

# MARY'S

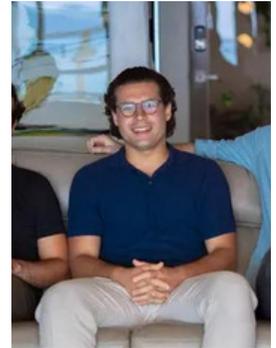
COLLEGE MAGAZINE 2022/2023





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*Mary's Magazine is published annually by journalism interns at St Mary's College. The internships are funded by alumni donations and this magazine showcases a range of alumni and current student voices.*

# Notes From the Editors



Being a journalism intern this year has been an immensely enjoyable and enriching experience. The Mary's community is a special one, and having the opportunity to engage with it more deeply is something I am very glad to have been able to do through this magazine. I have gained a great deal of professional skills throughout this process, particularly in terms of communication and graphic design, but there have also been major personal highlights for me as I have learnt a great deal from the alumni who have contributed to the magazine. It has been amazing to hear of the things people go on to do after their time at Durham! Overall, we have produced a piece of work I am very proud of and I hope our magazine demonstrates to past, present, and future students alike what makes Mary's so special.

**Nara O'Sullivan, Politics, 2nd Year**

While the internship has been different from what I expected, it has been equally, if not more rewarding. I've learnt and developed many professional skills as a part of this internship such as enhancing my communication skills, managing a bigger, long-term project and working collaboratively as part of a team ... and what a team! Working alongside Nara and Leo has been a core part of my internship and they, and the rest of the amazing College team, have really made this internship what it is. Working on the magazine has allowed me to connect with different students, alumni and Mary's staff while also getting creative and trying out new layout ideas for this year's magazine. Overall it has been a rewarding, engaging and over-achingly positive experience... I hope you enjoy!

**Katherine Chapman,  
English Literature and History, 2nd year**



I started working on this magazine when I was still a Durham student and a Mary's liver-in, and ended as a graduate, and alumnus. As I am writing this paragraph, I can more clearly see the importance of this magazine holds to its readers who miss Mary's as dearly, even more so, than me - it is a testament of our past in Mary's, but also a snapshot of our present as we grow alongside Mary's, and a map of what we will see of Mary's. I must thank Andrew and Emma for offering this wonderful chance to be part of this magazine as much as I am part of Mary's. I am also much indebted to Nara and Katherine who have been incredible, it's been a great pleasure getting to know them and working with them. I hope you enjoy the magazine as much as we enjoyed making it!

**Leo Li, Physics, 4th year**

Our greatest thanks go to Christine Wright and Andrew Unwin for their expertise, advice and contributions, without which this magazine would not have been possible.

Principal's Welcome

# Adrian Simpson



I am delighted to welcome you to the 2022/23 Mary's Magazine. As I come to the end of my first year as Principal, I am taking the opportunity to reflect back on the activities, achievements and joy of the past 12 months.

The year was rather neatly bookended by two large-scale, external events. Just before the start of the academic year, Mary's was honoured to be chosen as the host of the start of a stage of the Tour of Britain, with more than 100 of the world best cyclists starting the exhausting 160 km stage around the north-east from our terrace. Just after the end of the academic year, we were delighted to welcome the Vice-Chancellor, members of Council and external guests for the installation dinner for the new Chancellor of Durham University, Dr Fiona Hill.

Wonderful as it is to play a significant role externally, my greatest pleasures this year have come from looking inwards to the students, staff, alumni and friends of St Mary's College who have brought me in to its warm and engaging atmosphere. I could not have asked for a better welcome to my role.

The range of activity across the year has astonished me. We had the first uninterrupted year of social activity since before the pandemic; for example, holding balls in College in Michaelmas and Easter terms and the main summer ball at Hardwick Hall with over 600 students. We had a wide range of formals, including our first ever Pride formal with a thought provoking and entertaining talk about representation in science. We saw a strong return to normal levels of engagement with across all areas of college life. Our excellent JCR and MCR executives have worked hard to ensure that there has been the full range of clubs, societies and events. For example, our Foot of the Hill theatre group has entertained sell-out crowds across serious plays, panto, comedies and musicals. The sight I will most remember is the hilarious image of many of our JCR executive playing versions of themselves in the Panto.

We have had many musical events, from our amazing Basement Jazz group, through to individuals performing at live lounge, open mic nights, and poetry and music nights. We returned to the cathedral for our carol service, showcasing the talents of our chapel choir. Sports and societies too have seen engagement returning to normal levels, whether that is our astonishingly popular Games Society, our Random Acts of Kindness Society or our sports clubs. We have reintroduced a full mentoring programme for our first-year students (which will soon grow to encompass subsequent years), recruiting nearly forty mentors to play that critical role of 'interested other' for our freshers.

The disruption of the past few years also impacted on work with our Senior Common Room and St Mary's College Society, but I am pleased that these too are returning to normal levels of engagement. Our SCR is back to holding regular dinners (including a couple of opportunities to enjoy the amazing food of our new head chef, JP Cummings) and is growing its social activity. As our alumni association, SMCS has organised the first reunion since before the pandemic; I am looking forward to meeting as many of our alumni as possible across the weekend of 15 - 17 September.

Both our SCR and SMCS have contributed to college not just with their friendship, but with direct support for our students. This year has been a particularly challenging one for many of our students who have seen the cost of living and the cost of engaging in wider student experience rise substantially. Our JCR has worked hard to put on more free events and to target support for those going to the summer ball. The College was able to commit funds to ensure that all freshers from lower income households were provided with JCR levies, freshers' week levies and a gown for free; and the SCR has generously offered to cover many graduation costs for students from similar backgrounds. SMCS continues to support students with a book fund (now expanded to include academic resources more fully) and has committed to supporting careers events in future.

Many individual donors are transforming the lives of our students with scholarships, support for hardship, cultural engagement and funds which help our clubs and societies maintain equipment and support all the activity which underpins a full student experience programme in Mary's. On behalf of the whole college, I thank everyone who donates to the College - every donation has the power to transform the lives of our students.

One of the great pleasures of my first year has been hearing the history of Mary's and stories of the lives of alumni and friends after they have left the College - many of whom have maintained contact through SMCS, regular giving or just regular visits. In the Magazine, you'll see short pieces about those whose deaths have been reported to us. Of course these are great losses to their friends and family and to the wider Mary's community. Nonetheless, hearing about their lives has filled me with hope and admiration.

Professor Dame Rosemary Cramp was not only a world famous archaeologist, she was equally remembered by so many of our students as a supportive and encouraging member of our residential community for decades. Professor Ann Loades was renowned as a theologian, but again meant so much to the Mary's students of the day as a mentor and friend. Margaret Bloomfield went on to be a teacher and eventually headteacher of a secondary school and supported Mary's students financially consistently for decades. Marie Alexander similarly supported Mary's for decades, having graduated Mary's to become a leader in the work of market and personnel research. Jen Trotter, in the words of her niece, went on to have a varied and fulfilling life as a 'forever hippy', as a talented artist, through raising goats to working in a hospital. Though we mourn every one of these people, each of them has made their own mark on the work and I feel that any college that can encompass a world class archaeologist and a 'bonkers hippy' is clearly doing everything right! I can only wish that our current student body can go on to lead equally varied and rewarding lives.

