

# Review



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Editor's note



It is a pleasure to edit the annual Clare Hall Review. Thanks to Francé Davies, Sarah Garrison, and Andrea Schlitt for their help and to Jo at Cameron Design.

Photo credits: Katie Clarke, Jeremy Peters, Andrea Schlitt, Trudi Tate.

**Trudi Tate**  
Emeritus Fellow, Editor



President's Letter



So much has happened in the College over the last year that it is just dawning on me what an impossible

challenge I face in adhering to the ferociously strict word limit set by our wonderful editor, Emeritus Fellow Trudi Tate. It is in pensive mood then that I prepare to join the last College Fellowship Committee under the skilful and meticulous Chairmanship of Professorial Fellow Emilio Artachio, Professor of Condensed Matter Physics at the Cavendish.

The file is thick with applications. Committee members exercise the final selection of Research Fellows, Visiting Fellows, Associates and Fellow Commoners with total care and dedication. It is a huge amount of work.

The Visiting Fellow scheme is over-subscribed by some measure and the Committee settles down to do what





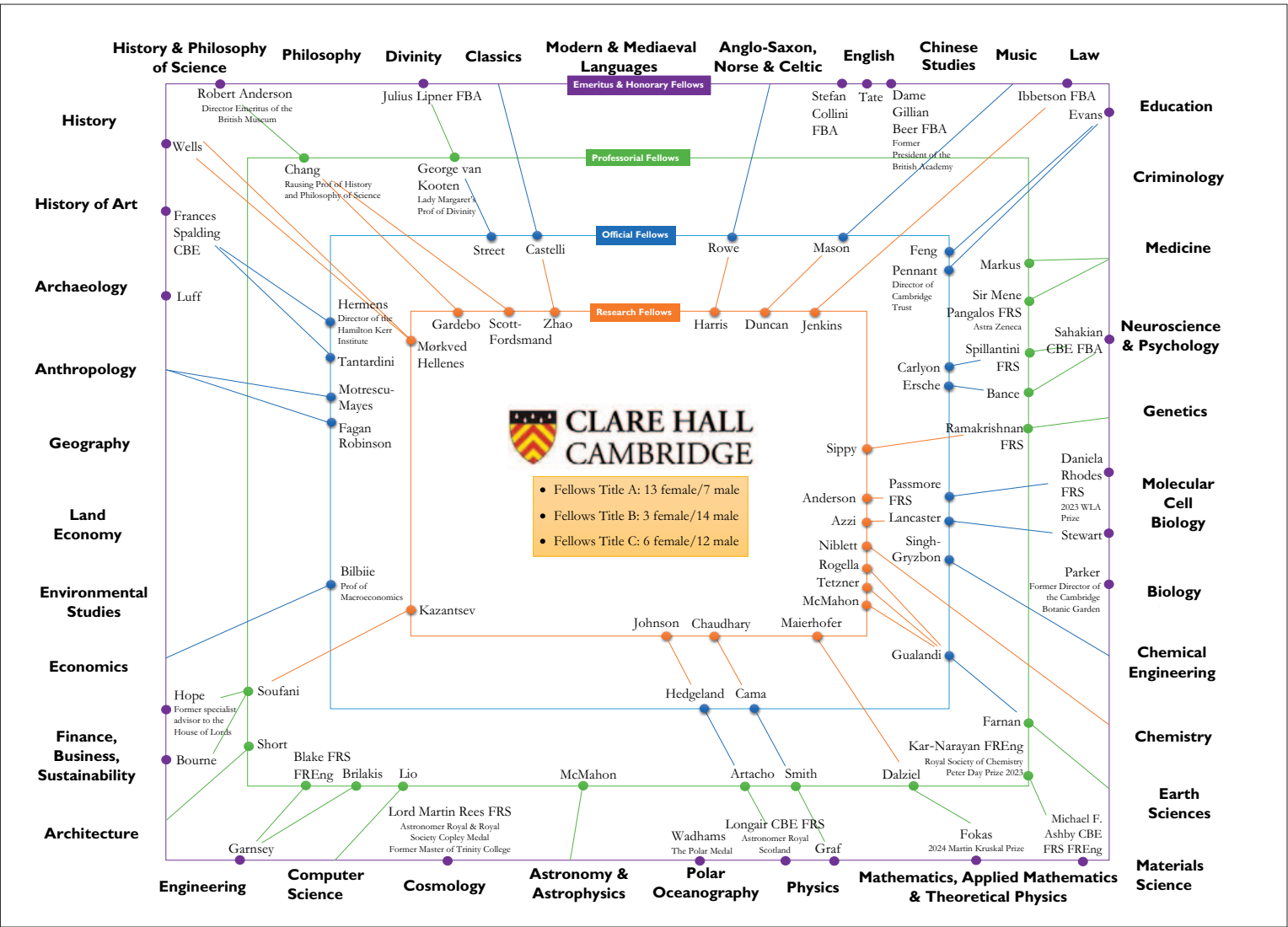
Cambridge does best, edit candidates out, suppressing all sentiment. Cambridge Dons sort through the applications of many thousands of sixth formers hoping to study in Cambridge, of graduate hopefuls, of candidates for the ferociously fought for Junior Research Fellow competitions, of home team academics applying for promotion in the Schools, including those for full grade 12 Professorships which require twelve full references from leaders in their fields, seven selected by the University committee. I know this well as I have just stepped down as Chair of the Promotions Committee in the Arts and Humanities. Clare Hall has a wholly disproportionate number of full Professors, twenty at the last count. The Governing Body was delighted to welcome three elected Fellows: Dr Joseph Mason, Musicologist and former Organ Scholar from New College Oxford who takes up a two-year Assistant Professorship in Music, Dr Kelly Fagan Robinson, Research Fellow but, very excitingly, the newly appointed Assistant Professor in Social Anthropology. Two new

full Professors join us: Ioannis Brilakis, Laing O'Rourke Professor of Construction Engineering and the Director of the Construction Information Technology Laboratory in the Department of Engineering, and Ben Allanach, particle physicist at the Cavendish laboratory and CERN, fantastic additions to our very distinguished Fellowship.

Whenever senior members of the University introduce me to others as coming from Clare Hall, they highlight the College's Visiting Fellowship scheme, unique in Cambridge. All Souls in Oxford takes marginally fewer Visiting Fellows than Clare Hall and sometimes they emerge as the same itinerant academics touring elite institutions. Clare Hall's Statutes provide for a maximum of forty-two Visiting Fellows at any one moment, an astonishing possibility never realised. The Committee's analysis of the scheme's recent history reveals rarely more than twenty-four in residence. About half present themselves through the schemes and agreements the

College has struck with a small number of universities and foundations of international standing, some for twenty years or more: the Osk Huttunen Foundation, the Basque Government, the University of Bologna, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, the University of Macau, the University of Heidelberg, Oulu and LUT, the University of Tokyo, RCAST.

Visiting Fellows come from across the globe. The Visitors fuel the Tuesday evening Colloquia and seminar series. We thank Professor Kevin Edwards most warmly for leading the Colloquia for many years and welcome Dr Li Tang into that demanding seat. This year's Colloquia featured College Members visiting from Hong Kong to Florida, presenting on physics, psychiatry, social anthropology, music, poetry, policy-making and the Apostles, the Trinity College version not the divine originals. For the second long summer, colloquia continue, attracting sizeable audiences every Wednesday evening from July to September, traversing religion, law, history, music, and manufacturing engineering.



Clare Hall's highly integrated Fellowship

The College also has the increasingly prominent seminar series, the Betty Behrens Classics of Historiography Seminar, led by our former Visiting Fellow in History and newly elected Associate, Davide Cadeddu. They are exceptional. Extraordinarily eminent speakers have come from Oxford, London, St Andrews, Edinburgh, Florida, Bologna and Cambridge.

Attendees have to do the set reading because attendees are placed around the table in the Richard Eden Room and expected to make a contribution. I so enjoy these seminars. The last one focussed on the Italian historian, Arnaldo Momigliano. Where else would I ever discover this highly complex and influential character? The Governing Body is

determined to maintain the broad spectrum of disciplines amongst its Fellowship, a world class university in miniature. In partnership with LUT University, Finland's premier science research institution, Clare Hall has instituted a major new prize to recognise world-beating research into the changing climate in the





Tanner and Ashby Lecture 2025

broadest sense. This extraordinary project was introduced to us by Visiting Fellow Hannele Seeck on behalf of the Rector Juha-Matti Saksa. We are most grateful. The cash prize is huge, hundreds of thousands of euros, donated by the Finnish government. The plan is to top it up with donations from major Finnish enterprises. It is biennial, by invitation only. Invitations went to the top twenty-two universities in the world. The first prize will be presented in June 2026 by the Vice Chancellor here in the middle of the College's 60th Anniversary year alongside the Finnish Prime Minister and Minister of Education. The Nobel prizes across the Gulf of Bothnia have never been referred to explicitly in our many discussions, but I detect more than a smidgeon of inter-Scandi competitiveness.

The submissions can range from work on atmospheric physics to exceptional writing on the human consequences of extreme climate events. I am delighted to announce that Harvard, MIT, Stanford, Berkeley, Imperial College London, ETH Zurich, Peking University, the University of Melbourne, Tokyo University, the National University of Singapore, Toronto, Yonsei University in Korea, the University of Cape Town, Tec de Monterrey in Mexico, the Weizmann Institute, and the University of Delhi, have already signed up to participate. We concluded discussions on the format of the prize by joining a healthy contingent of Clare Hallers at St Lawrence Jewry for the traditional Christmas Carols Service, followed by a very jolly reception in the Wax Chandlers' Hall, a very much appreciated gift from Fellow Commoners Graeme Harrower and Hendrik Puschmann.

Clare Hall is very privileged indeed to have been nominated to host the Tanner Lectures at Cambridge University. In fact it delivered the first ever Tanner Lecture, cooked up by Lord Ashby and Obert Tanner, who were clearly the best of friends. The 'purpose of the lectures being to advance scholarly and scientific learning in the field of human values'. The Tanner code in which partners are equal Board Members resonates with our constitution. Tanner Lectures are now held annually at Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Berkeley, Stanford, Utah as the Tanner home base, Michigan and Oxford, at Linacre College, as well as at Clare Hall. They are probably the most prestigious and well-endowed academic lectures. We were delighted to welcome back Stephen Irish Tanner, grandson of the Founder and Chair of the O C Tanner Company and the Tanner Lectures Board. He is an historian of science, an alumnus with a doctorate from Cambridge, a rare creature in the corporate world.

This year on 17 March we combined the Tanner Lecture and the Tanner Founder's Lecture, known as the Ashby Lecture, on the same evening so that we were resourced to really explore the future of relations between China and the West, not least between our great universities. Professor Rana Mitter from Harvard's Kennedy School gave the Tanner Lecture and we managed to lure Professor Li Daokui from Tsinghua, one of China's most famous economists and a member of the Bank of China's Monetary Policy Committee, author of China's World View published last year. He gave the Beijing view of the world with a subtle sub-text and broadcast live on social media, watched by over 400,000 followers. The Vice Chancellor and senior University figures listened intently, just as we hoped. We wanted to establish

some clarity for Cambridge in a highly confused environment. Zoe Strimpel, the Sunday Telegraph columnist, was invited. I was a little nervous about that. She declared to me on arrival that she and her circle were hostile to China, but two weeks later she wrote a two-page piece in the Telegraph on the 'glamorous Tanner Lectures' at Cambridge and had modified her view to 'Look, Learn, Engage, Compete', a remarkable shift in attitude.

Reflecting on China and the West continued late into the night and through the following day at West Court. Our new Associate Johnny Cornwell master-minded an invited Symposium to discuss Technology and Science: Research and Collaboration with Professors John Schellnhuber from the Potsdam Institute, Hans van de Ven and David Cardwell from Cambridge, Si Wu and Meng Lu from Peking University; The Geopolitics of Academic Exchange with Professors William Hurst, Dame Jessica Rawson, Kerry Brown; UK-China Trade and Economic Engagement with diplomats Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles, Richard Burn and Charles Parton and Dr Wuxin Mao of the Bank of China; concluding with Cultural Exchange and Contemporary Culture with Needham Research fellow Dr Jingyi Jenny Zhao, Dr Heather Inwood and Dr Brent Haas of Peking University. The Tanner Lecturers delivered their closing remarks.

The King Lecture, always organised brilliantly by Official Fellow Dr Lori Passmore to celebrate the life of our alumnus Donald King and his wife, was given by the Herschel Smith Professor of Medicinal Chemistry, Sir Shankar Balasubramanian who gave an exceptional and wholly intelligible lecture on very complex phenomena.



Dame Gillian Beer and Andrew Blake at the annual Garden Party



Graduands with Praelector Lucia Tantardini and President Alan Short





The College's Bell Collection of Ceramics won two grants in rapid succession, the first award of Trinity's Isaac Newton Fund for the curation of small collections, and a MAAK Foundation award to contribute to Lund Humphries' costs for publishing the huge, fully illustrated catalogue raisonné, and a public lecture and symposium on ceramics in the Twentieth Century on the alumni weekend, Saturday 27 September 2025. Do come to that! It will be fantastic.

All of this excitement was suddenly tempered by the very sad announcement that our former President, Professor Ekhard Salje, the sixth President from 2001 until 2008, died in Paris after a long illness, borne with great dignity. He was

a wonderful President, extraordinarily energetic on the College's behalf and fiercely loyal. Ekhard set a high bar for future Presidents. He was an academic of the highest rank, the Head of Earth Sciences, and a great friend. Our deepest condolences go to his family who lived here in the President's Lodge for the full seven-year term. A celebration of his life over a splendid feast was held on 13 June with reminiscences from the Department and the College. You can read a tribute to Ekhard later in these pages.

On New Year's Day the very sad news arrived that Michael Loewe, the world renowned Sinologist and our oldest Fellow, had died aged 102. Many of us gathered for

his very moving funeral at Hoop Lane Cemetery where he was laid to rest with his parents. You can read tributes to Michael later in these pages.

The Princeton Institute of Advanced Studies was an important model for the College and several of the founding fathers had completed a spell there as Visiting Fellows. I can now announce that the current Director of the Institute, the Leon Levy Professor, David Nirenberg, the eminent historian of the interaction of Christians, Jews, and Muslims in medieval Europe and the Mediterranean, will give the Tanner Lecture next year for our 60th birthday. He is very enthusiastic and we look forward to rekindling our relations with the Princeton community.

The College has been extraordinarily active. We are deeply grateful to all the College staff for managing such a relentless procession of events. The Art Committee's exhibitions this year have included the legendary Sheila Fell's works of rural Cumbria, evoking the sobriety of Dutch seventeenth-century landscapes, a selection from Clare Hall's own hitherto undervalued art collection (real gems are emerging through the cataloguing of Francis Wells' daughter Veronica and our incoming Communications supremo Snezhana), to works from Malcolm Ryan's turning point from abstraction to a figurative style, the landscapes of the Fens and the Flow country of Caithness by Fred Ingrams, and the still lifes of Ben Henriques.

The Music Committee exceeded even last year's intensity of musical offering to collegiate Cambridge. There were sixteen well-attended concerts this year, many completely packed out, including a moving performance of Schubert's Winterreise. We

were also delighted with the bespoke Christmas carol performed by the Clare Hall choir. We enjoyed our monthly Book Club led by Gloria Carnevali, weekly Mindful Meditation Sessions, and free yoga and pilates classes. My daughter suggests I enrol at every opportunity. Golf is strong in the College alongside football, cricket, and other sports. In January, we were delighted to celebrate the 90th birthday of Professor Dame Gillian Beer, President of Clare Hall 1994-2001 and a much-loved member of our community.

The Clare Hall Boat Club celebrated its 30th birthday this summer culminating in the last day of the Bumps on Saturday 21 June, spent very happily in the College Pimms tent on the river bank. The Club now has a gleaming new scull, soon to be rowed in by our emeritus Boat Club President, Oscar O'Hara, and a speedy new four. The Boat Club is 'the gift that keeps on giving' to the College, some half of the student population has been on the river, and a very rewarding cause to support. The College's two eights, the Richard Eden and the Patricia & Kit Thompson of Glenelg, are still less than three years old, the result of gifts from the Club's many friends and benefactors.

On 1 February the Colleges' Committee, comprising the Masters, Presidents, Provosts, Wardens of every college with their invitees, the Vice Chancellor and various Pro Vice Chancellors met in clausura in Clare Hall, the first time some had been here although almost half of the current Heads of House have attended the Tanner, Ashby and King Lectures, concerts and art exhibitions. I am currently the Deputy Chair of the Colleges' Committee. I will be Chair from 2026, and therefore a member of the University Council, a Trustee of the University. The Nominations



Committee then appointed me to the General Board. I am the only person who sits on all three committees. A huge effort was put into preparing the College and many thanks to our wonderful housekeeping team under the authority of Agi, the Porters under our supremely competent and unflappable Head Porter Donna Lavender with the returning former Head Porter Neil, the gardeners, our new recruit Louise, and the ever-vigilant maintenance team. However there is a lot more to do to get the College back into the condition Ralph Erskine envisaged and a huge effort is being put into that with our conservation architect Fiona Lamb of Avanti in close conversation with historic England and the Cambridge City planners. We hope to achieve real progress for the 60th Birthday celebrations. The festivities will be focussed into the long weekend of 16 to 19 April 2026 and we hope to see very many of you there.

**Alan Short**  
President



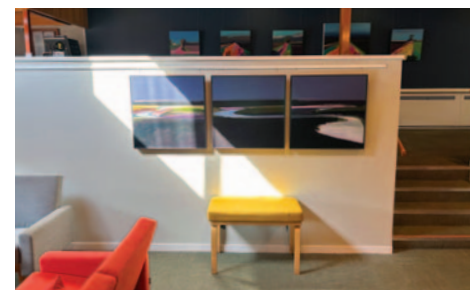
# Bursar's Report

I am pleased to report that the College continues to do very well. In particular, we are able to show an unrestricted operating surplus for the second year in a row, thanks to both the continuing careful management of costs by our dedicated staff and the exceptional generosity of our loyal members. The College has received the highest level of donations for at least a decade for which I would like to give my sincere thanks.

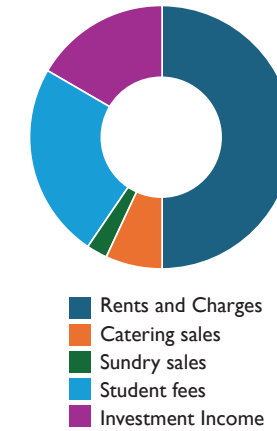
Happily this careful management of costs has not been at the expense of the experience of our students, who continue to benefit from relatively inexpensive but high quality meals and accommodation, and the continuation of a tradition of the College providing our students with a weekly free meal during termtime to encourage interaction between all our members – social and academic conversations that are of immense value to the whole community.



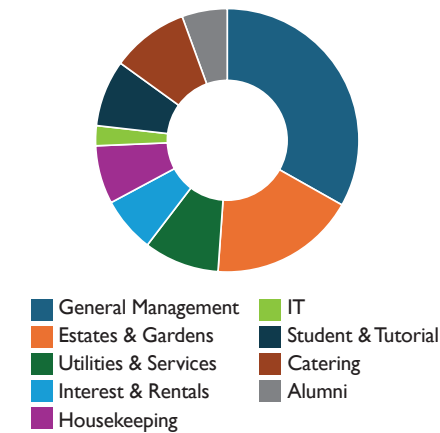
To further improve the College,Avanti, a leading firm of conservation architects, are guiding us in the next stages of restoring the internationally important Grade 2\* listed Erskine buildings to their original glory.The first stages of this plan are to enhance the external environment of the buildings, including the entrance, dining terrace and central courtyard (the latter both being underutilised spaces), enabled through donations to the *Ralph Erskine Buildings Restoration Fund* and other generous gifts. Following these works, our intention is to begin reinstating many of the College's original internal features, in parallel with repairing the now nearly 60-year-old roof. Donations towards the *Ralph Erskine Buildings Restoration Fund* remain extremely welcome, and I would like to pass on my thanks to all who have donated to date.The continuing improvement of our buildings forms a core component of the fundraising objectives of the 60th Anniversary Campaign next year, which I commend to all those who have enjoyed these remarkable spaces over the years.



## INCOME 2024 – 25



## EXPENDITURE 2024 – 25



### Financial Update

The annual report and financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2024 can be found on the College website at: [www.clarehall.cam.ac.uk/official](http://www.clarehall.cam.ac.uk/official).

The information in this Report is based on draft, unaudited information for the year

ended 30 June 2025; the final Report and Accounts for the year will be available in December 2025.

Unrestricted income has continued to grow this year, largely the result of high rates of occupancy for our rooms and flats, and the growth in our summer schools.

Due to continuing inflation unrestricted expenditure has also increased compared with last year, but less so, with careful management across all departments keeping cost increases to a minimum.

The net position is a modest unrestricted operating surplus for 2024-25, the second for a number of years. In addition, several exceptionally generous donations have recently been added to the College's endowment, enabling us to fully restore the funds that were drawn down during the challenging pandemic period.

However, whilst the financial position of the College is now stable, this is only because we continue to spend most of the investment income from our still modest endowment to offset the net costs of running the College. Unlike many other colleges within the University that benefit from larger endowments – enabling them to offer more opportunities to students and invest in their buildings – Clare Hall depends on the continued generosity of our Life Members and donors to sustain these efforts each year.At the same time, a key goal of our 60th Anniversary Campaign is to increase our endowment, ensuring the long-term future of Clare Hall for generations to come.

