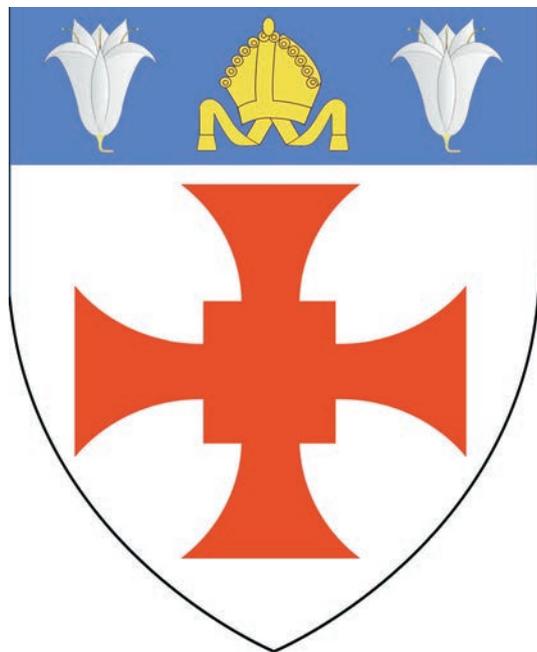


St Mary's College Society Newsletter

Summer 2020



Editorial



St Mary's College Society Summer 2020 Newsletter

Welcome to the St Mary's College Society 2020 Newsletter!

In these strange and unprecedented times, you may be reading this as the lockdown is lifted, or while many aspects of it are still affecting our daily lives.

St Mary's College is and always has been a strong community. It is "home" for our current and former students and staff. It is the pastoral care aspect of university for many students, and this year the personal contact and close community has been missing as students have been recalled to parental homes and all study and university social activities have gone online. Even the exams will be sat online, and degrees awarded, though not this summer in person.

We were going to be celebrating this year the Centenary of St Mary's as a College of Durham University, initially for women, who had been awarded degrees on equal terms with men since the formation of the Womens' Hostel in 1899, and from 1995 a mixed College. Unfortunately we have had to postpone these celebrations until the current crisis is over. We have had to forgo planned travel, holidays, family celebrations. Life is a series of days at home. Shopping can be frightening.

While the JCR and MCR have continued many activities online, the University centrally has a number of online events, and tuition has continued in similar fashion, no one can pretend that online learning and sociability can quite match face to face contact.

There are some consolations. When I went on foot to Mary's to take some photographs for this Newsletter showing both the College and Durham City in lockdown, I realised as I sat in the small Remembrance Garden for 2 former students who died in recent years that nature is coming to the fore again. The trees and plants were budding. Flowers were emerging. Bird life was abundant.

Small blessings that we can all appreciate. I think my daily walk is doing me more good than my former sessions in the closed down gym!

Even VE Day had to be celebrated under lockdown! You may be interested to read the first hand account of the original 1945 VE Day, by the Senior Woman of the time.

It occurs to me that this year's Newsletter, my first full publication as Editor, will be a significant document in the history of St Mary's College, so much so that I'm having extra copies printed as I'm sure they will be sought after. Some of the articles are about travel and the normal life which seems so far away at the moment ; some are powerful memories of being a Mary's student in past decades; others are about student and alumni experiences of the lockdown.

I hope you enjoy reading, and remember that this too will pass, and we will be a face to face community once again.

Thanks to all contributors: students, alumni and SMCS Committee members who overcame the challenges of being locked down to send me such interesting material and photos for this year's publication.

Especial thanks to our College and SMCS Archivist, Anne Elliott, who every year assembles fascinating articles and pictures from the history of St Mary's College.

And thank you to Peter Wright who typeset the edited Newsletter into a print and online ready document.

Christine Wright
Editor

President's Message

Loss and Gain

This article is being composed as the period of lockdown has just been extended. You may be reading it once this is over, or during a further extension of lockdown. We are living in



Canon Elizabeth Fisher

unprecedented times, and learning new ways of behaving and being. Empty streets, closed theatres, travel to holiday destinations abandoned.

Our first thoughts are often of loss - loss of freedom, loss of physical contact with family and friends, even the loss of a loved one. For me, one little loss is that of the weekly rhythm as one day looks like another. The diary remains empty.

Sitting here in front of my iPad, it is a life-line to 'meet' friends and family on line or on the phone. But it isn't like being in the same room. How hard it is to imagine college without students or face-to-face lectures. Somehow it seems specially sad that this is happening in this our centenary year at Mary's, when we should be celebrating togetherness.

Not very long ago, my husband dug up in our garden an old coin which needed the soil washing off to discover its age. We held the coin in our

hands and saw that the image on it was 'jugate', with two heads, one imposed upon the other. We were at first thrilled because we thought we had found a Roman coin (and we do live close to the site of a Roman camp). However, on looking at the reverse, and eventually finding that we were looking at the image upside down we realised we had dug up a William and Mary halfpenny- not nearly so historic, or valuable. But a discovery nonetheless. In the space opened up from an empty diary I cleared out a cupboard and found at the back an unopened box of dried yeast, something almost impossible to find on the shelf of a supermarket these days. I decided to use it, and discovered that the bread that I made was as good as any, even though the use-by date on the package of yeast was 2011! Not just a discovery, more a miracle. Both of these instances were chance discoveries, made in the course of other activities.



This got me thinking about what we might discover in these strange times. We are all thinking of, and praying for, those many people for whom the pandemic has brought pain, suffering and loss. Yet for many of us this is proving to be not so much a time

of direct suffering as of puzzlement. We have had to forego travel and holidays. But, for me, having extra time for my daily walk with the dog has awakened my senses to the beauty of shadows and the variety of plant and bird life. The ground-nesting birds are back; the air thrills with the sound of the oystercatcher and the trill of the curlew and the acrobatics of the lapwing.

The honking of the skein of flying geese is a pleasure. In nature in springtime there is no such thing as the colour green, rather a whole variety of shades and hues as the larch, hawthorn and beech buds burst. Why is it that I never before noticed the blue anemones coming into bloom ahead of the white ones, all planted at the same time in the same flowerpot? And the blue sky? It is in reality a wonderful collection of blues. The lockdown has provided the opportunity and time to stop and stare at the wonder and richness of our world.

Of course, missing one's nearest and dearest is a great sadness but even here we can experience renewed pleasures like a handwritten letter from an old friend. We may also have known a new level of kindness from neighbours and almost strangers. After a chance conversation with our postman about the scarcity of flour, a few days later there was a knock at the door, and there was the postman with a bag of

flour he had found on a shelf when he went shopping for his own groceries. There will be many other stories you can relate like this one of the thoughtfulness of others.

In the Bible's account of the creation, it is said



Old College Square

that it is not 'good for man to be alone'. This has never seemed more true than in these last days. We all need each other. We are all in debt to the front-line workers who have given freely of themselves to the suffering. We all need to protect our planet, as well as ourselves and to do our best to preserve the species of plant, animals and birds. It has never been more apparent that all life both human and animal is linked together and should be valued. Let us try to keep this in the front of our minds when our world (eventually) returns to normality. In the meantime, let us keep safe, and endeavour to be thankful. And won't it be wonderful to experience again the collegiality of St Mary's College when normal life resumes at the beginning of its second centenary! But return it will.

Canon Elizabeth Fisher
President SMCS

Report of the Principal, Professor Maggi Dawn: Summer 2020



When I arrived at St Mary's last August I knew I was joining the college in a milestone year – 120 years after the opening of the Women's Hostel, this was St Mary's 100th birthday as a fully-fledged college. But

none of us knew back then what a roller-coaster of a year this would turn out to be. This year of all years, the college has needed to feel some sense of being anchored to its own foundations, and as the days have unfolded, the history and traditions of the college, and the strength of generations of alumni have provided the resilience we needed. As my first year as Principal draws to a close, it is no exaggeration to say that my appreciation of our Alumni is sky high.

I flew in from the USA just one day before the annual SMCS Reunion weekend, so it was the alumni and former Principals who first introduced me to the college's culture and traditions. After the reunion dinner, I spoke about the changes the University had recently undergone, and about my conviction and determination that a shift in administrative structures would not diminish our sense of identity as a college. The unusual pressures of this year have proved that to be the case. A good deal of this year's work has involved smoothing out the wrinkles in the new systems, to ensure that they work well for the College. And while some of that work has been quite complex, it is to the credit of the whole college that the spirit of community is alive and well at St Mary's. Following on from the Reunion weekend, it was a pleasure to meet more than 70 London-based alumni at our annual reception in January, and March found me cheering on the touchline for the alumni and students' hockey match, followed by dinner with the players at Lebaneat. I have enjoyed visits from three former Principals – Phil Gilmartin, Jenny Hobbs and Joan Kenworthy – and from former Senior Tutor, Dame Gillian Boughton, all of whom have offered me their warm welcome to St Mary's. And my coffee machine has been put to good use as a steady stream of alumni has dropped by to say hello, and I have called on a number of alumni to advise me on issues ranging from art to architecture, and ecology to engineering. As the lockdown restrictions begin to ease, I look forward to many more such meetings.

Happy Birthday, St Mary's!

We celebrated 100 years of St Mary's College at the annual Michaelmas Dinner with a splendid feast, and speeches from former Senior Woman Helen Niven (formerly Trow, 1964-5), Canon Elizabeth Fisher (formerly Lacey) who, in addition to being our SMCS President was JCR Treasurer in 1967-68. The final speech was given by JCR Vice President Helen Paton, and then the whole gathering sang Happy Birthday to Mary's as we cut the magnificent birthday cake, iced and decorated in the college colours.

Other events had been planned for our 120th year and 100th college birthday, including the unveiling of a fourth wallboard in the Dining Hall to complete the story of Mary's all the way back to the founding of the women's hostel in 1899. But with the outbreak of the coronavirus, this year turned out to be historic in more ways than one – and the new wallboard is only one of a number of things that have been postponed to a later date.

There have been some staff changes during this academic year. After Catherine Paine (former half-time Vice-Principal and Student Support Officer) moved on to another post in the University, a small restructure enabled us to appoint a full-time Vice Principal. From an outstanding field of applications, it quickly became clear that Andrew Unwin (MSci (Hons), MA, MAUA, MInstLM) is exactly the right person for Mary's. A Durham graduate, Andrew completed a four-year MSci degree in Chemistry, after which he worked in a number of roles in the University, as well as adding an MA in Marketing with the Business School to his qualifications in 2017. Before joining us at St Mary's he was Department Manager in the Department of Chemistry. Andrew's knowledge of Durham, and his enthusiasm for student development and College life, are proving a huge asset, and he is already immensely popular with staff and students alike.



Andrew Irwin
Vice Principal

We also said goodbye this year to our college librarian, Jackie Urwin, who retired at Christmas. Jackie was well

loved at St Mary's, and we miss her quiet dedication and good-humoured presence. Another staff loss in July this year is our sabbatical officer, Andrew King, who has worked at St Mary's for two years on alumni focused projects and events. Alumni especially will miss his cheerful presence as well as his hard work. Life never stands still, but it is always a bit of a wrench to say goodbye – and I know you will all join me in our good wishes to our staff who have moved on this year.

The biggest change: Coronavirus

By mid-March, seeing what was ahead of us, we were already moving swiftly as a College to cancel end of term events and close our communal spaces. Within a few short days the whole university had united around the decision to move as much as possible of our teaching and research online, in order to protect both the University and the wider community. The majority of students left Durham and returned to homes or families, and by Easter there were only 24 residents in the Williamson Building, the Fergusson Building and West Court were closed completely, and a few more stayed up in Durham in private houses around the city. All but half a dozen of our staff began working from home, and some were furloughed, and the Easter term – meetings, classes, exams, and assessments – was delivered entirely in online format. Looking back with a few months' hindsight, this has been so much the common experience of every school, university and business in the land that it no longer seems unusual. But back in March, we were making daily decisions in uncharted territory, thinking through every detail of college life in terms of what to close, what to cancel, and how to take care of our college members. Not all decisions were popular – some felt we were too cautious, and others that we were not cautious enough. Personally I felt enormous gratitude towards all who were able to offer wisdom and practical support. Both the 'Colleges and Wider Student Experience Division' of which we are part, and our own St Mary's staff, were absolutely stellar during this period. But I am also grateful for those who dropped us a line or a phone call to offer moral support – alumni, mentors, friends of the college. Those encouraging messages put the wind under our sails on some very difficult days.

A number of alumni have commented that our 100th birthday has turned out to be historic for another reason, as this is the first time we ever had to close our college buildings. Mary's has adapted over the years to cope with two world wars, and various other social and economic upheavals, but we have always stayed open through those crises. The coronavirus has, temporarily at least, changed all of our lives, and its impact is felt

keenly by anyone who enjoys those aspects of college that support our social, cultural and intellectual life. Despite that, Mary's is being carried by the resilience and good humour for which the College has long been renowned. On both good days and bad, the vibrance and warmth of the student community, the beautiful setting of the college buildings and grounds, our inspiring history, and the support of our alumni have shone through. Particularly through the work of our tech-savvy staff and students, Mary's has risen to the challenge of maintaining college life while the community is spread to the four winds. Through online formats we have continued to hold meetings, deliver lectures and seminars, set exams and assessments, and meet for staff and student chats. Open days for prospective students were brilliantly adapted for online delivery. In place of our daily serverly menus, students have posted photos of their own lockdown baking. Dance classes, exam respite, music, sports activities – all these and more have appeared online to keep the community hanging together, and a number of post-exam events have been reconceived for online delivery, including our annual Mary's Day on Saturday June 20th.