I hope you enjoy the Magazine and that it gives you a flavour of Mary's recovery from the disruption of the last few years. It shows us in excellent spirit and sees the College growing from the foundations laid for us by past generations.

JCR President's Welcome

# Rex Munson



I didn't really know I wanted to be JCR President until the start of my final year. It was mostly because of the situation I saw Mary's was in that made me go for it. Two years of COVID had really impacted the college, and I thought that there wouldn't be as much of a collective memory of a 'normal year' as the last year group -- and we would all be leaving in June 2022! There's so much I love about the College. I wanted to get that feeling across to the students who hadn't had a chance to experience it, and to the students who were about to join us! Therefore, I ran for the role to try to give everyone a bit of that feeling, to help steer the JCR in a long term direction where it can sustain itself better.

When I ran for the role, I wasn't expecting to work with a new principal! However, working with Adrian has been fantastic and in some ways it feels like starting from scratch. So many of our students and staff haven't quite experienced a full year of Mary's without lockdowns, masks and LFTs. But this means that we've got to try out new things while keeping some of the old to see what has worked and what hasn't. Whatever the future holds for Mary's I just hope the next World Cup doesn't clash with all of our events!

Anyway, being Pres in the first real non-COVID year has been amazing. There have been some lows -- don't get me wrong. But I've felt so joyous seeing those in the lower years falling in love with Mary's the same way I did. From the view of the cathedral, the slightly jarring portraits of the previous Principals in the dining hall, to the clunk the pool table makes when you start a new game. The smell of toasties and pints in the basement, the snowmen that get built every year, the cherry blossoms, the unique, disgusting smell in each different corridor (ok maybe not so much this one).

I've had many special moments this year, for example when the frep team kept gifting me 'borrowed' banners from other colleges, any of Dave Greene's antics (if you know, you know), or when a few of us snuck into Chad's Day.

But most of all, what I love about Mary's is the people! From all of the staff, the other students and also the wider community of alumni. Everyday is different in this role, but it's the people that make it special!

# MCR President's Welcome

## Sophie Wilson-Logan



Having only arrived in Durham in 2021 as a postgraduate after completing my undergraduate degree at the University of Edinburgh, the concept of colleges and MCRs was alien to me. Now almost two years later, it has become obvious that the college experience offers an intrinsic and perennial emotional bond for students. One that is amplified, pioneered, and forged by common rooms and the students that run them. This newfound connection and fervour is the reason why I ran for MCR President in my second year of study, and why my overall time at St Mary's College has been filled with indelible and vivacious memories.

My primary goal as President has been to increase awareness and involvement around the MCR, and the perks it has to offer. After some existential blows to the MCR post-COVID, myself and my hard-working and wonderful exec have worked throughout the year to revive and revitalise the common room, and built a foundation for future Presidents and executive committees to create a meaningful and lasting affinity with St Mary's College and the Middle Common Room.

Throughout my nine months as President, the MCR has ran an expansive variety of successful events to broaden the inclusivity of current and future MCR members, enliven the college experience for those in Durham for a short time. Over the academic year, we hosted the

first Mary's inter-MCR formal in eight years, an inter-MCR boat party, pizza parties, welcome events for future members in their 3rd year, wine and cheese nights. We have further spent the year renovating the MCR to enhance and enrich the living space and kitchen space for members. We have also been advertising and attending the events ran by other MCRs such as formals, movie nights, research seminars, coffee and cake hours and so much more. The inter-collegiate aspect adds a wealth to the experience.

Anyone who knows me assumes that I have been in Durham for years and are always surprised to find out I only came here as a postgraduate in 2021. My experience at St Mary's is a testament to what Master's PGs especially can do in such a short space of time, and also to how meaningful and significant the College can become to anyone who spends even the most transient time here.

One of my favourite memories from my year as President was the prep for the inter-MCR formal. We had a relatively small formal committee but were struggling with the decorations in the run-up to the event. Within an hour we had 15+ other MCR members and JCR students helping out after a last minute plea. Students gave up time to decorate tables, organise goodie bags, string fairy lights, create a balloon arch, make origami dragons, and so much more. It was a heartwarming and momentous effort to make the formal a dazzling and immersive spectacle. In my eyes, the true MCR experience has always been the dedication, friendship, and fellowship of those around you.



## SCR President's Welcome

# Nancy Cartwright



This autumn, St Mary's SCR was at last able to resume meeting together and sharing the kind of intellectual conversations and friendships that SCR members value so highly. We were particularly glad to be able to resume our Tuesday night high-table dinners, and we are particularly grateful to all the college staff who have worked so hard to get these to happen, especially to head chefs Paul Embleton and JP Cummings, and Mustafa Gun and the entire kitchen and serving staff, as well as to Angela Gurteen who has helped us through with the new announcement and sign-up system.

It was of course a year of much change at St Mary's, not least with Maggi Dawn having just left as Principal and the arrival of Adrian Simpson. Adrian has by now been here most of an academic year and the SCR are all delighted to have him amongst us. There was also considerable change in other college personnel, and the SCR was sad to see so many people leave whose work at the college was so valuable and so much appreciated. In addition, we have had new SCR officers. Keith Lindsey as President, Steven Spencer as membership secretary and John Purcell as a co-opted member all stepped down after years of dedicated service to the SCR, replaced respectively by me, Christine Wright and Elizabeth Fisher. Sabrina Seel, who did her

postgraduate work at Durham and had served as St Mary's MCR president also left her post as SCR secretary, was replaced by Andrew Baldwin. I am happy to be able to take this occasion on behalf of the whole SCR to thank those who left for their hard work and friendship and those who are doing those jobs now. I am especially grateful to Elizabeth Fisher who served as substitute President while I was away during Epiphany term. We also have several new members this year, some even having joined us just this last term, and I am also happy to take this occasion to again welcome them all to St Mary's SCR.

Besides the chance to renew our dinners together, other highlights of the Michaelmas and Epiphany terms were the Christmas Carol Service in the Cathedral which the SCR shared with the rest of the St Mary's community, a celebration of the amusing book, *The Midnight Mannequins and other Stories* by our 'food and wine' officer Mike Daly, a talk on migrants by our secretary Andrew Baldwin and a fantastic gourmet dinner by St Mary's new chef JP Cummings with wonderful piano music by St Mary's undergraduate Tom Milnes. This Easter term highlights were an outing to the Theatre Royal Newcastle for the RSC performance of *Julius Caesar*, organized by Peter Fisher, who was subbing for our cultural officer Gillian Boughton, another great gourmet dinner, and a number of events shared with the St Mary's community, like the midsummer ball and a poetry and music evening. The SCR is also providing funds to help finishing students with the cost of graduation expenses.