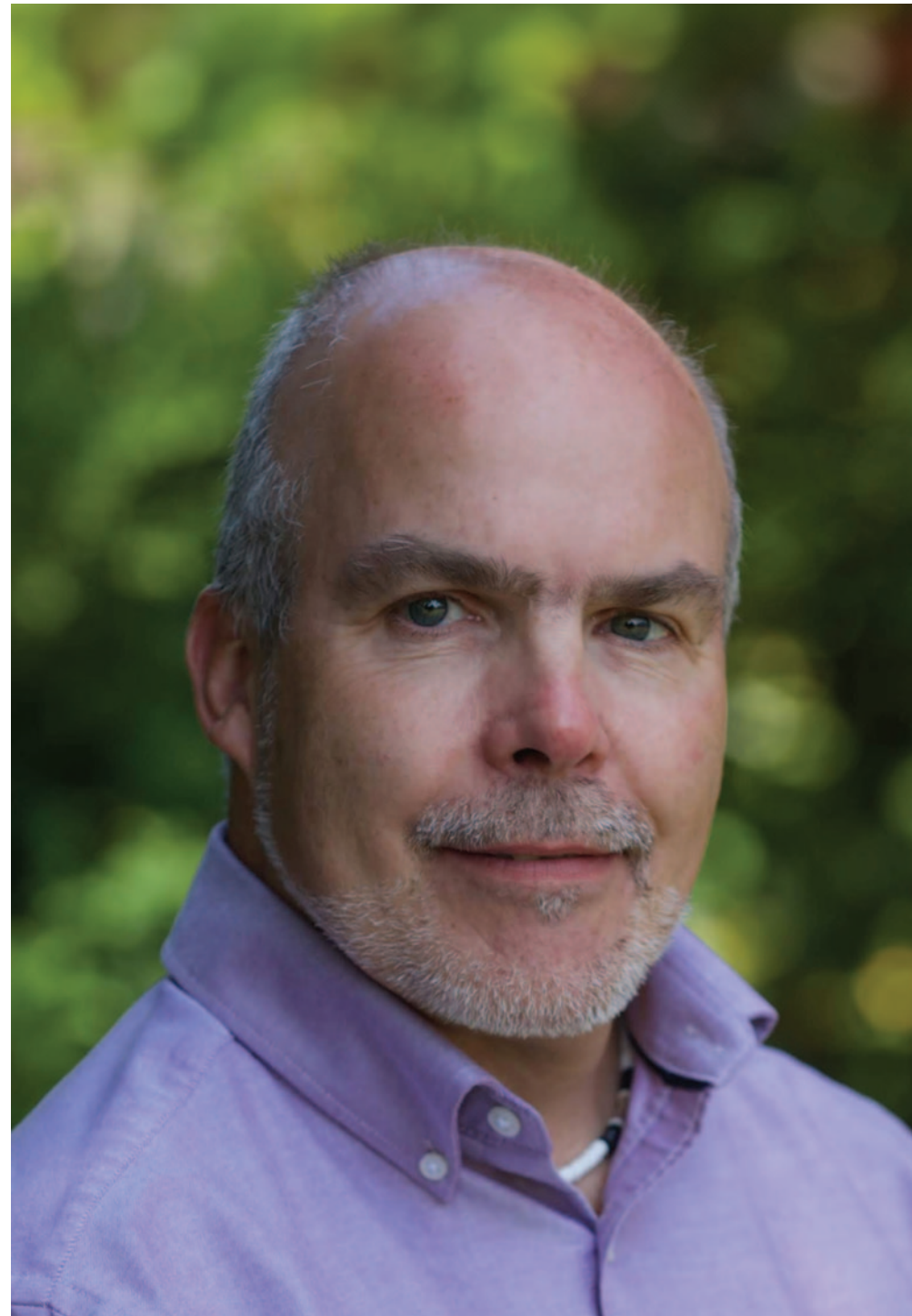
**Per Reiff-Musgrove**  
Bursar



# Domestic Bursar's Report

It has been another busy but incredibly fulfilling year at Clare Hall, and the Operational teams have been central to supporting the College in its many endeavours.

Having welcomed back CUDC (now UniHive) in the summer of 2023, they returned in both 2024 and 2025. Emeritus Fellow Trudi Tate has also run her Virginia Woolf Summer Course in each of the past 3 years. Both of these Summer Schools bring very welcome income to the College, but there is always the tension between maximising opportunity and maintaining the estate and preparing it for the start of a new Academic Year. Thankfully, we are blessed with a workforce that understands this tension and is skilled in negotiating a way through it. The teams work very



closely together to ensure that both the Summer Schools and the wider College can flourish.

As mentioned in last year's report, we were due to take possession of 4 of the new 7-bedroom Town Houses situated adjacent to West Court. We did, eventually, move in, but the whole development had been delayed, and this became something of a challenge. However, as always, my teams pulled together magnificently to get it done. The accommodation itself is fantastic, and our students thoroughly enjoyed their stays. The development is now complete (as of June 2025), and looks very stylish, with many open spaces for the residents to enjoy. We will be moving to a row of five 7-bedroom properties (overlooking our Swimming Pool) from the beginning of September – increasing our available student accommodation by 7 rooms. Again, it will be all-hands-on-deck to ensure that the houses are ready for our new students. The final phase of the development will be the restoration of the road surface running through West Court. This will happen in late August.

The realisation of the Conservation Management Plan, drawn up by Avanti Architects (and focusing on the Ralph Erskine-designed buildings), continues as funds allow – with the external areas being the first phase.

We engaged a Contractor to sensitively remove the staining, built up over the years, from the façades of a few of our buildings – thus dramatically improving the aesthetics of the College. Other projects include rolling out LED lighting throughout the site and addressing long-standing issues with the heating pipework in a couple of our buildings, helping to make the heating more efficient. Both of these projects are expected to have a positive impact on our carbon footprint. A number of our Gas Boilers are coming to the end of their useful life, and we are looking at ways in which they can be replaced. As always, we will be exploring the most ecological and sustainable options. Unfortunately, this will be a very expensive project, and will be rolled-out over a period of years.

A popular new initiative, introduced by a member of the Gardening team, is an Information Board (located outside the Porters' Lodge) which highlights the Flora and Fauna that may be found around the College estate. This Board is updated monthly, and it is impressive how many different species we are host to. This has encouraged more members of the College to explore our gardens and report back any sightings.



There have been a few personnel changes since my last report. These include a new Head Porter (together with a number of new Porters), 2 new members of the Gardening team, and 3 new members of the Housekeeping team. All have settled in well, and are contributing effectively in their respective areas.

In a year when many Colleges cancelled their May Balls (due to a general lack of interest caused, in part, by the high cost of tickets), the Clare Hall Spring Event sold out, and was an unqualified success. For me, it is one of the highlights of the year. Seeing so many members of our community enjoying themselves – with no hint of the 'issues' my colleagues in other Colleges have to deal with – is simply joyful.

I enjoyed immensely the past year at Clare Hall, and I look forward, with eager anticipation, to what the next year (our 60th Anniversary) brings. Knowing Clare Hall, it will be wonderful!

**David James**  
Domestic Bursar





## From the Tutorial Office

The 2024–25 academic year marked another season of growth and achievement for Clare Hall's postgraduate community. We were pleased to welcome 143 new full-time students to the College, with a further 6 joining part-time programmes – a vibrant and diverse group drawn from almost 50 countries and representing a full range of academic disciplines.

A lively induction weekend and an engaging Welcome Week programme greeted our new arrivals, supported by the Graduate Student Body and the Tutorial Office. We were hugely grateful to Andrew McDonald for continuing as GSB President through this busy phase of the year. From the Lent Term, this year's GSB Committee, ably led by Ismail Taoudi Benchekroun brought further momentum to the life of the College, orchestrating a full calendar of events including a swap with our sister Oxford college. Among the many highlights was the Spring Event, organised by a committed student team and now a firmly established feature of our calendar.

In the realm of student achievement, 2025 saw a significant number of Clare Hall members being recognised for their contributions beyond academia. Notably, a record number of Blues – Cambridge's highest sporting honour – were awarded to Clare Hall students this year, recognising excellence across fourteen disciplines. I was especially fortunate to watch our students achieve Varsity success in rugby union, football and cricket and to enjoy being regaled by tales of a victory in Taekwondo that led not only to a Blue but also qualification for the European championships.

Our community has long fostered a spirit of complementary balance between academic and broader achievements, and it is gratifying to see this commitment so visibly celebrated. In recognition of this ethos, we were delighted to act on a student suggestion working with the GSB President to launch the Academic Life and Community Spirit Award, a peer-nomination award to acknowledge students making contributions with a clear positive impact, either within the college or in the wider university setting. It was a delight to invite Ismail to present the award at the annual Awards

Event in June with Ana Isakovic, Rishul Karia, Andrew McDonald, Rose Montgomery Danagher and Polina Sevastyanova all deservedly shortlisted by their peers.

On the academic side, this year marked the inaugural award of the Clare Hall Doctoral Prize, established to support doctoral students in the final phase of their degree. The prize provides six months of maintenance funding to enable recipients to prepare publications arising from their thesis and to apply for postdoctoral opportunities. We congratulate the first recipient, Minja Axelsson, whose work on human-robot interaction has already led to a Research Fellowship offer and several high-impact publications.

More broadly, we remain grateful to our donors and benefactors, whose generosity enables us to sustain a strong framework of financial and academic support. In collaboration with the Cambridge Trust, we were once again able to offer 8 Masters Studentships, including four for widening participation co-funded by the Pippard and Blakes Funds. In addition, we supported four PhD studentships, including those continuing under the Ivan D Jankovic Fund, and awarded seven bursaries along with the Hart and Hart Marshall research prizes to students progressing from master's to doctoral study.

The Boak Student Support Fund has continued to play a key role in enabling students to present their work internationally. Over 20 grants were made this year to support research-related travel, including conference attendance in Chicago, Rome, Singapore, Vienna and Shanghai. We are also delighted to continue to partner with Heidelberg University on an annual summer exchange and to host Cambridge's Sciences Po exchange students.

The welfare of our students remains central to our tutorial provision, working with College Nurse and Student Wellbeing Advisor Anne Considine. We were also pleased to continue work under the Wellbeing Stimulus Fund, now in its second year, further supporting the development of our activity community programme.

We extend our thanks to our Directors of Studies in Mathematics and Law, Professor Stuart Dalziel and Dr Catherine MacKenzie, for their continued guidance to students on classed courses. With the support of our dedicated tutorial team – welcoming six new tutors in Michaelmas Term – we have supported over 50 Clare Hall graduands this year, with a further 50 expected at the large July congregation.

As always, we are indebted to the many Clare Hall Fellows, staff and students who have contributed their time and expertise to sustaining the intellectual and communal life of the College. Special thanks are due to the Tutors, and to Katie Clarke and Hilal Opal for their tireless support.

**Holly Hedgeland**  
Senior Tutor



### Tutorial Team

**Dr Holly Hedgeland**, Senior Tutor  
**Dr Alex Anderson**, Tutor  
**Dr Chiara Azzi**, Tutor  
**Professor Andrew Blake**, Tutor  
**Dr Jehangir Cama**, Tutor (Finance)  
**Dr Gaurav Chaudhary**, Tutor  
**Dr Kelly Fagan Robinson**, Tutor  
**Dr Wai Yi Feng**, Tutor  
**Dr Anthony Harris**, Tutor  
**Dr Nikolai Kazantsev**, Tutor  
**Dr Annamaria Motrescu-Mayes**, Tutor  
**Dr Lucia Tantardini**, Tutor & Praelector  
**Dr Lori Passmore**, Tutor  
**Dr Birgit Rogalla**, Tutor  
**Katie Clarke**, Tutorial Administrator  
**Anne Considine**, College Nurse and Wellbeing Advisor



## From the **Director of Alumni and Donor Relations**

As I reflect on my second year in post, I am delighted to share that Clare Hall continues to thrive due to the exceptional generosity and commitment of our Life Members, donors, and friends.

One of the most significant milestones over the past year has been the addition of a further £1 million to our endowment, which is the lifeblood of the College. We are very pleased that this achievement replenishes the £1 million drawn down during the pandemic. The aim is now to continue fortifying our endowment for the future. This progress is a testament to the collective belief in Clare Hall's mission and the ongoing dedication of our community.

The Boat Club has continued to flourish. Celebrating its 30th anniversary in style, the Club successfully raised funds for a new single scull and a coxed four, ensuring that rowing remains a vibrant part of College life for years to come.



We are deeply grateful to all who have supported our wide-ranging initiatives and campaigns over the past year. Your gifts have made and continue to make a tangible difference, especially to the following funds:

- *General Support Fund*, which provides the College with vital flexibility
- *Student Support Fund*, helping to ensure that financial barriers never hinder academic potential and that the well-being of our students is fully supported
- *Sustainability Fund*, driving our commitment to a greener future
- *Endowment*, securing the College's long-term stability
- *Ralph Erskine Building Restoration Fund*, which requires continuing support to preserve and restore our buildings and estate to Erskine's original vision.

Looking ahead, 2026 marks the 60th anniversary of Clare Hall – a momentous occasion we will celebrate with a Festival of Events from 16 to 19 April 2026. Please see the programme below and save these dates in your diary! We warmly invite all Life Members, friends and supporters to return to Clare Hall to partake in what promises to be a joyful and memorable celebration.

To mark this milestone, we are proud to announce the launch of the 60th Anniversary Campaign Fund. This new fund will support a broad spectrum of initiatives across College life – including academic, cultural, environmental, infrastructural, operational and extracurricular areas - ensuring that Clare Hall remains a place of excellence, inclusivity, and innovation for generations to come. Previously, we launched our 26-60 Society of regular donors to mark Clare Hall's 60th anniversary in 2026, as the name suggests. Those who wish to make a regular monthly, quarterly or annual gift to the College will automatically become a member of this wonderful society of dedicated supporters.

As we celebrate our past and look to the future, I invite you to continue standing with us. Your support, whether through giving, attending events, following Clare Hall on social media, or sharing your time and expertise, makes all the difference. Together, we are shaping a Clare Hall that is not only resilient but visionary, for which I would like to thank you sincerely.

With warmest regards,

**Francé Davies**  
Director of Alumni & Donor Relations



Our warm thanks to Andrea Schlitt, who has been a brilliant Communications and Marketing Manager and has recently moved on to study Law.





## MARIE BATTLE SINGER FUND

Clare Hall is very proud of **Marie Battle Singer PhD (1910-1985)**, one of the first Black psychoanalysts in Britain and a Research Fellow of Clare Hall from 1966 until 1972. Born in Mississippi to an African-American family of educators, she moved to Europe in 1948 to work with refugee children in Germany after the Second World War. In 1950, she came to England, trained with Anna Freud, and settled in Cambridge. She lived in Little St Mary's Lane near the city centre where she saw patients, entertained friends, and welcomed generations of students into her home. For many years she was one of only two psychoanalysts in Cambridge. She worked with many university students as well as with children.

You can read more about Dr Singer on the Clare Hall website and see a short film about her life and work.  
<https://www.clarehall.cam.ac.uk/marie-battle-singer-ph-d-1910-1985/>

To honour her life and work, a Fund has been set up in Clare Hall in her memory. Please consider supporting the Marie Battle Singer

Fund with a gift. To do so, visit  
<https://www.clarehall.cam.ac.uk/online-donation-form/> or scan the following QR code for our online donation form:



The Fund will generate bursaries for postgraduate students, with a preference for transatlantic or international students working within the fields of psychology or race relations, or any other closely related subjects at Clare Hall. These bursaries will provide support for academic-related activities such as research expenses, travel to conferences, books, dissertation binding.

Thanks to Professors Jane Rhodes (niece of Marie Battle Singer), Lynn Hudson, and Richard Zigmund who were instrumental in the creation of this fund.

**Trudi Tate**  
 Emeritus Fellow

## 60TH ANNIVERSARY FESTIVAL OF EVENTS PROGRAMME

*Join us 16-19 April 2026 to celebrate 60 years of academic excellence at Clare Hall.*



### Thursday 16 April 2026

**10:00** Tour of part of the Fitzwilliam Museum

**14:00** Tour of the Parker Library, Corpus Christi College

**16:00** Talk on Clare Hall's Ceramics – Helen Ritchie, Associate of Clare Hall and Senior Curator of Modern & Contemporary Applied Arts at The Fitzwilliam Museum (Meeting Room)

**17:00** Tanner Lecture – Professor David Nirenberg, Director and Leon Levy Professor, Princeton Institute for Advanced Study (Robinson College Lecture Theatre)

**18:00** Ashby Lecture – Professor Denis Lo, Vice-Chancellor and Li Ka Shing Professor of Medicine, The Chinese University of Hong Kong (Robinson College Lecture Theatre)

**19:15** Drinks reception (Common Room)

**19:45** Feast (Dining Hall)

### Friday 17 April 2026

**9:30** Tour of the Whipple Museum of History of Science Museum with Prof Hasok Chang, Fellow of Clare Hall and Hans Rausing Professor of History and Philosophy of Science

**11:00** Lecture by Professor Dame Caroline Humphrey, Honorary Fellow of Clare Hall (Richard Eden Suite, West

Court)

**14:00** Talk on Netherlandish Art by Professor Alan Short, President of Clare Hall (President's Lodge)

**15:15** Afternoon tea (Common Room)

**16:30** Talk on Clare Hall's Art Collection by Professor Frances Spalding, Emeritus Fellow and Chair of Clare Hall's Art Committee (Meeting Room)

**18:00** Anniversary Music Concert (Dining Hall)

**19:30** Drinks and buffet (Common Room)

**21:00** Whisky tasting, Richard Eden Room with Stephen Bourne, Emeritus Fellow of Clare Hall, and Dr Annamaria Motrescu-Mayes, Fellow and Tutor of Clare Hall (West Court)

### Saturday 18 April 2026

**9:30** Tour of King's College Chapel with Professor Jean Michel Massing, Fellow of King's College

**11:30** Talk by Professor Lord Martin Rees, Honorary Fellow of Clare Hall, and Q&A with Dr Alexandru Marcoci, Assistant Professor in Global Risk and Resilience at the Centre for the Study of Existential Risk (Dining Hall)

**12:30** Garden Party (Fellows Garden)

**15:00** Talk on the architecture of Ralph Erskine by Professor Alan Short, President of Clare Hall (Dining Hall)

**19:00** Continuum Concert (Robinson College Chapel)

### Sunday 19 April 2026

**10:30** Science showcase with networking brunch for science and technology research and innovation (Common Room)

**18:00** Evensong led by the Clare Hall Choir (Queens' College Chapel)

There will also be a retrospective Clare Hall Art exhibition and an exhibition on the history of Clare Hall during the Festival.

Registration for these events will open nearer the time, but please save these dates in your diary in the meantime.

Enquiries:  
[development@clarehall.cam.ac.uk](mailto:development@clarehall.cam.ac.uk)

**Francé Davies**  
 Director of Alumni and Donor Relations



*Should you wish to support Clare Hall with a gift, please scan the displayed QR code for our online donation form.*



## SHELLY SINGH-GRYZBON

Offical Fellow



I am an Assistant Professor in the Department of Chemical Engineering and Biotechnology (CEB), where my research focuses on improving how we treat cardiovascular, neurovascular, and valvular diseases by combining engineering and medicine. I specialise in developing computational models that help us understand disease progression and optimise treatment, with a particular focus on translating these models into tools for clinical decision-making. At CEB, I teach Computational Fluid Dynamics to fourth-year/Master's students, and Fluid Mechanics II to second-year undergraduates.

I received my BSc in Chemical and Process Engineering at The University of the West Indies, followed by an MSc and PhD in Chemical Engineering at Imperial College London. My doctorate research explored computational modelling of aortic biomechanics in patients with Marfan Syndrome. I then completed a Postdoctoral Fellowship at the Cardiovascular Fluid Mechanics Lab at Georgia Institute of Technology, where I developed and validated models for prosthetic heart valves, percutaneous repairs, and surgical planning.

At the heart of my work is the development of patient-specific 'digital

twins' of blood flow. These are virtual models created using medical images such as magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and computed tomography angiograms (CTA). Physics-based computer simulations replicate how blood flows through a patient's vessel or heart, allowing us to test and optimise treatments before they are performed. For example, in transcatheter heart valve replacement, we can simulate how different devices or implantation techniques will interact with a patient's anatomy. This helps personalise interventions, reduce complications, and improve procedural outcomes.

Beyond individual procedures, my research applies fundamental engineering principles, such as fluid dynamics and biomechanics, to deepen our understanding of the mechanisms underlying vascular diseases and to optimise medical device performance. I have worked on a range of clinical challenges, including aneurysms, blood clots, and heart valve diseases such as aortic stenosis, mitral regurgitation, and tricuspid regurgitation. My group develops predictive models to evaluate interventions like stent placement and percutaneous valve repair, supporting safer, more effective, and personalised treatments.

Collaboration is central to this work. I partner with clinicians, radiologists, and computer scientists to ensure our models are grounded in real-world practice and data. Looking ahead, I aim to further integrate computational simulation, artificial intelligence, and clinical workflows to advance precision medicine, where treatments are tailored to each individual patient. I recently joined Clare Hall's Research Fellowship Committee and am excited to contribute to the College's vibrant and interdisciplinary research culture.

## Clare Hall BURSARIES

*We are proud to introduce some of this year's outstanding bursary holders. Our grateful thanks to all our donors.*

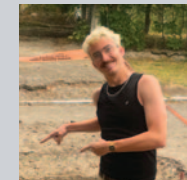
### Annie Cheng



I am writing my MPhil dissertation in the Department of Digital Humanities. My research investigates how AI-assisted journaling affects therapeutic self-writing practices by putting the phenomenon in

conversation with literary autofiction. I am from California, and my studies are supported by the Clare Hall Mellon Bursary.