This unusual year, for me then, has been a crash course in the appreciation of everything that is good about St Mary's. As I write, we are making plans for the Michaelmas Term – plans that are necessarily provisional and contingent, based on the likelihood that initially we will re-open with some social distancing measures in place. We do not yet know exactly what that will look like. What we are sure of is that every decision will continue to be taken with the main purpose of keeping all our staff, students and alumni safe and well, while continuing to provide what lies at the core of our purpose as a College and a University.

Half of me wants to say that, at some point in the future, we will pick up again where we left off, but I have a feeling that we will never quite do that. A world event of this scale creates not only economic and social disruption, but also a reassessment of life on such a scale that when we do recover we will not go back, but move forward. So I'm not going to make any promises about what comes next, except for this one: that we value every one of you – students, staff, alumni and friends – as a vital part of the College community, and whatever our future turns out to be, we will imagine and create it

**Professor Maggi Dawn, MA, PhD (Cantab.),
CCTM, APRS, ARSCM, APSE
Principal**

Reflections from the College Chaplain

Evensong has been offered fortnightly on Wednesdays at 7:30pm. We have had a series of visiting preachers. In November we saw the Rev'd Jeremy Chadd, Vicar of St. Chad's Sunderland. He is one of the longest standing incumbents in the Church of England, having been at St. Chad's since 1988, and an intelligent preacher. We were also visited earlier in November by the Rev'd Sarah Parkinson,

choral scholars who, as well as the Musical Director and Assistant Musical Director, are kindly paid by the college, but still sings to a very high standard. In the past academic year, the choir have gone from strength to strength, with the members of the choir turning up each week for rehearsals with infectious enthusiasm, as well as musical ability. The repertoire which has been tackled over the last nine months



the Chaplain of Low Newton Prison. That service took place the day after the SMCS Lecture by Gavin O'Malley, the Governor of Frankland Prison. It was followed in December when the choir sang a concert at Low Newton Prison at Sarah's invitation. The College Christmas Carol Service took place at the Cathedral on December 11th. In terms of sermons, one development this year has been the engagement of student speakers. This grew out of the practice of students reading poems at Evensong and was an initiative of the students. James Lehman, a third-year law student, spoke on Wednesday February 5th, the Eve of the Accession of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, on law, politics and unity. On Ash Wednesday the choir formed a joint choir with St. Oswald's Church to sing the service for Ash Wednesday at St. Helen's Kelloe, this service being the first joint service of the four neighbouring parishes, St. Oswald's, St. Mary's Shincliffe, St. Mary Coxhoe, and St. Helen Kelloe.

We have been fortunate in having a dynamic Director of Music in Hugo Jennings and I quote his words about the choir:

The college chapel choir is un auditioned but for five

ranges from earlier English music such as Byrd, Gibbons, and Tallis, as well as later pieces by the likes of Stanford, Howells, Noble, and Vaughan Williams, and some choral music by composers from mainland Europe, including Eccard and Tchaikovsky.



Mouse signature by 'Mousey' Thompson

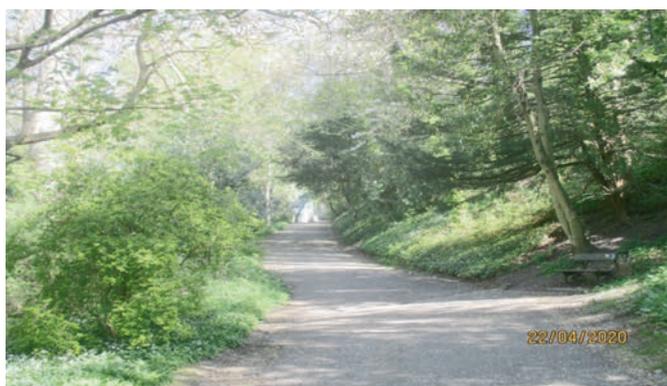
Working with Hugo, we were well served by Nathan Smith as Assistant Musical Director, David Harris, the Director of Music at St. Oswald's, and it was good to have a former Director, Matthew Warren, join us when he was in Durham. One of Matthew's own compositions was sung at the Christmas Carol Service.

The college chapel provides a familial atmosphere, and we have enjoyed being together there for these times of singing and praying, and listening to Scripture. We have also enjoyed the chance to talk over refreshments at the Calvert Room. I am conscious that the students are experiencing here the finest words and music that our religious tradition has to offer. I do pray that those words will be a source of some strength and wisdom for them for many years to come.

**Peter Kashouris
Chaplain**

Durham and St Mary's College Society in Lock down 2020

The University was ahead of the Government, being one of the first to decide to keep students and staff safe by moving its operations entirely online. Exams were held online, with degrees to be awarded remotely. Staff work from home wherever possible, buildings are shut down, and most students returned to their family homes, though some have remained in houses where they live out, including some of my own tenants (we have 2 student houses and manage 2 others.)



This is unprecedented; as Anne Elliott, the College Archivist said “Not even 2 World Wars prevented St Mary's from operating as a residential community.”

So when I walked up to St Mary's a few weeks ago (I live near enough to take it in on a “local walk”) in order to get some photos of the College with the cherry blossom flanking the Fergusson Building, I stood outside a strangely blank and closed edifice. A solitary delivery van arrived; the driver got out and rang the bell, and a contactless delivery of some boxes was made. He returned and drove away. I stayed out of his way in the small remembrance garden at the front of the Fergusson Building, dedicated to 2 former students who died tragically young.

To give readers an impression of what Durham was like at the height of the Lock down, I walked home over Prebends Bridge and along the riverbanks up to Palace Green, then through the town centre to the north end, and uphill to my home. It was a Durham I have never seen since I arrived in the 1970s.

The bridges and riverbanks were deserted apart from a solitary jogger on the opposite bank. The river shone greenly in the sunlight, the water seeming

clearer than usual, and birdsong was the dominant sound with little traffic noise. Most businesses, all the bars and pubs, and shops were shut up, with sombre notices about staying home and keeping safe, and there being no cash or goods left inside (apparently break-ins have been virtually non-existent). The only exceptions were banks, food shops with socially distanced queues outside, and a pharmacy.

The Bus Station in North road was closed, with a few temporary stops outside and opposite, and though it was a further 2-3 miles home I wasn't taking the risk of boarding a bus. Nor was anyone else. The bus displays alternated between their numbers and destinations, and a “Thank You” message to all Key Workers. On the way home, rainbows, teddy bears and “Stay safe” signs decorated house windows, some of them making it almost impossible for the residents to see out. If someone was approaching you from the opposite direction, one of us walked in the almost traffic free road to avoid getting too close.

A few weeks later, there are at last some signs of the lockdown coming to an end. Cars are off driveways



and on the tarmac again (so you dare not venture into the road now and just have to pass other daily walkers more closely than you would like!). A lot of people are back at work. Garden Centres have reopened. Soon they will followed by schools and non essential shops. The daily walkers have diminished in number to those like me who have always walked. If I go into Durham I rarely take the bus or the car.

But things are changed, possibly forever. Some companies will probably move to partial online home working; my neighbour is among those for whom t

hat may happen. More of us are shopping online. We only go to shops for food, medicine and essentials, and that with some trepidation! The Corner Shop is king once more. We are all tired, weary of being locked up, wary of other people. I miss the Gym, seeing relatives and friends (though some of us have started “socially distant” outdoor meetings again recently), and above all travelling. Some days all I want is to be on a ship again scanning the restless sea for whales and dolphins. And that may be a long time away.

Students are coming to the end of their exams now. Some returned to Durham if they live out, as online facilities and quiet for study were better there. Some are coming back for post exam events even though these will largely be online. The JCR and MCR have kept their vibrant communities going online throughout the Lock down; even Mary's day is going ahead online. See the JCR and MCR Presidents' report for details. Staff and students have supported each other. Next term, when the University and Colleges re-open, it's anyone's guess what will return to personal contact and what will continue online at least for a time.



I do hope that the College Community is able to return to what it was, perhaps supplemented by online activity. This situation has made us all realise how much we value the Collegiate System and the wonderful, warm level of interpersonal relationships that is Mary's.

Our SMCS Committee has also moved online. We have all managed to get our heads around using



Zoom or similar, and our normal May meeting was held via Zoom (see screenshot of the meeting taken by the JCR President!) Sub committee decisions have been made online or by telephone, and the meeting was expertly chaired as always by our President, Canon Elizabeth Fisher; it was a very efficient and productive couple of hours and I was surprised at how easy it was to meet this way and how well we got through the business, though I long to see people face to face again.

Sadly our 2020 Reunion has had to be cancelled because of uncertainty about exactly when buildings will reopen, but we'll be going for a real celebration in 2021. And the AGM has had to be postponed, with discussion at the moment among the Officers as to when and how it can happen.

We will, hopefully, never have another year like this at Mary's and in SMCS. The world, and Durham, may never be quite the same again. But our Community is as strong as ever.

Christine Wright (Bryce 1975-79)

CELEBRATING GWYNETH

29th September 1926 – 15th January 2020



Gwyneth Cole (nee Rees) celebrated her 90th birthday on 29th September 2015, just over six months before the Queen celebrated hers.

Gwyneth's birthplace, Stockton-on-Tees, belies her Welsh connection. However, her father, after working abroad, had moved between Wales and the North. Her first words were in Welsh because she was in Wales when learning to talk.

Gwyneth came to St. Mary's as a History student in 1947, not long after the end of the Second World War. Between leaving school and coming to University, she served for three years full-time, in the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS), the women's branch of the British Army. Gwyneth relates in her *Reminiscences 1998*, "While I was in Durham Princess Elizabeth visited the old College and I was presented to her as one of the ex-service students and in the ATS like her, though not with a commission, though I did acquire three stripes before the end."* She has a delightful little album of tiny black and white photos taken of her in uniform at Douglas, Isle of Man.

She has a unique place in the history of St. Mary's because she was a Fresher at two very significant times: 1947 and 1952. Firstly, she was present when HRH Princess Elizabeth, the future Queen, laid the Foundation Stone of the new St Mary's building (now known as Fergusson) on the present site in October 1947. Secondly, she was one of the very first students to live in this new building when it opened in October 1952. Although she had started her degree course in 1947, after just two terms she had to take several years off to recover from a

compressed spinal fracture. She was cared for by her mother and was eventually back on her feet, aided by two sticks and a support jacket. While she was away, various members of College kept in constant touch, including Principal Fergusson who visited her at her home in Billingham. When she returned in October 1952 as a Fresher for the second time, it was to the exciting new environment on Elvet Hill, St. Mary's being the first of the Hill Colleges.

"I had witnessed the laying of the foundation stone in 1947 and been presented to Princess Elizabeth before the ceremony. I jokingly declared that they had built the college in time for my return",* said Gwyneth, looking back fifty years later.



Not only was she part of two major landmarks in the College history but she also experienced different College life-styles, firstly in a variety of old buildings scattered around the peninsula, including 8, The College (now the Chorister School) on Cathedral Close and Abbey House on Palace Green. Then secondly, from 1952, she experienced College life in the magnificent new building on a single site with its imposing façade and spacious dining hall; it even had central heating!

Exactly 60 years ago, she was Senior Woman, (as the JCR President was called then), welcoming 40 freshers, in the academic year 1955-56. She saw another transition: a change of Principals, from Margaret Fergusson to Marjorie Williamson and thoroughly approved of both. She recorded the ups and downs of College life in her 1955-56 JCR Report for the SMCS Newsletter, such as a water shortage in Durham which “lasted until we went down, and so we missed the luxury of constant baths; two inches of water did not encourage one to linger.”

In 1955, she graduated with a B.A. Honours Degree in History and eager for another year in Durham, stayed on to train as a teacher in 1955-56. Because she was Senior Woman, she again lived in College. Her University career had spanned a decade!



She began her teaching career in Selby, aged 31. Six years later, she moved back to the North East to continue her career. Gwyneth had a very happy marriage to Tom Cole, a mechanical engineer at Billingham ICI. They had known each other a long time but “He was worth waiting for”, she says. Sadly, their marriage was cut short by his death after only a few years. Meanwhile, her interest in College grew from strength to strength.

Gwyneth has made a major contribution to the St. Mary’s College Society as an active committee member. With tireless enthusiasm, as Editor of the SMCS Newsletter, she collected news of Alumnae. She played a major part in organising events such as the annual SMCS Reunion and encouraged participation. She was the first College Archivist and

with her due sense of St. Mary’s history, dating back to the beginning of the College in 1899, she keenly collected archive items, established the archive storeroom in the basement and quickly acquired a computer and skills to match.

She was the SCR President during the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the Fergusson Building. She organised activities devotedly; not even thick snow would deter her from driving to Durham.



In 2000, her efforts were recognised when she was made an Honorary Fellow of St. Mary’s along with Elizabeth Boyd, author of ‘A Centenary Review’, to which Gwyneth had made a tireless contribution. A celebration dinner was held in the October to mark the occasion.

She is proud to say that of the 12 Principals spanning 117 years, she has met the last 9, even Rachel Donaldson of whom she wrote in her 1955-56 JCR Report, “We were glad to see Miss Donaldson among our guests [at Mary’s Day], and many of us remembered this when we heard of her death in March. It seemed appropriate that her last outside visit should have been to the College of which she had been Principal for so many years [1915-1940]”.

She herself is part of the College history and her interest in St. Mary’s past and present is unflinching. She has a fund of lively anecdotes and keeps in touch with the many friends she has made at St. Mary’s College. Gwyneth is a very special Alumna who has celebrated a very special birthday.

Anne Elliott, St Mary’s College Archivist

**E. Boyd: A Centenary Review p.28 Reminiscences 1998*

**Northern Echo 01/10/2002*

TRIBUTES TO GWYNETH

Eulogy by Penny Bence, Gwyneth's god-daughter
and daughter of Gwyneth's college friend Pat Kohnstam.

I have known Gwyneth all my life, & obviously she has known me all my life until now. I always felt that she would support me & my decisions.