# Intern insights

Mary's offers a range of internships, to give students enrichment and development opportunities, and to contribute to various aspects of college life in so many collaborative, technical and creative ways. This year we welcomed new interns and new internships, with archive, biodiversity and tech being added to alumni, social media, journalism, and library roles.

- Andrew Unwin, Vice-Principal



I'm the Alumni Engagement Officer for St Mary's College, and have thoroughly enjoyed and learned a lot from this experience! The main responsibilities of my role have been displaying effective communication skills, staying connected and building engagement with Mary's alumni community in creative ways, as well as contributing content to the Mary's Magazine, coordinating events for College and planning for the direction and promotion of alumni relations.

Working with college staff at Mary's has always been a fantastic experience for me, as they really do make the time and effort to support you through all your ideas and queries. Emma Gray has been a fantastic mentor for me through my time at Mary's, and the opportunity to work with her in doing this work has been my best takeaway!

This internship has been an extremely insightful and enriching experience, and I've gained a lot of important takeaways and learnings from it. The most important of these has been the power of effective communication and collaboration, particularly in fostering lasting relationships with College staff and alumni.

For any challenges that I did encounter, big or small, the Mary's College staff is there for you every step of the way to help and guide you through it. It showcases the importance and strength of the College community in working together to create a positive impact and fabulous experiences for the student and alumni body.

From my perspective, Mary's internships are such a great way to build important interpersonal and professional skills while working in a supportive and dynamic environment. I would excitedly reach out to the wider Mary's alumni network, particularly those that have recently graduated, to remain connected and increase engagement with College in the fantastic work they do!

Summarise your internship in three words:  
Insightful, Empowering and Supportive.

As the Biodiversity intern, my main responsibilities are to improve the level of biodiversity at Mary's by implementing projects across college. My role involves working with members of staff within College but also the university-wide grounds team, staff at the botanic gardens, Greenspace team and the environment society.

Within my role, I have set up wildflower plots on the slopes beside the road near Williamson which are trialling 5 different techniques for growing wildflowers to see which is the most productive with the soil and environment at Mary's. This also included adding native flower seeds to the plots. With this information, we hope to set up larger wildflower meadows with future biodiversity interns across College grounds. As many are aware, wildflowers are incredibly beneficial to our local biodiversity especially, within pollinator species such as bees. Improving their populations further benefits our local biodiversity and ecological balance. Similarly, we are currently running a 'no-mow-May' scheme on the banks by the steps down to Williamson and on the side of the driveway by the main entrance. This has similar benefits to the wildflower plots but will only grow what is already on these grasses rather than adding more native seeds.

Moreover, we have recently placed a nature camera on the grounds to capture any animals on the grounds to promote biodiversity and wildlife protection across College. We are hoping to show photos from this camera next year. We also have been planning on installing a bird box camera, but this will be passed on to next year's following biodiversity intern. **In the meantime, we are going to try and organise a bird box repair session with the environment society and Greenspace at some point in third term.**

It was great to have the experience of working with top members of staff as well as getting advice and enthusiasm from these people for the projects I put forward. These opportunities have improved my maturity and communication skills as well as provided me with experience in the field I want to go into in my future career. I think other colleges would benefit from having internships as it not only improves the skills of the student who receives the internship but also improves their own college. In my case, Mary's is going to have better biodiversity and hopefully more publicity from the University because of this.

Seeing the wildflower plots being made has been my favourite moment in the internship. It was very exciting to see the plots made in October and adding the seeds to them myself. I have wanted to have wildflower meadows in College since I was the environment officer last year but never managed to get the project rolling, it felt great to know I was starting something I'm passionate about and seeing it come to fruition.

Summarise your internship in three words:  
Passionate, prosperous and environment-loving





I am the social media intern for St Mary's College. My main responsibility is providing content to St Mary's main and news Instagram accounts with a cumulative following of over 3000. Content can come in the form of reposting events and opportunities for Mary's students, but also enjoying Mary's photogenic scenery! Having meetings with the Vice Principal on how to expand Mary's social reach is an increasingly important responsibility within the role too.

The internship has aided my ability to develop my social media and marketing skills. This is an invaluable skill set to possess for modern careers and not something I had previously had the chance to cultivate. In particular, I have learned about how timings can affect the post's reach as well as the type of content that boosts engagement.

My favourite internship moment was being able to promote the new St Mary's merchandise. It was fantastic to show the merchandise to students and alumni that would otherwise not have seen them. Moreover, I was able to express creative freedom with the post, opting for a collage and then individual photos.

The biggest challenge was the anxiety that comes with the responsibility of ensuring that the posts represent the College to the best of my ability. Some of the challenges involved include people's direct messaging with various requests. Learning how to respond professionally has been crucial.

I think internships are a brilliant way for students to engage with their College. The role has been personally rewarding as I have been able to give back. In addition, they provide an opportunity to cultivate new skills and volunteer for roles that would otherwise not be available. Other colleges should offer internships for these reasons.

Summarise your internship in three words:  
Like, follow, share!

As tech interns, Marek and I have had the opportunity to develop our skills in order to help out with College events. We set up and took down the light and sound for the Halloween Carnival and have helped to reorganise 34B (the tech cupboard in College). Given that this year was the first year that the tech internship has been run, one responsibility has been to try and make the internship and College tech more streamlined for future interns.

My favourite moment has been discovering how to use Mary's tech equipment with Marek and getting to know someone else who is also interested in improving his tech skills. I have got to know a lot more people involved in the running of Mary's events and have a greater appreciation for all the work they do!

The internship being new has been a challenge as there was no strict plan for how we should spend our time. This was equally exciting as challenging as it meant that we were able to create our own plan for the year and pursue our own interests within tech.



Tech interns



This experience has taught me that something that may seem overwhelming or challenging at first can result in more exciting opportunities.

I have learnt useful, practical and soft skills from my internship. I have learnt how to set up lighting and sound equipment and I have developed perseverance in learning new skills and working professionally within a team. Furthermore, the opportunity to attend meetings with College staff has improved my oral communication skills.

Internships are a great investment for colleges as they allow students to develop skills that they can take forward into life after university and they also benefit the college itself as the projects interns have been working on, such as the College magazine and the streamlining of tech within College, are things which the wider College community benefit from.

Summarise your internship in three words:

Extremely valuable opportunity



My main responsibilities are to return books in the library, meet with college staff to keep up the running of the library, and take ideas from other college libraries to see what can make Mary's library better.

In my internship, I have learned how to communicate with colleagues and people in other organisations to achieve a goal. This is from experience discussing library matters with the vice-principal, payment with the finance department, and from meeting with the librarians from other colleges. This will help in the future as the ability to clearly get across ideas and resolve disputes in the workplace is a very important skill that I have learned in this Internship position. I now have an entire year's worth of experience meeting with new people and familiar colleagues and can tell that I now communicate more clearly and with less anxiety than when I started.

