

Special Interest News:

- Engineering Professor wins Beacon Prize
- Clock-work plants
- Advancing the career of women scientists

The Cambridge Society Friend-raising not fundraising

Members Tour the University Library

This year's 'summer event' was a tour of those hidden places of the University Library most of us didn't know existed.

Tony Harper and three other senior colleagues led us down dusty corridors, along gargantuan stacks of books, inside print rooms and binding rooms, revealing all the mysteries of a building many of us thought we knew, yet clearly didn't!

It was also an interesting juxtaposition to observe the high-tech communication facilities in one room and ancient hand-

written manuscripts in another.

After the tour we enjoyed an excellent tea, provided by the University Library. This gave some the chance to ask more questions and the rest the chance to enjoy each other's company.

The University Botanic Garden

A reminder to members: we have in the office a limited number of entry tickets to the Botanic Garden. Please ask us to send you a ticket (one per member) if you are planning to visit Cambridge and wish to visit the Garden.

Exhibition at the University Library

A spectacular exhibition of medieval illuminated manuscripts opened at the Fitzwilliam Museum and the Cambridge University Library on July 26.

Cambridge is among the world's richest treasuries of medieval illuminated manuscripts and The Cambridge Illuminations displays over 200 treasures, many never before on public view.

An entire gallery is devoted to leaves from the renowned Macclesfield Psalter. The exhibition also includes numerous books of hours, Bibles, encyclopaedias, scientific, mathematical, historical and geographical treatises.

The exhibition will close with an international conference from December 8-10 2005 at Corpus Christi College, which will bring together many of the world's leading medievalists.

Admission to the exhibition is free and opening times are: 10.00-17.00 Tuesday - Saturday, and 12.00-17.00 on Sundays & Bank Holidays at the Fitzwilliam Museum; and 09.00-18.00 Monday - Friday and 09.00-16.30 on Saturdays at the University Library. The University Library is closed on August 29 & September 16-23 inclusive.

<http://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/exhibitions/>



Engineering Professor wins Beacon Prize

Peter Guthrie, Professor of Engineering for Sustainable Development at the University was the overall winner of the prestigious Beacon Prize for charitable giving and was also honored with an award for 'creative giving'.

Part of Professor Guthrie's prize was £20,000 to donate to a charity of his choice. He chose RedR, Register for Engineers Disaster Relief (now RedR-IHE). This charity responds to crisis situations and relieves suffering caused by disasters by providing competent and committed engineers to humanitarian programmes worldwide - frequently at short notice.

Professor Guthrie set up RedR in 1980; at the time he was working as the only engineer with Oxfam helping the Vietnamese 'boat people' in Malaysia. He saw how difficult it was for relief agencies to recruit skilled workers to help provide desperately

needed facilities and set about solving this problem by setting up a register of engineers willing to be called on at short notice to work with front-line relief agencies.

The Beacon Prize celebrates the profile of charitable giving. Giving money is always useful but this reminds us that giving our time can also be of great value.

The Cambridge Science Festival

The next Science Festival will take place from 17 – 24 February 2006. Check this website nearer the time for further details <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/science/>

"Many of the stories in this newsletter came from the University of Cambridge Press Office"

Branch Events:

Saturday 10 September, [Shropshire Branch](#). Professor Lord Rees, 'Einstein and 21st century science'.

Saturday 10 September, [Highland Branch](#). Mr Duncan Robinson on the Fitzwilliam Museum

Friday 16 September, [Merseyside Branch](#). Dr Peter Forster, 'Tracing your ancestors using DNA.'

Clockwork Plants

Researchers at the University have found that the biological clock in plants increases photosynthesis, helping them grow faster.

The biological clock, which allows individual plant cells to estimate the time of day, helps boost global productivity by providing cells with the facility to anticipate daily changes in the environment.

"Photosynthesis is the basis of virtually all life on the planet, and our experiments have demonstrated that the clock is an integral part of that. Therefore, the plant clock may play a vital role in ecosystem productivity and control of atmospheric CO₂ (a key greenhouse gas)", said Dr Antony Dodd from the Department of Plant Sciences, lead author of the study.

"Building on this knowledge, we now need to understand the detailed mechanisms by which the clock controls and optimises photosynthesis."

The findings of this study were published in the scientific journal *Science* on Friday 22 July by a team of researchers from Cambridge and Warwick, in association with the Hungarian Academy of science.

The Cambridge Society Isaac Newton Trust Bursary

This year The Cambridge Society Isaac Newton Trust Bursary was allocated to Miss Charlotte Charteris of Pembroke College, and a first-year student of English. Charlotte is severely disabled and consequently incurs expenses far beyond those of a typical student. She wrote: 'I have never wanted my circumstances to prevent me from achieving highly in this competitive environment. I have many different requirements to those of an 'average' student, but my aims are essentially the same as anyone I study alongside.'