There were many stories that Gwyneth told, true ones, about events in her life. One was of the uncut rubies, given to her father as a leaving South Africa present, which were thrown out in the garden because he did not realise what the stones were. How she drove tanks to the depots during the war was another. Given her diminutive height, that must have been quite a challenge.

As an adult with my own children, Gwyneth was very much associated with our family Christmas. She spent it with us for over 20 years, until 3 years ago when she became too immobile & I took a Christmas dinner to her instead. It will not be the same without her.

Gwyneth was still in the forces when she fell, damaging her back, while running for a train. She had to lie on her back for 5 years to let it recover. The reading frame that her father made for her & how well her mother cared for her then were also part of her life stories that shaped her spirit & subsequent zest for life & educating younger people. She returned to St Mary's College, Durham after her recovery, which is when she became such a good friend of my mother, who had been at college there herself 5 years earlier.

Gwyneth also was responsible for my becoming a member of St Mary's Senior Common Room. It was a very important institution in her life, & some of her friends & colleagues from there are here today.
3rd Feb. 2020

Eulogy by Dr Fadia Faqir, Writing Fellow, St Aidan's College

I met Gwyneth twenty-five years ago at St Mary's on high table and we became good friends since. Gwyneth first joined St Mary's as a history student in 1947 and then returned after retirement as a College Archivist and President of the Senior Common Room. We spent hours in the SCR and in her house in Marton talking about our memories, lives and future. With the absence of my family, she slowly

took on the role of my 'mother', offering help and support and nudging me in the right direction.

She was a formidable woman, independent and fearless. She was also extremely intelligent, an excellent educator, an avid reader, well-informed, elegant, compassionate, inclusive, with a mischievous sense of humour. The character of Gwen in my novel, 'My Name is Salma', who is both intelligent and compassionate, is based on her, and I hope will remain a fitting tribute to a great woman.

She was also an excellent history teacher and her ex-students loved her and kept in touch with her over the years. The house is full of gifts they sent her like the crochet mats on the side coffee table. I would like to share this lovely episode in the classroom, she described in one of her letters to her late husband Tom, the love of her life, written in 1971, which she gave me to use as I wish. 'The class discovered that an empty ballpoint pen filled with rice makes a wonderful shooter. They were starting to demonstrate this, so I made all the culprits empty their pockets, pencil cases etc. into my wastepaper basket. They protested feebly, but did as they were told, asking what I intended to do with the rice. I said that I was taking it to the kitchen so we could have rice pudding for dinner. Imagine my delight when rice pudding actually appeared as the sweet!'

In our house in Amman, Jordan, we had a huge jasmine vine and we used to start our day sweeping jasmine flowers off the tiled floor. Since I arrived in the UK in 1984, I tried and failed to grow a jasmine like the one I left behind. I did a documentary for BBC Radio 4 entitled 'A View from Abroad: In Search of a Jasmine Tree' on the subject. In her interview for the programme, Gwyneth spoke eloquently about the beauty of nature and industry in the North. On air, she gave me a cutting from her jasmine, which I planted in my garden in Durham. It grew into a huge tree.

I shall remember you my friend whenever I need someone to ask me the right question, whenever I crave an intelligent conversation, whenever I hear opera, whenever the jasmine flowers fill the evening air. Rest in peace, my friend.

3rd Feb. 2020

A Personal Recollection by Dr Margaret Collins (nee Purnell 1965-68)

When I joined the SCR in the 70s, I became aware of this little lady looking like everyone's favourite granny, with curly hair and a traditional, smart appearance, but she was obviously a lady of sharp intellect, and authority who knew everyone and everything about the college. As SCR President I joined SMCS and I saw a lot more of Gwyneth. My image of her was reinforced, as she was always involved in something to do with Mary's, going without stopping from one thing to another, often physically as well as mentally. Gwyneth's authoritative comments always added much to any discussion. Even when she disagreed with someone and was obviously cross about some decision taken during a meeting, she never raised her voice, shouted or took umbrage. We still always knew exactly what she felt!

I came to know Gwyneth better when I became SMCS President in 1998, and realised just how much she did for the Society and College. I spent more time with her, often down in her claustrophobic work-room in the cellar, grandly called the College archive. As Archivist she had collected and sorted so many records and memorabilia and was a real source of knowledge of the history of St Mary's. And she knew where everything was in the tottering piles around her! She certainly unearthed some real gems for meetings and the Newsletters. I also realised during that time, she kept up to date with technical advances, using a PC with a lot of confidence and efficiency, unlike many of her generation.

Gwyneth was always very pleasant, quietly spoken and friendly. She had a wonderful sense of humour and a fund of stories and anecdotes, so she was always good company and a very pleasant colleague to relax and chat with. I remember her warm smile and delightful little chuckle when something amused her. It was sad that, as her health deteriorated in more recent times, she was unable

to come into college. However she still kept up to date with College and university developments.

It is such a shame we have lost this lovely lady who was so able, so dedicated and did so much for the College, but her memory will stay with us for a long time to come.

I am proud to have known her
4th March 2020

Fond memories from Dr Gillian Boughton

A high point – a wonderful memory of Gwyneth lives on in several relaxed and happy photographs taken at a celebration of her 90th birthday. She welcomed the Principal, Professor Hackett, her very old friend and Writing Fellow of St Aidan's College, Fadia Faqir and me to her sitting-room which was abundant with flowers, gifts and cards from her friends, colleagues and ex-students, implicitly reflecting her own generosity to others over the years.

On my first week as Vice-Principal of St Mary's in August 2000, Gwyneth brought a pair of antique St Mary's bookends to my office. They were a very precious link to St Mary's in the past and I treasured them on public display on my office bookshelf for thirteen and a half years, leaving them there as a heritage link for my successor when I retired. I felt they were a gift to St Mary's and not to me personally, although I will always value her personal friendship and robust engagement on a number of issues, sometimes disagreeing but always with great mutual respect. Her attention to detail when setting up alumnae and SCR dining events with the kitchen, was extraordinary as was her ceaseless initiative on behalf of the College. It is impossible to overestimate the benefit to St Mary's of Gwyneth's conviction, imagination and kindness over the years.

20th April 2020

With grateful thanks to Penny, Fadia, Margaret and Gillian for these heartfelt words in appreciation of Gwyneth's life.

Anne Elliott
College Archivist

Late 1950s Memories of Mary's , and Life Now

by Elizabeth Mcleod

I was at Mary's from 1957 to 1960, and was lucky enough to be part of the renowned Geography Department under Professor WB Fisher. My tutor was Dr John Clark, later Professor Clark, who much later, as pro vice chancellor oversaw the degree giving ceremony with Dame Margot Fonteyn when my son Richard Parr (Grey) his wife Alison(Trev's) and Jeremy Vine , and Annabel Heseltine were awarded their degrees.

At Mary's I rowed and played tennis for the College, and got my Palatinate for playing Lacrosse for the University.

I was Treasurer of DWUS (the society was not amalgamated with the DUS until much later,) but on invitation, I took part in many debates there on Palace Green. The subject of one debate was ' Marks and Spencer have done more for humanity than Marx and Spenser'

My moral tutor at Mary's was Mrs Offler(wife of Prof Offler of the History Department) she gave us sherry at her house now and again; she was a distinguished historian herself.

I had lectures from the famous Rosie Cramp of the Archeological Dept, and from Leo Blair(Tony Blair's father) of the Economics Dept, then situated opposite Durham Prison.

On Year our group from Durham Colleges Light Opera group (DCLOG) took our productions of Pirates of Penzance and Yeoman of the Guard into the prison. The inmates loved it!

With the Durham Revue Group I could have gone to the Edinburgh Fringe with our 1960 Revue, and met the famous 'Beyond the Fringe' people: Jonathan Miller, Peter Cooke Dudley Moore etc before they were famous.

But I went to Norway instead!

My greatest friends from Durham I am still in touch with. Patricia Moore(Fayers) was my

bridesmaid and godmother to my daughter Sarah. Rev. Juliet Woollcombe(Dearmer), her late husband Bishop Woolcombe confirmed both my daughter Sarah(in Marylebone London,)and my son Richard(in Oxford) Marjorie Ayling(Blackburn), Sallie Maclay(Vine) Hilary and Joe Clinch (he was at Cuth's with my first husband John Parr who both also read Geography) Hilary's maiden name was Jacques

My career started as a graduate trainee at Harrod's and ended as the HR advisor to the Hospitality industry. Over the years I worked in the Pharmaceutical and Financial industries, was a Headhunter in the City of London during the 80's and Big Bang , was a Magistrate, and sat on various committees including Industrial Relations, Social Security, and VAT and Duties Tribunals.

When Miss Kenworthy was Principal, I came to College several times to meet current students and give advice on careers.

In retirement, until the current lock down, I am a volunteer at National Trust Upton House, and at our local Horton General Hospital in Banbury where I am a Presenter on Hospital Radio every Monday with my programme 'Live at Three'

I have 3 children, Richard, Sarah and Rosalind (she is Head of English at St John's Leatherhead) She read English at Manchester University and was in several dramatic productions with Benedict Comberbach) before he was famous!

I have 8 grandchildren, James is a Barrister, Amy is a chemical engineer and works for Mars, Sophie is a nurse at Shrewsbury Hospital, Magnus and Grace also have degrees, Oscar had to return in March from Glasgow University, Christabel and George(11 and 9) teach Grannie how to use her computer, especially Zoom, WhatsApp, and Houseparty!

Elizabeth Macleod(nee Wrottesley) 1957-60

Life in Wyfold Vineyard for a Mary's Alumna

We've been getting so many questions about what Coronavirus means for vineyards that I thought you might be interested to hear how life has changed at my own 2-hectare site in South Oxfordshire. All vineyards in the UK ended the winter as wet as they had started. In Wyfold Vineyard's case, a gravelly, flinty sloping site in the Chilterns that always (did) drain beautifully, the ground water never disappeared and we were eventually forced to put in a new trackway so that engineers could come and do basic machinery maintenance, tractor diesel could be delivered (and the toilet emptied!). But it was a problem solved. We had already started some regenerative pruning on our older vines but, as usual, we delayed the general pruning till the last week in February in an effort to hold back bud development while there was still danger of frost. This worked because the frost incidents we had over 14th to 16th April didn't do any harm. Then Lockdown happened. What to do? The period from budburst to when the leafy canopy is fully grown is the busiest time in a vineyard for handwork. After that it's mostly tractor work and vigilance against pests and diseases. This handwork in France is called 'les petits façons' – usually done by women because it's detailed work needing focus and attention (they'll tell you). Then the men and machines come onto the vineyard. Although there were some contract crews still to hire – there was fierce competition to get them. Like a lot of businesses we turned to local help. We already had a Friends of Wyfold volunteer group which enjoyed summer evenings doing light work and a barbecue. This wasn't now possible. But vineyards are farming, we're an agricultural business and we were able to adapt. We tried out a system of volunteers arriving at 10-minute intervals to disinfect, receive instruction and be given their rows. Each worker travelled to the site with an Essential Workers

Certificate on advice from DEFRA - they worked either as individuals or as a household and at least 2 rows apart which was perfect as the rows are 2.2 metres apart. Never did I imagine that Wyfold Vineyard's was the perfect layout for social distancing! Once done people still kept well apart and either went home or stayed and had their own picnics. Again, a vineyard is perfect – lots of lovely corners where a grassy slope invites a short stay – and always with a beautiful view. We have been compensated for the flooding by some beautiful, sunny and warm weather. So that's how we will continue this year until those more gregarious gatherings are allowed and we wish our many clients in the restaurant and hotel trade the very best as they seek to reopen.



I write this as more 'frost incidents' are happening this week. Mid May is by far the most dangerous time – we have all this beautiful, luscious green growth and the flower buds are showing. Keep your fingers crossed for us please!

Barbara Laithwaite, Wyfold Vineyard

St. Mary's College Centenary

1919-2019

St. Mary's College enjoys celebrating special anniversaries. Recent ones include 2012, the Diamond Jubilee of the Fergusson Building; 2007, the 175th anniversary of the University marked by a Grand Alumni Weekend with a memorable lunch and dinner for Alumni of all the colleges in a huge marquee on the race course; 2005, a Year of Celebration for St Mary's contribution to the higher education of women.

In 1899 the Women's Hostel, forerunner of St Mary's, was established with Principal Laura Roberts and 6 students. So naturally in 1999 the centenary of this small beginning was enthusiastically celebrated. At the June Reunion of that year, a magnificent dinner was attended by 300 alumnae and guests who included the Chancellor Sir Peter Ustinov, the Vice-Chancellor Sir Kenneth Calman and Lady Calman. A detailed history by Elizabeth Boyd, 'St Mary's College 1899-1999: A Centenary Review', documented the hundred years.

1974 marked the 75th anniversary of the Women's Hostel with the publication of 'St Mary's College 1899-1974' edited by Marilyn Hird. In 1949 the half century of the Women's Hostel occasioned Laura Roberts' revealing account of her two years as the first Principal at 33 Claypath before the move to Abbey House and a vivid article by Bessie Callender, 1899 student and first Senior Woman. [SMCS Newsletters 1948/49 and 1949/50].

In 2019 St Mary's has enjoyed a threefold centenary celebrating the granting of Collegiate status to the Women's Hostel, the new name St Mary's College and the move to a new main home, all of which took place in 1919.