The largest challenge in my internship has been the library itself. The library was quite unorganised at the start of this academic year, but through working with the library team leader Lillie Guest-Payne to coordinate an effort to clean up our storage room and working with Bill Bryson staff to ensure our library uses the same system so everything can be logged automatically, the library now runs far more effectively and spends much less time on sorting and clearing back logs.

My favourite moment has been my interview with Timothy Fowler, Trevelyan college's Librarian. Tim has been working at Trevs for many years and previously worked at Mary's college. He gave me many insights into how to run a library and properly integrate it into the college management structure, and also how to improve the student-facing side of the library with available physical resources.

Mary's internship has been a great opportunity to get experience in the area of the internship in my opinion. I have learned a lot about the running of libraries from both running Mary's library and from interviewing the librarians of other colleges. I first worked in a library in Y12 and so to go from a 16-year-old helping scan books to running the college library and doing lots from helping people find resources to finding the total cost of the books the college owns has been a great job for me. I believe the experience and growth that the internships offer should be offered by all colleges and I hope Mary's expands their own internship opportunities.

Summarise your internship in three words: Organisation. Communication. Automation.

# Christmas Carol Service 2022

After mince pies in College, the carol service at Durham Cathedral saw over 400 Mary's students, staff, alumni, mentors, and supporters gathered at a memorable and happy service of traditional readings, choral music, and carols, carefully planned so that everyone felt welcome and involved. The service was led by Rev Canon Michael Hampel and Rev Peter Kashouris; the Principal gave his personal words of welcome. The choir were ably directed by Jasmine Margalit and Jess Simson, who have built a strong choir throughout the year. One of our chapel scholars, Sophie Derbyshire, sang the solo for the first verse of *Once In Royal David's City*. In recent years the directors of the choir have offered an anthem which they have composed, and Jess Simson's *Visitors' Carol* was sung this year. The nine lessons were read by: Lewis Humble, Ava Dadswell, Rachel Clarke, Charles Bishop, Elizabeth Fisher, Rex Munson, Fiona Baker, Alex Wright, and Andrew Unwin. Over £100 was raised for *Moving On*, Durham's leading youth homelessness charity, through the retiring collection.



# Masquerade Ball 2023

Run as usual, by the St Mary's College Art Society (SMCAS) this year's

Masquerade ball was held in Epiphany term with the theme 'The Seven Seas'.

The photographer for the event was Laura Wales



# Words from Mentors

Many cohorts of Mary's students will have benefitted from the knowledge, wisdom and support of college tutors and mentors over the years. With the COVID-19 pandemic having had a great impact on the ability of mentors and mentees to meet in the usual ways, we relaunched our mentoring programme in 2022/23 with 290 students being allocated to 40 mentor groups. Our mentors come from all areas of the community, some are members of University staff and some work in other sectors, some are recent graduates whereas others have had varied and interesting careers. However, what they all have in common is a desire and willingness to enrich the lives of our students.

## Why did you become a mentor at Mary's?

I have recently completed my degree as a member of St Mary's College so I know what it's like to be a first year at Mary's. I am well aware of some of the challenges experienced by Mary's students (e.g., finding housing) and can provide advice around this); I can also provide more general support around job applications.

To be part of a diverse community. I work in education and would like to help students have a happy time at Mary's and Durham as they've worked hard to be here.

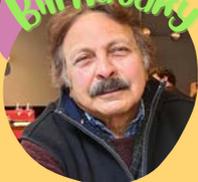
I have over 40 years of experience in education, including mentoring within Youth Justice. I have knowledge of various issues and have worked in the property rental sector so can help with getting accommodation. I am experienced in encouraging performance and getting involved in college life.

During my time as an undergraduate student at Durham, I saw how beneficial a positive and supportive mentor could be, especially to students who may be first-generation scholars or have less outside support.

Having graduated I was really keen to remain part of the St Mary's community and give back to my College in some way. I personally really benefitted from my mentor when I was an undergraduate and I wanted to help to continue this great scheme and to form some positive links with the new students. I know how overwhelmed I was when I started and so I was keen to support those who may be feeling the same.



Barbara Keys



Bill Kabaky



Adrian Gao



Helen Roberts



Fiona Baker

Empathy, and experience here as an undergrad and a postgrad. I'm very grateful to those who have helped me whilst I've been a postgrad and I also remember with horror the total lack of support for students during my first degree in the 80's!!

I have lived in Durham for most of my adult working life and so am able to share local knowledge about the area and opportunities that exist in this beautiful city. Having spent all my life working with young people, I have many lived experiences to draw upon when it comes to giving advice or support.

As a very recent graduate I understand completely how the students may be feeling, and can offer advice from someone who has recently dealt with the things they are dealing with (and give very good cafe and trip recommendations!)

I was an international student at Durham University, currently in full-time employment in the North East. I have first-hand experience in providing advice to international students navigating post graduate employment opportunities and seeking part-time employment during education, building their CV and portfolio.

## What do you gain from mentoring?

Mentoring provided positive connections and genuine supporters for both students and myself. I found it enlightening and inspiring talking to students. I've also met some really interesting and interested mentors. Mary's is a dedicated and loving community.

A diverse community brings the world to me and shapes my views on events from a human perspective. I enjoy helping others to be their best and to have fun.

It's good to belong to another community and as my children have left (and are preparing to go) to university, I enjoy the times I get to spend with the mentees. They are remarkable young people.

Being a mentor is a privilege itself - I enjoy the opportunity to interact and engage with Durham University's students. Seeing my mentees succeed brings me joy and I am particularly happy when the knowledge and experience I have shared has made a difference in a mentee's life. It also allows me to be a part of Durham University's community post-graduation.

Learning how to listen better and grow in compassion for different students. Understanding changing times in societies and evolving struggles young people face in this day and age. Continuing to be involved in and enjoy the life of St Mary's College!

Lan Dong



Leanna Trick



Lydia Kitchen



Stuart Green



# Revival Charity Fashion Show

Revival is a University show and a major event in the University calendar. Loretta Krasniqi (Finance and Accounting, Second Year) is a Mary's student and was President of Revival 2023. Loretta discusses the extraordinary event, which raised over £21,000 for Family Fund UK, and shares what she gained from the experience.

The Revival is a student-led organisation at Durham University. We operate throughout the year, hosting a variety of pre-show events and a social media campaign, as well as the fashion show itself. The Revival values inclusivity and we seek to create a platform that celebrates individuality and diversity, and somewhere everyone can feel comfortable and confident in their own skin. At the centre of Revival 2023 was Family Fund, UK's largest charity providing grants for families raising disabled or seriously ill children and young people.