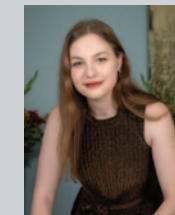
### Jay Ford



My research for my MPhil in Archaeology focuses on woolly mammoths in Moldova and is supported by Cambridge Masters and Clare Hall Key Studentship.

My work utilises isotopic analysis to investigate diet and movement patterns in past woolly mammoth populations, as well as reconstructing the past environment in which they lived. By proxy, we have been able to infer how past humans interacted with mammoths and the environment which they shared. I conducted fieldwork in Moldova, excavating the mammoths and other archaeological material.

### Bianca-Mihaela Ganescu



I am from Romania and am doing an MPhil in Advanced Computer Science, supported by the Clare Hall Mellon Bursary. I am working on building AI models that can learn

language in a way that is similar to how humans learn their first language: from just tens of millions of words and grounded in visual input.

### Wahab Shahbaz



I am pursuing an MPhil in Industrial Systems, Manufacture and Management, supported by the Cambridge Opportunity Masters and Clare Hall Pippard Fund Studentship. My

research focuses on how smart factory technologies are used in university teaching and research. My project investigates what encourages long-term use of these technologies, through interviews with academics, students, and industry partners. I'm especially interested in how innovation can be made sustainable in real-world settings.

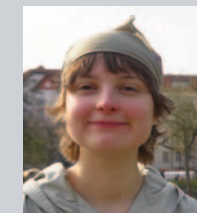
### Robyn Schnell



I am a PhD candidate in the Faculty of History, supported by the Clare Hall Mellon Bursary. My research explores the dynamics of an intricate conspiracy in which the South

African Security Police attempted to infiltrate the anti-apartheid struggle both within the country and abroad during the period of high apartheid. My PhD dissertation sheds new light on concepts of race, gender, agency and complicity within twentieth-century South African historiography.

### Natalie Stoker



Originally from the Wirral, I am completing an MPhil in Anthropocene Studies in the Department of Geography, funded by the Cambridge Masters and Clare Hall Boak

Studentship. My dissertation explores the pasts, presents, and futures of mining in Cornwall, particularly tin and lithium. I am focusing on how these rocks are assembled as resources, and the kinds of green transitions that are co-constructed by this process.





## Michael Nedo EDITING WITTGENSTEIN

Surprisingly, given his fame, much of the output of the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein remains unpublished although more than seventy years have elapsed since his death.

Most scholarly editors have not risen to the multiple challenges they encounter in Wittgenstein's writings. The exception is Michael Nedo, a longstanding Associate of Clare Hall, who has devoted himself for decades to creating the Wiener Ausgabe (Vienna Edition) of Wittgenstein's writings, published initially by Springer and more recently by Klostermann. Michael fell in love with Wittgenstein's writings in the 1960s and in 1974 received permission from Wittgenstein's literary heirs to create the Wiener Ausgabe. He not only edited these volumes but designed and typeset them.

A scholarly edition should be both faithful to the original and accessible to the researcher. With Wittgenstein, accessible is a relative term. Whether he is writing about language or psychology or the foundations of mathematics Wittgenstein is beautiful, indeed poetic, but unavoidably difficult. All the more need for an edition that aids concentration.

One complication for the Wittgenstein editor is that Wittgenstein often wrote several variants of a sentence, all of which contributed to his argument. Previous editors saw the variants as clumsy efforts of someone struggling to express himself, and left them out. Michael recognised the need to present the variants. He trained himself as a master typographer and invented a way of typesetting the variants in parallel so that all read fluently.

Another challenge is that Wittgenstein, being hugely cultured, would quote from great German and Austrian literature from memory, sometimes not with complete accuracy, without using quotation marks. Michael knows the German-language literature and Wittgenstein's own style so well that he recognises the quotations.

Wittgenstein was trained as an engineer – he had several patents to his name. A third challenge to an editor is that he often used engineering drawings within his text as metaphors. These drawings need to be typeset within the flow of the text.

Perhaps the biggest obstacle to faithful publication is that Wittgenstein did not follow the structure of a conventional academic book with a proposition and a linear discourse leading to a conclusion. His output, reflecting the complexity of the issues he is tackling, is in the form of interlinked remarks which together approach a topic from many directions. His texts with their frequent repetitions resemble a musical fugue where a theme appears in changing contexts. Wittgenstein would be more faithfully published by a three-dimensional electronic structure than a linear book.

Michael in fact designed the Wiener Ausgabe as an electronic edition back in the 1970s – hugely innovative at the time. He then realised that print allows more intense concentration than reading on a screen. He had planned to publish the edition as a combination of print for concentration and electronic for the three-dimensionality but in the 1980s Wittgenstein's literary heirs vetoed an electronic edition.

Michael is not formally trained as a philosopher but he has a unique skill set for the task he set himself. For his PhD in physics, he had worked with computers from the late 1960s: he designed the structure that underlay the computer code for a print and electronic edition of Wittgenstein, and actually wrote the code himself in the 1980s for the pilot volume. Michael has an artist's eye, which

he brought to bear on the design of the beautiful volumes. Above all, his 60 years of reading and thinking about Wittgenstein have brought a deep understanding. He can tell whether a feature of the manuscript, such as the length of a dash, is meaningful or just noise; if there is a discrepancy between manuscript and a contemporary typewritten version of the manuscript he can judge which version records what Wittgenstein meant.

Wittgenstein usually destroyed early versions of his writings. For his output from 1929 to 1938, however, each of numerous intermediate stages survives, providing a unique insight into how Wittgenstein refined his thinking. In 2024 Michael completed the publication of every iteration of Wittgenstein's 1929–1933 philosophical output leading to the production of Wittgenstein's second book project, the so-called 'Big Typescript'. Much of Wittgenstein's output still remains to be published: Michael is now setting about editing the three stages of Wittgenstein's revisions to the Big Typescript.

**Gillian Moore**  
Life Member





# Clare Hall COLLOQUIA

This year marks the sixth calendar year of my involvement with the Clare Hall Colloquia. I shall now be passing the convenorship on to Li Tang. It has been a privilege to share in the organisation and presentation of seminars which represent the flagship series of talks within our institution. As one of our past Presidents said, 'The Colloquia represent the combined social and intellectual heart of the College'.

Success with the Colloquia lies in most part in the willingness of speakers to share their research, and by audience members who attend, freely contribute astute and supportive comments, and who share in the conviviality. I have every confidence that the series will continue to thrive.

A big thank you to the College and its staff for assisting with the smooth running of the Colloquia, and to the following speakers whose talks have enriched the past two years.

## 2023-24

**Tristan Begg** (University of Cambridge): Genomic analyses of hair from Ludwig van Beethoven

**Andy Goetz** (University of Denver): The next transport revolution: Sustainable mobility and decarbonisation

**Margaret Miller** (University of Sydney): The politics of foreign ethnicity in antiquity

**Alfred Hwangbo** (Seoul National University of Science and Technology): Historic dwellings of Korea: Gangnam style to Korean wave

**Jaume Navarro** (University of the Basque Country): A physicist confronts religious pluralism: Edmund T. Whittaker (1873-1956)

**Susana Sánchez Ferro** (Autonomous University, Madrid): The road to Scottish independence: how the law can shape politics

**Evelyn Nallen** (Weaver Ensemble): Getting to Mars and Venus: Recreating the first modern ballet, 1717

**Joshua Mostow** (University of British Columbia): Re-translating the One Hundred Poets: Lineation and heteronormativity

**Nikolai Kazantsev** (University of Cambridge): Are your chocolates good or evil: The industrial metaverse, hype or future reality?

**Gaurav Chaudhary** (University of Cambridge): Quantum materials

**Judith Harford** (University College Dublin): Educating women: A history of higher education for women in Ireland, 1850-1950

**Nancy Ramage** (Ithaca College): The Cone sisters of Baltimore, and their friends Picasso, Matisse, and Gertrude Stein

**Maximilian Kiss** (CWI, Amsterdam): Open access research data for machine learning in computed tomography

**Esdras Paravizo** (University of Cambridge): Terra incognita: mapping design creativity

**Andrii Bovgyria** (University of Cambridge): 'Cossack Myth': The construction of identity in 17th–18th Century Ukraine

**Linn Holmberg** (Stockholm University): Dictionary craze in Enlightenment Europe

**Derek Hughes** (University of Aberdeen): Wagner: The fabrication of a monster

**Elizabeth Barsotti** (University of Cambridge): Are humans smart? Lessons in intelligence from neuroscience and AI

**Norman Hammond** (Boston University): The Mysterious Maya? An ancient American civilisation

**Morten Broberg** (University of Copenhagen): Organ donation: The

application of behavioural science to legislation

**Anthony Harris** (University of Cambridge): Using Large Language Models (LLMs) for Humanities Led Research (HLR)

## 2024-25

**Shaul Katzir** (Tel Aviv University): Multiple inventions

**Eugene Wong** (University of California Berkeley): Foresight and hindsight: Science, technology and public policy

**Mauricio Suarez** (Complutense University Madrid): Modelling science: James Clerk Maxwell on analogy

**Jonathan Bordo** (Trent University): Canada the proper name of the Wilderness

**Peter Allen** (University of Nottingham): 2,000 years of taxing death in the UK: Taxation reflecting its time

**Buzz Baum** (MRC, Cambridge): Our archaeal origins

**Priscilla Garcia** (University of Cambridge): The gospel of anti-communism: The rise and influence of the Christian Right in democratic Brazil

**Seppo Poutanen** (Turku University): Banished from their material campus: How did closures related to the COVID-19 pandemic affect European doctoral researchers?

**Miriam Solomon** (Temple University): Do psychiatrists only treat disorders?

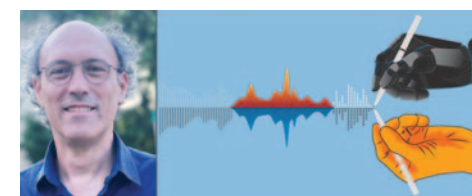
**Ping Sheng** (Hong Kong University of Science and Technology): Acoustic metamaterials

**Laura Fabbri** (Bologna University): A journey through High Energy Physics: What we know, what we don't know and what we pretend not to know



Kelly Fagan Robinson

Barbara Sahakian



Shaul Katzir 'Multiple inventions'



Kevin Edwards and Eric Nye

Mauricio Suarez



Susana Sanchez Ferro

**Barbara Sahakian** (University of Cambridge): Brain boost: Healthy habits for a happier life

**Anne Kovaleinen** (Turku University): Last resort of digital advice: Libraries' changing role in Finland

**Elizabeth Elbourne** (McGill University): Seeing the San: A global micro-history of San performers in Victorian Britain

**Adia Mendelson Maoz** (Open University of Israel): Yoram Kaniuk and Günter Grass: A fraught dialogue through time

**Daniel Veres** (Romanian Academy): Environmental metal pollution in Europe from the onset of metallurgy to the present day

**Calogero Santoro** (Tarapacá University): 'A waterless people is a dead people': 13,000 years of living under chronic water shortage in the Atacama Desert

**Clarissa Chenovick** (Florida Atlantic University): Touch, taste, and vision in early modern English passion poetry

**Alexander Anderson** (MRC, Cambridge): Food for thought: The importance of metabolism in the evolution and development of the human brain

**Joyce Lindorff** (Temple University): An Italian musician-priest in the early Qing court: Sonatas, letters and politics of Teodorico Pedrini (1671-1746)

**Kelly Fagan Robinson** (University of Cambridge): Rebuilding research and researcher

**Eric Nye** (University of Wyoming): Leslie Stephen and *Sketches from Cambridge by a Don*

**Kevin J. Edwards**  
Convenor  
Clare Hall Colloquia





# BRAINBOOST

Healthy Habits for a Happier Life

We recently discussed our new book *Brain Boost: Healthy Habits for a Happier Life* at the Clare Hall Colloquium. Much of the evidence-based studies presented in the book is our own research, and some of the large-scale studies have been conducted in collaboration with Fudan University, in particular Professor Jianfeng Feng and members of his Institute. This collaboration has been facilitated by Clare Hall and President Alan Short, including through the Visiting Fellows Programme.

Most people focus on their physical health but often overlook their brain and mental health. Surveys have shown that our New Year's Resolution lists are mostly about getting more physically fit or losing weight, and thoughts about improving our mental health and wellbeing are low on these lists. However, it is important to recognise the bidirectional connection between physical and mental health. Mental health issues can contribute to physical illness by impairing the immune system. For instance, individuals with mood disorders tend to experience higher rates of infections and respiratory issues. Similarly, those diagnosed with physical conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, or cancer are at a higher risk of developing mental health problems. Additionally, physical illness can worsen symptoms such as anxiety and depression. It is crucial to understand that changes in physical health can trigger physiological responses that directly impact mental wellbeing.

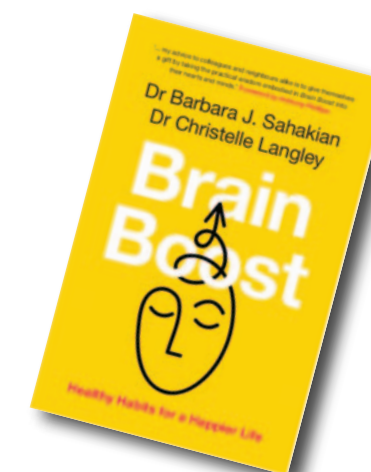
To improve our brain health, cognition, wellbeing and physical health, we can adopt healthy lifestyle factors and maintain them throughout life. Studies have shown that both environmental factors and our behaviour can improve our brains, cognition and mental health or detract from it. Our diet, our sleep and our social support

systems are all key to improving brain health, cognition and wellbeing. For example, a diet with high cereal and low caffeine was associated with better cognitive performance, body mass index (BMI), and other metabolic measures. We have also shown that in middle to older aged adults, getting 7-8 hours of sleep per night consistently was associated with better cognition, brain health and mental health. Similarly, we have found that social isolation and loneliness can detract from our brain health and wellbeing. In fact, in this older age group social isolation can actually increase the risk of dementia by 26%. In addition, our study found that having a healthy lifestyle can reduce the risk of depression by 57% compared to having an unhealthy lifestyle and may even help mitigate the effects of genetic risk factors. Another factor is lifelong learning, including cognitive games, which can improve cognition in healthy individuals. These games improve cognitive performance and functioning in people with neurological diseases, such as mild cognitive impairment and stroke as well as in psychiatric disorders. Lifelong learning can build cognitive reserve and foster resilience which can lead to better outcomes in people with neurological diseases and psychiatric disorders.

On the other end of the age spectrum, having a friendship group of approximately 5 close friends, was associated with beneficial effects on cognition, brain health and mental health. In another study in adolescents, we found that reading for pleasure early in childhood is associated with better brain structure, cognition, educational attainment and mental health in adolescence. These adolescents also had better sleep and less screen time, including TV, cellphone and tablets. Adopting good strategies and habits early in life can have great impact later in life.

There was an enjoyable and stimulating discussion at the end of the Colloquium. We explored topics such as what people can do towards behavioural change, the role of the Government in promoting good brain health, the role of genetic factors in lifestyle behaviours, and what can be done for poorer members of our society to facilitate good brain health, cognition and wellbeing. On this latter topic, our study on reading for pleasure at an early age and beneficial effects in adolescents, regardless of socio-economic status, was discussed more fully. We have written in the past on the effects of poverty on the developing brain. One important question was how we had changed our lifestyle behaviours given our own research studies. We confessed that we had both reduced our coffee intake and Barbara had increased her exercise levels, while Christelle had started learning Italian.

**Barbara Sahakian,**  
Professorial Fellow  
**Christelle Langley,**  
Affiliated Postdoctoral Member





# SALJE MEDALS

Two medals are awarded by the College each year to the most outstanding PhDs: one in the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences and the other in the Sciences. The Salje Medals were kindly provided by former Clare Hall President, Professor Ekhard Salje, who sadly died this year. The 2025 medals were presented by Lisa Salje.



**Dr Kamila Rollan**  
Faculty of Education

My PhD research examined the critical role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in advancing inclusive education reform in Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan). In these countries, centralised policy implementation and systemic gaps create disparities in equitable education access.

Through grounded theory methodology – incorporating policy analysis and interviews with NGOs, governments, and international organizations – my PhD identifies eight pivotal NGO roles. These include policy advocacy, teacher training, and enhancing school enrolment. The work also reveals the reliance of NGOs on strategic partnerships to navigate structural constraints such as funding dependency, bureaucratic instability, and limited capacity.

My research found that parental leadership is a driving force of inclusive education reform, with NGOs led by parents of children with disabilities acting as ‘engines of change’. It proposes the novel 4-Tier Framework of NGO Engagement in Inclusive Education, offering a systematic analysis of NGO functions, strategies, challenges, and motivations.

Since completing my PhD, I have been working on inclusive education in Kazakhstan where I am an Assistant Professor at SDU University, Almaty. I serve on a government advisory committee and have presented my research at conferences in Ukraine and Armenia.

I am deeply honoured to be recognised by Clare Hall with the Salje Medal for the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences. It is a testament to the transformative years I spent at Clare Hall as a PhD candidate, and serving as an Equalities Officer in 2020-21.



**Dr Simon St-Amant**

Department of Pure Mathematics and Mathematical Statistics

I did my PhD in a branch of Mathematics called geometric inverse problems. This field underpins many imaging techniques such as CT scans, electrical impedance tomography or seismic tomography. My PhD was on inverse problems related to connections, which are geometric objects that describe how vectors change as they move in a curved space. A magnetic potential, which in turn defines a magnetic field, is an example of a connection. I established new uniqueness results for such inverse problems and provided a novel geometric framework for their study. My findings deepen our understanding of inverse problems in differential geometry and have potential applications in physics, particularly in gauge theories such as electromagnetism and quantum field theory.

Since finishing my PhD, I have moved to London to work as a quantitative researcher.

I am truly honoured to receive a Salje Medal for the Sciences from Clare Hall. I will always cherish my time as a member of the College, where I got to meet amazing people and made lifelong friends.



## Virginia Woolf AT CLARE HALL

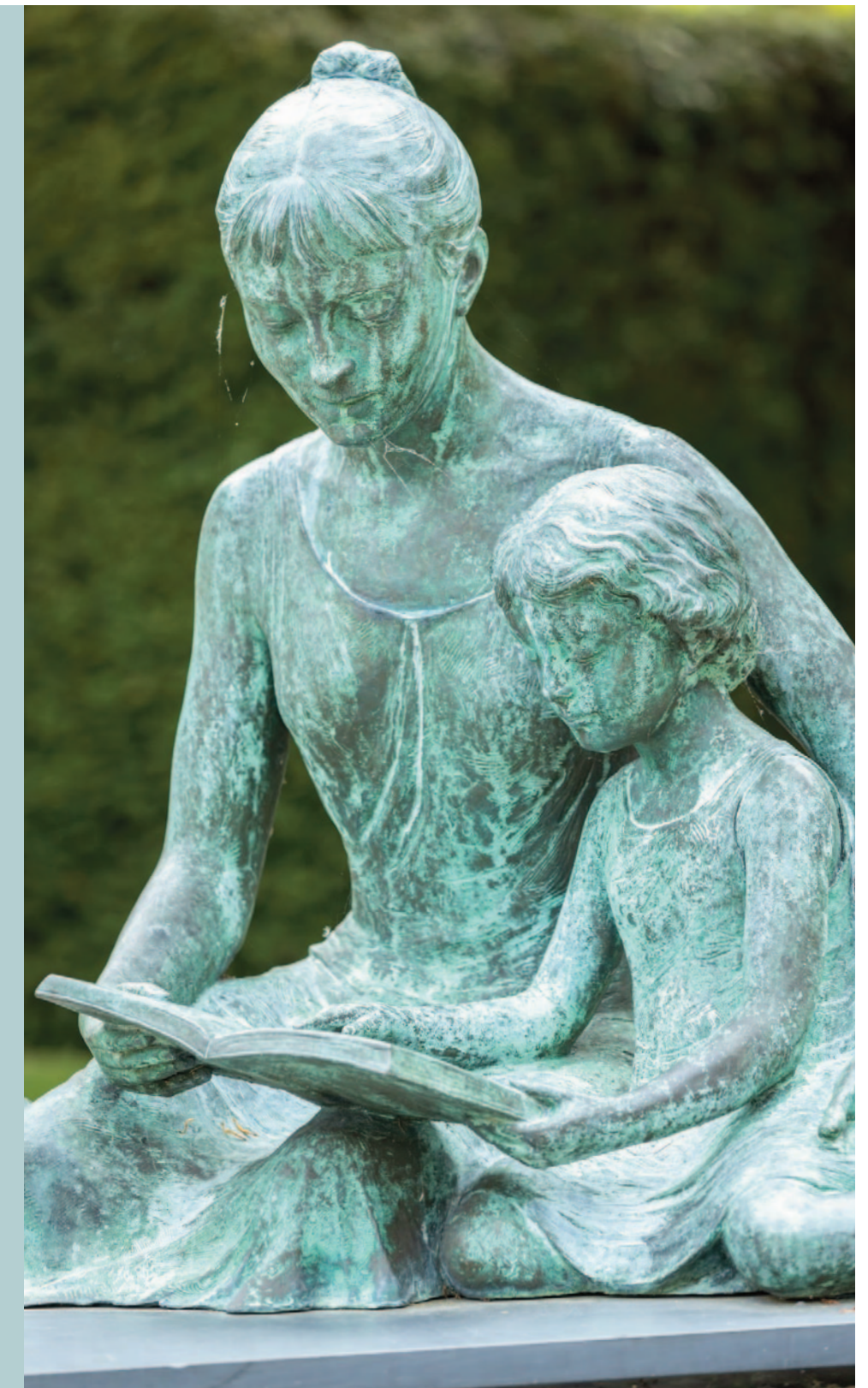


The Literature Cambridge summer course on Virginia Woolf returned to Clare Hall in July 2025, directed by Emeritus Fellow Dr Trudi Tate. An audience of 24 keen readers came from all

over the world for a week of lectures, tutorials, talks, a book launch, and visits around Cambridge. The theme was Virginia Woolf: Writing Life. Thanks to Clare Hall staff and catering for their support and for an excellent vegan buffet supper.