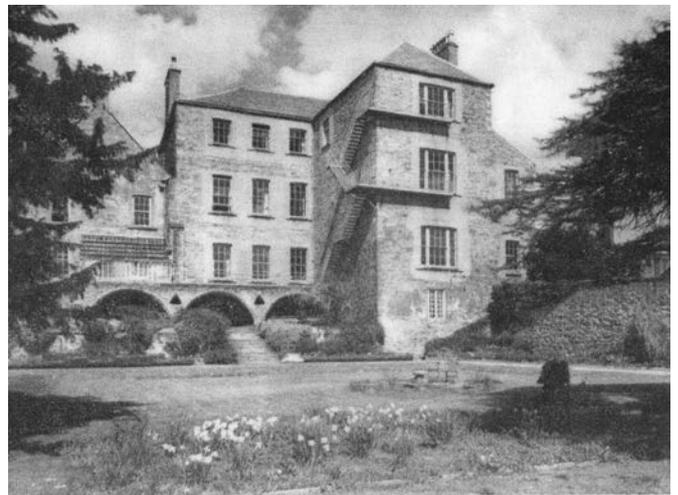
NEW COLLEGIATE STATUS

"It was agreed that the new Women's Hostel be called St Mary's College and that the Estates Committee be requested to advise on its status."

This statement is recorded in two lines in the minutes of the University Council of 4th November 1919. These minutes are kept in the Palace Green Library. The changes of name and status are obviously highly significant in the College history yet there appears to be no grander acknowledgement of the name change than this. The Estates Committee minutes have probably not survived.

NEW NAME: ST. MARY'S COLLEGE:

The Principal, Rachel Donaldson, wrote in her 1919-20 Report to the Old Students, "I may say with regard to the new name that there were times when we were in imminent danger of going through life bearing the name of some Bishop who probably would have been horrified at the bare suggestion of a women's college within these sacred precincts, or of some obscure Woman Saint with an unpronounceable Saxon name. There were many suggestions...but eventually it was generally agreed that we could not do better than place the College under the protection of Mary herself, and I think that the choice is one that, as time goes on, we shall not regret".



ST. MARY'S COLLEGE FROM THE GARD

NEW HOME 8 THE COLLEGE, CATHEDRAL CLOSE (now the Chorister School)

This became the new main residence though Abbey House and Cottage were still retained. "Abbey House now being too small, its members have moved to one of the prebendal houses in the College. Owing to various strikes, there has been great difficulty in getting the house ready and properly furnished. When all the difficulties have been overcome the members of the Hostel will be delighted with their new abode, which has a much more collegiate appearance, is more commodious in every way, and has a delightful garden. We hope, however, that the day will soon come when they will have to move again to a permanent building, when industrial conditions make such a desirable event possible." [Durham University Journal Nov. 1919]

The Principal, clearly pleased with the College's new home described it as follows: "The prebendal house.....stands on the site of the former granaries of the monks. It is approached from the Cathedral College (the name given to the Close in Durham) through a beautiful arch which leads into a large dignified, cobbled courtyard. Over the entrance are the arms of Shute Barrington, a former Bishop of Durham who added an east wing to the house. In the rear of the house, which faces South, lies a large, sunny, rectangular garden with a lily-pond in the middle and a cedar tree – the only one in Durham. A very high wall on the line of the ancient city wall (of which there remains a twelfth century buttress) encloses the garden, the wall of which eventually joins the only remaining gate to the city.....The interior of the building is remarkable for a very lofty ceiling and a handsome staircase of two flights. The spacious public rooms provide a dining-hall capable of seating eighty students, and two very large rooms which serve as library and common room respectively". [R.E.D. Donaldson quoted in M.Hird, Doves and Dons

"To begin with we have reached the status of which we used in my first year in Durham to talk longingly but rather hopelessly – the status of a full-fledged College.

"This year we have come of age, are known as St Mary's College, are represented on the Council, possess a Common Room into which we can all get, as well as a spacious garden and a boat. We are



1982]

The College house had bedrooms for only 15 students so it is not surprising that additional premises were required. A new house nearby was added. This was 8, South Bailey, now known as Welldon House in memory of the former Dean. (Bishop Welldon had allowed St Mary's the use of the Deanery Chapel during his time as Dean. Eventually a chapel for St Mary's was built in the garden of 8, The College.)

Principal Donaldson summed up the historic achievements of 1919 in her 1919-1920 Report:

soon going to have a crest on our notepaper, and we want suggestions for a motto. During the year we attained to thirty students and to judge from the number of applicants for October, will easily surpass that record next year." She kept former students well informed especially now that reunions of Old Students had resumed after their suspension in the First World War when travelling and catering were difficult. The College's change of name and status was followed by a change in the name of the Old Students' Society. The title St Mary's College Society was chosen shortly afterwards by the Committee of the Hostel Society when the Principal reported the changes. It was formally adopted at the Annual General Meeting in May 1920. This title still describes the alumni body 100 years later. [E.Boyd: A Centenary Review p96]

Anne Elliott, St Mary's College Archivist

Colour

an award winning story by Judith Wharton plus review of Judith's novel "Bug"

She made up her mind to move while she was washing her hands in the 'rest room' of the crematorium. It was the dusty plastic gardenia arranged in a yellowing glass vase on the windowsill that hardened her heart. She looked at herself in the mirror. The face that looked back at her was oddly composed, as if she had arranged her features that morning whilst putting on her lipstick. Well, better keep it that way. No point in succumbing to emotion now.

A woman in a black coat, black gloves and a high black hat welcomed them into the chapel. She was very short and stood on her toes to speak. Sophie pictured Steve's spirit hovering somewhere near the ceiling. She imagined how the colour would drain from his pale face when he saw that his wife had chosen a firm of funeral directors run by women. But then, since her son had been born, he had always looked cross.

'For my own peace of mind,' the woman was saying, 'For my own peace of mind, I have to ask you to make sure that your mobile phones are switched off for the duration.'

For her peace of mind, Sophie thought... why did she need peace of mind? It wasn't as if it was the body of her husband they were sending into the furnace. What if she, the widow, now that she was ontologically changed, decided to take a phone call just as the curtains were closing?

Surly, if she wanted to, on this day of all days, she could do anything she liked. She could pull down the arrangements of pallid silk lilies that hung in bleached wicker baskets on either side of the aisle. She could run outside, where the trees were drunk with colour as if they had sucked up barrels of burgundy and vats of yellow sherry and gather up armfuls of amber oak and copper beech and bronzed ash. She could cover the floor with branches and throw handfuls of rusty red leaves on the coffin. She could take off all her black clothes and tie her teal coloured bra and panties to the handles. She could remind his friends that she had once been strawberry blonde. Her pubic hair was still as ginger as the day they had married.

When it was all over, and his friends had eaten sandwiches and sipped champagne in the front room,

she and Freddy stood and watched the last car back out of the paved area in front of the house. Twenty years ago, Steve had insisted that they cover the whole garden with concrete, 'so we won't have the effort of a lawn.' Only Steve's Honda had used the space, until eventually they had put up a basketball net above the garage door. At least that had meant that Freddy's school friends had come to play with him. She had wanted more children, but Steve had put his foot down after Freddy was born. So she had moved out of their bedroom and into the guest room.

She turned and looked up at her son. 'You can have this house if you want it... or sell. I don't know where I'm going yet, but I'm leaving as soon as I can.' His dark eyes smiled back at her and she touched his cheek. His silky skin as nut brown as the conkers he had hoarded as a child.

She didn't wait for a reply but went inside and climbed the stairs; the beige carpet was worn on every alternate tread, as if the occupants of the house had been at pains to keep their imprint to a minimum. She crossed the landing towards the room she had slept in, and then on an impulse, opened the door to the master bedroom.

She pulled back the curtains. The day before she had taken out all Steve's suits and laid them on the candlewick bedspread. Methodically, she began to search the pockets. She looked through the chest of drawers, and under the bed and finally stood on a chair to look on top of the wardrobe. She lifted down a box. The disturbed dust danced in a shaft of autumn sunshine.

As she lifted off the lid, she hardly dared hope for what she might find inside. For twenty-five years she had refused to think about that time and that place, certain that if she locked away the memory and refused to go near it, she could keep it safe and unsullied, a golden memory to be treasured in a life of drab grey.

She pulled out some papers, and a photograph of her and Steve standing outside a brightly painted house by the sea. It was taken soon after they were married, because in the picture she's holding Steve's hand. She rummaged through and found the document she was

searching for. He hadn't sold their first home. After they had moved away, she had never asked. She had known that to talk about it, to talk about anything, was too dangerous.

She bundled up the papers and put them back in the box. She could still remember the telephone number. She picked up the phone on the bedside table and dialled. A woman's voice said hello.

'Hi, my name is Sophie Drake,' said Sophie. 'My husband was Steve Drake. He's died and so I now own the house you're renting. Can you tell me how

long you still have to go on your contract?' 'We'll be moving out in a month,' said the woman. 'My husband has a job down south. Didn't meet your husband. We've only dealt with the agents.'

Sophie put down the phone, crossed to the window and pushed it open. The sun was setting and the buildings behind the house were silhouetted against a salmon pink sky. She breathed deeply. The air smelled of wood-smoke from a neighbour's bonfire. A month was just long enough to pack

Judith Stevenson

Review: "Bug" by Judith Wharton

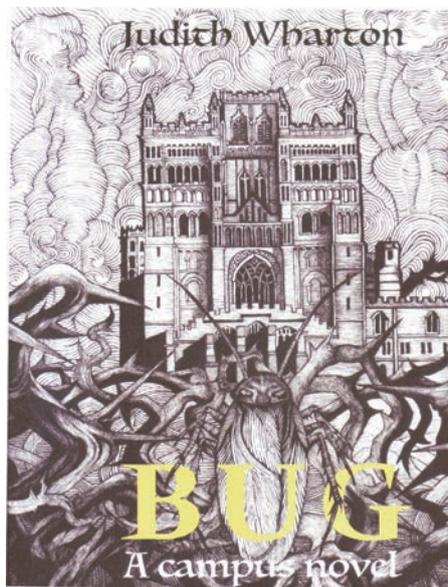
I read this Campus Novel with interest, based as it is on Durham, the Collegiate system, and St Mary's College.

It's a very entertaining read; by turns dramatic, witty, unlikely, and atmospheric. Durham Alumni will revel in the writing which evokes the breath of the buildings, the Cathedral counting out time, and the river which is almost a character in its own right particularly as tension builds towards the end of the story.

The characters appear to represent the whole gamut of eccentrics found in the enclosed world of a University, from American academics trying to settle in this most English of Universities, to their British counterparts displaying more oddities than one would expect, to enthusiastic students playing daft pranks; students with problems adjusting to independent living and study, and a Student Support Officer who seems desperately trying to stay sane herself and keep everyone else so. Many of them carry dark secrets inside which affect their relationships. The past haunts the present.

And all of this is set within the last term of 1999, amid the media-fuelled fear of the Millennium "Bug" which older alumni will remember well. Computers, on which we had relatively recently become so dependent, would cease to work. Data would be

destroyed. Planes would fall out of the sky. And then the relief and the slightly foolish feeling we collectively had when it all turned out to be nothing. There are other "bugs" at work in the darker side of this story. The entomologist who becomes a sexual stalker, and who is not all he seems. The fear and mental health issues which stalk some of the main characters. The lonely cottage in the woods. The badger sett. And the student pranks which are just a step too far for ordinary College rivalry.



It's beautifully written too, with some sentences that make you stop and reflect as they evoke a vivid image of Durham or the Colleges, as well as the characters.

The novel steers a clever course between the humorous, the dark and the dramatic, achieving in the end a good balance. The sexual element is constant but doesn't dominate. It's a good page turner; you want to rush on and find out what happens. And the vivid descriptions of the town which is

Durham, the local villages, the natural world, and university life, evoke a bittersweet nostalgia in the reader.

Altogether a really good and memorable read. Bug is available from Amazon as a paperback or e-book.

Editor
Christine Wright

Report from the JCR President

Mary's

GOOD VIBES

This week, we've included photos of people celebrating completing their dissertations - well done to everyone, you absolute stars!

Feel good back to them self writing them!

WAM, Lockdown Edition - by Kat Jackson
WAM have been absolute angels yet again and organised lots of wonderful things to keep supporting Mary's through this current exam season...

A few times a week, there are Zoom break times at 3pm. This week I joined Grace, Nu, and Serena on one and it was such a lovely way to chat to some friendly faces during a study break.

To replace Snack Drops, WAM have bought subscriptions to numerous apps, like Headspace and Down Dog, which will hopefully be useful for people when it comes to self-care and managing stress, anxiety, and sleep.

There'll be Drop Ins twice a week on Skype with the usual signposting available, if needs be, or just a friendly chat!

For more info on any of WAM's Exam Season plans, be sure to join the 'WAM Exam Events - Lockdown Edition' Facebook group & keep your eyes peeled on the group for some Motivational Monday or Wellness Wednesday posts! Lots of WAM love x

Newsletter

16.5.20

Quarantunes - by Maggi Dawn
Here are a few of our very own college Principal's current go-to songs.

"I either want the kind of songs that make me want to sing along just a little too loud, or move back the furniture and dance in the living room. Or I want something beautiful that reminds me that, despite the weirdness of lockdown, I am still just lucky to be alive. Enjoy!"

It's Not Living - The 1375
You Can Call Me Al - Paul Simon
Fun Fun Fun - The Beach Boys
Born to Run - Bruce Springsteen
Together Alone - Crowded House
How Lucky am I? - The Lemon Twigs



Our lovely WAM Exes



Oliver, Computer Science



Cherry-blossom 360 or 18 for more!

First and foremost, I hope that you and your loved ones are safe and well during this incredibly unpredictable and rather bizarre time. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the staff, current students and alumni who have been working incredibly hard over the past few months to keep the Mary's spirit alive during the COVID-19 outbreak. This year has been an exceptional one for the JCR at Mary's, but the love, support and strength that our community has displayed over the past few months has made me feel incredibly proud and fortunate to be a part of the Mary's family during this time.



The 2019 Freshers' Rep Team led by our Senior Freshers' Rep (Serena Conn).