Everyone and anyone who knows me, knows I have always been passionate about charity and fashion. I initially got involved as a model for The Revival 2021/22. As a model, I had an insight into the 'behind the scenes' of a fashion show and was inspired by the hard work and passion the executive team had. Additionally to this, finding out how our £18,500 raised in 2021/22, helped our local community in the North East encouraged me to apply for The Revival 2022/23.

My role in 2022/23 was President. As President, I was the head of Revival and led a team of over 70 students, overseeing the strategic direction, both logical and creative, of all aspects of Revival. It was an incredible role where I learnt new things every day, problem solved, met new people, and made new friends.

As mentioned previously, at the centre of Revival 2023 was Family Fund, UK's largest charity providing grants for families raising disabled or seriously ill children and young people. This charity was very close to me personally as I have a young sister who suffers from her own disabilities, and therefore I know how equipment and money can improve the quality of life for families and children involved. Therefore, my favourite moment, throughout this entire experience, had to be announcing the total my team and I raised - a massive £21,580. The look on everyone's faces was a surreal moment, but in particular, the look from the team at Family Fund was so rewarding.





Another great moment would have to be the Open Mic Night we held at the Angel Inn. It was one of the first moments where the models and exec met each other for the first time, and guests enjoyed a very lovely evening of live music. Not only did we have a successful night raising money, but there was an amazing atmosphere of community at Durham University.

Finally, I must mention our fashion show nights, which were an absolute success. Bringing together art, community, and individuality all in the name of charity was an incredible experience. The energy from the audience clearly showed that they had a fantastic night and everything went smoothly, which could not have happened without the amazing team I had.

Being part of The Revival has been one of the best experiences of my life, having learned so many new things. My team and I, certainly, will remember this for the rest of our lives and I would encourage everyone and anyone to get involved, regardless of previous experience! I am excited to see what The Revival 2024 brings.



Photography by Oliver Riley-Smith

# Midsummer Ball 2023

This year's theme for the Midsummer ball's end of year celebrations was The Lord of the Rings. It was held at Hardwick Hall Hotel. Our thanks to everyone who made the "long awaited party" so magical.

This year, Mary's Day was held on 18 June 2023. Mary's saw food, games, some amazing student bands and incredible tribute acts ... plus a lot of Pimms and rain!



# Mary's Day 2023

Photos have been submitted by students or taken by our event photographers, Laura Murphy (daytime) and Laura Wales (evening). Thank you to the committee for all their hard work.

# The Women's Hostel

If you walk from Durham Market Place up the left side of Clay Path past a church, you will see an imposing door flanked by sandstone pillars. This was the entry to the old Post Office which is now retirement flats named Clay Path Court. On the red brick wall beside the door, the keen eye will observe a blue plaque celebrating the opening in April 1899 of the forerunner of St Mary's College, the Women's Hostel at 33 Clay Path.

63 years elapsed between 1832 when the residential, collegiate University of Durham controlled by the Dean and Chapter, was founded by Act of Parliament, and 1895 when a supplementary Charter allowed the University to confer degrees on women. Even then, progress for women was slow: it was another four years before the Women's Hostel began.

The first women undergraduates were admitted to the University by St Hild's. In 1898 they became the first 3 female graduates\* of Durham University but they had no permanent abode. Known as Home Students, they lived with relations or friends and even the Warden, Dean Kitchin, made his home available. In 1897 a Lady Censor was appointed to take charge of female students, a common room provided and strict 'Principal Rules for Women Students' drawn up. In October 1897 a scholarship for women was introduced. But the University remained reluctant to find a permanent residence.

## FIRST HOME: 33 CLAYPATH

By February 1899 the University had agreed to take 33 Claypath for the purpose of a Women's Hostel for 3 years at £45 annual rent. Provision was made for a Principal, 6 students and 2 servants. In April 1899, two Darlington Training College students\*\* joined the Principal. In October 1899 the Hostel's first full academic year began when the first 3 fully Durham undergraduates; (namely the scholarship girls Bessie Callender and Constance Tunnicliffe, and a Miss Korner) took up residence along with 3 girls from Darlington.

## FIRST PRINCIPAL: LAURA ROBERTS 1899-1900

On March 29th 1899 Miss Laura Roberts, eager for a new academic challenge was appointed Principal at a salary of £50 a year with full board and 11th April set for her arrival in Durham. From the first she was unimpressed by the impractical, unimaginative living conditions provided. "All the rooms were coloured bright yellow of a particularly irritating shade save one which had formerly been a solicitor's office. It was painted a dull green, and contained a huge shallow cupboard useful for books and for such stores as could not be kept in a damp kitchen. I appropriated it for my sitting room and my Sheraton furniture showed to advantage in it. The furniture...was ugly machine-made stuff. Drawers would not open, handles would not turn, and writing tables had few and shallow drawers." She fought hard for better conditions but her disillusionment grew and led her to resign. The final straw was that no deputy was to be appointed so she could not be absent in any circumstances; secondly the damp draughty house was unhealthy and noisy. Dean Kitchin accepted, writing, "It makes me regret that I ever consented to the hiring of that house". She left Durham on 18th October 1900 but subsequently found fulfilment in her marriage to Archdeacon Lonsdale Ragg, Canon of Lincoln Cathedral, with whom she shared academic interests, writing and travelling. In 1948 she wrote an account of her experiences at the Women's Hostel.



## FIRST SENIOR STUDENT: BESSIE CALLENDER 1899-1902

Nevertheless, the Principal really cared about her students and created a good family atmosphere helped by Bessie Callender's enthusiastic organisation. Bessie had come to Durham on a maths scholarship. She established hockey, rowing, debating and drama clubs, not too easy with only 6 students! Rules were strict and by modern standards unreasonable! Academic dress, (gowns over black coats and skirts, white shirt, stiff collars and black ties) had to be worn until 1pm and for evening lectures on pain of half a crown fine (12.5p) Students had to 'keep their days' by attending chapel and every lecture. Bessie records: "Towards the end of my first year I nearly lost a term and my scholarship. Out of eight weeks a scholar could miss only eight days. I had kept every day as I knew I had to be in London at the end of term for eight days, and could only get back by taking by taking the five o'clock train on the last evening, which arrived about midnight. The train broke down and we were stranded at 2am six miles from Durham. No cars or buses, of course, and I was told we could not get to Durham till the morning, too late to keep my chapel attendance. I went nearly mad and raged so violently that the railway put on a special train at 3am and I travelled in solitary state to Durham, went to bed for a few hours and was at chapel at 9am." Bessie's entertaining descriptions of the early days of the Women's Hostel are recorded in her invaluable autobiography, Education in the Melting Pot.

