

DOWNING COLLEGE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

91st Annual General Meeting

held in the Howard Theatre

at 17.15 on Saturday 22 September 2018

DRAFT MINUTES

- 1 Mr Neville Tait, President of the Association, chaired the meeting and welcomed the 35 attendees.
- 2 The Minutes of the 90th Annual General Meeting were accepted.
- 3 There were no matters arising other than those covered on the agenda for the present meeting.

4 **President's Review**

The President reported the sad news of the death recently of two former Presidents.

Julian Childs died on 26th July. Julian came up to Downing in 1969 to read Oriental Studies. He rowed as stroke in the 1971 May Boat and was Captain of Boats in his final year. Julian was a great supporter of the College: in particular he was a major benefactor in the building of both the Boathouse and the Cambridge Rowing Tank. He also sponsored two boats, Basil and Basil Childs, named in memory of his father, and supported the Mays Wild Fund. He was an active member of the Association, serving as President from 2006 to 2007, and as a Co-opted Member of the Committee from 2009 to 2004. He was also a member of the Downing Enterprise Board from its inception in 2005, serving as Chairman from 2008 to 2011

John Hopkins died very recently on 19th September. He was President in 1993 to 1994. John was known to all of us and he made an immense contribution over very many years to the College and its reputation in Cambridge.

Both will be greatly missed by the College and by the Association

The President reminded members of the stated objectives of the Association and how we have achieved those objectives over the past 12 months.

1 To provide support to current students.

This is achieved by making grants to students for books, travel and the like. This year the Association has set aside £13,000 for this purpose. The grants come out of our general fund, supplemented by the profits we make from selling College Merchandise. The merchandise operation is run by the Merchandise Working Group currently very effectively chaired by Kate Dyer, a past President of the Association.

After some years of talking about moving our merchandise sales into the digital age, one of the youngest members on the Executive, Katherine Fish, rapidly set up a website from which Merchandise can be ordered and paid for. This can be accessed at www.downing-gifts.com or by typing Downing Gifts into a search engine. Orders are efficiently dealt with by Assistant Secretary, Peter Whittington, for posting or collection from the Porters' Lodge.

2 To use its contacts with alumni to help Downing College and to keep alumni in touch with one another and the College

The Association works very closely with the Development office in this respect by means of the Year Reps scheme and also by frequent contact between the officers of the Association and the various members of staff at the Development Office.

3 To hold an annual meeting and dinner

About 125 people are due to dine after the AGM. Thanks are due again to the Development Office who, as always, do splendid job with the organisation of the Alumni Day, AGM and Annual Dinner.

4 To publish an annual report and news of interest to members.

The 2018 Edition of the Newsletter which is combined with Magenta News and the College Record has recently been circulated. Producing this very professional looking publication is a massive task and huge and thanks must go especially to our Hon. Secretary Simon Walker and also to Assistant Secretary and College Fellow Zoe Barber for all their hard work.

5 To Award an Association Prize for outstanding achievement in Final Year Examinations.

This year the prize of £300 goes to Thomas Yip who came top out of 50 entrants in Natural Sciences Part 2 Pathology.

6 To organise an Annual Photographic Competition for Undergraduates and Post Graduates in residence.

This is not a formal requirement, but we are now in our 8th year of this very successful enterprise which has produced a large number of outstanding images of the College and College life. This year 41 images from ten entrants were submitted. The standard seems to get better every year. Twelve of this or last year's images appear in the Newsletter. Current entrants were on display in the Grace Howard Room during Registration and Afternoon Tea.

The official duties of the President are not onerous, comprising chairing four meetings of the Executive Committee and attending this Dinner. Most of the hard work is carried out by the executive committee, with Simon Walker taking on the difficult and time-consuming role of Hon. Secretary. This is a truly major commitment and we have been fortunate that the previous Secretary and current President Elect, Barrie Hunt, has been very supportive in ensuring a smooth transition by providing a great deal of advice and counsel.

Retiring from the Executive at the AGM having come to the end of their respective term of office were David Lloyd Jones our Past President and Colin Blackmore. Our thanks to both for their contributions.

Also retiring at the AGM as Association Treasurer after ten years of Service is Norman Berger who as well as being Treasurer has done an immense amount of work with the Merchandise sales. The Executive has nominated Norman for election as a Vice President in recognition of his long and exemplary service to the Association.

Another event affecting the Association is the change in the Development Office with whom the Association works closely. Since Gabrielle Bennett left the post of Development Director to return to the USA, Cat Middleton has ably filled the breach

as Interim Development Director and has been an enthusiastic helper and supporter of the Association as an ex-officio member of the Executive. We now look forward working closely with the newly appointed Director of Advancement, Jo Finnie Jones but are also delighted to learn that Cat Middleton is staying on as Director of Engagement and Development Operations.

We are also hugely grateful to the stalwart members of the Development Office staff, Susan Esden, Claire Varley and Rachel Kirkley who do a huge amount of work behind the scenes on our behalf.

Finally, last year the President referred to two key upcoming events.

2020 which will see 40 years since the first admission of women to Downing

2022 will be the centenary of the founding of the Association

The Executive has already identified two very suitable candidates to become President during those two significant years and has obtained their consent to be nominated.