At the beginning of this year, we warmly welcomed Professor Maggi Dawn into the Mary's community as our new Principal. Additionally, we also welcomed

Andrew Unwin, our new Vice Principal, to Mary's at the beginning of March. It has been a pleasure working with Maggi and Andrew this year, as they are always keen to help the JCR in any way they can. They have both provided me with a fantastic support system over the past year and I cannot thank them

enough. It hasn't been the easiest start at Mary's for either Maggi or Andrew, but I am truly certain that Mary's will continue to grow and develop progressively with their leadership, support and enthusiasm for all things Mary's. We also had to say goodbye to our beloved Vice

Principal, Catherine Paine, at the end of Michaelmas term. To thank Catherine for all of the support she has provided the JCR with over the year, we have awarded her with Honorary Life Membership of the JCR.

Looking back at this year, it astounds me to see how much our JCR has achieved in such a short space of time! Our students have been actively engaged in establishing a variety of new societies this year, including Poetry Society, Games Society, Debate Society and Vegetarian & Vegan Society. An important addition to our JCR this year has been the introduction of the Ethnic Minorities Association, established by our 2018/19 Ethnic Minorities Representative (Odi Oladuji). The aim of the society



Mary's Got Talent, with guest judges Prof. Maggi Dawn, Aiden Patterson (MCR President), Nuriya Shoro (JCR President) and Emma Johnson & Charlotte Frazer (DUCK Reps).

is to provide safe spaces for our ethnic minority students within Mary's and to raise awareness of ethnic minority related issues both within and outside of the Durham community. Alongside this, I have spent this year creating a JCR Development Plan, in order to ensure that long-term goals for the JCR, including increasing inclusivity and diversity within our

community, are carried forward by future JCR Presidents and Executive Committees at Mary's.

Nuriya Shoro

MCR Report Epiphany 2020

St Mary's College stories and events

Winter Congregation Dinner

9th January – On this celebratory occasion a group of 1970 alumni graduates of St Mary's returned with an invitation from the Principal to help rejoice in this College congregation event. It brought back memories for them in which they could share to the students and helped the Principal learn more about the College that she now was in charge of, for her second term of the academic year! It was also a wonderful evening with family of the newly graduated to celebrate successful endings and new beginnings.



Burns Night Formal Dinner 23rd January – Another classic yearly formal has once again come around and passed us by. As always the 'address to the Haggis' took place and all the students that flooded the hall to capacity had a joyous time in company of friends from all different year groups. The solidarity and friendships we see are delightful to observe and we hope people can keep in contact with their friendship groups for years to come!

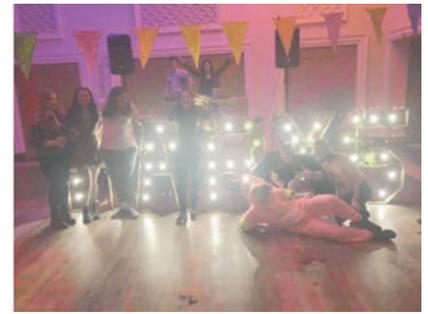


Mary's Does Parkrun – As always Mary's has kept up its weekly Park Running and occasionally we get a larger turnout from our students. Congratulations to you all (some didn't make it to the group picture). Keep it up and be proud of what you all achieve. It can be hard to get up so early to then hurl yourself around for 5km!

Mary's Bop 7th February – Another in-house College event but with a twist. No formal meal but a disco-style set up to keep the students grooving and having fun in each other's company. A lot of set up and preparation always goes in to events by the students themselves through the JCR and as always it was heart-warming to see many of them staying back after the event to help tidy away and take all the decorations down. It takes teamwork to keep these events running smoothly and with no hitches, and that's exactly what students

Mary's Bop 7th February

Another in-house College event but with a twist. No formal meal but a disco-style set up to keep the students grooving and having fun in each other's company. A lot of set up and preparation always goes in to events by the students themselves through the JCR and as always it was heart-warming to see many of them staying back after the event to help tidy away and take all the decorations down. It takes teamwork to keep these events running smoothly and with no hitches, and that's exactly what students keep giving us.



The camaraderie of Mary's shines through at events like this!



Arts Week 17th February

This week involved a pub quiz with arts related questions and general knowledge, a life drawing session, a painting and decoration session and brand new this year a Mary's got talent event. This featured a variety of acts as well as a panel of judges. The judges were the Principal who has a very interesting musical career background, the Arts President and a live audience voting system. The winning act won a place for a headlining slot for this year's Mary's day!

Students varied in skill, but some rose to the occasion and a rare few had developed a special sense when it came to drawing over the years and stunned many in the society. It was a chance to celebrate the Arts in Mary's and it was certainly a busy time organising the week for the President, but all enjoyed themselves and it often gave students a chance to try something new or open their minds to a new hobby that they will now consolidate. Along the way people were guided in how to develop their drawings and no previous experience was required. It was always a very chilled-out atmosphere. As many people that wanted to get involved could, and the turnout never disappointed.

Arts Week finished with the climax of the Masquerade Ball...

Masquerade Ball 21st February

This year's theme for the Ball harked back to the scenes of Venice and its roots. This masquerade extravaganza had all the usual entertainments before and after the meal and more! There was a selfie machine, print outs and phoenix photography before the meal, and after was a waffle machine, a rodeo-esque spinning machine, and several acts. These included basement jazz, witless, a Mary's dance routine, a magician and it finished off with a DJ closing the evening off.



Sports alumni weekend 7th March

A range of sports wanted to get involved in this event this year and there was an obvious reason! Fun and competitiveness... to prove who is the best – the present students of the sports clubs or the past veterans of our alumni community. But somehow there are always stand out characters of each generation and year group. It was an excellent event of skill and leisure, the inclusivity from all our sports was super to see and always with laughter and smiles from everyone. Thank you to all the captains involved in the organisation of the sports day and I hope all the alumni that travelled up enjoyed their time here and passed on beneficial wisdom to our current students, in both sports and academia. After this, other events for this term sadly had to be cancelled due to the coronavirus prevention policy. St Mary's wishes everyone well and hopes to see you all in the future.

Memories from the late 60s at Mary's

by Marion Glazebrook (nee Acland) 1968-7

It is fifty years since I was an undergraduate at Mary's. I was lucky enough to live in College for the full three years and what I remember with particular affection is the food. Best of all were the formal meals in the Dining Hall two or three times a week: Latin grace said by the Senior Woman, sitting in our gowns being waited on, holding up the serving dishes for a refill... The roast potatoes were to die for! After dinner we usually bowed out to Mrs Holdsworth on High Table, not because we had urgent essays to finish, but to be first in the kettle queue back in the New Building. There, we made our Nescafe with Marvel and passed round fig roll biscuits bought from the Buttery in the Old Building basement.

As an alternative to Marvel, which invariably went lumpy, a little shop on Church Street sold us fresh milk which we hung outside the window in a plastic bag to keep it cool. We bought Ryvita crisp-breads at the little shop too, and these we ate in our rooms with our butter ration - half a pack each, collected from the Dining Hall after Sunday supper. This was always cold meat and salad, left out for us by the catering staff, with plenty of bread and jam to follow.

Most of my lectures and tutorials took place on Palace Green, so we spent our breaks in the Union cafe next door. Here Marie served us her own unique frothy coffee in thick white cups, together with her wonderful home-made date and walnut slices, the best I have ever tasted. Durham City was rather gritty and grubby before the heritage industry smartened it up, and there were not as many restaurants in town as there are now. But I remember egg and chips in the House of Andrews cafe, coffee in the Mugwump, and ice cream from Valente's, next door to the Essoldo cinema in North Road. Sometimes we treated ourselves to a fish and chip supper from Sweaty Betty's on the corner of Hallgarth Street, opposite Dunelm House. On very special occasions we might splash out at the Kwai Lam Chinese restaurant in Saddler Street, but even their businessman's lunch was expensive for students living on a grant. More often we stayed in College and cooked up a Vesta powdered curry in the pantry on our floor. It stank the place out and it really didn't taste very nice, but an Indian meal seemed daring and exotic to us then. How times have changed!

Marion Glazebrook (nee Acland) 1968-7

My experiences in Lockdown

There's no doubt that quarantine has been a weird situation for people, especially young people who love socialising with others. But even as an introvert myself, I have found changes to my life since I left Durham at the end of the Epiphany Term.

Revision for my exams has certainly been a chore for me. The repetitive nature of reading over notes, whilst effectively knowing that the knowledge isn't as necessary as exams are officially open-book, really made it difficult to stay focused. Additionally, I previously enjoyed moving around the Science Site to change the working environment and keep focused, whilst socialising with my friends in college. The absence of this has made revision hard, but so much rewarding that the knowledge I learned will be more retained for the future.

My days would normally be divided up with my exercise. I'm not physically active - so I enjoyed going

on walks around my neighbourhood and going shopping in town for my family, who are mostly working from home or helping my older family members. I would usually go for around 30mins to 1 ½ hours daily, which refreshed my mind from revision, solidified what I knew from revision, and helped me keep sane. Additionally, shopping trips were insightful as a business student. Seeing the weekly changes to the business environment was certainly interesting. I particularly noticed early on a form of Corporate Social Responsibility many businesses took for protecting their customers and staff. I saw both M&S and Poundland preaching social distancing and helping the community before other big supermarkets and brands announced their social actions.

The other main hobby I do (which I could do during lockdown), was playing video games. I am a huge Nintendo fan as my friends can agree with. I am also

an E-sports competitor for Super Smash Bros Ultimate (SSBU) with Durham University E-Sports Society. So during lockdown, I have been practising every day and attending online tournaments from the comfort of my room. These have been the most enjoyable experiences during quarantine - even those days where I don't perform well. Many players are taking a break from the game due to the poor online performance - and although it is not optimal - I am learning more and more about the game as I play, win and lose. Plus, the community is so tightly-knitted, with other players giving up time for coaching, running tournaments, and just socialising outside of the game.

This routine has been repetitive and frustrating over the past months, I can't deny that. But with the help



Owengate - Deserted due to Coronavirus

of my family, friends and girlfriend, I have been able to keep my mental health positive for most of the lockdown. I talk to them frequently about my feelings, whilst being able to crack a pun and just laugh it off with others. Luckily, this is something that has never changed since lockdown began and I cannot find the words to describe how grateful I am for having these people in my life.

Hopefully, the government will be able to take the UK population out of lockdown in a safe and sustainable manner - to avoid a second spike and overwhelming health workers. I will do my part in that, to protect my family, friends and loved ones. Although it is frustrating and it has affected my mental health, I know it is the right thing to do and I feel a sense of pride knowing that I am doing the right thing. Stay safe everyone and keep in contact with those close to you.

Joshua Pattison, 1st Year Business & Management Student

I think it would be fair to say that some of my time during lockdown has been spent feeling sad about the premature end to first year and missed experiences in Durham. Not having a third term living in Teikyo, not attending Mary's day and not witnessing Durham in the summer: it will always feel like my university experience has been somewhat reduced. However, there have been some really great things about living back at home. I've spent some of my time in lockdown volunteering through a local voluntary



**Coronavirus 2020 - One Person Crowd
Framwellgate Bridge**

association. This has entailed picking up prescriptions and shopping for vulnerable people as well as calling them on the phone. Through this role I have built cross generational relationships, something that I'm sure I wouldn't have developed had I been in Durham for a third term! Another positive about living back at home has been the opportunity to spend time with my family that I wouldn't have had otherwise. I've been on long runs with my brother, danced in the kitchen with my sister and played card games as a family. I have a younger sister with Down's Syndrome and my mum works as a primary school teacher and has continued working in order to look after key workers children. This meant that each week I have spent time "homeschooling" my sister. Homeschooling her has been both challenging in itself as well as having to balance such responsibility with online exams. Despite the inevitable difficulties that come along with homeschooling, and it has been great to spend so much time with my sister, and it has also been pretty fun at times. Last week we acted out Shrek, I was the donkey!

Sophie Paxton, 1st year Student

Annual General Meeting 2019

The 2019 AGM was held on Saturday 31st August as part of our annual Reunion Weekend. 39 alumni were in attendance, representing six decades of Mary's graduates. We were also pleased to welcome former Principals, and to extend a warm greeting to our newest Principal Professor Maggie Dawn.

Reports and Discussion

Attendees were welcomed by the President, who updated them about the work of the Society over the past year which included the launch of a student essay competition, joint work with other alumni society presidents to make representations to the University, changing the timing of our membership fees from matriculation to graduation, and the receipt of a generous legacy gift from alumna Brenda Gibson. This legacy has been moved to an endowment fund, allowing it to be spent over a number of years.

The President also gave thanks on behalf of the alumni community to long serving staff member Karen Fisher, and outgoing Principal Simon Hackett. Both were awarded honorary life membership of the Society and thanked for all their help over the years.

Acting Principal Catherine Paine spoke of a busy year for the College, with long serving staff departing. She paid tribute to the departing JCR and MCR Presidents, and commented on the thriving nature of the SCR. She thanked the President for the support given during her tenure, and was thanked in return by the meeting.

Our Treasurer Ann Bainbridge outlined a positive financial year, despite initial challenges. In line with University policy, the charging of membership fees has moved from the beginning to the end of a student's years of study. This presents a concern that fewer will choose to pay, but more immediately it creates a three-year funding gap in which no fees will be received. College had kindly offered their financial support in the interim, though the generous gift of the Gibson legacy means this is no longer necessary.

The JCR President reported a lively year for the JCR.

Aiming to be more financially inclusive, they have launched a less expensive 'Bop' to complement the current offering of Balls, and established a Finance Committee to better oversee value for money in the JCR. Events have focussed on the themes of inclusion and internationalism; an ethnic minorities rep role has been created and LGBT+ representation has been improved.

The MCR President had reported via a newsletter article the vibrant social programme they have developed this year, with activities ranging from formal dinners to 'speed dating' where the focus was to rapidly explain and share current research interests.