## MOVING ON: ABBEY HOUSE

Led by the second Principal, Elizabeth Robinson (1900-1913), the Women's Hostel moved to Abbey House on Palace Green. Bessie wrote, "By the Easter Term of 1901 we were in a bigger house. It was a wonderful change, and we were now in the centre of everything and had much pleasanter quarters". By 1901 there were 12 students and in 1904 when Bessie left Durham, the Women's Hostel held 30 and expanded further into Abbey Cottage adjoining Abbey House. After Principal Phyllis Wragge (1913-1915), came Rachel Donaldson (1915-40) who led the Hostel through the First World War to historic changes in 1919: the granting of collegiate status, the new name St Mary's College and the new home 8 The College in Cathedral Close. And so after 20 years the Women's Hostel became St Mary's College.

\*A recently unveiled blue plaque reads "Here in 1898 Mary Gibson, Dora Heslop and Winifred Hindmarch graduated from St Hild's Training College becoming the first female graduates at Durham University - supra montem posita".

\*\*Students of the training college could count 2 years residence in Darlington as equivalent to one year in Durham and after passing the appropriate exam could do the final year of a degree course in Durham.



# The Queen and St Mary's



Anne Elliott, St Mary's College Archivist, Pays tribute to HM Queen Elizabeth II and explores her role in college history

## A Timeline

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II has played a unique and indelible part in the history of St Mary's College. It is remarkable that significant times in her life happened close to major developments of St Mary's.

**23rd October 1947** HRH The Princess Elizabeth, aged 21, laid the foundation stone of the new St Mary's building, the first College on the Elvet Hill site.

Four weeks afterwards came her wedding to Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. The JCR and SCR later gave her an etching of Durham Cathedral and Castle as a wedding present. **20th November 1947**

**4th November 1948** When Prince Charles, now HM King Charles III, was born the College sent a telegram of good wishes and congratulations. A week later the following reply came in hand-writing from Buckingham Palace: 'The Lady in Waiting is desired by The Princess Elizabeth to express to you Her Royal Highness' sincere thanks for your congratulations and for the good wishes which you send'.

Five years later was her accession to the throne on the death of her father, HM King George VI. In October of the same year the whole College moved from the peninsula to the completed new building, later known as the Fergusson Building. **6th February 1952**

**4th May 1953** Royal interest in St Mary's continued even as the coronation approached. The Queen's mother, known as HM Elizabeth the Queen Mother, was to have performed the opening ceremony of the new building but regrettably had to cancel owing to the sudden death of her brother. She hoped to come at a later date.

Coronation of the new Queen, by which time the new building had almost seen through its first year of students. **2nd June 1953**

**1st November 1956** The Queen Mother made a delightful visit to the great pleasure of all. However, there could not now be an official opening as the building had been occupied for over a year.

HM Queen Elizabeth visited St Mary's accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh. She had expressed a wish to see, while visiting County Durham, the building of which she had laid the foundation stone. She had been on the throne for a mere eight years out of her final seventy. **27th May 1960**

**2012** On her Diamond Jubilee tour of the North East, it was hoped that the Queen would take a brief look at St Mary's. Though she came close to St Mary's, driving round Palace Green and lunching at the Castle, regrettably her schedule was too full to allow a visit. In 2012 the College also was proud to be celebrating its own Diamond Jubilee - of its 1952 building. Maybe Her Majesty spared a thought for St Mary's.

**1952** A new beginning for Queen and College, meant that both ran parallel to some extent and special anniversaries coincided. In June **2022** she celebrated the memorable Platinum Jubilee of her reign. The Platinum Jubilee of the occupation of St Mary's new building was also 2022.

# 1947: HRH Princess Elizabeth Lays The Foundation Stone

Thursday 23rd October 1947 was a historic day for St Mary's College when HRH The Princess Elizabeth laid the foundation stone of the new buildings on Elvet Hill. At the time the students who numbered 87 lived on the peninsula in 8 The College, Cathedral Close.

It was a mild, sunny autumn morning with leaves still brightly coloured and flags were waving from the windows of the old St Mary's in the Cathedral Close. At the site of the new St Mary's on Elvet Hill, a dais bedecked with bunting was in position for the foundation stone ceremony.

The Princess like most of her student contemporaries was just 21. Wearing a sage green coat and matching side-swept beret with a feather cockade, she arrived accompanied by a lady-in-waiting, her secretary and a detective. She had spent the night at Wynyard, home of the University Chancellor and his wife, Lord and Lady Londonderry.



## A Royal Welcome

Princess Elizabeth entered Durham by the White Gates and was received by the Mayor on Prebends Bridge. She then drove straight to St Mary's along South Bailey and stepped from her car just outside the archway. Meanwhile, the Warden Sir James Duff, senior members of the Governing Body and the Senior Woman Edith Stayman, had been awaiting her arrival before the main door of the old College. Here the Warden presented the waiting group, and the Senior Woman gave Her Royal Highness a bouquet of cream carnations twined with violets for the palatinate purple.

Principal Margaret Fergusson carefully recalled the coffee-party in the dining-room where "the assembled College swept into curtsies as the Princess advanced down the room to stand near one of the windows opposite the fireplace..... She was offered a cup of coffee, most carefully prepared from the first fresh roasting of the beans, but alas the Princess stirred her coffee as she talked but had no time to drink it. I asked her if I might bring up students to meet her, and she replied 'Please do, I'd love that'. As the students were presented, the Princess talked with a delightful mixture of friendliness, shyness, and dignity, about the subjects they were reading, their war-service, or the places from which they came." Finally she was shown the original water-colour painting by architect Vincent Harris exhibited at the Royal Academy, of the front elevation of the new building. She then went to the Cathedral while the College walked up to the site of the new building. The Cathedral bells rang a peal of welcome and Dean Alington welcomed the royal party. She listened to the choir and visited the Chapel of the Nine Altars and Galilee Chapel. She passed through the choir-boys' guard of honour, out by the North door and on to the new College site.



These are the words carved on a block of Durham sandstone. The stone now stands in the north wall of the Fergusson Building and can be seen behind the conference bar in the Dining Hall.

# Foundation Stone Ceremony

## The Warden's Words

At the new site in the absence due to illness of the Chancellor Lord Londonderry, Princess Elizabeth was received by the Vice-Chancellor Lord Eustace Percy and led to her seat on the dais. Sir James Duff, Warden of the Durham Colleges, amongst many words of welcome and appreciation, then requested Princess Elizabeth to lay the foundation stone, saying that it marked two things "first the sign of a hope now nearly fifty years old, that our women students should at last have a worthy home of their own. They started in one house; they now occupy seven, widely scattered and none of them suitable for the purposes of a residential college. Secondly the first step in a bold plan of extending the Durham Colleges here on the south side of the river till in course of time this becomes a larger centre than our old centre on the rock."



## H.R.H. The Princess Elizabeth's Reply

"I am very glad to be here today to lay this Foundation Stone because I know that the rise of New St Mary's College will give reality to a long cherished hope. It is now 50 years since women first entered the University. They did so in the teeth of strong prejudice and, both at Durham and elsewhere, they must have had to accept living conditions to which no man would have submitted. Now in New St Mary's College, we may be sure that every student will have not only a room of her own but many other amenities which are as much deserved as they are desired.