Literature Cambridge hopes to be back in Clare Hall in July 2026 or 2027 for a summer course on Virginia Woolf and the Natural World.

[www.literaturecambridge.co.uk](http://www.literaturecambridge.co.uk)







## MINJA AXELSSON **DOCTORAL PRIZE STUDENTSHIP**

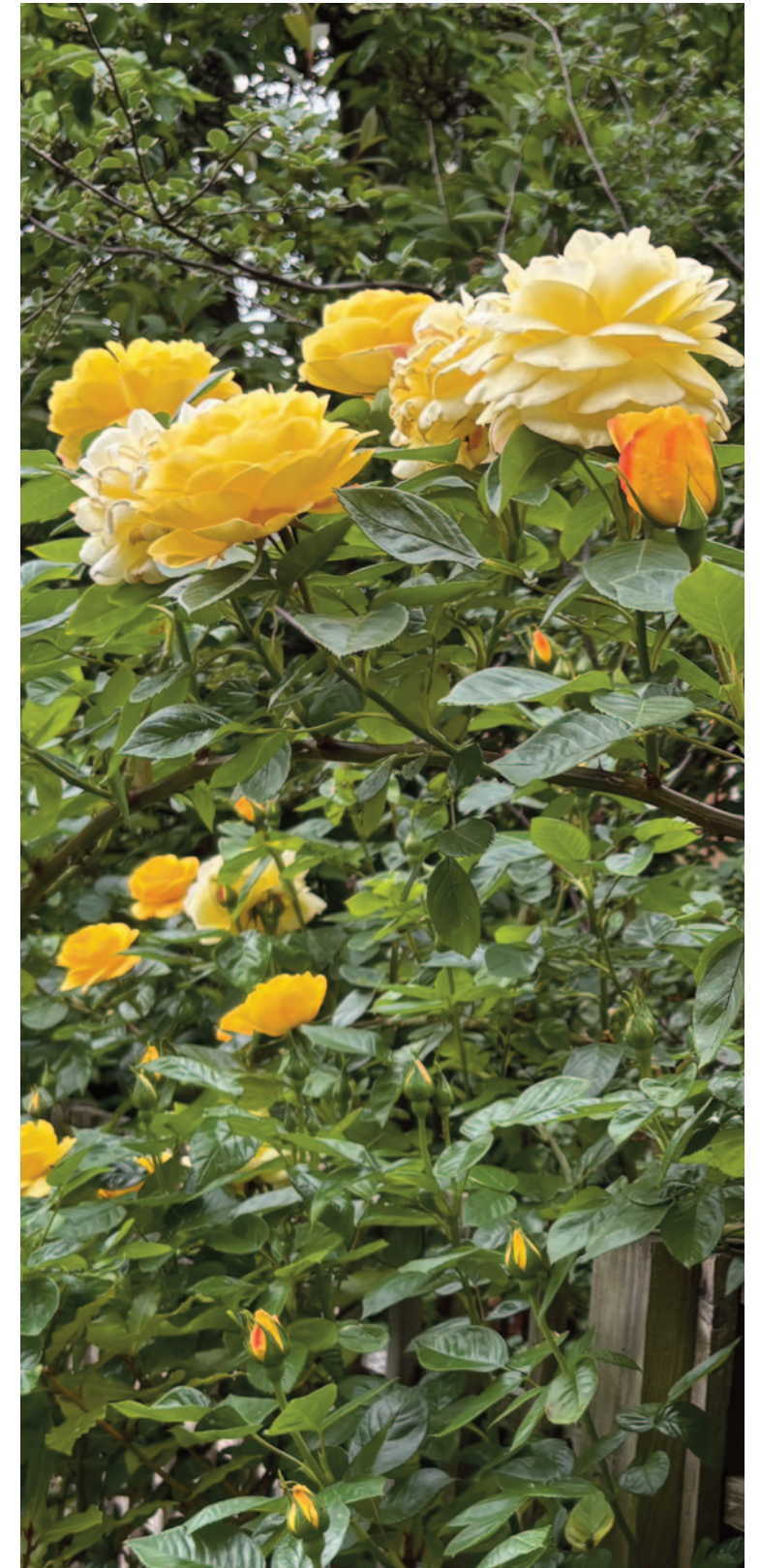
Congratulations to Minja Axelsson who has been awarded a Clare Hall Doctoral Prize Studentship. Minja writes about her research project:

During the Clare Hall Doctoral Prize Studentship, I am completing two research publications on the ethics of robotic mental well-being coaches, which I started during my PhD. I am investigating how we can align the design of robotic mental well-being coaches with users' needs, and address the ethical concerns they raise. In practice, this means inviting members of the public and robot users to be active participants in the design of the robot.

I am writing the first publication for a conference, focusing on a community-based investigation of what members of the public perceive as ethical issues with a robotic mental well-being coach. This work aims to first identify ethical concerns, and then propose approaches to reflect on and mitigate them, and further align robot design with public interest. The second publication is for a journal, based on a study I completed while I was a visiting student at MIT. This work focuses on robot users' feedback on how well-being robots could be more ethical. The idea of this work is to propose ethical design strategies that robot developers and researchers could apply.

Overall, these projects extend the work of my PhD into the important domain of ethical technologies, and examines how we might create them with a reflective and human-centred approach. I'm grateful to Clare Hall for the opportunity to finalise this work.

**Minja Axelsson**  
PhD Student







# Visiting Fellows

Some of our Visiting Fellows write about the work they have been doing at Clare Hall in 2024-25.

**Paul Barbone**  
BOSTON UNIVERSITY



I work in theoretical mechanics which is at the intersection of Applied Mathematics and Mechanical Engineering.

Mechanics, like all quantitative sciences, is based on theories that work from cause to effect. A mathematical problem that seeks to predict the effect of a hypothetical cause is called a forward problem. A mathematical problem that seeks to identify the cause of an observed effect is called an inverse problem. I study inverse problems that involve acoustic waves in solids, otherwise known as elastic waves. Inverse problems involving elastic waves can be used to create elastic wave images, with applications as diverse as medical imaging and CO2 sequestration.

An inverse problem solution in the form of an elastic wave image may be understood to be a best-guess inference from (usually imperfectly) observed effects. Some aspects of an elastic wave image are very robust to errors in the observations, and hence are very reliable; other aspects can be quite unreliable. Understanding which is which is an active area of research. I am using my time at Clare Hall to study uncertainty quantification in inverse elastic wave problems.

**Julie Bergner**  
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA



I came to Cambridge to participate in the programme Equivariant Homotopy Theory in Context at the Isaac Newton

Institute. Homotopy theory originated in the field of topology, in which we regard two shapes as being essentially the same if one can be deformed into the other without tearing the shapes or creating new holes in them. My research is primarily on homotopical categories. The idea is that we take some kind of mathematical objects, together with appropriate functions between them, but these functions form spaces that can be deformed. Such structures, while defined abstractly, have shown themselves to be quite useful for understanding a wide range of concepts throughout mathematics. Equivariant homotopy theory considers the same kinds of structures, but also takes into account extra symmetries, and I'm learning how to introduce these approaches into my own work.

I have enjoyed being a Visiting Fellow at Clare Hall, especially getting to know so many other people from all over the world doing a great variety of interesting research. I've also appreciated the opportunity to immerse myself in the wealth of choral music here in Cambridge.

**Maggie Fu**  
UNIVERSITY OF MACAU



I am a Professor in Finance and Business Economics at the University of Macau and Senior Economist at OxValue.ai, a spinoff company of the University of Oxford.

During my time at Clare Hall, I have worked on two research projects. Firstly, I have been involved in the Sustainable Fintech and Green Finance project, a collaborative effort between the University of Macau and Banco Nacional Ultramarino (Macau). Secondly, I have worked on the Valuation Creation for AI Startups initiative, supported by OxValue.ai (UK). The outcomes of these research undertakings have been presented at several conferences and forums, including a Parliamentary meeting associated with the Sino-UK Innovation and Development Forum in London, and the Adam Smith Sustainability Conference in Edinburgh. A publication entitled White Paper on AI Startups by Value Creation was released by OxValue.ai and the Technology and Management Centre for Development at Oxford.

In College, I have been involved in the Clare Hall Boat Club and striving to establish the first women's crew in Macau with the invaluable support of CHBC. I am grateful to the Clare Hall community for fostering a vibrant academic environment in which friendships flourish and collaborations thrive.

**Benjamin Kohlmann**  
UNIVERSITY OF REGENSBURG



I have long been interested in literature's complex and fascinating relationship to politics. While at Clare Hall, I'm working on a new

book project that offers a global history of the Left *Bildungsroman* (the 'novel of formation'). My project shows that politically committed writers turned to the novel as a medium of political thought and historical understanding. In doing so, these writers aimed to reshape our sense of what it means to possess 'a self' and to inhabit a shared world. The Left *Bildungsroman* seeks to imagine the conditions under which a socialist and internationalist dispensation might finally emerge. As a result, the genre is a cornerstone of Left world literature. My project considers a transnational set of works ranging from Nikolai Chernyshevsky's *What Is to be Done* (1863), Martin Andersen Nexø's *Pelle the Conqueror* (1906-19), and Maxim Gorky's *Mother* (1906), to novels by Jean-Paul Sartre, Maryse Condé, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, Doris Lessing, Ding Ling, and Nanni Balestrini. I also think about films such as Jean-Luc Godard's 1967 Maoist *La Chinoise*, with its revolutionary protagonist Guillaume Meister (modelled on Goethe's 'Wilhelm Meister').



**Anne Kovalainen**  
UNIVERSITY OF TURKU, FINLAND



I am Professor of Entrepreneurship at Turku Centre for Labour Studies (TCLS), University of Turku, Finland. I had the privilege to be a Visiting Fellow

at Clare Hall for six months in 2024-25. During this time I have finalised two articles for publication together with Dr Seppo Poutanen, my spouse, who is also a Visiting Fellow at Clare Hall. As part of a larger research project on platformisation and digitalisation of societies, we are working on book and article manuscripts on new professions and competencies in the AI era. In March 2025 I gave a Colloquium talk on 'The last resort of digital advice: libraries' changing role in Finland', and as a member of the EU Science Diplomacy Working Group, I participated in finalising the European Framework for Science Diplomacy, published by the European Commission.

The outstanding cultural events, from the music performances to talks and art exhibitions, combined with the superb and friendly College members and staff, encapsulate the unique spirit of Clare Hall. My time at Clare Hall has given me a lot both personally and professionally. Indeed, Clare Hall has offered a convivial, friendly and open intellectual home.

My stay at Clare Hall was generously funded by Osk. Huttunen Foundation.

**Seppo Poutanen**  
UNIVERSITY OF TURKU, FINLAND



I am Senior Research Fellow and Associate Professor of Sociology at Turku Centre for Labour Studies, University of Turku. I have much appreciated living for

six months in Clare Hall's excellent, diverse and friendly scientific community. Opportunities for gaining new knowledge have been practically limitless, including the wonderful College Feasts and numerous cultural events. Together with my spouse Professor Anne Kovalainen (also Visiting Fellow), I have worked on research projects concerning assetisation of knowledge, digitalisation of private and public sector services, and platformisation of society. During our time at Clare Hall we have completed two scientific articles for publication:

Kovalainen, A. & Poutanen, S. (2025) The state as an agency in the assetisation of knowledge: the case of the Finnish education export. *Learning, Media and Technology*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17439884.2025.2450724>  
Poutanen, S., Kovalainen, A., & Lehtinen, E. (2025) Online banking and Social insurance in between crime novels: A study of the widening of library work towards digital care. *Finnish Working Life Journal* (Forthcoming in Finnish).

My stay was generously funded by Osk. Huttunen Foundation.

**Joyce Lindorff**



As an historical keyboard performer, scholar and educator, I focus on how 17th- and 18th-century performance practice treatises inform musical performance in our

own time. I enjoy bringing the results of my research to life for audiences. During my time at Clare Hall I am studying the writings of Nicolò Pasquali (c1718–1757), an Italian composer, conductor and teacher who was active in London, Dublin and Edinburgh, and I am preparing a modern edition of his treatises, *Thorough-bass Made Easy* and *The Art of Fingering the Harpsichord*. These tutors, popular in their time, address many practical aspects of Italian and English keyboard style, but most significantly include Pasquali's surprising opinions on the changing sound aesthetics of the era. In addition to my research, Cambridge has offered wonderful opportunities to perform and hear a wealth of music. As a Visiting Scholar in the Faculty of Music I have participated in supervisions, seminars, colloquia and regular practice on the historical keyboard collection. A highlight for me was the opportunity to perform a recital in Robinson College Chapel, with its perfect acoustic and gorgeous Rubio harpsichord – and the inspiring presence of so many Clare Hall colleagues.

**Marilyn Reizbaum**  
BOWDOIN UNIVERSITY, MAINE



During my Visiting Fellowship, I am working on several co-authored essays with Maud Ellmann, Professor Emerita of the University of Chicago and Life Member of Clare Hall, who lives in Cambridge.

We are working on selected stories in James Joyce's *Dubliners*. During my time at Clare Hall, we are focusing on Muriel Spark (1918-2011), and Sylvia Townsend Warner (1893-1978). Our choices reflect our ongoing commitment to interrogating and engaging with modernist form, of which the short story is exemplary but less often addressed. We have selected these superb authors for their supposed 'minor' contribution to the short story form, both in that they have been under-represented in canonical and scholarly considerations, and that their literary innovations comport with the idea of the minor as a feature of modernist revolution in genre, style, and character. Gillian Beer describes Warner's style as abutting the modernist: 'it uses surreal appositions, nonsense strides, narrative fractures and shifting scales'.

**Bing Shui**  
UNIVERSITY OF MACAU

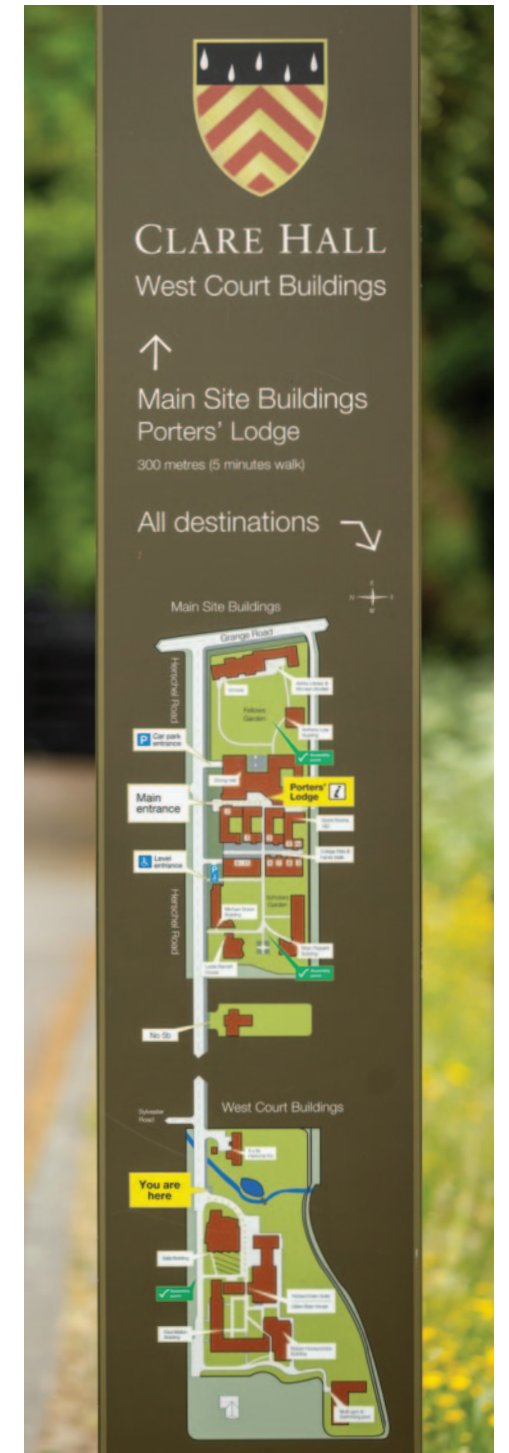


For centuries, patents have been seen as catalysts for genius. However, modern medical breakthroughs are the product of billion-dollar

laboratories where antibodies are transformed into life-saving therapies. Today, medical innovation is largely driven by substantial corporate investment rather than individual ingenuity, with profit incentives shaping research priorities. Yet, our patent systems remain anchored in frameworks designed for a different age.

My research focuses on optimising biomedical patent strategies to strike a balance between fostering innovation and ensuring public welfare. The global biopharmaceutical market, now surpassing \$1 trillion, is fuelled by advancements in antibody-based therapies. While patent protections are essential for safeguarding these innovations, they also create a paradox: excessive patent barriers can impede follow-on research and limit access to critical treatments—an issue often described as the 'Tragedy of the Anticommons'.

While I am at Clare Hall, I am examining the patentability of antibodies and its broader implications for biomedical progress. My goal is to refine patent systems that not only incentivise scientific advancement but also serve the public good. Ultimately, the question is not merely how we protect ideas, but how we ensure they remain a catalyst for discovery rather than an obstacle to it. This is not just a legal debate – it is a pressing contemporary challenge.





# Research Fellows

We are fortunate in having a brilliant group of Research Fellows affiliated with the College, including these scholars:



## Research Fellow

### Alexander Anderson



I am a cell biologist at the MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology investigating brain development and evolution. Primate brains share a common organisation, but human brains are

larger and have more neurons than non-human apes. Human brains also develop more slowly at each stage of growth. I aim to identify mechanisms within cells that control the timing of early brain development and their effect on brain size in primates. To do so, I culture human, chimpanzee and gorilla stem cells, stimulating them to develop into 3-dimensional brain tissues we call 'cerebral organoids'. I monitor changes in the organoids' metabolism at key developmental stages to characterise differences between species. This work has implications for our understanding of developmental, neurodegenerative and mitochondrial diseases. Furthermore, it will improve our understanding of human evolution and the neurobiology that enables our unique cognitive abilities.

## Research Fellow

### Birgit Rogalla

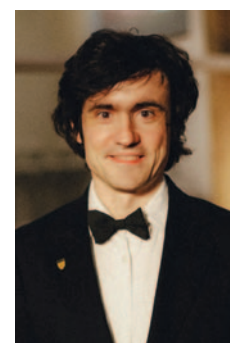


I am an oceanographer and climate scientist at the British Antarctic Survey, interested in physical dynamics of polar oceans and how humans have altered these. The Antarctic Ice Sheet is

rapidly losing mass, contributing to global sea level rise. The strongest melt occurs in western Antarctica where floating extensions of glaciers, ice shelves, are melted by warm ocean waters. But are human activities fully responsible for this increased ocean melt or is it also impacted by natural climate variation? This question is the focus of my current research and a key uncertainty in future projections of sea level rise used to inform decision-makers. To tackle this question, I use numerical simulations of ocean circulation and ice shelves around Antarctica from 1850 to the present with various atmospheric states. The aim is to quantify the impact of increasing greenhouse gas emissions, the hole in the ozone layer, and natural climate variations on ocean-driven ice shelf melt.

## Research Fellow

### Nikolai Kazantsev



I am an engineer by training and a musician at heart. My interdisciplinary research interests focus on system-level methodologies to develop, reconfigure, and deploy manufacturing capacity across

supply chains. This work aims to enhance British society's resilience in the face of future pandemics and other catastrophic disruptions from the National Risk Register (2023) by quickly forming emergency consortia across local supply chains.

Arguing against the misleading notion of a 'post-pandemic world', in the presence of ever-mutating viruses and climate change, I propose reconsidering the lessons learned from Covid-19, including local production inefficiencies of items of critical need, through the lens of system dynamics. My early results show that future preparedness against such risks will go beyond stockpiling towards the capacity reconfiguration of the regional supply chains to produce a limited number of urgently needed products (e.g., masks, sanitizers, water filters, ventilators, etc.) and buffer related demand shocks optimally. The new citizen-focused methodology allows households to increase their autonomy, access easy-to-scale emergency production, and avoid the adverse impacts of catastrophic risks, such

as lengthy lockdowns. At my department, the Institute for Manufacturing, I have been working on the research programmes Elastic Manufacturing Systems, Made Smarter Connected Factories Centre (MSCF) and RASCAL (Resilience in Agrifood Systems Supply Chain Configuration Analytics Lab). I have delivered outcomes to various government agencies, supported by the Cambridge Centre for Science and Policy.

In addressing many social and technical challenges, I am often inspired by the genius and creativity of baroque music. In my spare time, I am a cellist, completing a recording of JS Bach's Six Suites cycle in 2025. My College duties include pastoral support as a Tutor.

# Postdoc Group

Clare Hall has about 60 post-doctoral members, both Research Fellows and Affiliated Postdocs.



We meet twice a term for informal events to discuss our research, find new connections and ideas, and to talk about strategies of survival in postdoc life. The events are also an occasion to give an informal introduction to College life and share tips on how to make the best of it. Clare Hall has a long history of providing a warm welcome to a highly international and diverse group of scholars and this is equally true for the postdoc group. Our discussions often explore the quirks of the Cambridge system, different cultural codes and traditions, and how to navigate both. During the academic year 2024-25 our events included a Halloween 'academic nightmares' event, a creative crafts night, and other themed evenings to help early career scholars at Clare Hall to connect. Beyond the organised events, members of the postdoc community often enjoy impromptu dinners or outings or go as a smaller group to College events. The group is organised by the Affiliated Postdoctoral Members Liaison Valeria Ramirez, and Research Fellows Helene Scott-Fordsmand and Nikolai Kazantsev.