Our Archivist Anne Elliot, Newsletter Editor Steven Spencer and Website Editor Tim Hughes gave an overview of their work supporting our communications with alumni. Steven was thanked for his 11 years' service to the Newsletter.

The AGM also heard of how current students have been directly supported by the Society through our Travel Bursaries, Postgraduate Bursaries and the SMCS Book Fund.

Vacancies

Catherine Stone, Sam Bentwood and Pat Corbett were thanked for their time on the committee.

Up to five vacancies were available for election, including the role of Secretary due to Christine standing down early in order to take over as Newsletter Editor.

Andy Hopkins was elected to serve as Secretary for four years. Tim Hughes was re-elected for one year. It was agreed that the SMCS Reunion for 2020 would take place 4th – 6th September 2020. However, the world was rather changed since then and we are now looking to hold our AGM and Reunion once it is safe and appropriate to do so. In the meantime, those whose membership expires in September 2020 will continue to hold office until the AGM can take place.

Andy Hopkins, SMCS Secretary

SMCS Reunion 2019

In what seems like an age ago, on this November morning, but was only in August of this year, St Mary's College Society held the annual reunion for Mary's alumni, within Mary's towers. For three days from Friday 30th August until Sunday 1st of September, Marysites with matriculation dates that ranged from the 1950s through to the noughties, as well as former staff members, three past principals



Full Hall Formal

and the incoming principal, Professor Maggi Dawn, gathered to begin a year of celebration marking 100 years of college status.

It was in November 1919 that a decision of the University Council bestowed the status of 'college' on what had been the women's hostel, from its formation in 1899. The name of St Mary's was subsequently chosen and the rest, as the saying goes, is history. It was fitting to have people who remembered so much of the college's history back within our hallowed walls, as we reflected on a century of providing a home to so many learners advancing through their formative years.

To celebrate this occasion, the centrepiece of the reunion weekend was the Grand Reunion Dinner, held on the Saturday evening and involving a full hall formal, complete with gowns and formal dress. It was wonderful to see 114 alumni, staff, former staff, past principals, guests and the band, all dressed to impress and in Mary's dining hall, to enjoy excellent food, wine and of course, the company of friends, old and new. After dinner, Elizabeth Fisher, our Society President, had the honour of introducing Professor Maggi Dawn, our as then, not quite in post principal, who delivered a speech that reflected strongly the spirit, collegiality and warmth that

characterises our community.

With the night still young, the folk band 'Skerne' filled the Kenworthy Hall with tunes, from SMCS Reunion 2019

from local and afar, and also with a large number of dancing alumni, jiggging along to timeless melodies, late into the evening. A great night was had by all and it was not till the wee small hours that college



After Dinner Entertainment

returned to slumber, as the last reveller made it back to their room.

This all followed on from a busy Friday evening, when alumni arrived and after a sparkling reception, were treated to a buffet and quiz, complete with a competitive spirit and a sparkling hostess, Anne Furness. Saturday morning had also been busy, with a very well attended visit to the Chorister School and Abbey House, both former homes of the college, giving all a real taste of our history and revealing many fascinating stories. In the afternoon, the AGM informed alumni about the important work of the Society Committee, complete with reports of the Book Fund, Travel Bursaries, Essay writing competition, newsletter, website, and also, of course, elections, in addition to updates from the Committee officers and College Principal. Those present agreed that the Society does a great with its limited funds and were pleased to hear alumni are such a big part of college life.

A Chapel Service provided a chance to reflect and explore a more spiritual side of college life for some, whilst others availed themselves of the opportunity to use free tickets to the Botanical Gardens and Oriental Museum, or simply to spend time in Durham.

The weekend was rounded off with the now traditional Sunday lunch, complete with speeches to thank the hard-working kitchen, domestic, operational and administrative staff of the college, and also a chance to round off the weekend. As evening beckoned, college reverted to its sleepy out of term time state, having witnessed goodbyes between old friends and new acquaintances, and many a vow to come back next year.



Present and former Principals

It is not an exaggeration to say that for most who came, this was the best reunion they could remember, with a vibrant and relaxed atmosphere, activities and opportunities to engage, that all enabled alumni to both return to student days and to experience the college as it is today. It is this combination of reconnection and reminiscing that alumni enjoy at reunions and what prompts many to return year on year.



We hope that even more alumni will come to the 2020 Reunion, which will be held on the 4th to the 6th of September 2020. Details of this event and how to book will be available in the near future. To indicate an interest, please contact the leader of the Reunion planning group, Steven Spencer.

Future Reunions

Unfortunately due to the current Lockdown, the SMCS Committee reluctantly decided to postpone the 2020 Reunion which was planned for the first weekend in September, as it is uncertain whether or not the College will be open by that date, or that the usual attendees will be willing or able to travel at that time.



Durham Castle

It is hoped that the Reunion will be back in 2021, and that it will be a big event, perhaps even better attended than 2019. The Vice President, Steven Spencer, will lead the planning and organisation as he has for the past few years. Information will



Durham Cathedral

be shared with Alumni as soon as planning is at a sufficiently advanced stage.

**SMCS Vice President
Mr Steven Spencer**

The 2019 Annual SMCS Lecture

The annual Lecture is now fast becoming a tradition, with 2 extremely interesting presentations by academics in 2017 and 2018.

This year was something slightly different; we were treated to an intelligent, compassionate and probing talk by Gavin O'Malley, Governor of Frankland Prison in Durham. Frankland is situated next to Newton Hall and the Arnison Centre on the Northern outskirts of Durham, and specialises in high security "Category A" prisoners: those most dysfunctional and disturbed inmates for whom



escape must be made impossible, and those who have been involved in terrorism and who are a "radicalisation" risk to others.

Unlike some Prison Governors who have come up "through the ranks" of working in the service, Gavin O' Malley has a background as a Psychologist; from his 1995 first degree at St Cuthberts Society, through years of work in psychotherapy, and then into the Prison service where his previous post was at Deerbolt Young Offenders Institution. He emphasised the importance of diversity in leading effective prisons.

In a fascinating 3 minute introductory presentation, he demonstrated how society's view of imprisonment has veered between the 2 ends of the spectrum of "punishment" and "incarceration" versus "rehabilitation". In Frankland, of course, many inmates are serving long sentences and some may never be released into the community. So how to square the circle of keeping prisoners locked away for the good of society versus their rehabilitation and improvement?

In a thoughtful and insightful talk, Gavin O Malley outlined his views of successful leadership (even if staff don't always agree, if you are fair, consistent and committed to your views they will by and large accept them) and explored some of the tensions between Leadership and Management, systems and people, firmness and friendliness or the personal touch. He pointed out that staff training now emphasises personal communication and empathy rather than control, as being more effective when dealing with

some of the most damaged and dysfunctional men in Britain. He outlined the effects of ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences such as abuse, family breakup or violence) in stunting moral, emotional and cognitive reasoning development in many prisoners. Which is not to say that he believes in being "soft" on prisoners; indeed a firm system of incentives, humanely and consistently applied by staff, seems to work best.

Gavin O Malley comes across as a committed, intelligent and passionate professional who paid tribute to the quality staff with whom he works. He has a deep understanding of the tensions in the prison service and in societal expectations of it. Overall he appears to have a positive faith in rehabilitation and redemption, despite the difficult circumstances in which he leads, and in the power of a positive staff culture to run a successful and stable prison. His lecture was fascinating and challenging, as was the way he handled some probing questions at the end.

A highly successful Lecture, in what is now becoming a hugely positive feature of the SMCS calendar!

The Lecture was recorded and is available at: <https://youtu.be/FCmC6hKXTNY>



COMING SOON: THE 4th ANNUAL SMCS LECTURE

Following the success of the previous SMCS Lectures in 2017, 2018 and 2019, the SMCS President is pleased to announce the 2020 Annual Lecture:

A Lecture by Dr Fiona Hill

Senior Fellow for the United States and Europe Foreign Policy Programme of the Brookings Institution, Washington DC.

Tuesday November 10th 2020 at 5.15 p.m.

Location: TBA (It may be virtual, or live, depending on the University being open to the public at the time. If live, it will be in the new Teaching & Learning Centre on South Road)

All are welcome! If you are interested in or curious about USA and European foreign policy, or similar issues, come and hear this fascinating lecture!

St Mary's College Society Essay Competition 2019

Introduction:

The competition was established for the 2018/19 academic year and first run in the Epiphany term. Only two entries were received, of which the judges decided that neither was quite worthy of publication. Both contestants were given an award of an aerial photograph of St Mary's College. The competition's purpose is to encourage students, both undergraduate and postgraduate, to develop and explore new forms of writing, in terms of subject content and style. It benefits the Society by making it more visible in college life. This may, in turn encourage students to choose to be members upon graduation. The publication of the winning article (and potentially others) in the newsletter and possibly in other relevant outlets, will provide the Society with more student generated content; this should foster enhanced links between current students and alumni.

The 2019 Summer Competition:

The SMCS Committee recommended that the competition should be run again in the summer term with a post-exam deadline – writing is a form of relaxation too. This was done in June with a deadline of July 20th (the middle of the summer holiday), and with guidelines slightly amended for clarity. Three entries were received – all respected the 1000-word limit and selected the topic “Being alive in 2019” rather than “A message for the people of Mary's in 2019.”

Judging and the winner:

Sandra Ward (SW) chaired the judging panel which included three alumni, Jane Roscoe (JR), Sue Simson (SS), and Christine Wright (CW). All judges responded promptly and had obviously scrutinised each entry carefully against the three defined criteria with incisive and informed comments viz:

1. Quality of written communication (including grammar, punctuation, spelling, style, register, vocabulary and structure).
2. Effectiveness of conveying knowledge, understanding, meaning and/or argument to the intended audience.
3. Originality (in the sense of both individual creativity and inventiveness)

Recommendation: It was decided by the Panel that Matthew Warren should be awarded the Essay prize. All the essays evidenced interesting thinking, “No Home” was the most original and creative; the arguments were clear; the ending excellent; and this essay could be published and enjoyed with minor edits.

Edited from a report by the competition organiser, Dr Sandra Ward.

The Winning Essay

No Place, by Matthew Warren

‘There’s no place like home.’ It’s a wish for solace in turbulent times. It cries out to be taken away from the disturbing shifting sands of whatever upheaval we are living through and begs for the solid earth of a place of comfort and stability; a place where troubles are left at the door as the familiarity of the smell of home cooking welcomes us over the threshold. It is a plea for sanctuary in a world whose wanton persecutions seem senseless and unjust. It is a place where neither tornadoes, nor wicked witches may harm us; a place which time will not weather nor the revolutions of the world

over-run; a place whose inhabitants will neither age nor die. There is no place like it.

Given the importance of our early attachments in fostering healthy and resilient minds, it is little surprise that this idealisation is such a ubiquitous utopia. When life is hard and consists of continuous struggle, who can say they have not wished for the rapids to give way to still waters? This attachment comes with a corresponding bereavement that is brought about by changes to that home. Moving house, family upheaval, or

leaving home oneself all trespass on the sanctuary of the ideal, unvarying home. The challenge is how we deal with this loss of home?

Consider our ambitions. Amongst the desires to do well academically, get a good job and make a difference to the world, one also finds the ambition to start a home, and often a family. We dream of a return to our sanctuary, of establishing a place of safety populated by those we love and by whom we are loved constantly. In other words, home is not just that from which the tornado uprooted us, it is what we dream of for the future - it is why we follow the yellow brick road - and it is the mantra "there's no place like home."

A curious thing is that there is actually a No Place. Go down to North Road, to the bus station, and climb aboard the number 16 bus to Stanley. From there, just six stops on the number 8 towards Sunderland. Or cycle out through Pity Me to Beamish and then just a few minutes further and you will find five streets of terraced houses. It is only by the sign at the roundabout coming out of Beamish that one would know its name: No Place.

The word "utopia" was coined by Thomas More in his 1516 fictitious description of the fictional society of Utopia. "Utopia" has an ambiguous derivation, played upon by More, translating from the Greek as either "good place" or "no place". The work illustrates an idea of a good society - wealthy, just and egalitarian - but it is also a fiction, a no place. In literary utopias, characters go on some sort of journey to find Utopia - in Francis Godwin's *The Man in the Moone*, this involves a flight in a chariot pulled by "moon geese". In each case, we don't find Utopia coming to us; instead, we have to step towards it, motivated by the desire to find a better way of living. We will never make it, but that's in the nature of a utopia; it is a no place, an intention, a bearing. It is something to navigate by.

Communities that are often called utopian - those that seek to radically reimagine the organisation of society - are also known as "intentional communities". Here, the imagining of a utopia can replace the ad hoc development of society through the winds and currents of social and economic

forces with an intention to move in a particular direction. It gives the helmsman sight and knowledge of the stars. And yet, utopia is so often a dirty word, seen as synonymous with a naiveté that excludes the values expressed from consideration.

The idealised home, as we have said, is a prevalent utopia. If things could be just so, and always stay that way, all would be well. That would be a good place. And the utopia of Home is not a bad thing per se; a solid foundation of healthily stable attachments allow us the resilience to cope with a turbulent world. However, when "home" becomes a fetishised vision based on the comfort of a well trodden path, we risk refusing to contemplate change. In a world which is facing threats of unimaginable scale, our concept of home cannot stay in the past; it must look to what it will mean to live in the future in which we will make those homes. As individuals and as a society, we should not simply fall back to the ideal of home that provides the easiest, most visceral reassurance of an eternal sanctuary based on what we have lost; as new challenges come, and as we face up to old injustices, home cannot look the way it did. Instead, we must make our home in a No Place and then put our hearts where that home is.