"The College will stand in this magnificent position, looking across the river to the Cathedral in all its glory, as a record of initiative and of resolution undismayed by practical difficulties. ... You may well be proud that Durham has given this lead both in starting to build so soon after the War, and in using such wise discrimination in the choice of a site.

"There can be no thinking people in this country who do not wish to see the advantages of a university education extended as widely and as soon as possible. A statesman of the last century said that 'A university should be a place of light, of liberty and of learning'. Those are possessions which in the modern world we must guard most jealously: it is to the breadth of mind, the character and the understanding which a university breeds that we look to lead us to brighter days ahead,

"Women have moved far in this century. They have asserted many rights and they have established many claims. Nobody will deny the splendour of their part in the war, or underestimate the work they are doing today in every aspect of the national life. But if we are to maintain this highest tradition which is none the less noble for being new, we must not forget that before all else we are women...

"I now have pleasure in laying the Foundation Stone of the new St Mary's College. In so doing I congratulate all those who have brought this project so close to fulfilment, and wish happiness and prosperity to the many who will benefit from their labours."

## And then.....

Lunch with local dignitaries, University representatives and an orchestral accompaniment, was in the Castle Hall because the old St Mary's did not have a room of suitable size. Principal Fergusson remembers, "The Princess sat between the Vice-Chancellor and the Bishop. We drank two healths only - those of the King and of the Princess herself. The Vice-Chancellor then presented a copy of Professor Whiting's 'University of Durham', specially bound in blue morocco, with a design based on the three lilies of this College and with its motto 'Ancilla Domini'. And at about 2.30 the Princess left the Castle through ranks of students, and the great day was over." After lunch she drove through Durham on her way to her next engagement - opening a training centre for disabled men at Finchale.



# 1960: Return of the Queen

On 27th May 1960, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh made her second visit to St Mary's. She had expressed a wish to see the building of which she had laid the foundation stone 13 years before. It was a short visit between lunch in the Castle and Newton Aycliffe later in the afternoon.



At 2.40p.m the royal couple drove from the Cathedral along South Bailey, Prebends Bridge and Potter's Bank to St Mary's College. Principal Marjorie Williamson recalled, "A day of sunshine, all green and gold and Her Majesty looked relaxed and happy. The Royal Standard flew from our flagstaff on the roof, as Her Majesty arrived at the portico steps to be received by the Warden Sir James Duff and myself and presented with a bouquet by Dawn Thompson, [a geography undergraduate from the Bahamas], before the welcoming crowd of students." \*\*

Her Majesty would have taken notice of the foundation stone as she walked up the portico steps to the Dining Hall. There the domestic staff watched the presentation of Mrs Gordon member of the Governing body, and members of the Senior Common Room. In the West JCR, the Senior Woman Margaret Tindle and JCR officers were presented. The royal party then made a short tour of the building, signing the Visitors' Book in the library, talking to students and visiting some of the rooms on the first floor of the East Wing. From the south end of the East Wing, the Queen and the Duke crossed the south lawn pausing to look across at Grey College the next new College to be built. Then they made their way to the main entrance, were escorted down the steps and departed from the forecourt, cheered by the waiting members of College. Dr Edna Jenkinson, (College tutor and Classics lecturer) took some delightful informal photos. Angela Packham, the next Senior Woman, summed up the students' impressions of the visit: "All our expectations were fulfilled by what was a very happy, though brief visit. We were all delighted by Her Majesty's gracious charm and the Duke's sense of humour. The visit was as informal as such an occasion can be, which made it particularly enjoyable." \*\*



\*\*(quotes from Principal's and Senior Woman's reports 1960-61)

# Nathaniel Barling

Nara O'Sullivan and Katherine Chapman speak to Nathaniel Barling, a member of the Mary's community who graduated from Durham in 2016, about his time at university and his career at the cutting-edge of AI innovation.

There is no doubt that the start of Nathaniel Barling's career has been a successful one. In the midst of his undergraduate degree, Nathaniel regularly flew between Durham and Stanford, raising the \$10million needed to launch his business Knowhere - an AI-driven objective news source. Knowhere went on to earn Nathaniel a place on Forbes' 30 under 30 media list alongside his two co-founders before being purchased by Andreessen Horowitz, where Nathaniel now works as a senior product manager. During our talk, Nathaniel spoke at length about the drastic changes he has already undergone in his short career. He says that as a CEO only 30-40% of his work was product-focused, whereas now he gets to explore his creative side as a product manager. It is this creativity, Nathaniel says, that makes him "tick" and gets him "excited" when he wakes up in the morning.

Yet aside from his unexpected love of creative work - a shock to himself when he remembers the time during his degree when he wanted to go into investment banking - Nathaniel's interest in society and community shines through. Nathaniel's degree focused on politics, philosophy and economics, and he says political philosophy still has an important place

in the work he does. Nathaniel's real passion lies in unlocking the possibilities AI holds for education. AI could "put a private tutor in every single child's home", he says, allowing them an education that exposes them to a world beyond their immediate surroundings and thus will "help others make sense of the world". Diversity and inclusivity are essential to his vision of the world.

**MY FIRST YEAR WAS ONE OF THE BEST YEARS OF MY LIFE**

When asked about his time at Mary's, Nathaniel's joy was palpable. "My first year was one of the best years of my life" he says as he describes his vast community of friends and the "illegal rave" they all threw after exams on the playing pitches opposite College. There are many funny memories like this, such as when Nathaniel describes flying back and forth between Durham and Stanford and how he would always make a beeline for the club when he landed, desperate to make the most of his time with his friends.

There is, however, also a sense of great growth during Nathaniel's time at Durham. He admits that in his final year he bit off more than he could chew, eventually getting to a point where he was "coping, not balancing" as the pressures of completing a degree and building a business became overwhelming. When asked if he has any advice for current students, Nathaniel answers that "when things are too much, make sure you look to the community around you". He talks openly about accessing the University mental health services and the vital help provided to him by Mary's staff who were "extraordinarily good" to him. Yet despite this, Nathaniel does not regret the challenges of his final year. "There is immense value in life in jumping off a cliff and figuring out how to open your wings on the way down. Sometimes it might feel like you're not going to but if you look to support and are part of a really strong community, you will", he says.

Nathaniel's advice is compelling. Of course, there is a great deal of career advice to be gleaned from Nathaniel, and he does urge students to consider the rate of change when thinking of their next steps in the world. Technology and society are transforming rapidly and there is room for huge innovation. Yet, at the core of Nathaniel's story there seems to be a great sense of faith: in oneself, one's community, and the ability of strong core values in guiding you. If one can capture the joy of their time at Durham and hold onto the awe-inspiring feeling of gazing out of Mary's to the cathedral at a time possibilities feel infinite, then "the world will be at your fingertips".