# Special Interest Groups

We are fortunate in having a number of Special Interest Groups at Clare Hall. These were created by Professor Hasok Chang a few years ago. Students and Fellows with a shared interest in the History of Science, Art, Classics, Maths, or various other subjects come together for discussions and activities. You are welcome to attend any group within or outside your professional area. Some groups meet frequently, some occasionally. Warmest thanks to the group organisers and to everyone involved.

## Art and Architecture SIG

This was another eventful year for the Art and Architecture Special Interest Group. We met regularly each term, starting with a lively paper on Venetian Art in England. Other meetings focused on Chinese Calligraphy, Art and AI, and Art and Legitimation. *Dulcis in fundo*, we also introduced an engaging series focused on Italian postwar films, delivered with MPhil student Kemlo Rose. For more information on the A&A SIG please contact Dr Lucia Tantardini: lt303@cam.ac.uk

## History and Philosophy of Science SIG

The group meets once a week in term-time for presentations and discussions followed by conversations over lunch. The group is member-driven, and the activities depend on the interests of those involved. Often, prominent scholars of the field will visit the group for friendly exchange. Activities include excursions to museum exhibitions and collections, work-in-progress sessions, and creative methods workshops. We explore a broad range of topics. In Easter Term 2025 these included Newtonian mathematics and the history of the reception of Newtonian physics in Japan, a defence against science scepticism, creative reflections on the biological self, ideas for applied ancient philosophy, and more. The group is co-convened by Hasok Chang, Helene Scott-Fordsmand, Lewis Bremner, and Johan Gardebo.

### Helene Scott-Fordsmand

## Law SIG and Clare Hall Law Dinner

The Law Special Interest Group includes Master's and PhD students in Law, as well as Fellows and visitors with an interest in law. Two events were held this year. The first was a Law Dinner held in the Aldermen's Dining Room at the Guildhall, London, hosted by Graeme Harrower, a Fellow Commoner, in October 2024. An after-dinner speech was given by Sir Stephen Laws, former First Parliamentary Counsel, introduced by Professor David Ibbetson. Sir Stephen gave an illuminating and entertaining account of those rare lawyers that write laws, rather than just argue about them. The second event, held in June 2025, was a speech and Q&A session by former government minister and chief negotiator for leaving the EU, Lord (David) Frost, entitled 'Nation states and international law: the Brexit experience'. Lord Frost gave a fascinating account of his experience of the EU exit process and the interplay between national control and supranational constraint.

### Chris Jenkins

## Literature SIG

This group welcomes anyone with an interest in literature of any language and from any period. During the 2024-25 academic year, we hosted the following talks by Visiting Fellows:

Dr Clarissa Chenovick, 'Blood Piety Before and After the Reformation'  
Dr Kousuke Kaita, 'The Lord's Prayer in West Germanic Poems'  
Dr Yu Onuma, 'How to Write a Medieval Travel Narrative'  
Dr Adia Mendelson Maoz, 'Jerusalem in Contemporary Israeli Dystopias'



4 at law dinner



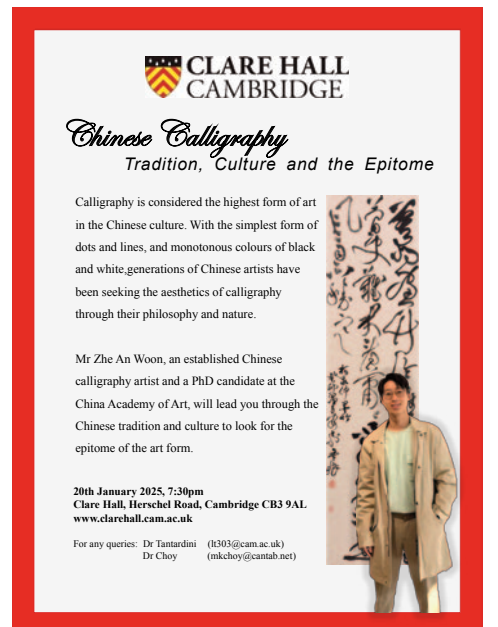
Law SIG dinner



Literature SIG

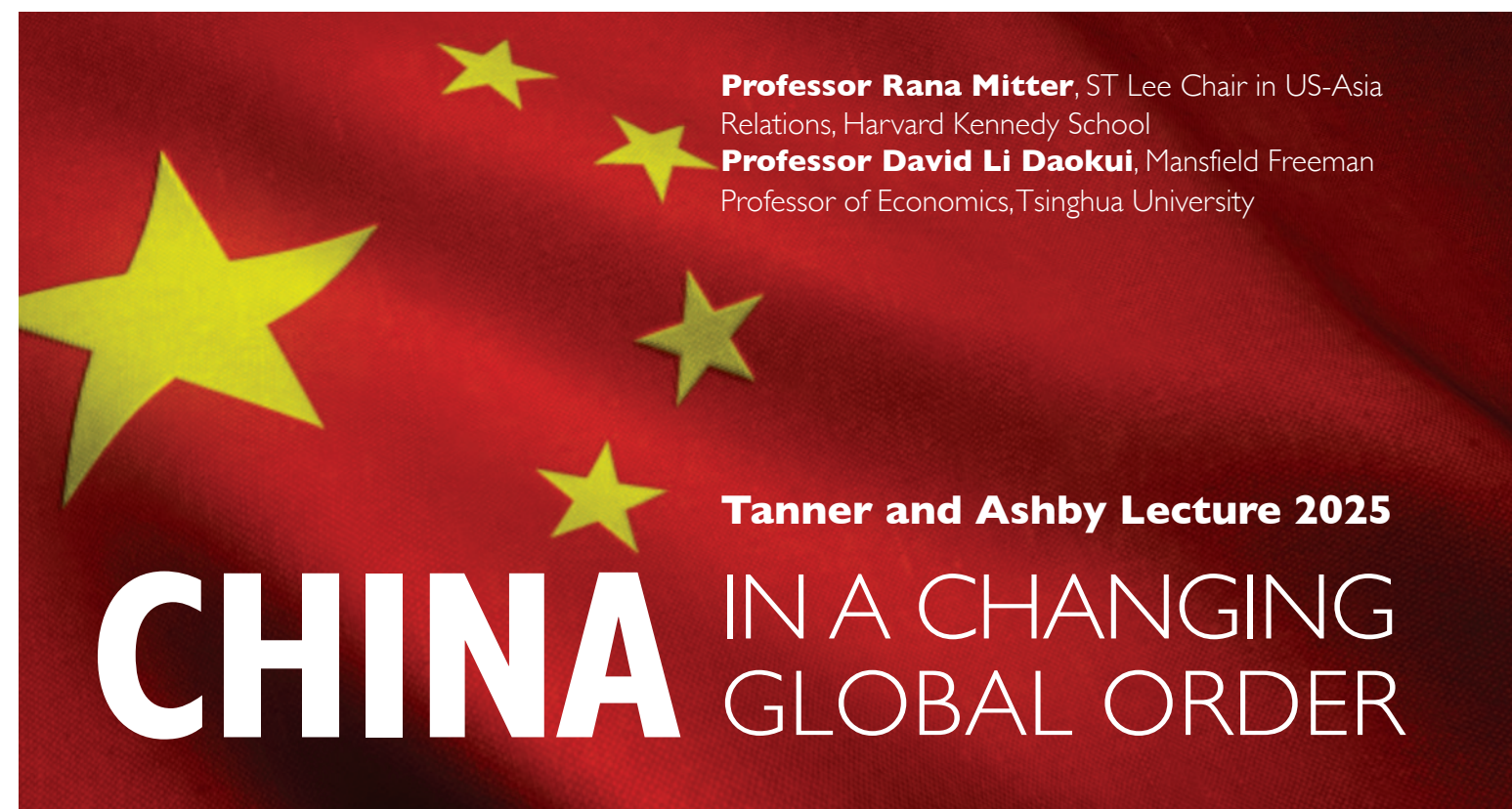
Dr Sara Pankenier Weld, 'The Bog Ate My Homework: What We Can Learn from a Medieval Russian Boy's Lessons and Doodles on Birchbark'

The group was co-convened by Drs Anthony Harris, Clarissa Chenovick, and Yu Onuma. As Clarissa and Yu conclude their Visiting Fellowships at the end of this academic year, we look forward to welcoming new members to help lead the group into its next chapter.



Art SIG Calligraphy Poster





*The 2025 Tanner and Ashby Lectures were combined to allow two eminent scholars to explore China's evolving place in the world. Rana Mitter offered a geopolitical and historical analysis, while David Li Daokui focused on economic structures and institutional dynamics.*

Professor Mitter opened by situating China-West relations within a fragile global order marked by prolonged decline and sudden rupture. In this transitional moment, he argued, China is poised to be a central player in reshaping the international system. However, he cautioned against fixed predictions, pointing to China's volatile modern history, from imperial collapse and communist revolution to economic liberalisation and rising geopolitical tensions, as evidence of its capacity for rapid transformation.

Rather than attempting to forecast China's next move, Mitter stressed the importance of tracking long-term trends. Demographic shifts, technological advancements and

environmental pressures are all reshaping China's internal and external priorities. He warned that economic or military confrontation would compromise China's long-term strategic goals.

Central to Mitter's argument was China's worldview, built on four enduring foundations: the trauma of the 'century of humiliation', the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) legitimacy via economic performance, the revival of premodern Chinese philosophy, and continued adherence to Marxist-Leninist principles. Two influential ideological concepts – *fuguo qiangbing* (rich country, strong army) and *zhongti xiyong* (Chinese essence, Western application) – still guide China's policy-making.



Mitter mapped out various scenarios for China's future, ranging from an assertive ideological exporter or green energy leader to a more pragmatic and internationally integrated power. He suggested the most plausible trajectory involves sustained economic engagement and cautious reform, influenced by a generation of leaders shaped during China's relatively open era in the 1990s and early 2000s.

Mitter concluded that China is likely to project influence not through conflict, but by embedding itself in global development and scientific networks, particularly in the Global South. This gradual shift could reshape global norms and institutions without direct confrontation with the West.

Professor Li's lecture approached China's role from the inside out, aiming to explain how internal structures shape external behaviour. Drawing on his long-running research and his book *China's Worldview*, Li argued that foreign observers often misinterpret China by failing to understand its cultural and political context.

He outlined three fundamental features of China's governance. First, the enduring role of the CCP, which has blended Marxism with Confucian values to remain deeply embedded in Chinese society. Far from static, the Party has shown institutional adaptability, evolving alongside China's development.

Second, Li introduced the principle of self-discipline in governance, which he claimed counters the assumption that power leads inevitably to corruption. China's political system, he argued, integrates long-standing traditions of restraint and responsibility.



Third, he described China as having an 'all-responsible' government, in which the state is expected to oversee nearly every aspect of social and economic life. The response to the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, reflects how Chinese leaders view themselves as custodians of national well-being.

Li also explained China's external outlook through three guiding principles: prioritising internal development before international activism ('doing homework before fun'), a foreign policy centred on economic cooperation, and diplomacy rooted in mutual respect. According to Li, China is not driven by ideological export or hegemonic ambition, but rather by a desire for domestic stability and global recognition, especially among developing nations.

Despite challenges such as population ageing and low domestic consumption, Li expressed confidence in China's long-term prospects, citing high savings rates, strong investment in R&D, and urbanisation potential. He downplayed the idea that China's political model could be exported, noting that its complexity and context-specific evolution make it unlikely to be replicated elsewhere.

In closing, Li envisioned a multipolar global future, a 'Romance of Many Kingdoms' in which China plays a leading but non-dominant role, cooperating with other powers rather than displacing them.

The Q&A discussion, chaired by Professor Alan Short, reinforced several key themes. Questions addressed BRICS' potential to counterbalance Western institutions, China's green transition, and the limitations of its overseas influence. Cultural diplomacy, gender inequality, and the



imbalance in educational exchange between the UK and China also emerged.

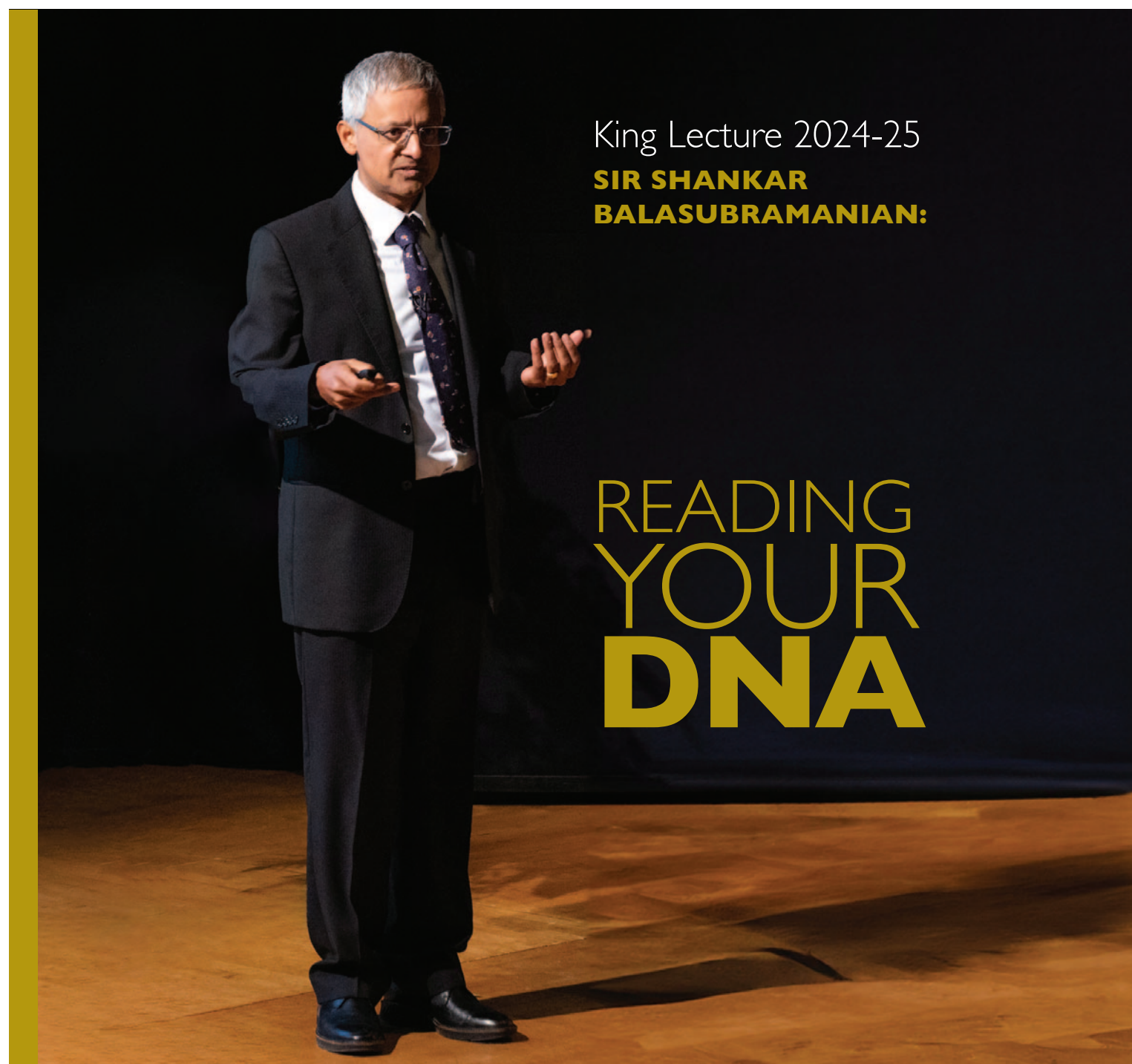
Both speakers emphasised that China's actions are guided less by expansionist goals than by efforts to preserve internal stability and core national interests.

The following day at Clare Hall, a symposium titled *Navigating Relationships with China Across Academia, Trade and Culture*, allowed for further discussion among an interdisciplinary group, including Professors Mitter and Li.

**Johnny Cornwell**  
Director,  
Science & Human Dimension Project







We were delighted to welcome Sir Shankar Balasubramanian to Clare Hall on 18 February 2025 for the sixth Clare Hall King lecture. The annual King Lecture in the Biomedical Sciences has become a highly anticipated event in college.

Sir Shankar Balasubramanian is the Herchel Smith Professor of Medicinal Chemistry at the University of Cambridge, a senior group leader at Cancer Research UK's Cambridge Institute and a Fellow of Trinity College. His work focuses on the chemistry, structure and function of nucleic acids.

In his lecture, Sir Shankar described how he came up with an innovative idea for DNA sequencing using fluorescently labelled nucleotides and imaging, together with Sir David Klenerman. This was in 1997, only a few years after he had started his independent research group in Cambridge. This would become the basis of next generation sequencing, the methodology that is used in almost all DNA and RNA sequencing today, and which has revolutionised biology and medicine. Sir Shankar and Sir David led the development of this idea to a DNA sequencing technology that was many orders of magnitude faster and cheaper than the previous technology and is highly scalable. As a result, we can now sequence whole genomes routinely. This takes about one hour for a human genome – but can also be used to sequence the genome of any living organism – furthering our understanding of biology and the environment. Their technology was commercialised through Solexa (and later Illumina). We were all impressed by the unique and broad-reaching influence of Sir Shankar's work.

The King lecture was followed by a reception and feast in College for more than 100



guests including Heads of Houses and many local researchers in the biomedical sciences.

But Sir Shankar has not only worked on DNA sequencing technology. He has also made very important contributions to other areas of biology and chemistry. This includes research on G-quadruplexes (a specific nucleic acid structure) and modifications of DNA bases (epigenetics). This work was the topic of a second lecture, delivered by Sir Shankar at the MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology on 19 February 2025.

In recognition of his seminal contributions to technology, science and medicine, Sir

Shankar was knighted in the Queen's New Year's Honours in 2017 and has been awarded many accolades including the 2018 Royal Medal of the Royal Society, the 2020 Millennium Technology Prize, the 2022 Breakthrough Prize for Life Sciences and the 2024 Gairdner Prize in Life Sciences.

Clare Hall established the King Lectures in Biomedical Sciences in 2016. This lecture series is made possible through a generous gift from the late Professor Donald West King, an Honorary Fellow of Clare Hall.

**Lori Passmore**  
Official Fellow





BRECON Photograph by Jason Elberts

The 2024-25 Season has been another good one for Clare Hall music, full of variety and innovation. Fifteen concerts were programmed. There have been good attendances, with several full houses, and there have been some truly exceptional performers coming to the College. It is true to say that we are amongst the leading colleges in providing serious musical experiences. This is said in spite of the limitations set by the nature and size of the dining hall, which because of its basic purpose can only be used on Saturdays and Sundays.

However, the informality of the venue does have advantages. Often a close rapport develops between music-makers and music-listeners, with exchanges taking place outside the hall by those who linger after the last notes have died away.

We now have two groups of musicians who perform on regular occasions: the Fitzwilliam String Quartet and the Continuum Choir under its conductor, Harry Guthrie. This year the Fitzwilliam's composition changed somewhat because of retirement and health reasons but with new members it continues to provide much enjoyed concerts. In January 2025 it was joined by the distinguished Hungarian flautist Noemi Gyori, who played in Mozart's K285 flute quartet, and in Amy Beach's theme and variations for flute and strings Op.80. In March, the quartet marked the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Shostakovich (who had once travelled to York to hear the newly-formed quartet play) with quartets I and II, and with the quintet Op.57, for which they were joined by Patrick Hemmerlé.

Continuum returned in April 2025, following its debut Clare Hall performance in the previous year, to offer a concert of a selection of compositions by Cambridge-based composer Lucy Walker, who has now been named Clare Hall's Composer-in-Residence. Other pieces, written for the colleges of Cambridge, included works by Arvo Pärt, Charles Villiers Stanford, Judith Weir, Jonathan Dove, and Pawel Lukaszewski. The choir will be returning to offer further concerts in 2026. Another choral group, L'Isola, performed a concert of music from sixteenth-century Rome, featuring rarely heard composers de Macque, Locatelli, Zoilo, Ferrabosco, Marenzio and Anerio. We have also enjoyed performances at college events by our own Clare Hall choir, led by Ben de Souza.



Maurice Ravel was born 150 years ago, in Paris in 1875, and violinist Lesley Hatfield and pianist Jams Coleman played his late sonata (which reflects his interest in jazz and blues) in October. Tyler Hay proved a very popular pianist, providing lucid explanations of his programme of Beethoven's Appassionata sonata, a set of variations by Czerny, and a set of variations by Liszt on Bach cantata. He will be returning in 2025-26, by popular demand. We enjoyed a programme of very rarely-heard nineteenth- and twentieth-century





Tyler Hay

Increasingly, relatively neglected women composers are being rediscovered. In March we heard compositions by Irene Podowski, Liza Lehmann, Joanna Mueller-Hermann, Lori Laitman and (once again) Amy Beach; these were played by Marie-Noelle Kendall (pianist), Ute Lepetit-Clare (soprano) and Jessica Lawrence-Hares (mezzo). The Sukuntala Trio played a piece by a really unknown composer, the twentieth-century Breton naval officer Jean Cras, a man of phenomenal talent, together with works by Purcell, Schubert and Enescu.