Advancing the career of women scientists

This summer the University of Cambridge is piloting the Athena SWAN Charter, which recognises excellence in employment practices which assist the recruitment, retention and progression of women in science, engineering and technology (SET).

The Charter has been developed by the Athena project, which aims to advance the careers of women. The UK Resource Centre for Women in SET supports it. The University of Cambridge is a founder member of the SWAN Charter.

The Charter recognizes achievement at bronze, silver and gold levels. Universities can apply for recognition at bronze, silver and, exceptionally, gold level. Departments in universities that have achieved recognition at one level can apply for recognition at the next.

The assessment for SWAN recognition awards covers the following key areas:

- * Knowing the base line – the profile of the organisation's academic staff in science, engineering and technology
- * Providing positive support for women - at key career transition points
- * Changing the culture – assessing and improving the gender balance in decision-making
- * Work-life balance practices - their introduction and uptake
- * Champions and initiatives for success – their role and impact

In Cambridge, a team will assemble the case for recognition, guided by a self-assessment team that includes men and women at different stages of an academic career.



The Spanish Golden Age

A major conference on the Spanish Golden Age was held in Cambridge in July. The conference took place at Robinson College and was opened by the Vice-Chancellor.

This international event covered almost every aspect of the tremendously rich period of Spain's cultural history from 1500 to 1700. It was the first major Hispanists' conference to take place in the UK this millennium.

The speakers included Sir John Elliot of Oxford University, who spoke on Philip IV of Spain as patron of the arts. Dr Anthony Close from here in Cambridge pointed out that this was the fourth centenary of the publication of Cervantes's *Don Quixote*. He led a

discussion on this subject during the conference.

One of the themes of this conference was the lasting influence that the Spanish Golden Age had on European and International cultural history.

The Worts Fund

In 2001 the Society donated the accumulated surplus in the former Cambridge Society Travel Fund to the endowment of the Worts Fund in order to provide student travel bursaries. These bursaries are identified as Cambridge Society Bursaries.

Branch Events

Saturday 17 September, Hampshire/Wiltshire Branch. Professor Colin Humphries.

Tuesday 20 September, Buckinghamshire Branch. Mrs Jenny Schofield, 'W E Johns flies again'.

News from the office, by Anne McGowan

'Please remember when you send attachments to Branch members, clearly mark them as from CamSoc'

Welcome to this newsletter. I thought you might be interested to know what we do for you here in the office at Fitzwilliam House and indeed who works here!

People first. There are four of us who work regularly in the Society's office.

Katie Knapton, our full-time administrator. Katie has worked for the Society for 'many' years (she won't tell us how many!) and her knowledge and experience is invaluable.

Caroline, Jan and I all work part time, with help from Julia with our accounts. Caroline Shepherd works each morning. Her main duties are membership renewals and updating the database.. Jan Thulborn comes in twice a week; we 'share' Jan with the Centre of South Asian Studies. Jan helps with producing the magazine and oversees our mailings.

And what do I do? I'm available on a day-to-day basis to deal with immediate matters affecting the smooth running of the Society. I sit on various committees and ensure the paperwork reflects their different needs. I

also edit CAMBRIDGE and write the newsletters. This involves constantly being on the lookout for interesting news and events.

Each Wednesday the staff meets together to brief each other on what they have done in the previous week. We discuss any ideas I've had, or suggestions made by members, for new ventures or activities and work out ways to act on them.

It's also important for us to keep thinking ahead, which is why last week at our staff meeting we spent several minutes choosing Christmas Cards while fanning ourselves to keep cool!

We've had a request from one of our Branch Secretaries about e-mail attachments. As attachments are one of the main ways viruses are introduced to computers, many people won't open them unless they are sure they know the person who has sent them. So PLEASE, if you send information to neighboring Branches could you clearly mark it as information about the Society.

The Boat Race:

The 2006 Boat Race will be on Sunday 16 April at approximately 16.30.

Twining:

The German Cambridge Society has suggested a twinning arrangement between UK Branches and overseas Branches and Societies. Anyone interested should contact the office.

Director of the Isaac Newton Institute for Mathematical Sciences appointed

Professor Sir David James Wallace has been appointed as Director of the Isaac Newton Institute and as the NM Rothchild & Sons Professor of Mathematical Sciences

The Professor is expected to be in post in October 2006. He has recently served as the Vice-Chancellor of Loughborough University.

His undergraduate and graduate work were carried out at Edinburgh University. He returned to Edinburgh

later in his career as Tait Professor of Mathematical Physics and Director of the Edinburgh Parallel Computing Centre.

In 1996 he was given a CBE for services to parallel computing and was knighted in 2004 for services to UK science, technology and engineering.