5 Treasurer's Report

Mr Berger presented his last report as Treasurer and pointed out that there had been a recent adjustment to the merchandise stock value which had increased by £232.

In his ten years in the post the Association had been through some calm and some choppy financial waters, but he hoped a fair wind would prevail for his successor, David Riddoch. He thanked the College Bursary staff, Mike Haddock and Kay Martin, and the auditors, Robert Richards and Martin Mays for all their help, and looked forward to his continuing involvement with the Association as Vice President. He also thanked the President, the Hon. Secretary, Kate Dyer and Karen Storey for their help over many years, and Katherine Fish for setting up the web site using Wix for ordering merchandise and the iZettle card payment system.

The Treasurer's report and accounts had been included with the agenda. In answer to a query about the purpose of £35,000 in reserves, including £18,000 with the Cambridge Building Society, it was pointed out that these were there as a buffer in case of any unexpected loss of income.

The Accounts for the year ended 30 June 2018 were accepted unanimously.

6 Sales of Merchandise

Dr Kate Dyer, Chair of the Merchandise Working Group, thanked all those involved with its work, in particular Peter Whittington. She reported that sales had been slow recently, but the now biennial London Event on 1st November will provide another opportunity for sales. Photographs from the competition that are on display in the Grace Howard Room can be purchased directly or via an e-mail enquiry to merchandise@dow.cam.ac.uk

New products introduced this year include pint glasses engraved with the College crest and a cheese or chopping board which matches the design for the tray introduced last year. A new framed print based on a watercolour by Stephen Bennett will be introduced and Sir Quentin Blake will be approached again later in the year to see if he would be willing to provide another design for a framed print.

Any suggestions from Alumni for new products are always very welcome and will be looked at carefully.

7 Address by the Vice-Master

Dr Millett commented that the death of John Hopkins marks the end of an era and years in which he made a remarkable contribution to the College. A book of condolences is available for signing.

The Bursar is away on visits overseas, but it can be reported that the financial deficit is about to disappear. The College lawns are now recovering well after last year's infestation by chafer grubs. No major building work is occurring at present, but a water feature with some benches will soon be placed near the College entrance paid for by a donor. The agora in front of the Library with the associated planting is now a mature feature. A bronze sculpture by Barbara Hepworth has been relocated from Clare College to the College, all costs being paid by a donor. J staircase has been refurbished and the next major project is the refurbishment of the West Lodge which includes the Tim Cadbury Room. Mr Cadbury had been a generous supporter of the College and it with sadness that the College had learnt of his recent death. The College has recently acquired no 26 Lensfield Road for conversion into student accommodation, the last of the houses in Lensfield Road adjoining the College which it does not own, apart from the Medical Practice.

The Vice Master had stood in for the Master in the Lent Term of 2017 while the Master took a sabbatical. He had set himself three objectives on taking up his post and he was pleased to report that all have now been accomplished:

- Reinstating the bell to summon students to dinner.
- Reinstating the external boot scrapers on the West Range.
- Arranging for the name of the only member of College staff to be killed in the First World War, Joseph Blogg, to be added to the War Memorial.

Academically the College had performed well, but not as well as might be hoped, and is some way down an informal system for rating Colleges according to examination results. It is a sign of how the balance of results between degree grades has changed over the years that 2:1 degrees now depress a College's rating.

The College continues to perform well in sports activities, a highlight being the Men's Hockey team topping the League and Cuppers. College members had gained 13 Blues and 8 Half Blues. The Rowing Tank has attracted wide publicity.

The President had already reported on the changes in staff and structure in the Development Office and the Vice Master also thanked the Development Office staff for their major contribution to the College and the Alumni Association.

For the first time the College has appointed a Director of Music, David Lowe.

During his five year term of office the retiring Master has encouraged a sense of ambition and purpose, and we wish him well for the future. The new Master has already shown his skill as a cricket umpire. If he shows the same qualities in his new position, the College has nothing to fear.

8 Election of Officers

President

From President Elect:

Mr Barrie Hunt (1966)

President Elect

Proposed by the Executive Committee: Professor Richard Bowring (1965)
Honorary Treasurer

Proposed by the Executive Committee: Mr David Riddoch (1995)
Vice President

Proposed by the Executive Committee: Mr Norman Berger (1952)
Members of the Executive Committee

Proposed by the Executive Committee: Ms Julia Martin (1981)
Ms Sharon Gimson (1998)
Mr Peter Marchment (2001)

All those proposed for election were seconded and elected.

The following are co-opted members of the Executive Committee:

Prof. Roy Farmer	Website and merchandising
Dr Kate Dyer	Merchandising
Mrs Karen Storey	Merchandising
Hon. Auditors	Dr MJ Mays, Dr RJ Richards

9 The Annual Dinner

This would take place in Hall following a Reception in the Grace Howard Room.
After dinner, drinks would be served in the Howard Building.

10 Any Other Business

- i. An alumnus asked why the Publication section was no longer in the Newsletter. Mr Walker explained that this information could be found in Magenta News and the College Record: Reports from the Fellows.
- ii. The font in the Newsletter seemed less easy to read this year. This feedback will be passed on.

The meeting closed at 17.45.

11 Date of Next AGM

Saturday 28 September 2019