Jean-François Rouchon and Bill Eidi

Brilliant players seem to be getting younger and younger. In May, a string quintet accompanied one of Patrick's former piano pupils, now turned violinist, Peihan Francesca He. Just 13, she is a musician of remarkable talent, playing virtuoso pieces with seeming ease to a stunned audience. We shall follow her progress with interest. Clare Hall rarely arranges to hear song cycles but in June (though unseasonally) Jean-François Rouchon sang and Bill Eidi played Schubert's melancholic Winterreise. We hope that one day at Clare Hall we shall be listening to more Schubert, as well as Schumann and

Hugo Wolff song cycles. The music year should have finished at the end of June with two days of the complete Ravel piano works played by Patrick Hemmerlé, but a finger injury meant that this has had to be postponed until November 2025. However, in compensation, an additional concert was arranged for late July (very out-of-term) and Patrick's finger had recovered sufficiently for him to accompany violinist Melanie Clapies in works by Schumann, Fauré and Enescu. This last, the Impressions d'Enfance, was unlikely to have been heard before by any in the audience, yet its reception was received with great enthusiasm by the packed room.

During the course of the season just described active planning has been underway by the Committee to prepare for the next one, devising the programmes and engaging musicians. Another season will shortly be starting and it is our intention that its musical content will continue to engage, provide enjoyment, and perhaps even perplex, the audience next year.

**Robert G W Anderson**  
Chair, Music Committee

**Patrick Hemmerlé**  
Musician-in-Residence



## CLARE HALL CHOIR

At the time of writing last year's report, we had yet to sing at two scheduled events – our first ever solo chapel service, covering for Robinson Choir in March 2024. Then, just a week later, the choir engaged with an organisation outside of the university for the first time, as St Botolph's Church, Trumpington Street welcomed us for a joint evensong.

Another new collaboration took place in June 2024 when we shared a concert with Darwin Choir in the Old Darwin Library. Both choirs sang separately and together, and members of each college also offered other musical items. Being the first event of its kind we had no idea how many people, if any, would actually attend the concert, so we were all delighted to find a queue snaking through the Darwin corridors. We had to turn people away in the end, and it showed there is an appetite for such events in both colleges.

I was approached in summer 2024 by well-known composer Ben Ponniah, who was offering to write several new Christmas carol compositions to mark his 40th birthday. With the generous support of Eric Nye, Carol Frost and Per Reiff-Musgrove, to whom I am very grateful, we were able to commission him to write a bespoke Christmas carol for Clare Hall. The piece, entitled *The Golden Rose Carol*, uses text by William Canton and received its first

performance at the Christmas Feast in December 2024, followed by another performance at the Clare Hall Carol Service in London a week later. I was absent for November and most of December 2024 as I recovered from a knee operation, but I am grateful to our accompanist, Marcus Cox, for deputising so ably in my absence. Marcus led yet another joint endeavour in November, as the choir sang a joint evensong with the choir at St Andrew & St Mary, Grantchester.

The continued support for the choir from within the College is most welcome, and the many collaborations we have had with other colleges, churches and composers continue to increase our standing in the Cambridge music community. I look forward to many more years of music-making here.

**Ben de Souza**  
Choir Director





Composer Lucy and conductor Harry

CLARE HALL'S FIRST  
COMPOSER-IN-RESIDENCE:

# LUCY WALKER

The rising young composer, Lucy Walker (b. 1998), was recently elected a Fellow Commoner and will serve two years as our Composer-in-Residence having just finished a similar appointment at the church of St Martin in the Fields in London.

Her tenure there culminated in a CD recorded by St Martin's Voices. While at Clare Hall, her new compositions will be performed by our college choir under Ben De Souza and by Continuum Choir, directed by Harry Guthrie, who have been a staple of our music seasons for the past two years. Lucy attracts commissions from some of the best choirs in the UK such as The Sixteen, BBC Singers, VOCES8, and

Continuum. But when she was earning her first degree in Cambridge (2017-20), composition was the furthest thing from her imagination. She saw herself as a pianist, studying theory and analysis. She only started composing at the beginning of her MPhil year during Covid, when she studied Dallapiccola's political vicissitudes and how these affected his music in the 1950s. In an interview with the director

of Continuum recently, she and he both applauded the 'polymath musician' who brings a whole range of intellectual passions to the task of making music. Her earliest choral compositions were encouraged by Anna Lapwood at Pembroke College during Covid and were sung by their college choir where she was also singing. She learned to fuse music and text. 'Words can be so naturally lyrical. Some poetry is so striking. It just wants to be musical.'

Harry Guthrie first discovered the Pembroke Choir recordings of Lucy's pieces in 2023 and heard something remarkable. Her anthem, 'My heart, O God, is steadfast', struck him immediately. 'I thought it set itself apart harmonically but more so with a melodic lyricism within the harmony. The contemporary sound world is driven by vertical harmony, but here there was both the vertical harmonization and the horizontal linear melody which I think is rare in contemporary composers.' Harry's choir was approaching its fifth anniversary, and he commissioned her anthem, 'In peace, I will lie down and sleep' for the occasion. Their partnership is powerfully symbiotic. Lucy affirms what a joy it is to know who will be singing the works she composes, and Harry is creating the 'Continuum Sound' that is inspired partly by his work at St John's where, as with Continuum, Andrew Nethsingha's choir was built from the bottom upwards, with strong foundational voices in the basses. His style of conducting has been influenced by Stephen Layton in whose choir he sang during his years at Trinity College.

During her two-year appointment, Lucy will compose six new choral compositions for Continuum to be performed for the first



Continuum Choir

time in Cambridge, including one large-scale piece. At their concert in Clare Hall last April, they premiered the first of these, 'My heart danceth', a joyful and whimsical celebration with real depth of praise in the central section. These will ultimately all be recorded as a CD by Continuum. Lucy will also write special pieces for our college choir, including a new carol for performance at the Christmas Feast. She and Harry will work with musicians, composers, and performers in the college to ensure that all can benefit from her tenure. Continuum's concert on 18 April 2026 will help wrap up the 60th Anniversary Celebration of the Foundation of Clare Hall and will feature a piece written by Lucy Walker to commemorate the occasion.





# MUSIC ANGELS AND SUPPORTERS

We are immensely grateful for the support of our Music Angels and Supporters whose generosity enables Clare Hall to offer an outstanding programme of music for our community:

## MUSIC ANGELS

Professor Andrew and Dr Fiona Blake  
Professor Howard and Mrs Diana Colquhoun  
Dr Paul Cumming  
Professor Yale and Mrs Kitty Ferguson  
Sir Martin and Lady Barbara Harris  
Dr Anthony Harris  
Professor Dame Caroline Humphrey and Professor Lord Martin Rees  
Mrs Gillian Moore and Dr Michael Nedo  
Professor Eric Nye and Professor Carol Frost  
Lady Charlotte Pippard  
Dr Lisa Salje  
Professor Andrew Wernick and Dr Heather Jon Maroney  
Mrs Joanna and Mr Michael Womack

## SUPPORTERS

Professor Jon Bordo  
Mr Edward and Mrs Sue Coales  
Mr Adrian du Plessis  
Mr Matt Jones  
Professor Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr  
Mr Per Reiff-Musgrove  
Dr Volker Wille and Dr Aiping Mu



Photograph by Peter Searle

# PROFESSIONAL MUSIC RECORDING



Are you a musician who would like to create professional recordings of your work? We are fortunate to have the services of professional music producer *Dominik Gryzbon* at Clare Hall.

Dominik studied contemporary music in London. He worked as a musician, playing guitar, then moved into recording as a music engineer and mixer. He came to Clare Hall with his wife, Official Fellow Dr Shelly Singh-Gryzbon, who chose Clare Hall because it is family friendly. Dominik plays a full part in College life and serves on the Music Committee.

Dominik offers professional recording services, both audio and video, to College members at a discounted rate. He has produced high quality recordings of music performances by Visiting Fellow Joyce Lindorff on harpsichord, and Research Fellow Nikolai Kazantsev on cello. You can see Nikolai on the Clare Hall YouTube channel.

Dominik can also mix and produce spoken word recordings. Contact him: [gryziul@gmail.com](mailto:gryziul@gmail.com).





Sheila Fell, *Country Road in Winter, Cumbria*, 1972-73, (Fig.1)

# Art at Clare Hall

Exciting things have been happening in art at Clare Hall this last year. At a time when exhibition programmes were dominated by a keen desire to promote the work of women artists, Clare Hall sailed ahead of other institutions by mounting a Sheila Fell show, re-awakening interest in this cult figure, who sadly died of alcoholic poisoning at the age of 48 in 1979.

Admittedly an informal display of her work had gone on show at Abbot Hall Gallery in Kendal, but Clare Hall's exhibition, also small in scale, was nevertheless selected to prepare the viewer for a major Sheila Fell retrospective that opened at Tullie House Gallery in Carlisle in late November 2024. We benefitted greatly from the help of two people, Andrew and Eleanor Bradley, who were completing a Catalogue Raisonné of Sheila Fell's paintings and important drawings. When published in the spring of 2025, this impressive tome provided the final acclamation needed to reposition Sheila Fell within the history of modern British art.

A typical example of her work is *Country Road in Winter, Cumberland I* (fig. 1), painted in 1972-73 and hung in the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition in 1973. It was not shown in our exhibition but here reminds us of her love of Cumbria and the farming environment around the small mining town of Aspatria. Here she grew up, in one of the poorest parts of the region, witnessing its way of life and the seasonal changes of crops in the fields. Her involvement with it went deep and she returned frequently to this region, even after London had become her base. It made her one of the most outstanding landscape artists of her day. In this painting, small details sing out, under the dark broiling clouds and among the snow-covered rooves, all working together to create both gravity and beauty.

The most memorable piece in the Clare Hall Sheila Fell exhibition was the vast print (fig.2) which hung at the back of the common-room, on the blue wall between dining-hall and bar. It looked like a charcoal drawing but in fact made subtle use of silkscreen. It had all the power of a Gauguin, and like much of his work, was a paean of



Sheila Fell *Country Road* c.1961 (Fig.2)

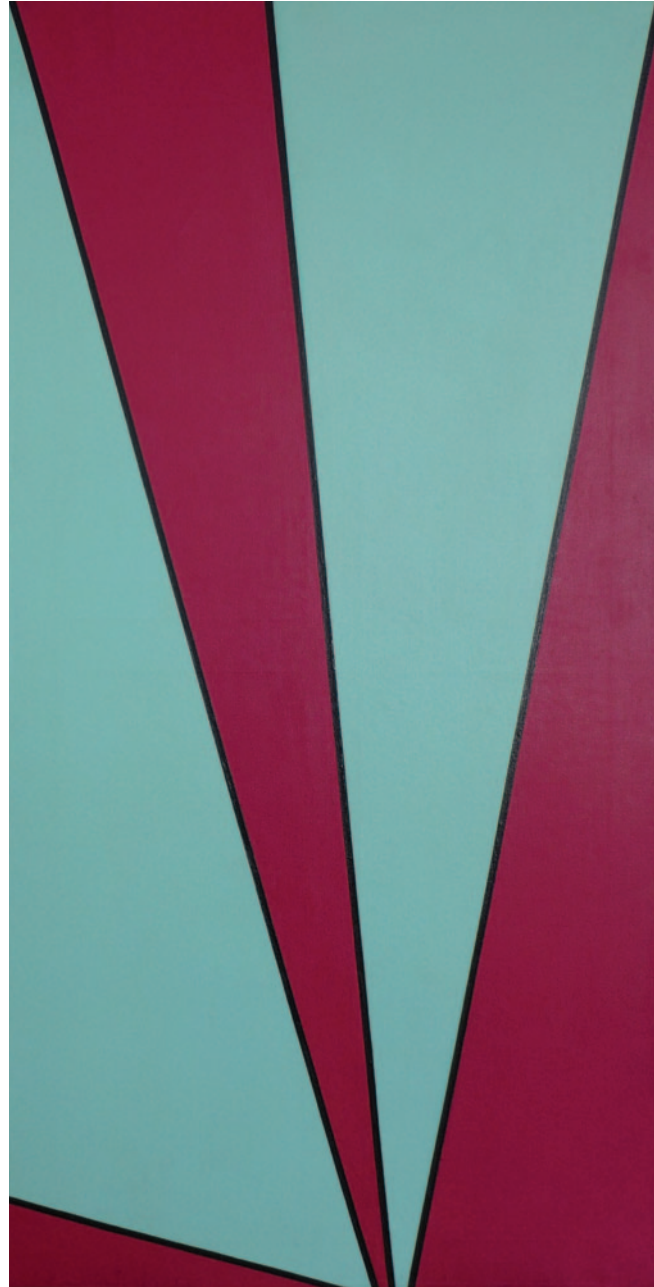
praise to Primitivism, blending native and European influences.

Another exciting discovery this last year arose from our commitment to running a loan collection. Soon after the arrival of Andreas Morkved Hellenes as Research Fellow, he requested paintings to enliven his family flat at Clare Hall. Among those he asked to see in the Art Collection was a work by the Swedish artist Olle Baertling. With some difficulty it was found at the back of the Art store. Owing to its large size, it was taken to a nearby landing for viewing. It was clear that it dated from around the late 1950s or early 1960s, when hard-edged abstraction took over from Abstract Expressionism. But sadly, as Andreas was quick to point out, a yellow stain slightly disfigured an area of pale blue. It was agreed that steps would be taken regarding possible conservation, but, in the meantime, the painting would hang in Andreas's flat.

Whilst there it caught the attention of one of Andreas's colleagues. 'How come you have an Olle Baertling in your flat in Cambridge?' This was asked during a Zoom or face-time call from Stockholm, with some astonishment, as an example of Baertling's work had recently made a record price at auction in Sweden. Soon after this, conservation of this painting was approved and we began collaborating with Polly Saltmarsh, a picture restorer frequently employed by other Cambridge Colleges. Her detailed report drew attention to Baertling's long and distinguished career, much of it involving work with architects and using paintings to enhance the sense of space in buildings. Baertling undertook the decorative scheme for the entrance hall in Stockholm's first high-rise building, and did similar work for Stockholm's University.

In 1971 Baertling offered to gift Clare Hall with one of his paintings. This was only two





Ollie Baertling, *Arado* (Fig. 3)

years after the College's modern buildings, designed by Ralph Erskine, had come into existence. It is probable that Baertling already knew of Erskine and his Swedish practice, but he wrote to Göran Printz-Påhlsson, a Swedish poet, essayist, translator and literary critic, then occupying an academic post at Cambridge University and a Fellow of Clare Hall. Göran Printz-Påhlsson recognised the significance of this gift, and, in a lengthy reply, wrote the following:

*Clare Hall was designed by Ralph Erskine whom I presume you know personally and he can give you further details about the building itself, which I personally think is one of the best examples of the most modern architecture in Cambridge. Clare Hall is a modern college with solely researchers and doctoral students as members and especially suited to accommodate international scholars with families for longer periods of time. Both its international character and its Swedish architectural connection make it an excellent fit for your art ...*

The picture Baertling sent, from Erskine's office, to Clare Hall, is called *Arado* (fig. 3). At the time of writing, it hangs in the Meeting Room, beautifully cleaned and restored. This academic year has also seen three other memorable shows. Malcolm Ryan filled every space we could find for him in the main building with the 40 paintings he wanted to show in *Swimming against the Tide*. This title was a reference to the way his art had shifted from abstraction to figuration, while retaining a design sense that owes much to abstract's art use of balance and tension. (fig.5). Also effective was Ryan's use of light for dramatic or atmospheric purposes, and occasionally a hint of narrative added to the appeal of his work *A London Bookshop at Night*. Ryan had often shown in the Cambridge Painters and Sculptors Society's annual exhibition, alongside famous names

from the past, and he was pleased once again to be on show in this city. Much praise of this exhibition came from college staff, which was most welcome.

Fred Ingram's exhibition *Fen and Flow* displayed his passionate love of the Fens and that of Caithness's Flow country. 'It is this flatness that is so overpowering when you stand in the middle of any fenland landscape,' he writes. He also enjoys the way an overcast view can be suddenly transfigured by a gleam of light on water or a vivid sighting of exposed earth. Hence his use of colours, such as orange and pink, that you might not associate with the Fens (Fig. 4). Looking at a photograph of an actual scene beside his painting of the same, he is doing far more than copying. Here is a man who cares deeply about fragile landscapes and the environmental dangers they face. This was a highly popular show and almost every painting sold.

Last but not least came an exhibition of still lives and portraits by Ben Henriques. This was a soothing event in which the handling of paint had a subtle appeal (fig.6). It was reminiscent of the Italian artist Giorgio Morandi and other painters, past and present, who uphold the value of stillness when allowed to quietly feed our busy lives.

Henriques makes us focus on the tactile sensation of paint meeting canvas. He states: 'I want to capture a fleeting connection with nature, mirroring the essence of my initial inspiration. A concept of colours is settled upon, a subject is devised, and a composition is arranged. These are the anchors which allow risks to be taken, and surprises of light and life itself to play their illogical part in the process.'

**Frances Spalding**  
Chair of the Clare Hall Art Committee



Fred Ingram, *pinkditchblackdrove* (Fig. 4)



Malcolm Ryan: *A London Bookshop at Night 2015* (Fig.5)



Ben Henriques, *Still Life: Orange Table Cloth* (Fig.6)





# ODYSSEY OF THE CRICKET CLUB

What a bumper year 2025 has proved to be for the Cricket Club. When the club was revived ten years ago not even a Homer could have imagined what a triumphant homecoming the club would be having this year after a perilous but determined journey through long unnavigable winters and the storms of Covid.



Come Midsummer, some 30 members of the club, urged on by Skipper Chris Hendry bound to the stumps, had played no less than an unprecedented seven matches in the evening sunlight, losing most of them only because our top players were busy leading the Varsity team.

After a stirring opening win over the Fellows cohabiting with our sibling Clare, our serendipitous adventures included a first-ever match on Parker's Piece where - on what was definitely not 'the dream wicket' described by Jack Hobbs when he played there - we were ground down between the Scylla and Charybdis of NCI's opening pair of bowlers, Sally and Charlotte.

Fortunately, there is no room here to agonise over the string of Oceanic setbacks we suffered, rain happily never stopping play, on - thanks to Corpus and its gardeners - the vine-dark sea at Leckhampton. All was fit prelude for the grandest of all Midsummer Matches, this year beginning at High Noon to allow for 30 overs a-side and so give more players a bat.

If the decade had been an Odyssey, the day was more of an Iliad. Presided over by umpire Lizzy Condor as commanding as Athena and scorer Niall Taylor her Homer, the Student geeks performed like Greeks and, before the gaze of a company of cricket-initiates from faraway Serica,

overwhelmed the long-tailed President's XV, cast as Priam's troy-trashed residents.

Pivotal was the positively Odyssean cunning of Students' Skipper Chris Hendry in fashioning a Trojan horse, out of which tumbled a hitherto unseen force of warriors forged in the celestial regions of Blues & Blades.

Step forward onto the verdant fields of mundane history Immortals Ryan McWilliams (a six-ball, 4 six, 25), Will Magarey (44 n.o. & 2-13) and, while feeling blue, Kailen Patel (30 n.o.). Why, in heaven's name, did Alex Ferreira stay away on the day just to lead the Varsity team against the M.C.C.?

Better to ask Odyssean Chris why he bothered at all with the Immortals when he had a trio of battle-hardened Antipodeans to hand: the emeritus panjandrum Ben Rae (31 n.o. & 1-8) and leonine composer Glen Downie (15 n.o.), with, besides, the avuncular Andrew Royce (18), whose Sydney turned out to be Barnes, his credentials the more questionable since the Presies had been counting on Chris to let byes gone be byes gone.

Even the foot-soldiers, schooled in the art of footwork through the long winter, played no small part, though Adam Brass and Rishul Karia were nutmegged by Ed Parker and Will Gardner, who both scored 19. Will to boot finally found form with the boundary-bound ball as he had all season with the beamer, a feat that won him his spurs at the end of the day.

Of all the Students, only lorefully bangled Faisal Khan was left parked war-wounded in the slips, frustratingly close to his two customary roles of wicket-keeper and batter.



Ten of the Presie's XV threw every ball they could muster at the advancing horde, most of them wholly in vain, whether it was Mark Smith, hauling himself over from Clare, or Tony Anghie, fighting himself between Sri Lanka and North America.

In vain did those fabled warriors from the distant Orient, Pradip Adhikari and Jehangir Cama, combine with wickie 'Unni' Unnikrishnan to catch the marauders in a pincer grip: the boundary walls were constantly breached. A rout ensued.

When a truce was called to count up the losses and observe the elysian ritual of ambrosial cakes and nectarine cold tea, the Students had plundered 245 runs for the loss of but 7 wickets.

Loins girded, the contest renewed, hold-out Sam Strong (32 n.o.) took the lion's share in an unbroken opening stand of 47 that gave the President's troops hope, Zeus willing, of a glorious victory. Though Zeus duly obliged, bestowing his zapping powers on an alliterative Zak Kinsella, alas, Zak was too amazed to see the point. Worse still, Lawrence Hamilton and Ram





Rawat, veterans of many a midsummer battle, ducked out of their duties and, vulnerable to Achilles' hamstring as well as heel, fell without a blow.

Haply, perennial tail-enders, Law-giver Desmond Lam, reverse-ordered John Drew and tutored striker Holly Hedgeland, all usually to be counted on to stand their ground, were unexpectedly seen to be running, Holly bewildered by this turn of Fortune's Wheel. Sadly, their singles did not top the charts.

Travis Glasson, pitching to be Rookie of the Year and schooled in the art of hitting a Homer instead of reading him, fell to an unguarded swing but Jehangir (30 n.o.) and Pradip (11) counter-attacked stoutly enough to be worth three figures to their team. It was not enough.

Rishal's looping leg-spin accounted for two valuable wickets (2-11), setting it up for Adam to round off an old one-two, Adam, unfortunately, too surprised at being allowed to handle the ball to play the advantage.

As old Chronos threatened to strike, the President's captain, Sam Martensz, called upon evergreen Seb Skeaping, the legendary Orpheus of the club's Silver Age at the turn of the Millennium, to enchant the opposition. This he sought to do to the tune of 18 trills. Sadly, Chris's philistines gave no ear to these rhapsodies.