STOP PRESS! Sir David has also been named as the new Master of Churchill College. He will take up this appointment in summer 2006

Forming a reading group

I seem to have become more aware this month of the phenomena of Reading Groups; first my friend Jill couldn't meet me for a trip to the cinema because it was the night of her reading group, then a group calling itself 'Cambridge Women's Reading Group' advertised itself in the University Newsletter and finally a book I read recently had a banner on the front proclaiming it 'OPRAH'S Book Club selection' and had a section at the back entitled 'Reading Group Guide'. Clearly this needed investigating!

What I found was an interesting sub-culture meeting in homes, pubs and online, its members enjoying both reading and the debate that followed at their meetings. It became clear that this was something many local Branches of the Society might enjoy doing. I realise I will now hear from myriad people to say that their Branch has been running such a group for years, but for those who like me are not familiar with the process I include information here to help you set up such a group if you find the idea

appealing.

The consensus seems to be that the ideal size for a group is 8-12. Ground rules, however few and relaxed, need to be set in advance: you may want to discuss how you would invite new members in the future; whether you're going to change the venue amongst members' houses or meet in a central place like a local pub; you'll need to decide who is going to be responsible for organizing the event and who is going to send out reminders about forthcoming meetings. This sounds like a long list but I'm assured the results make the initial groundwork worthwhile.

A web site well worth looking at for further help and advice is found at www.readinggroupguides.com/index.asp.

Do let us know if you have a group or if you set up a group. If enough people are interested, the Society could perhaps publish a small Reading Group Guide.

The London Bombings

We've all been acutely aware of what has been happening in London over the last few weeks. We'd like to extend our best wishes to all those who may have been affected in some way.

Cambridge has a tradition of training not just members of the military and secret services but also senior members of the police service. The University contributes to government bodies brought together to offer help and advice in religious and ethical matters. It provides excellent medical professionals and many others involved directly with

incidents such as these. To those people we also extend our hope that they will be successful in their tasks and soon in a position to rest and become a little less stressed.

A member of the Society in Philadelphia, USA has sent us this message and asked us to pass it on to members of the Society affected by recent events, 'I...know that many of you have been touched by the bombings in myriad ways, and please know that I (and many others here...) extend best wishes to you and yours - and respect for your continuing strength'.

Branch Events:

Friday 23 September, Cumbria Branch. Dr Elisabeth Leedham-Greene, 'The State of the University at the time of Trafalgar'.

Friday 24 and Saturday 25 September, Guernsey and Jersey Branches. Professor David Cardwell, Superconductivity Engineering.

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[http://www.cam.ac.uk/
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Autumn Event – 22 October 2005

Plans are underway for this year's 'autumn event'. This year we're planning a conference themed around Leonard Woolf, founder of the Hogarth Press, member of the Bloomsbury Group and writer of the novel 'The Village in the Jungle' set in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). The suggestion was made by one of our members who now works in England but originally helped establish the Sri Lankan Branch.

Speakers

We shall have a number of speakers from various departments here in Cambridge. However, we are also looking forward to welcoming Victoria Glendinning, who has recently finished writing a biography of Leonard Woolf, and Christopher Ondaatje whose book 'Woolf in Ceylon' will be out in October.

Location

The main part of the Conference will be held at Lucy Cavendish College. Lucy is conveniently located on the corner of Madingley Road and Lady Margaret Road making the Madingley 'Park and Ride' a convenient place to leave the car.

Refreshments

More Branch Events...

September, [Dorset Branch](#). Michael Bywater

Sunday 2 October, [North Yorkshire Branch](#). Mr Richard Stibbs, on changes in proctorial duties over the years.

Friday 14 October, [Lancashire Branch](#). Professor Paul Kerswill.

Saturday 15 October, [Kent Branch](#). Mr Richard Stibbs, on changes in proctorial duties over the years.

Friday 21 October, [Buckinghamshire Branch](#). Professor John Parker on the history and current activities of the University Botanic Garden.

Saturday 29 October, [Berkshire Branch](#). Professor Lord Broers, 'Technology – our friend'.

Contact details for Branches are on our website.

During the conference there will be tea and coffee served in the morning and afternoon, with a light lunch at mid-day.

Drinks Party

After the conference, there will be the opportunity to join the Master of Trinity, Professor Lord Rees, for drinks in the Master's Lodge. During this gathering a presentation of copy of Leonard Woolf's book will be made to Dr David McKitterick, Librarian at Trinity.

Ceylon Bloomsbury Group

The Society is collaborating in this venture with the Ceylon Bloomsbury Group, who organised a successful event last year in London, and Trinity College's Student Association. Leonard Woolf was at Trinity and was one of the mysterious Cambridge Apostles. It is hoped that this will be a very agreeable occasion and a further way to involve current students with the Society.

Costs

Full day attendance at the conference will be £22.50, this will cover refreshments and a light lunch. The drinks party is priced separately and will cost £7.50 but if you plan to come to