The threats we face are not so often dangers of malicious action so much as sleep-walking into crisis. It is a lack of intention rather than ill-intention that allows us to pillage the natural world, to drift into climate crisis, to propagate widening inequality, to fall into conflict. In the fight for intention, there is no adversary. Instead we have to find it in ourselves to imagine the good society and pursue it, not allowing ourselves to be perturbed by the accusation of utopianism. If we refuse to make our communities intentional, then we extinguish the utopian guiding star from our thinking and leave ourselves with no bearing.

So let's leave home. Step out of the front door, and push our imaginations out of the comfort of familiar surroundings. Get your bike, take a bus, harness a moon-geese and we'll tap our heels together and whisper a wish: "Let's find a home like No Place".

To Travel is.....

How often are we told that life in the 21st century is GLOBAL, so in contrast to my childhood years, when life was essentially PAROCHIAL. I, a child of 1946, grew up in a village and realise, now, how extremely lucky I was to have had a fascination for TRAVEL nurtured in my early years. My grandfather was mostly responsible for this, along with extended family and family friends.

My grandfather, with a possible view to emigrating - a view not carried through - had sailed, as a young man, to Australia and, in 1928, to Cape Town, S. Africa. I used to listen with fascination to his tales of these voyages, particularly of sailing through storms in the Bay of Biscay. I poured with delight over a beautiful book which he had of the British Empire, 'The King's Book' (King George V), loving the beautiful illustrated pages which introduced the chapters and depicted the landscapes and agriculture of each colony. A family friend had worked in both east and west Africa. We had relatives in Vancouver, Canada, having moved there from Toronto, because winters on the east coast of Canada could be so severe. (Icicles, I heard, could form on men's moustaches !) How delighted I had been to receive from them a pair of pink leather Moccasin slippers, decorated with delicate Indian beadwork. I lived less than three miles from the North Sea and, as a child, played on the beach. I used to see ships appearing and disappearing over the horizon, on their voyages to Scandinavia, and thought ,
" One day ! "

My first trip abroad was with my school, in summer, when I was sixteen, to Switzerland, to the Bernese Oberland, then the height of fashion. The highlight was to travel by train up the Jungfrau Mountain to 11,000ft., only 2,000 from its summit. On the final stage, the train stopped several times to allow us to alight and enjoy spectacular views across glaciers from the observation platforms. The impact was truly dramatic ! We had discovered a completely new world!

Landscapes gave me, thus, my first love of travel, but my school had been fostering other interests, too. We had been learning foreign languages - French and Latin - had been studying ancient cultures - Egyptian, Greek, Roman - learning about the history of Europe

and given lessons in the history of art. All of this built up, in the mind, a treasure trove of places to visit, when the opportunities arose; and my first came as a student at Durham, with several of my student friends, to spend a week in Paris. This amazingly, in 1966, cost us a mere £17 each for transport by boat and train and a week's full board in a student hostel, very basic dormitory style accommodation, but excellent food throughout the week. We walked and walked and walked, visiting the many places of historic interest, visiting the Louvre with its wonderful art and sculpture (the Winged Victory of Samothrace my favourite, so powerful with the spread of its mighty wings), La Comedie Francaise to enjoy a French play, the Bagatelle Gardens, within the Bois de Boulogne, so beautiful in Springtime with their swathes of daffodils; and we attended a service in Notre Dame Cathedral. I'm afraid, however, that I, unlike my friends, missed Leonardo da Vinci's ' Mona Lisa ', as I spent most of my afternoon in the Louvre in its sickroom, lying on a bed, after the nurse in charge had declared me ' toute epuisee ' - completely exhausted - by so much walking round the city for a week ! (I hope that you will, please, forgive the absence of accents on the French words, which offends me deeply, but I have no means of writing them.)

And, in 1970 and 1971, I did cross the North Sea to Scandinavia, to Bergen, in Norway, to spend two



Bagatelle Gardens within the Bois de Boulogne, Paris

weeks each time on the fjords. How exciting it was, on those crossings, to watch seagulls following the ship's wake, to feel the rocking-horse motion of the ship on the open sea, in the darkness, and to enjoy the sight of land again, as day came and we entered sheltered waters. And for my seventieth birthday, I enjoyed a Mediterranean cruise from Barcelona to Venice, chosen because it included two long crossings, each of a day and a half, the first from

Palma, Mallorca to Malta, the second from Malta to Venice. I love being OUT at SEA and how beautiful it was to walk around the passenger deck and see the ship's wake creating frills of white water on a deep blue sea, beneath a bright blue summer sky, to be out within that vastness of sea and sky meeting at the horizon.



Crossing The Mediterranean

In the late 60s, only students of foreign languages spent a year abroad, their third, as part of their studies, serving as assistants in secondary schools, teaching English to the pupils. A tiny number of students, after graduation, went on voluntary service overseas to developing countries, for a year. How interesting it was, therefore, for me to learn that today's students can spend their third year abroad, studying at foreign universities or working in a wide range of contexts. Such wonderful opportunities to develop personal skills and to appreciate the many cultural aspects of the countries they are visiting.....throughout the world !

My own love of travel has lasted a lifetime - visits throughout Europe, during school holidays, in the twenty-seven years which I spent as a teacher and, in retirement, travel worldwide. One visit has inspired another and I have travelled from the temperate lands to deserts and tropical shores and to the world's great cities to enjoy their history, art and architecture, but how to begin to describe it all ? I can only be very selective and try to convey the essence of what I have enjoyed.

In 2005, I visited the Seychelles, lying off the coasts of Kenya and Tanzania, within the Indian Ocean, being welcomed with the gift of a garland of frangipani. These are islands of great natural beauty with rain forest extending down to pristine white beaches (AND insects, particularly giant mosquitoes that I miraculously eluded until the last day of my visit, carrying home THEIR mean gift of red bites on

one of my lower legs. Fortunately, the islands are not malarial !) My bungalow was so close to the beach that I fell asleep and awoke again to the whisper of the sea. The heat was intense and the reception areas of the hotel were thatched and stood on stilts over the water, the sides of the dining room open to the air, as we enjoyed breadfruit soup, red snapper and coconut desserts. From the glass balustrade of the beach bar, I watched brightly coloured fish - some turquoise, some yellow - swimming in the waters beneath.



The pristine beaches of the Seychelles, within the turquoise Indian Ocean.

The journey home, by air, was one of the greatest travel moments of my life, crossing first the beautiful Indian Ocean. William Golding, in his novel 'Lord of the Flies' describes a tropical ocean as ' an unbelievable blue ' and the Indian Ocean is exactly that, the most intense turquoise blue, rivalled only by the moraine lakes of far away Northern lands, which I had found so beautiful when in Olden and Loen, in Norway. After crossing the invisible line of the Equator, came the excitement of seeing the coast of Africa coming into view - the Horn of Africa - and, once over land, deep red earth dotted with acacia trees and thorn bushes, soon giving way to desert - dried-up river-beds, dirt roads, flat, sandy earth and bare, rugged mountains, as we flew over Somalia and Djibouti, and then criss-crossed the Red Sea. Here, near Jedda in Saudi Arabia, were gigantic sand-dunes, some 1,000 ft. high, before we flew over Egypt: flat, stony desert; a monastery surrounded by high walls; and, in the gathering dusk, the Nile Valley, with glimpses of irrigation ditches and greenery, before the arrow-straight waterway of the Suez Canal, with a ship sailing. Finally, the lights of Alexandria, in the darkness, bade us " Farewell, " as we left Africa and headed over the Mediterranean to Europe and home.

Unforgettable, too, is the continent of America. On one journey by air, making the crossing east to west, I witnessed its dramatic contrasts: the tundra of Labrador, Canada; the wide Missouri River; the Great Plains - the farmlands of Dakota - and the Rockies, sadly obscured by cloud, from which we emerged to the the whole expanse of the Red Rock country, with its Grand Canyon, turbulent white water, Lake Mead and the Hoover Dam. This gave way to the Mojave Desert of California, the Hollywood Hills with their Hollywood sign and, finally, the mighty Pacific Ocean.

So, the infinite variety of the earth, in all its beauty and majesty, has been enjoyed, along with the beauties of art and architecture. I DID visit those ancient lands of Egypt and Greece to marvel at the mighty temples of Luxor and Karnak and the beautiful mathematical symmetry of the Parthenon, in Athens, (complemented by my much earlier visit, in my student days, to the British Museum, in London, to see the Elgin Marbles, the exquisite frieze, depicting figures of humans and horses, which had once formed part of the Parthenon.) And one of my very greatest travel moments was, in the soft light of an early Spring evening, to stand on the Capitol, in Rome, and look across the Roman Forum, beneath. Here was ‘ the glory that was Rome ‘, grandeur, even in decay. ‘ And later, to see the Appian Way before me, bordered by tall cypresses, was to be taken back to the Latin of the classroom and for Ancient Rome to come alive before my eyes. And how I marvelled at the exquisite beauty of great Moorish architecture, in Andalucia, Spain: the Alhambra Palace, in Granada and the Mezquita, in Córdoba. (Continued visits to France, Italy and Spain were also opportunities to use the French learned in school and the Italian and Spanish learned in retirement.)

And paintings and sculpture have had a great impact on me: Michelangelo’s ‘David’, in the Accademia, in Florence, and his ‘Pieta’, in St. Peter’s, in Rome, the first so robust, the second so tender; Botticelli’s ‘ Primavera ‘, in Florence; Rembrandt’s ‘Night Watch’



The Roman Forum

‘, in the Rijksmuseum, in Amsterdam; and Picasso’s ‘Guernica’, in Madrid. And, finally, great architecture: I have loved the Pazzi Chapel, in Florence; Gaudi’s Casa Mila and Casa Batllo, in Barcelona; both the classical beauty of Senate Square, in Helsinki and the fine, contrasting, modern architecture nearby; the Art Deco Chrysler building, in New York; and the Palladian architecture of my favourite Italian city, Vicenza.



Gaudi's Casa Mila in Barcelona

I feel intensely privileged to have seen so much - and what I have described is only a small part - AND what has been constant throughout my travels has been the great hospitality which I have been shown everywhere in the world.

Jane Roscoe 2020

Principal Donaldson

Rachel Eleanor Duff Donaldson

100 years ago Miss Rachel Eleanor Duff Donaldson was leading the College at these significant turning points. She was the fourth Principal, succeeding Phyllis Wragge, and the longest-serving (1915-1940) in the history of St. Mary's. She graduated in Classics at St. Hilda's, Oxford. Her intellect and wit were formidable. She entered into College life with enthusiasm and energy, coaching and umpiring hockey and playing tennis. She supported concerts and drama. She loved the open air, enjoying picnics and walking holidays and even slept in the College garden in the long vacation! She eventually obtained for St. Mary's, the use of the Deanery Chapel then the Chapel in the garden of 8, The College. In evenings during the War, she encouraged a sense of community: students and staff gathered in the Common Room where they knitted and sang patriotic songs and retreated to Abbey House kitchen when aircraft whirred overhead.

During her Principalship, she saw the translation of the Women's Hostel to a College and the acquisition of 8, The College and fought for the new Elvet Hill buildings which she visited after her time in office.

She saw the Women's Hostel/St Mary's College through the First World War and its aftermath, not to mention the Spanish flu pandemic. And yet "Perhaps because of its improved status, or because of the energy with which Miss Donaldson pursued expansion, St Mary's grew rapidly – and at this time of depression when student numbers in the University were in decline. In 1924, with 58 students, and in 1925, with more than 60, it was the largest of the colleges, and it is at this period that the idea of a purpose-built college was mooted." [E.Boyd: Centenary Review pp19-23]

Principal's Poetry Competition

The 1928 edition of a St Mary's College Magazine was called 'The Dove' costing one shilling and sixpence (seven and a half pence today). Principal Rachel Donaldson contributed a forthright criticism of the College hockey team and also encouraged creative writing. She set an example to a poetry competition by contributing her 'Sonnet to a Teapot'. The editorial explained the Principal's intentions as follows:

SONNET

Scorn not the teapot; doctors you have frowned
Mindful of its abuses; on this tea
Johnson composed his famous dictionary,
And in two dozen cups his sorrows drowned.
A thousand times did Cowper pass it round.
'Tis tea that soothes Siberian exiles' grief.
Scorn not the pot that holds the potent leaf
Through which America its freedom found
At that great teaparty; but rather, when
You burn the midnight oil, boil close at hand
The midnight urn - and though the eager pen
Clings to the paper - stop - don't let it stand.
The Thing becomes mere tannin wherein throng
Never-desolating fumes - Alas, too strong!

R.E.D.

"The entries for the prose competition set last term were submitted by the Principal to a judge outside the College who, unfortunately, found the standard low, and thought that none was worthy of the prize offered. No attempt at a College song was received. As the need of one is felt very acutely, the Principal has re-set this competition together with another, and she offers a prize for each. The new competition is the re-writing of the nursery-rhyme 'Goosey-goosey-gander' in the style

of any famous poet. It must not exceed fourteen lines in length. We hope that the College will respond enthusiastically, and inundate us with entries".



Garden at 8 The College

News of Alumni

1990s Memories

I was at Mary's from 1991-1995 studying French and Italian, my maiden name was Catherine Allkins. I was very keen to go to Durham University so I did an open application not knowing that that meant I would end up at Mary's, which was then the only all-female college. Having gone to an all girls school I have to say I didn't like it very much at Mary's. It was only really in my final year after having had my year in France that I liked it more. I did not like the stigma of being in the only all women's college- people from other colleges called us "the nuns on the hill." I found it was hard to make friends with boys especially as there weren't many on my course. And I think when you told people from other colleges who were from Mary's they looked down on you a bit! All that aside I made lifelong friends at Mary's including Ruth Winch and Helene Felter who are still very close friends. I remember the tv lounge getting packed each day when it was time for watching Neighbours and Home and Away and I also remember the post being put in trays alphabetically- it was great to find a letter. Mary's Day dinner was always fun with a ceilidh afterwards. In the fourth year I got one of the brand-new bedrooms with ensuite bathroom and I really liked that. Having studied modern languages I then did a PGCE in Cambridge and have been a French teacher ever since. It enabled me to work in India at Hebron School school for three years which was fantastic. Now that I am married and have children aged 12 and 10 I just work part time and I teach primary French which I enjoy.