It was left to Sam himself, in single combat with his opposite number, to go down to defeat with honour, a captain's innings (15) following bowling figures of 2-25 plus a catch - a fair match for Chris's 14 and 2-22. Alas, the President's forces came up short, their hopes, like Troy, burnt to Ashes: 168-9.

Battle over, among the Shades as evening fell, victors and vanquished alike gathered with camp followers to pass round the Loving Cup in comradely fashion and, having congratulated each other fulsomely on their heroic deeds and toasted the Club at their Banquet, they agreed to come together again to meet the imminent threat posed by the Perseans. Alala! Eternal summer gilds them yet.

#### Twelfth Hoplite





# BETTY BEHRENS SEMINAR on Classics of Historiography



In September 2022, the Betty Behrens Seminar on Classics of Historiography was established and is now in its third year of life, bringing to Clare Hall almost forty outstanding academics from the United Kingdom and the United States.

The seminar was named after the historian Catherine Betty Abigail Behrens, known as Betty Behrens and published as C. B.A. Behrens, who was born in London on 24 April 1904 and died in Swallowfield Park, Reading, on 3 January 1989. She was elected as Emeritus Fellow in 1972, the first one in Clare Hall, after being elected as a Fellow in 1967. Previously, she was a Fellow of Newnham College, Cambridge, until the publication of the successful book *The Ancient Régime*. For a while (1966–79), she reviewed regularly in the *New York Review of Books* and belonged to the Anglo-American intellectual élite. In 1985, she published *Society, Government and the Enlightenment: The Experiences of Eighteenth-Century France and Prussia*, as Jonathan Steinberg said, ‘her last book and undoubtedly her greatest’.



John H. Arnold (University of Cambridge) and Davide Cadeddu (University of Milan)

During the academic year 2024–25, the Betty Behrens Seminar has hosted Roland Mayer (King’s College London), Peter Sarris (University of Cambridge), Paulina Kewes (University of Oxford), Kathleen Burk



Seminar on John Burrow’s *A History of Histories* (2007)

(University College London), Tim Cornell (University of Manchester), John H. Arnold (University of Cambridge), Katherine Harloe (School of Advanced Study, University of London), John Marincola (Florida State University), Victoria Leonard (Coventry University), Robert Evans (University of Oxford) and Carlo Ginzburg (University of California, Los Angeles), discussing classics of Tacitus, Procopius of Caesarea, John Leslie, A.J.P. Taylor, Quintus Fabius Pictor, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, Johann Joachim Winckelmann, Polybius, Paulus Orosius, James Bryce, and Marc Bloch.

In Easter Term, the Betty Behrens Seminar ran a special session on ‘Arnaldo Momigliano’s Historiography between Italy and England’. This opened with two main lectures given by Carlo Ginzburg and Oswyn Murray, with papers by Valentina Arena, Carol Attack, Mirko Canevaro, Paola Ceccarelli, Tim Cornell, Serafina Cuomo, Giovanni Giorgini, Nino Luraghi, John Marincola, and Tim Whitmarsh. The proceedings will be published in the international journal *Storia della storiografia*.

## Davide Cadeddu

Convenor, Betty Behrens Seminar







# GRADUATION 2025







## From the GSB President

When I matriculated at Clare Hall in October 2024, I was struck by how immediately the College felt like home. From formal dinners to spontaneous chats over Tuesday cake breaks, I found myself part of a truly welcoming and tight-knit community. It was that warmth and the inspiration from the committee before us that motivated me to run for GSB President.

Succeeding the brilliant Andrew McDonald, who continues to serve as Vice President and has guided me through the formalities of the role, I've had the privilege of leading a phenomenal team through an exciting and packed academic year. Together, we've aimed to make academic life at Clare Hall not only more enriching but also more joyful and connected.

Our year kicked off with a flurry of activity. Two BOPs (Big Organised Parties) kept energy levels soaring and brought the College community together with music, dance, and an unforgettable atmosphere. Behind the scenes, our Arts and Music Officer Gloria Wu ensured bands and DJs had the right setup and even captured some of the most vibrant moments on camera.

Social Officers Rose Montgomery Danagher and Diana Smiljkovic organised the much-anticipated Clare Hall Spring Event and used their extensive networks to bring in live bands and make events come alive. Their efforts, supported by Vice President Andrew, built a vibrant social calendar that reflects the spirit of Clare Hall.

On the academic side, our Three Slides series organised by Fellow Student Interaction Officer Ella von Moeller, has just launched, creating an engaging platform for Clare Hall Fellows to present their research in a format designed to ignite new conversations among students and Fellows.

Swapping formal dinners and ideas with other colleges remains a cherished tradition. Thanks to our External Officer Tomas Kreuzinger, we've reinforced our partnership with St Cross College at Oxford. This year's annual swap includes two days of inter-collegiate exploration

with formal dinners, cheese and wine receptions, and live music.

Our Sports Officer Efthymia Kostaki has done a fantastic job supporting our sports teams throughout the year. Whether it's football or volleyball, Clare Hall athletes have had the backing they need to represent our colours with pride.

As the days grew longer, Parker Taft, our Punt Admiral, welcomed the punting season with style, offering students a peaceful post-exam way to enjoy the Cambridge sunshine.

Meanwhile, our Treasurer Nicolas Spiesshofer has streamlined the GSB's financial processes. He's worked with Andrew and Welfare Officers Ana Isakovic and Lisa Valentini to secure theatre tickets for students to attend a performance written and acted by Clare Hall's own William Lloyd at the ADC Theatre. An inspiring night that reminded us just how talented our student body is.

As I write, we are preparing a range of summer events. From a sunny BBQ to a hands-on T-shirt printing session and more casual garden gatherings to help everyone wind down and soak in the joy of being here.

None of this would have been possible without the incredible support of the College staff. I'd like to thank the Tutorial Office and especially Dr Holly Hedgeland, our Senior Tutor, as well as the Domestic Bursar David James and the Bursar Per Reiff-Musgrove. Their advice, kindness and patience have made everything feel possible. I am incredibly proud of what this committee has achieved. Every single member has helped bring joy, purpose, and warmth into this community.



And now, as I reflect on this journey, I'm reminded that Clare Hall is more than a college. It's a quiet garden in a loud world. A place where the days blur in candlelight and laughter, where strangers become teachers and companions, and where time slows just long enough for people to see each other properly. It has taught me that

leadership is not about control, but about listening, growing, and letting go. And in that stillness, between the music and the meetings, something deeper takes root. Something like gratitude.

**Ismail T-Benchekroun**  
GSB President 2024–25



## CROSSING BORDERS, FUELLED BY PURPOSE

This February, I had the immense privilege of taking part in something far beyond a rally. Alongside my friend Jad, we drove a thirty-year-old Renault 4L across more than 6000 kilometres, from Biarritz in the French Basque Country to the edge of the Moroccan Sahara.



We carried with us school supplies, sports equipment, and above all, a sense of responsibility toward the communities we were about to serve.

The 4L Trophy is a humanitarian rally that blends challenge with impact. Every team is required to gather donations to support the education and wellbeing of children in Morocco's Province of Errachidia. In partnership with the association *Enfants du Désert*, over 30 tonnes of material are distributed annually, directly benefiting 20,000 children. More than 26 classrooms and essential facilities – including those for children with disabilities – have already been built. Our journey was supported by *Stop Hunger*.

Travelling through the Atlas Mountains and deep into the desert meant pushing our old car - literally and figuratively – through sandstorms, engine breakdowns, and steep climbs. Some days, the car needed more attention than we did.

To me as a Moroccan, this project held special meaning. Education is not just a right; it is a vehicle of dignity and possibility. And as a student at Clare Hall, I felt it aligned with the values we try to live by: internationalism, compassion, and intellectual engagement grounded in real-world impact. It's easy to feel powerless in the face of global inequality, but this experience reminded me that action – even on four rattling wheels – can make a difference.

**Ismail T-Benchekroun**



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# ROWING NEWS

CHBC started the 2024-2025 season on 12 October with a smashing Induction Day, sending 54 novices out on the Cam across 9 separate outings

But a successful season starts the summer before, and our senior CHBC rowers wasted no time securing division wins at the Peterborough Summer Regatta and Great Ouse Marathon in August and September.

As the cold, dark mornings of Michaelmas progressed, CHBC positioned itself as a force to be reckoned with on the River Cam, sending out two full novice eights nearly every morning. The return on this investment was apparent at the Queens' Ergs and Clare Novice Regatta, where our novice crews gave their opponents from bigger colleges a run for their money.

In parallel, our senior men's squad spent Michaelmas training for a new race to which the club generously received an invitation this year: the AISL Harrow Rowing Regatta held in Hengqin, China. Squaring up against strong competition including Yale University, our CHBC men came away with 5th place, an honourable finish and an incredible experience.

To complete Michaelmas, the club made a splash by fielding 7 crews across novice and senior categories in the storied Fairbairns Cup, a 2.7km (novices) / 4.3km (seniors) head race down the length of the River Cam.

Lent Term began with strong performances from our M1 and W1 crews at Newnham Head. Lent Bumps followed not long after, seeing three entries from CHBC: M1, W1, and an M2 crew which posted an impressive time at the Getting-on-Race but was forced to scratch from the main week of racing due to injuries and academic conflicts. Nevertheless, our M1 and W1 crews prevailed fearlessly. M1 achieved a net -1 bumping over Selwyn M2 before being revenge-bumped by the same crew, rowing over, and being caught by St. Catherine's M2.

W1 bumped over Downing W2, Christ's W2, and Queen's W2, with a single row-over on the second day of racing precluding Blades.

Meanwhile in Lent, our alumni made a historic debut on the Tideway at Hammersmith Head in Central London, racing the 4.5km course from Chiswick Bridge to Hammersmith Bridge in an impressive 13:32. Only a month later, they followed up this performance at the Vesta Veterans International Head of the River Race with a blazing 24:36 over the famous 6.8km Championship Course.

Over Easter Break, CHBC reconvened at our home away from home on Lake Bled, Slovenia, hosted by Clare Hall alumni Suzana Ograjensek and David Crawley for a productive and picturesque training camp on cerulean waters.

May Bumps, like Lent Bumps, saw three entries from Clare Hall: M1, W1, and an M2 which this time around had no injuries nor academic interference to worry about. Our M1 bumped over Clare M2 to achieve the highest position ever held by a Clare Hall crew, rowed over to hold this position, then was caught by an exceptional Peterhouse M2 crew and rowed over again to end the week net 0. Our W1 bumped Pembroke W2 and Magdelene W2 on the first day of racing as sandwich boat to ascend to Division 3, held this position with a row-over, then bumped Queen's W3 and Caius W3 to end the week +4. Our M2 rowed over on the first day of racing before bumping Peterhouse M4, Sidney Sussex M3, and First and Third M4 to end the week +3.

Any CHBC rower, past or present, knows the Mays Boat Club Dinner is always a party to remember at the end of a long season. But I'd venture to argue this season's was a step above the usual standard as we



Thanks to Annamaria Motrescu-Mayes (OF and Tutor) and Eric Mayes for their kind donation of a Concept2 rowing machine to the Clare Hall Boat Club.

Photo: Annamaria with Andrew McDonald, Captain of the Boat Club 2024-2





celebrated the club's 30th Anniversary with a spectators' tent on the Saturday of racing, a Gala Dinner on Saturday evening, and a Ceremonial Paddle on Sunday morning. In the company of club and college alumni, generous donors, and of course current students, CHBC officially unveiled two new boats to 'complete the fleet' of our small but mighty club: a new single scull (1x), named *Lisa and Ekhard Salje*, along with a new coxed four (IV+), named *Mara*.

The grand finale of CHBC's 2024-2025 season took place not on the waters of the River Cam, but between the banks of the River Thames in the Henley Royal Regatta Qualifying Races. Our M1 crew, competing in the Temple Challenge Cup, posted a strong 7:57, while our W1 crew, competing in the Island Challenge Cup, posted an admirable 8:24. Although neither crew qualified for the main knockout round of Henley, it was a historic step for

CHBC, being the first time the club has sent crews to race at Henley.

I would like to thank this year's committee and next year's committee for the time and love they've given to CHBC, and thanks also to our generous donors. This year was awesome, and we look forward to next year under the leadership of incoming President Cory Aitchison.

**Andrew McDonald**

Clare Hall Boat Club President, 2024-25





# Donors 2024-25



We gratefully acknowledge the following individuals and organisations for their generosity during the 2024-25 financial year, including those donors who wish to remain anonymous, have given gifts in kind, or made a bequest to the college.

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Elizabeth Miller  
Leslie Miller-Bernal  
Peter and Lorna Minshall  
Patricia Mirrlees  
Don Monson  
Gillian Moore and  
Michael Nedo  
David Morgan  
Andrew Morrogh

Annamaria Motrescu-Mayes  
Vincent Moulton  
Georgia Mouroutsou  
Ken Murchison and Eloise  
McClendon Murchison  
Sathy Naidu  
Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr  
John Niles and Carole Newlands  
Joakim Nivre and  
Elisabeth Wåghäll Nivre

Suzanne Normington  
Eva Novotny  
Eric Nye and Carol Frost  
Yoko Okuda  
Carl Olson  
Bridget Orr and Jonathan Lamb  
Wayne Osgood  
Nolan Panneck  
Nick Paul  
Jörg Peltzer

Lynne Pepall  
Charlotte Pippard  
Bill Prior  
Peter Quint  
Rich Reeder  
Per Reiff-Musgrove  
Cedric Reverand  
Antje Richter  
John and Irene Rielly  
Harriet Ritvo  
Juan Rodriguez-Molina  
Jackie and Phil Roe  
Dan Roos  
Jon and Wendy Rose  
Robert Rosner  
Roy Rotheim  
Edmund Russell  
Chris Russo  
Patty Ryan  
Lisa Salje  
Malabika and Sudipto Sarkar  
Roberto Scazzieri  
Raphael Schafer  
Hal Schenck  
Marie Schimmelpenninck Van  
Der Oye  
Christoph Schlegel  
Ping Sheng  
Debora Shuger  
Pou Seong Sit  
Niall Slater  
Amos Smith\*  
Laura Snyder  
Rob Socolow  
Miriam Solomon  
Eugene Speer  
Mary Speer  
Kate Spielmann

Bhama Srinivasan  
Theodore St.Antoine  
Joe and Gussie Stanislaw  
Christopher Star  
Alexa Steinberg  
Ian Strachan  
Wes Sundquist  
James Tanna  
Stephen Tanner Irish  
Trudi Tate  
Peter Teachout  
Daigo Terutsuki  
Delphine Theobald  
Ellen Thomas  
Jack Thomas  
Margaret Thouless  
Paul Timans  
Mike Trower  
Richard Unger  
Tim Unwin  
Ineke Van't Spijker and  
Nick Collings  
Moshe Vardi  
Burt Visotzky  
Siva Visvesvaran  
Linda Voigts  
Gary Waite  
Catriona Walker  
Brian Walker  
Peter and Kathryn Walls  
Tom Webb  
Kevin Weeks  
Julia Welbon  
Andrew Wernick and Heather  
Jon Maroney  
John and Judy West  
Volker Wille and Aiping Mu  
David Williams

Chris Williams  
Joanna and Michael Womack  
John Wood  
Gill Wu  
Carl and Marjory Wunsch  
Ariel Xia  
Aiora Zabala

Jeff Zacks  
Steve Zhang  
Meng Zhu  
Richard Zigmond  
Evan Zimroth

*\*Recently deceased*



Photograph by Jeremy Peters



# News of Members

We are pleased to share the following news from our Members and Friends. You are welcome to get in touch with your own achievements. Please email [lifemembers@clarehall.cam.ac.uk](mailto:lifemembers@clarehall.cam.ac.uk)

**Abbreviations:**  
AS - Associate, AP - Affiliated Postdoc, EF - Emeritus Fellow, HF - Honorary Fellow, FF - Foundation Fellow, OF - Official Fellow, PF - Professorial Fellow, RF - Research Fellow, VF - Visiting Fellow, VS - Visiting Student



Jaime Craig



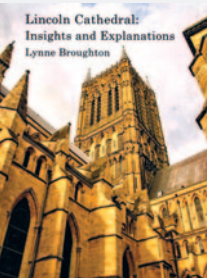
Chaitanya Joshi



Lori Passmore



Tilenji Phiri



**Robert Balfour** (VF 2003) published *Culture, Capital and Representation* (2010) and *Education in South Africa: Crisis and Change* (2015), both from research undertaken at Clare Hall. In 2025 he was appointed Vice Chancellor of the University of the Western Cape, South Africa.

**Jean-Claude Baron** (PF 2000-10) has been awarded the 2025 David G. Sherman Award of the American Heart/Stroke Association at the International Stroke Conference 2025.

**David Bates** (AS 2005-09) has published an English translation of his co-authored book, *The Bayeux Tapestry*, which was first published in French in 2019.

Congratulations to Dame **Gillian Beer** (HF, President of Clare Hall 1994-2001) on her 90th birthday in January 2025.

**Cristina Blanco Sío-López** (VF 2024) was awarded the María Moliner Spanish National Research Award in the Humanities in recognition of her work in Contemporary History, especially on the European integration process.

**Lynne Broughton** (AS 1982) has published *Lincoln Cathedral: Insights and Explanations* (2022).

**David Callies** (VF 2000) coauthored 'The American Law Institute's Influence on Property' in the *Brigham-Kanner Property Rights Journal* published by William and Mary Law School (2024).

**Hasok Chang** (PF) has been elected a Fellow of the Royal Academy.

**Claire Chewapreecha** (RF 2015-17) is now a Wellcome International Intermediate Fellow at the Mahidol-Oxford Tropical Medicine Research Unit, where she leads the Melioidosis Genomic Group in Bangkok. She is also a lecturer at the Faculty of Tropical Medicine, Mahidol University and an International Fellow at the Wellcome Sanger Institute. In 2024, Claire was awarded the *Nature* Scientific Achievement Prize in recognition of her work in the fight against melioidosis, a neglected tropical disease with a high fatality rate in Thailand.

**Jaime Craig** (PhD 1994) has been elected chair of the UK Association of Clinical Psychologists. He has published clinical research in child, adult and older adult mental health and the fields of intellectual disability and autism.

**Jessica Milner Davis** (VF 2011) has published 'Humour and Culture', in Thomas E. Ford, Władysław Chłopicki and Giseline Kuipers, eds., *De Gruyter Handbook of Humor Studies* (2024), and 'Re-evaluating Comic Stereotypes: Dirty but Essential', in Benjamin Nickl and Mark Rolfe, eds., *Moral Dimensions of Humour: Essays on Humans, Heroes and Monsters* (2024).

**Athanassios Fokas** (EF) received the 2025 California Institute of Technology Distinguished Alumni Award.

**Miguel Angel Gonzalez-Torres** (VF 2021) has published *Who am I? Exploring Identity Through Sexuality, Politics and Art* (2025).

**Kerry Havner** (VF 1981) has published *The Mechanics of Finite Deformation with Applications in Metal Plasticity*. Kerry writes that he wrote the book over five years, aged 85 to 90.

**Richard Hayes** (VF 2012) has been elected a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects, in the category of education, research, and literature.

**Paul Hedges** (VF 2022) has published *Christian Polytheism? Polydox Theologies of Multi-devotional and Decolonial Praxis* (2025). He has been promoted to Professor of Interreligious Studies at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

**Tony Hooley** (Fellow Commoner 2013–18) was appointed as Executive Chairman, Foster Technology Ltd in 2024. Foster Tech is a new tech startup founded by Jason Jiang (PhD Engineering 2010) who is now Professor of Dynamics and Control at the University of Bristol.

**David Irving** (VF 2018) has published *The Making of European Music in the Long Eighteenth Century* (2024).

**Chaitanya Joshi** (PhD Student) has been awarded a Fellowship by Qualcomm Innovation for his project Geometric Generative Models for 3D RNA Design. This work aims to address RNA-specific modelling challenges and develop interdisciplinary collaborations with wet labs to experimentally validate his AI-designed RNAs.

**Sohini Kar-Narayan** (PF) was elected a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering in 2024.

**Rishul Karia** (MPhil Environmental Sciences) completed an 87 kilometre cycle to raise money for a charity which cares for injured and ill seabirds in South Africa, especially the endangered African penguin.

**Noah Law** (MPhil 2016) was elected Labour MP for St Austell and Newquay in 2024.

**Noa Leach** (MPhil 2020) has progressed from News Editor to Special Projects Editor at BBC Science Focus. In autumn 2024 she won a Professional Publishers Association Next Gen Award, celebrating the rising stars of UK media. In 2025 she won the British Society of Magazine Editors award for Best Writer in Science and Technology.

**John MacDonald** (VF 2019) has been awarded the status of 2024 Fellow of the American Society of Criminology.

**Bob Macauley** (VF 2013) has published a memoir, *Because I Knew You: How Some Remarkable Sick Kids Healed a Doctor's Soul* (2025). He currently works as a pediatric palliative care physician in Oregon.

**Juan Rodriguez-Molina** (AS 2018, RF 2019-23) has been appointed Assistant Professor in the Department of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences at the University of





Cincinnati College of Medicine.

**Edward Ng** (VF 2013) was awarded a Doctor of Science degree in 2023 by the University of Cambridge in recognition of his work on urban climatology for urban planning and building design.

**Michael Ngai** (MPhil 1990; Fellow Commoner) has been appointed as the Council Chairman of the City University of Hong Kong by the Chief Executive of HKSAR Government.

**Yoko Okuda** (VF 2017) has published *Emotions and Contingencies in Conrad's Fiction* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2024).

