer, before the latest crop of second-year undergraduates move in from October.

Overnight accommodation in the new and improved

Mitre will be available following a number of alumni events in 2021 and there will be an alumni guest room that can be booked throughout the year. We hope you will be able to stay in the Mitre and experience the refurbishment for yourself when you visit Oxford in the future.

As the buildings making up the Mitre are listed, the project is more complicated and, ultimately, more expensive. The College took out a loan on favourable terms which will cover a large part of the costs involved, and is fundraising for the remainder. The fundraising campaign centres on room naming opportunities in the revamped building and the response so far has been very good; many alumni have fond memories of the Mitre and are keen to sponsor their former room.

If you would like to learn more about naming opportunities in the Mitre, please contact Jane Mitchell (jane.mitchell@lincoln.ox.ac.uk).



Above: TSH architectural drawings for the new entrance on Turl Street and new rooms.



A Report from the President

In May the Murray Society visited Broughton Castle in Oxfordshire. This moated castle, which has been in the Fiennes family since 1377, is one of the most beautiful houses in England, perhaps the most beautiful. It has a heroic history. In an upper room, Viscount Saye and fellow opponents of Charles I plotted resistance to the King. In more peaceful times, it has been a favourite haunt of Lincoln's undergraduates, for the present Lord Saye and Sele, once the College's land agent, beneficently allowed ventures onto the leads and football in the fields. The Murray Society, though less venturesome, nevertheless battled endless traffic jams on the M40 to arrive. We enjoyed being shown around the Castle, seeing its treasures, and beautiful gardens, and we had a delicious lunch.

In College this Michaelmas, the Society enjoyed splendid hospitality, and was then initiated by Angela Trentacoste, one of the College's brilliant Junior Research Fellows, into a subject new to almost everyone: Zooarchaeology. Her lucid explications of animal husbandry and the keeping of pets in the ancient world, and her witty delivery, were captivating.

For the first time, the Murray Society has met in North America. This year there was a tour of the National Gallery in Washington, DC, a meeting in the New York Historical Society, and a visit to the Aga Khan Museum in Toronto. Tomorrow, the world.

I have enjoyed my first year as President of the Murray Society. Seeing old friends and meeting new ones has been a pleasure. To visit beautiful places, and discover new ones, in the company of the Murray Society is a happy prospect, so I hope that you will welcome the new schemes that the Development Office is devising for our delectation.

Susan Brigden
President of the Murray Society

Murray Society Events Survey

For the last ten years, the Murray Society has held two meetings a year, one in Oxford and a Spring Murray Day at another place of interest. The format has worked well so far, with the Autumn Murray Day featuring a good lunch followed by a talk from one of our Fellows. In Spring, we have visited some fascinating venues, including Compton Verney and Broughton Castle. In the past year, we have also been able to hold Murray Society events in North America for the first time, thanks to the generosity of alumni hosts. Members are welcome to bring spouses, partners or a friend to all Murray Society events.

This year, we had intended to go further afield, and to join forces with the Crewe Society to hold an event at Alwick Castle. Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 outbreak, we have had to cancel this trip. However we thought this might provide a good opportunity to ask you, our Murray Society members, for your views on Murray Day, and in particular whether you would like us to make any changes to the types of events we offer. You will shortly receive a questionnaire by email, and I would be most grateful if you could complete this online (it is quite short!) and send any other comments to susan.harrison@lincoln.ox.ac.uk.

IN MEMORIAM

We are sorry to report that the following Murray Society members have passed away. They will be sadly missed.

Dr Audrey K Tucker	
Mr Bob Blake	1946
Mr Michael Lumb	1946
Sir Rex E Richards Kt FRS	1947
Dr Anthony Hampshire	1948
Mr Roger B Hunt	1948
Dr David Cohen CBE	1950
Mr Richard M Stobart	1951
Dr Elman W Poole	1953
Professor Robert Craig	1960
Dr Richard A W Shock	1969