By Catherine Dembek



Alumni Obituary

Ann Colclough (nee Burrows)

I regret to inform you that Ann died on Saturday 11th April. She was my best friend during our undergraduate years (1956 - 1959) and beyond. We both studied Mathematics and Physics and both taught Mathematics for many years - in Ann's case for all her working life, which was cut short when she developed MS.

Sadly her last years were spent in a nursing home having also developed dementia. My husband I visited her and her husband, Colin (a Cuthbert's Returner) after the St Mary's Reunion last September. She leaves two daughters and two grandchildren as well as Colin, aged 94.

The Covid19 virus was implicated in her death, and we couldn't attend her funeral..

We hope to be able to come up to Durham when it becomes possible for her Memorial Service.

Very Best Wishes to all at St Mary's

Avril Avery (nee Tyler).

Janice Williams

Please find attached a photo of my mum, my son and myself on the college steps which you may like to include in the next newsletter. My mum, Sheila Williams (nee Harrison) was at Mary's from 1960 to 1965 and studied French and then did a PGCE. I was a history student at Mary's from 1985 to 1988. My son Sam (Farrington) is currently a student at the college. He is in his third year studying for a Masters in Maths.

We all spent a lovely day in Durham last September and the highlight was visiting Mary's together. My mum hadn't been inside the college since I graduated and she really enjoyed having a look round. We all have treasured memories of our college days and it feels very special that Sam is the third generation of our family to go to Mary's.

Janice Farrington (nee Williams)

Uncommon: Two years in Northern Cameroon

by Rowena Godfrey

Shortly after leaving St Mary's in June 1974, I was teaching English to French-speaking Cameroonian students. After my return to the UK two years later, I considered writing about the 'uncommon' things which had made such an impression on me during my stay, but I had more pressing concerns then, such as starting a career. However, over the past few years the Boko Haram terrorism in the far north of the country and the growing unrest and violence in the English-speaking regions have made travel to much of the country impossible for westerners; these events made me realise that it was time to revisit my diaries, letters, photographs and certain sharp memories, and to write a memoir of my experiences forty-five-odd years previously in a beautiful country at a peaceful time in its history.



I was sent by International Voluntary Service to teach in a small mission middle school at Mokolo in the heart of the Mandara Mountains on the border with Nigeria. I had ninety-six students in the four

classes, some of them nearly as old as I was, and just four of them girls. I taught them English up to the brevet, roughly the equivalent of GCSE. The United Republic of Cameroon, declared in 1972 when the federation of the French-speaking and English-speaking zones was dissolved, was striving towards bilingualism, so English was a required subject at school in the francophone areas.

My students kindly took me to see their homes and told me about some of their festivals. The Mafa – one of over 240 ethnic groups in Cameroon – lived around Mokolo, the vast majority in compounds consisting of a series of linked mud-and-rock huts thatched with millet straw, perched on flattish areas up the mountainsides. They farmed on little contoured terraces, with groundnuts and beans planted between the millet, the staple crop. They kept hens, sheep and goats, and a few zebu cattle. I developed a deep respect for them as they worked so hard to make a living from such an inhospitable area.

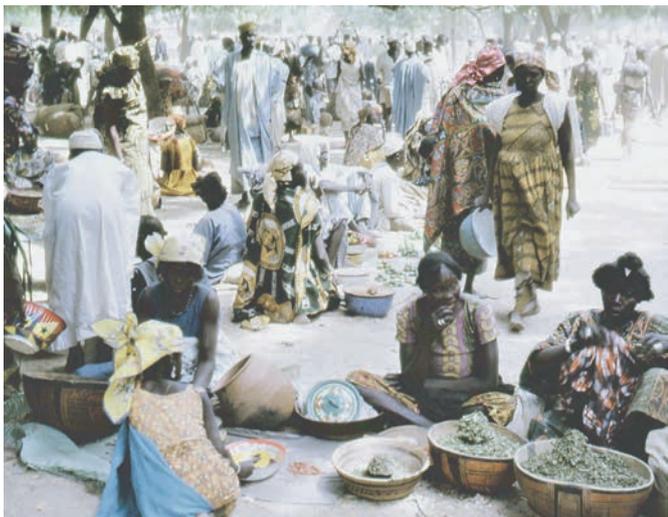
I relished the Wednesday market, a highlight of the week and a feast for all the senses. It took place in the centre of the town, stretching out along the main road. Men and women sat with little heaps of locally grown vegetables or fruit arranged in bowls or laid out on pieces of cloth on the ground. It was impossible to miss the very smelly dried fish stand, or the meat stall where chunks of a roughly-chopped-up animal would be displayed. I loved looking at – and from time to time buying – the other goods on sale: lengths of brightly-coloured printed cloth, locally-woven cotton blankets, pottery articles, metal goods and carved calabashes, as well as items brought over the border from Nigeria, such as Bird's Custard Powder and Lyle's Golden Syrup.

It took me a while to get used to the two distinct seasons – the rainy, starting sometime in April and usually finishing in mid-October, when huge thunderstorms every three or four days could cause landslides, wash away newly-planted crops, damage the dirt roads and destroy the fords across the many rivers; and the dry, when rivers ceased to flow, when it was time for repairing homes and roads, and harvesting and storing the crops. Day and night were each almost twelve hours long all year round. I revelled in the many cloudless days from dawn to dark, and I was amazed to see millions of stars in the clear night skies.

I used all my holidays to travel, mostly around Cameroon, which is aptly called a ‘microcosm of Africa’ as it has so many varied regions. In the north I saw the rice-growing area by the Logone River and

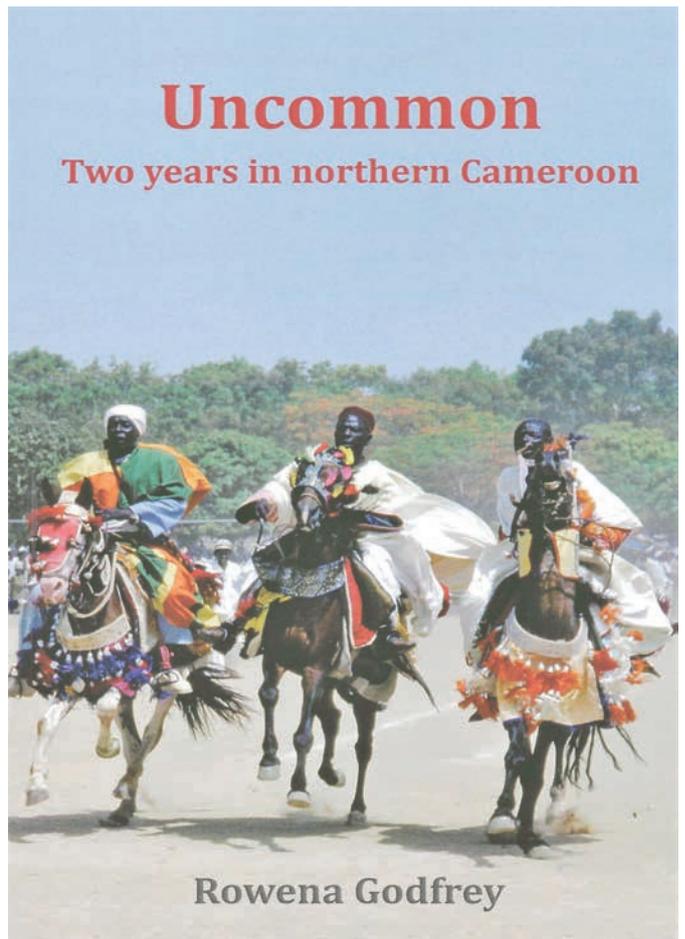


animal-watched in one of the national parks; went southwards through savannah and tropical rainforest to the capital Yaoundé, and on to Douala, the commercial hub of the country. I visited beautiful coastal areas on the Gulf of Guinea, stayed in the foothills of Mount Cameroon, swam in a vast crater lake, explored the grasslands area, and attended various local and national dances, celebrations and events. I also travelled in Nigeria, where I watched the colourful and noisy Muslim Eid al-Adha festival in Maiduguri, and toured the famous indigo dye pits and explored the centuries-old Kurmi Market in Kano. I twice dipped into Chad – once to see the capital



N’Djamena, and the second time to spend nearly a week with one of my students in a village by the side of a lake. I still remember so many extraordinary sights, sounds and smells.

Before I went to Mokolo, I had perhaps talked to just half a dozen non-Europeans. I had a Jewish friend at school, but I had never met a Muslim, and certainly not come across those like the Mafa with their totally different beliefs. In Cameroon I got to know a wide variety of people from very different ethnic, cultural, social and religious backgrounds: this made me realise that people are basically the same the world over – the vast majority want to live in peace and to bring up their children in the best possible way. What I most appreciated there was the warmth and kindness of the people and their willingness to share whatever they had with outsiders. My book was published in December 2019, just before a pneumonia of unknown cause was first reported to the World Health Organisation Country Office in China. What effect COVID-19 will have on Cameroon remains to be seen, but I am certain that, despite it and the current unrest, ultimately the peoples there will survive and thrive.



Photos © J Nichli. Map thanks to Sheila Ripper © Rowena Godfrey

To purchase a copy of my book, please go to <https://rowenagodfrey.com/contact/>

V.E. DAY 8th May 1945

Muriel Graham, Senior Woman 1944-45, wrote the 'Report from the Junior Common Room' in the St Mary's College Old Students' Society Newsletter of September 1945.

"The past year will no doubt remain long in the memories of all present St Mary's students, for none of them have experienced College life except under the shadow of war. **In the Easter Term, however, we celebrated V.E. Day – a hilarious and extremely happy day in the University as a whole. In College itself we held a Thanksgiving Service in Chapel – a Chapel literally packed to the door. The Service was simple and very moving, and one which many of us will never forget.** We all of us have seen Durham and College in a strange and novel light. With the lifting of blackout restrictions The Bailey and the Close* became comparatively easy to negotiate after dinner. And to all except Freshers, Main Building*, with its enlarged dining-hall and basement cloakroom, at first presented rather confusing aspects. However both the lights in the Bailey, and the Dining Room, are now familiar sights, and the change from when the College was about fifty strong, to today when it is the largest of the Durham Colleges, will be scarcely realised by any except graduates."

Main Building, of course, was not the one on the present site that we now know as Fergusson. It was 8, the College, in the Cathedral Close (now the Chorister School). The College, some eighty strong in 1945, also lived in Abbey House, 6, 8 and 13 South Bailey and Cruddas House taken over from St John's College. There were about 80 students in 1945.

From 1941-45 the Newsletter was reduced from a booklet with a brightly coloured cover to an A3 sheet folded in two very closely typed. In 1946, normal standards were resumed.

Anne Elliott
College Archivist

VE Day: Then and Now

My story about VE Day is not my story but my Mum's story. My Mum Freda Perry (nee Elliston) was born in November 1920. She lived in a village called Wormley in Hertfordshire. She was the second of three children; girl, girl, boy. She left school at 14 and started work, she was not at all academic. Had she been a boy she would have been in the first age



group to be called up. She was exempted from Land Army, Wrens or similar as her mother was a widow, her older sister was married living elsewhere and her younger brother was still a school boy. She worked nearby in a munitions factory during the war and probably had a rather dull time as most people her age were away. Her father had died of TB in 1938, her elder sister died of TB in 1941 aged 24 and her niece aged 10 months died in 1940 also of TB. In 1945 they suspected my Mum had TB and she was tested, on



VE Day a “v” shaped mark came up on her arm showing she had TB , she thought that meant she would die so she did not celebrate at all on VE Day. She was sent to a sanatorium in Nayland Essex where she stayed for about 10 months and I think in fact, had a fun time there .She got better and came



back home. She married in 1952 and I was born in 1953. When I went to St Mary’s College in 1972 to study Geography she was extremely proud and loved coming with my Dad to visit me -she had never been



that far north before. She lived until her 90th year.Barbara PerrySt Mary’s 1972 to 1975.

The 2020 75th Anniversary Celebrations were, of course, affected by the Lockdown. Many local residents in Durham, and further afield, decorated their houses with flags, pennants and memorabilia. Tea parties were held on front lawns where neighbours could wave to each other and converse at a suitable “social distance”

It wasn't the public celebration we wanted, but it was in its way unique.

Alumna Ione Simons, who works at Frosterley Primary School in County Durham, sent these photos of her family VE Day celebration.

The New SMCS Committee: from September 2019

Name	Position
Officers	
Canon Elizabeth Fisher	President until AGM 2020
Mr Steven Spencer	Vice President until AGM 2022
Mr Andy Hopkins	Secretary until AGM 2023
Mrs Ann Bainbridge	Treasurer until AGM 2020
Ex-Officio	
Professor Maggi Dawn	Principal
Andrew Unwin	Vice Principal
Aiden Patterson	MCR President
Nuriya Shoro	JCR President
Miss Anne Elliott	College Archivist
Karl Williams	Past MCR President
Ellie Ng	Past JCR President
Andrew King	Development Officer
Committee Members	
Dr Margaret Collins	Until AGM 2021
Mrs Anne Furness	Until AGM 2021
Mr Timothy Hughes	Until AGM 2020
Mrs Christine Wright	Until AGM 2020
Miss Gillian Martin	Until AGM 2021
Dr Sandra Ward	Until AGM 2021
Co-opted	
Mrs Janice Clark	Until AGM 2020