**Lori Passmore** (OF) is joining Sjors Scheres as Joint Head of the Structural Studies Division of the MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology. Together they will provide strategic management of the Division's goal to understand the structure, function and interactions of biologically important molecules at atomic, molecular and supramolecular levels. Lori was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 2023.

**Natalia Petrovskaia** (RF 2012-14) has published *Transforming Europe in the Images of the World, 1110-1500. Fuzzy Geographies* (2025). The book is Open Access thanks to funding by the Dutch Research Council.

**Tililenji Phiri** (PhD Student, Education) was awarded a University of Cambridge Public Engagement Starter Fund to carry out a project in a rural school in Zambia which aims to make tertiary education information and planning accessible to students of all grades.

**Fu Xiang Quah** (PhD 2019) has published an article about cichlid fishes of East Africa in Genome Research. Fu now works in bioinformatics engineering at Genomics England.

**Nancy Ramage** (VF 2007) has published 'From Kitsch to the Sublime: The Many Lives of Mt Vesuvius', in *Roman Copies, Collecting, and Culture on the Bay of Naples and Beyond: Papers in Honor of Eugene Dwyer* (2024).

**Helen Ritchie** (AS) was named by *Apollo* magazine as one of the '40 under 40' working in craft: specifically one of ten people named in the 'thinkers' category.

**Kelly Fagan Robinson** (OF) has published *Inaccessible Access: Rethinking Disability Inclusion in Academic Knowledge Creation* (2024), with illustrations by Indigo Ayling (MPhil 2020).

**Barbara Sahakian** (PF) was awarded a CBE in the King's Birthday Honours 2024. Barbara and Christelle Langley (AP) have co-authored *Brain Boost: Healthy Habits for a Happier Life* (2025).

**Helene Scott-Fordsmann** (RF) has been appointed Lecturer in *Medicine, Health, and Society* in the Department of Science and Technology Studies, UCL. She has published three articles in 2025: 'Ethnographic Philosophy: A Qualitative Method for Naturalised Philosophy', *Philosophy Compass* 20, 3 (2025); 'Tracing the World through Grasp and Synthesis', *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science, Part A* 109 (C) (2025); 'Negative Analogies and Scientific Reasoning,' in *Mary B. Hesse: Metaphors, Models, and the Growth of Scientific*

*Knowledge*, ed. Pietro Gori (co-authored with Mauricio Suárez, 2025).

**Alessandro Sepe** (AP 2013-14) is currently Head of the Scientific Computing Program at the Shanghai Synchrotron Radiation Facility at the Chinese Academy of Sciences. In 2022 he received the Magnolia Award and Medal from the Shanghai Government. In 2024 he was awarded the Friendship Award and Medal by the Chinese Central Government and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry.

**Paul Smit** (VF 2024) has been elected to the North-West University Council and appointed as a section editor of the *African Journal of Employment Relations*.

**Maria Grazia Spillantini** (PF) has been awarded the Mika Salpeter Lifetime Achievement Award for women in neuroscience.

**Trudi Tate** (EF) has edited a new edition of Virginia Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway* (2025) for Oxford World's Classics. She organised a week-long Virginia Woolf summer course for Literature Cambridge, held at Clare Hall in July 2025.

**Kevin (Kit) Thompson OBE** (AS) was inducted as a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences at Harvard University.

**Pamela Thurschwell** (VS 1994-96) has published *Teenage Time: Coming of Age Disruptively in Literature, Culture and Film 1945-2024* (2025). Pam is now Professor of Modern and Contemporary Literature at the University of Sussex.

**G.C. Waldrep** (VF 2021) has published his eighth book of poetry, *The Opening Ritual*, in November 2024, including poems he wrote during his Visiting Fellowship at Clare Hall.

**Shalva Weil** (VF 2021) was appointed a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society in 2022. She has published 'Effigies, religion and reversals in the celebration of Purim by Cochin Jews', *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*, 24 (2025).

**Callum White** (PhD student) was awarded the Cambridge Society for the Application of Research student award in recognition of his 'outstanding research and potential' in the Concrete Infrastructure Research Group.

**Haoyang Ye** (AP) has hosted an Astrophysics Career Event Series at Cavendish Astrophysics. She was awarded a university Enhancing Research Culture Fund grant. Congratulations to Haoyang on her wedding in 2024.

**Jingyi Jenny Zhao** (Needham RF) is a 2024-25 Fellow at the Berggruen Institute China Centre in Peking University.

**Caroline Zilboorg** (VF 1992) published a two-volume biography of her father, *The Life of Gregory Zilboorg* (2021) and a personal memoir, *A Psychoanalytic Childhood: A Memoir of Growing Up in Mid-Twentieth-Century New York* (2025).



### Keeping in touch with Clare Hall



Keep your contact details updated with us by scanning the following QR code. This will enable you to complete the online form on our website, so that you continue receiving information about events and news from Clare Hall.

## In Memoriam

We are sorry to report the deaths of these College members in the past year.

**Andreas Acrivos** (VF 1970 & 1976-77)

**Barbara Aland** (VF 2004)

**Walt Harrison** (VF 1970-71)

**Richard Hays** (VF 2008)

**Michael Hollington** (VF 2010-11)

**David Hughes** (RF 1982-85)

**Jerry Kutcher** (VF 2006-07)

**Michael Loewe** (OF 1968-90, EF 1990-2025)

**Angus McLaren** (VF 1998)

**Duane Osheim** (VF 1986-87)

**Mark Phillips** (VF 2009)

**Ian Polmear** (VF 1973)

**Merrick Posnansky** (VF 1974, AS 1975-76)

**Sagar Raturi** (PhD 2014-18)

**Paul Richards** (VF 1973-74)

**Ekhard Salje** (P 2001-08, EF 2008-2025)

**William Schlaepfer** (AS 1974-75)

**Amos Smith** (VF 1982)

**Michael Smith** (VF 2009)

**Maria Tippet** (VF 1991-92)

**Guy Welbon** (VF 1999)

**Daniel Wilson** (VF 1993)

We are also sad to report the deaths of these College members in 2023 and 2024.

**Andrew Brierley** (RF 1999)

**Anthony Butterworth** (RF 1973-74)

**Fabia Franco** (VF 1995-96)

**Philip Hefner** (VF 1977-78)

**Sanford Katz** (AS 1972-73, VF 1973)

**John Knott** (AS 1973-74)

**Syvert Paul Norsett** (VF 2003-04)

**Iija Pietikäinen** (Friend)

**Martin Simons** (AS 1978)

**Richard Smethurst** (VF 1999)

**Robert Thobaben** (VF 1981)

**Jasper Wall** (AS 1979-86)

**Graham Connah** (VF 1970)

**Nicholas David** (VF 1978)

**Betty Davidson** (VF 1994)

**John Elvin** (RF 1965-68)

**Terry Ewart** (VF 1981-82)

**Janet Fodor** (RF 1968-69)

**Francesca Frassinetti** (VF 2019)

**Milton Gatch** (VF 1974-75)

**Stephen Gaukroger** (RF 1977-79)

**Peter MacHamer** (AS 1973)

**Julio Montesino Ramos** (MPhil 1981-82)

**Jaap Murre** (VF 1973)

**Tom Ogletree** (VF 1987)

**Elmer Ogryzlo** (AS 1972-73)

**Tony Podlecki** (VF 1991)

**Daniel Shea** (VF 1984-85)

**Henry Sullivan** (VF 1995-96)

**Stephen Waddams** (VF 1995-96)

**Norman Wessells** (VF 1976)







# Michael Loewe

(2 November 1922–1 January 2025)

*Scholar, Sinologist, Historian*

As the year 2025 dawned to the distant crackle of fireworks, time seemed to pause for a moment in the English village of Grantchester, Cambridge. In the stillness of an early winter evening, a revered centenarian scholar quietly closed his eyes for the last time – bringing to a gentle close a life that had borne witness to more than a century of turbulent and triumphant world history. Michael Arthur Nathan Loewe, the esteemed British Sinologist and historian, passed away on 1 January, 2025, at the age of 102.

Born on 2 November 1922 in Oxford, Michael came from a long-established and distinguished Anglo-Jewish family that played a prominent role in the religious and intellectual life of the Jewish community. His paternal great-grandfather, Louis Loewe (1809–1888), a German-Jewish polyglot from Zülz, Prussian Silesia (present-day Biała, Poland) was appointed ‘Oriental Secretary’ and trusted confidant by the eminent financier and philanthropist Sir Moses Montefiore, Baronet (1784–1885), owing to his mastery in Oriental and European languages. Louis first visited England in the 1830s and became a naturalised British subject in 1862. Though of Ashkenazi descent, Louis adopted Sephardic traditions and passed them on to future generations. Michael’s grandfather, James Henry Loewe (1852–1944), born in Brighton, worked for Moritz Sachs Bank in Breslau before returning to England in 1877 to lead the translation department at the Imperial Gas Association.

Michael’s father, Herbert Loewe (1882–1940) was appointed Lecturer in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Arabic at Exeter College, Oxford, in 1914 and later became Reader in Rabbinics at the University of Cambridge. Widely regarded as the foremost representative of Jewish scholarship in Britain during his time, Herbert had a profound influence on Michael’s intellectual formation. Michael’s mother, Ethel Victoria Loewe (née Hyamson, 1887–1946), was the younger sister of Albert Montefiore Hyamson, OBE (1875–1954), historian and Chief Immigration Officer in the British Mandate of Palestine (1921–24). Michael’s elder brother,



Raphael Loewe (1919–2011), was Professor of Hebrew and Jewish Studies at University College London and a noted scholar in Jewish poetry and philosophy of medieval Spain.

Michael attended the Perse School in Cambridge before matriculating at Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1941 to read Classics. However, with the outbreak of war with Japan in December that year, the British government urgently sought individuals to be trained in Japanese. Being a brilliant young classicist studying Latin and Greek, Michael was recommended for Japanese language training by A. D. Lindsay, Master of Balliol College, Oxford and Martin Charlesworth, President of St John's College, Cambridge. He was selected for the Inter-Service Special Intelligence School in Bedford where he learned Japanese and received training in cryptography. In August 1942, he was posted to Bletchley Park, in the Naval Section working on Japanese decryption until the end of the war.

Michael's academic path in Sinology began after the war when the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) offered him the chance to learn Chinese in China. He often spoke fondly of the six formative months he spent in 1947 at the former British Legation in Beiping (now Beijing), an experience that sparked his enduring interest in traditional and historical Chinese topics.

In 1951 while still employed by GCHQ, he began studying Chinese at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), completing his PhD there with a thesis on Han-China (206 BCE–220 CE), a formative period that profoundly shaped the Chinese civilisation. A pioneering scholar in the West, Michael fully made use of Han administrative records preserved on wooden strips unearthed in northwest China in the twentieth century. His ground-breaking two-volume study *Records of Han Administration* (Cambridge University Press, 1967), remains foundational in the field. From 1956 to 1963, he taught History of the Far East at SOAS before taking up a lectureship at the Faculty of Oriental Studies, Cambridge, where he remained until his retirement in 1990.

Throughout his academic career, Michael held Visiting Professorships at Stockholm, Harvard and the University of Chicago, and was elected an honorary member of the American Academy of Arts and Social Sciences. A prolific writer till the end of his life, he published 15 books, over 70 articles, several major reference works and a historical novel set in Han-China. Among his most enduring editorial achievements are *The Cambridge History of China Vol. I* (co-edited with Denis Twitchett, 1986) and *The Cambridge History of Ancient China* (co-edited with Edward L. Shaughnessy, 1999), both essential texts for

students and scholars of Chinese history. A new generation of historians of China emerged under his influence.

Michael married Leonora Mary Dickins Loewe (née Burdett, 1909–2005) in 1949; their marriage later ended in divorce. In 2002, he married his long-term partner, the renowned Japanologist Carmen Blacker, whom he had first met at Bletchley Park. Both became early Official Fellows of Clare Hall – Carmen in 1965 and Michael in 1968.

Deeply committed to Chinese and Japanese Studies, Michael brought many Visiting Fellows to Clare Hall, enriching both the college and his department at Cambridge. He was particularly grateful for Clare Hall's positive response to his proposal to establish the Spalding Trust Fellowship in Comparative Religion, co-sponsored by the Trust and the college. An exemplary college person, Michael served as Chair of the Fellowship Committee and as Vice President of Clare Hall, playing a pivotal role in putting the Fellowship Committee on a sound footing and maintaining high selection standards. Known for his old-world charm and deep-voiced oratory, Michael remained a cherished presence at Clare Hall. Though fiercely protective of decorum – he would shout 'Shut up!' at those speaking too loudly in the common room or scold men for wearing hats in the dining hall – few took offence. On the contrary, he was held in genuine affection, and returning Life Members always greeted him warmly. East Asian scholars revered him, often eager to pose for photographs with the legendary Sinologist. He relished spirited conversations with them over lunch, always with a glass of Peroni in hand. Even into his nineties, he could be found cheerfully chauffeuring visiting scholars to the libraries in his trusty mini car, offering them impromptu tours in the academic heart of Cambridge.

In later years, Michael withdrew to the peace of his village home, where each morning began with a gentle walk to the River Cam, followed by hours of writing in his office, a Chinese-style garden pavilion. Afternoons were reserved for guests and friends, his conversation as sharp and generous as ever. The world had not forgotten him. In 2021, he was honoured with the Distinguished Contributions to China Studies Award at the 9th World Forum on China Studies. He was named an Honorary Fellow of both Clare Hall and Peterhouse.

The Covid-19 pandemic brought new challenges, and his sight slowly faded. Yet he remained dignified and composed, often seated in his conservatory beside shelves of books. A kumquat tree stood nearby, its slender branches hung with small golden fruits. On a table by the window rested a framed photograph of his beloved wife, Carmen, and

a 100th Birthday card from HM King Charles III. In those final conversations, talks would drift from Han-China to ancient Rome, from his early Cambridge years to his lifelong admiration for his father, whose memory he cherished, and whose presence he was, at last, ready to re-join.

**Li Tang**  
Fellow Commoner

## Remembering Michael Loewe

*Michael's niece Rebecca Hilsanrath paid tribute at his funeral*

Yesterday, in synagogue, we read about the death of Joseph. All Biblical characters live to superhuman ages but in fact Joseph, at 110, was only 8 years older than Michael. Biblical characters are also noted for their genealogy – the children they begat and the children their children begat, but Michael left a different kind of legacy.

Michael was born on 2 November 1922, two days before Carter discovered the tomb of Tutankhamun, and twelve days before the BBC started broadcasting news for the first time. That gives a sense of the extraordinary framing of his long life, to which I am not qualified to speak and only list here some of the salient facts: Classics at Magdalen College, Oxford, interrupted by the war – studying Japanese and then decoding at Bletchley Park. After the war – Mandarin Chinese at SOAS (with a First Class degree and a PhD). Lecturer at the University of London; Lecturer at Cambridge; Fellow of Clare Hall; Emeritus and then Honorary Fellow; elected Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

There will be other occasions for a proper academic recognition of Michael by those far more qualified than I am. This is personal, on behalf of the family, with their permission.

The past few days I have been overwhelmed by emails. They have spoken about Michael as mentor, teacher and neighbour, grandfather, colleague, friend. People have written about his kindness, his support – that he was non-judgemental, that he went above and beyond any kind of professional role in what he offered to friends and colleagues. They spoke of his sincerity and his modesty, of his courage, grace and generosity of spirit. I was told he had left a huge hole; I was told about lifelong friendships. People wrote about a 'disaster', about being 'shocked and overwhelmed by grief' – by the death of someone at 102. People say they thought he was immortal. People tell me he was very dearly loved.

So – no begetting, but perhaps Michael's legacy was not so different, after all.

I had the immense privilege of looking after Michael over the past few years, although he wasn't someone, even in extreme old age, that could easily be categorised as being looked after. At the age of 96, I very clearly remember him saying to me, with evident regret: 'The thing is, Becky, I just can't do more than six hours' work a day any more.' He published his last book last year.

We are a small family – he left two nieces, and a number of cousins. When he turned 100, we consulted about the best way to celebrate the occasion. We decided to come to his house in Grantchester, where we would foregather in one room and, so as not to overwhelm him, each of us would individually go to speak to him quietly in his conservatory. Of course, that was never going to happen. As always, Michael was entirely in command of the occasion and wasn't going to be left out of the party – he simply got himself out of his chair and came and held forth to the family gathering, where we formed a rapt audience.

We recognise, of course, and appreciate so very much that Michael made another family, in Grantchester and in Cambridge, and we know how immensely important that community was to him.

Today I also want to remember those companions of Michael's life whom he loved the most – his wife Carmen, and his brother Raphael. I also want to mention his long-term student, friend and colleague Michael Nylan, who can't be with us.

My own understanding of his last few years is that Michael was ready to go and, in that sense, we are truly here to celebrate him and not to mourn. To mourn him would be selfish. Michael himself was unfailingly positive, appreciative and grateful in the face of the most difficult of challenges. Inevitably, we talked about the end, over the last few years and, equally inevitably, he talked about the beginning, about his parents and about an abiding sense of regret that he had let down his father in abandoning Orthodox Judaism. He was quite adamant that he wanted to be buried here, in Hoop Lane – not only a Jewish burial ground but where his parents and all his immediate and extended family lie. In that sense, I want you all to know that Michael has closed the circle and has come home.

**Rebecca Hilsanrath**





# Professor Ekhard Salje

(1946-2025)

## An Appreciation

It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of the sixth President of Clare Hall, Ekhard Salje.

Academically, Ekhard was a leading world figure in the field of mineralogy and the most cited researcher in the field. His contributions combined theoretical and experimental methods to study, for example, the stability of minerals and the transformation processes that occur within them in response to changes in temperature and pressure. He developed the key field of ‘ferroelasticity’ which plays a major role in metals and high-technology materials.

In 1985, Ekhard was appointed Professor of Mineralogy and Petrology in Cambridge and in 1998 assumed the post of Head of Department of Earth Sciences which he held for 10 years. During this time he built up the field of Mineral Physics.

Some measure of his distinction was his membership of three national academies of science, the Royal Society of London, the

Leopoldina of Germany and the Spanish Royal Academy of Sciences. He was Chevalier dans l’ordre des Palmes Academiques of France and was awarded the Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany in 2007, the highest honour for a scientist.

Ekhard succeeded Gillian Beer as President of Clare Hall in 2002. Ekhard’s energy, enthusiasm and vision for the College led to his appointment by acclamation with a minimum of fuss. He was exactly the right person at the right time to take the College forward and further expand its intellectual and international impact.

Gillian Beer’s brilliant Presidency was one of considerable expansion of Clare Hall. When she took over in 1994, the College had to solve the major problem of the provision of accommodation and facilities for graduate students and Visiting Fellows. Fortunately, Clare Hall was able to purchase West Court and a major programme of construction took place on that site<sup>1</sup>.

As President, Ekhard threw all his energy into building upon these developments, implementing his vision and enhancing the funding-raising activities through the appointment of the first Director of Development Nami Morris. He had very broad cultural interests as well as a very strong international perspective<sup>2</sup>. A few highlights give an impression of his achievements.

- He developed partnerships with overseas universities in East Asia particularly with China, Japan and Korea where he already had strong scientific collaborations. Among his successful fundraising efforts were the resources to expand yet further the accommodation for research students and visitors, the Salje Building, named in his honour.

- Wherever he went around the world, he promoted Clare Hall’s Visiting Fellowship programme. The result was the build-up of Clare Hall alumni groups in many different countries, especially in Spain and in Asia. The Visiting Fellowship programme was (and remains) always very significantly over-subscribed.

- Domestically, the College continued to expand its international flavour. Country-themed events were very successful, including Korea Week, Japan Week, France Week, and Spanish Week.

- Music developed dramatically. The Intimate Engagements Series, conceived by Abigail and David Dolan, was made a reality through Ekhard’s enthusiastic support. The series has attracted renowned performers such as the soprano Emma Kirkby, violinist Alina Ibragimova, the baritone Roderick Williams and pianist Iain Burnside.

- A further musical enhancement was the Divertimento Music series, featuring non-western and non-classical music. Individual musicians from Japan, Spain, Egypt, Greece, China, Korea and many other countries performed in the President’s Lodge, reorganised to accommodate an audience of 60-70. It was a joy to see and hear the strange instruments on which the performers expertly performed at these events.

- Ekhard was passionate about painting whenever he could find time away from all his many responsibilities. In his last year as President, an exhibition of his works was held in the College. The proceeds of the exhibition were used to purchase a screen print South Lopham by John Piper.

Throughout his Presidency, Ekhard benefitted enormously from the unstinting support of Lisa, his wife. They sustained a lively and friendly academic and social atmosphere which was greatly appreciated by all members of the College. With five children, Joelle, Henrik, Jeanne, Léa and Barbara, their lives were very full. The family have all been very successful in academic and academic-related employment.

Ekhard’s tenure of the Presidency of the College was a period of remarkable expansion of the activity of Clare Hall, all consistent with the goals of the founders of developing a new type of inclusive college environment. Long known as Cambridge’s ‘family college’, the term should be interpreted not only as referring to the way in which families are integrated into the life of the College, but also to one academic and intellectual ‘family’. Ekhard and Lisa were the ideal leaders who reinforced greatly this vision of a modern Oxbridge college.

We pass on our great appreciation to Lisa and the family for the support they gave to Ekhard. His memory will be cherished by all of us who know how much he contributed personally, academically and institutionally to the College.

**Malcolm Longair**  
Emeritus Fellow

<sup>1</sup>See Stefan Collini, ‘The Presidency of Gillian Beer, 1994-2001’, in *Clare Hall: A 50th Anniversary Portrait* (London: Third Millennium Publishing).

<sup>2</sup> See Lisa Salje and David Ibbetson, ‘The Presidency of Ekhard Salje, 2001-08’, in *Clare Hall: A 50th Anniversary Portrait*.



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