THERE IS IMMENSE  
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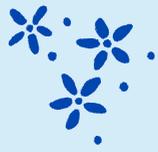
Nathaniel, centre, with his fellow *Knowhere* co-founders for Forbes' 30 under 30



Our thanks to Nathaniel for sparing the time to talk to us and to Arshia Bhatnagar for arranging this enlightening conversation.



# Postcards From Mary's



## Jane Roscoe



I graduated from Durham in 1968 with a BA (hons.) in English Literature and in 1969 a PGCE, after which I spent my professional life teaching English to children aged 11 to 18 in co-educational state schools. My main focus of interest was examination work, but I also enjoyed sharing literature with children of all ages and abilities and encouraging their creative work, several gaining certificates for their poems in national competitions. I introduced an annual Spoken English competition and enjoyed working collaboratively by organising Christmas concerts with the Music Department and a Newspaper Day with the Art Department.

In 1986/7, I was seconded by my LEA to do a teacher fellowship at Northumbria University, writing a paper on 'New Approaches to Communication Skills' for policy purposes, and, in 1990, I was seconded again to work with the NE Regional IT Team, my role being to promote IT within the English curriculum.

In retirement, I continued to learn for pure pleasure: Italian, Spanish, Philosophy, Art; I extended a lifetime of European travel to worldwide to further my love of art, architecture and history.

## Rosalind Lonsdale

Following a management career, I became an actor and had 13 good years before stopping for family care.

I was re-entering the industry when Covid19 hit.

To raise my profile for Acting while cheering family & friends, I'm releasing a weekly 30 secs video anecdote for a year.

Today's is about my first week at St Mary's Oct 1981 and so I thought other St Mary's alumni might enjoy it:

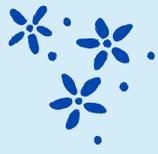
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yw076v31X1s>

Ros' Real Anecdotes Videos page to catch up on previous anecdotes:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeqJLP\\_kNI-JO65TTQO39yA/videos](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeqJLP_kNI-JO65TTQO39yA/videos)



# Postcards From Mary's



## Taliya Hafiz

Taliya Hafiz shares her new song, 'Donne-moi, a letter to the beloved filled with French poetry and soft piano melodies and sealed with sensuality and romance. The release of "Donne-moi" is to follow the aesthetics of Taliya Hafiz's debut album "SENSATIONS" and latest singles ("Prière pour la Paix", "Just Not You") featuring the artist's original lyrics, composition, performance and full production. Written in Taliya Hafiz's universe of poetry, sensuality, and romance, "Donne-moi" is to give us a taste of her upcoming album "DESIR" in which a multilingual singer-songwriter based in Cyprus and Paris will deliver us songs in 3 languages including English, French, and Japanese.

The single was created during Taliya's stay in St Mary's College where she was not only writing her thesis in ethnomusicology but also her songs! It is in the solitude of her College's "chambre vide" (empty room, Fr.) and with the confinement being in full swing that this romantic song was created. It was set to music, recorded, and fully produced by Taliya Hafiz a year later in her home music studio in Cyprus. The artist's unique songwriting, performance, and production work was given a final touch by the mixing and mastering engineer, Raphael Thierry, who has worked in Parisian "Omega" studio.

The song release on May 19th thus marks 2 years of creative work connecting the UK, Cyprus, and France. As in her previous works, Taliya Hafiz chooses to speak here in "the language of her heart", which is French. Recently signed to Paravitta Records (Cyprus / France) and prestigious Inouïe Distribution, Taliya Hafiz is to accompany her release with the official clip and lyric video. "Donne-moi" once again sets Taliya Hafiz as a multi-talented artist willing to share deep feelings and poetic stories in her musical Universe of sensuality, lyricism, and romance through original songs and music.

Having had several live concerts in Cyprus, she is to kick off with some international gigs: follow Taliya Hafiz on social media to know about her new music and next live concert: Instagram & Facebook: @taliyahafiz Youtube: @TaliyaHafiz Soundcloud: @TaliyaHafiz. Stream "Donne-moi": <https://youtu.be/TPCwNSDQjDY>

## Stavros Pantos



I currently live in Cardiff, Wales, working in risk management and financial services, plus I also continued into further studying with my part-time PhD.

Familywise, I am engaged and in the planning process of the big day!

When I am not working or studying, I practise playing songs with my new guitar (Ibanez). Sadly because of COVID-19 I missed my congregation, but I hope to visit Durham, St Mary's College and the Business School in the near future.





# Sue Goldie

## An Industrial Tribunal for Pin Money?



How did a conscientious teacher like me, with many years of blameless service behind me, end up taking my employers to industrial tribunal over a part-time job?

In 1994, the European Court ruled that part-time British workers were entitled to the same conditions of service as full-time workers, pro rata. This had huge significance for people like me who worked part-time in Further Education. Suddenly, I was invited to rejoin the Teachers' Pension scheme which had only been open to me when I worked full-time. The rejoicing was short-lived. Within a term, the employers had found a way of circumventing it. In September, I was given less than a week to sign up with an agency which could then supply me to the college for part-time hours. I would be deemed self-employed and my pension would be my own private affair.

I went to my line manager and explained that I would not be joining the agency because I valued the Teachers' Pension. I was informed that there would therefore be no work for me.

Fortunately, the North-East has a strong trade union tradition. Word spread round and I was offered hours at other colleges. They were distant: I spent a lot of time driving while my patient husband bought a bus pass and spent a lot of his time waiting for buses as he went about his work at Social Services.

My union, NATFHE (now UCU) supported my case under the sexual discrimination law since more women than men were affected by the change. A union member, a professor of Employment Law, offered his services as my barrister, pro bono. I knew nothing about court cases and knew no one to advise me. The only preparation I made was to send my clothes to the dry cleaners. Fortunately, the day before the case was scheduled, it was settled out of court.

My solicitor phoned me and asked me what I would like. For example, would I like to have my office repainted? I was astonished: I could only aspire to a desk in a staff room. What I did want was a point five post. It was his turn to be astonished. Only point five? Surely, I would want a full-time post.

My reasons for working part-time were threefold: first, I had a household of five to run, with three sons at school, the youngest aged ten. I had always regarded housework as work, at least equivalent to a part-time job in itself. Secondly, I had to be at home to deal with the evening meal and the boys during the week. My husband was an efficient worker but on occasion he had to stay late at Social Services. Twice he had come home late in the evening because he had been sent to take children into care who had witnessed domestic murders. Often, he was too exhausted to help in the evening although he did a lot of cooking at the weekends. Part-time work fitted in better as far as hours were concerned. Finally, we were still reeling with the shock of my husband's recent medical diagnosis of a life-shortening blood condition. I might need time to care for him. The money I earned was important to the family budget but so was the time which part-time work brought me. I was not working for pin money as my (all male) managers appeared to think.

A point five post, permanent and with pension, was therefore arranged together with compensation for loss of earnings which we spent on a family holiday in Rhodes. Now retired, I am glad of my pension.

# Ingrid Roddis

Ingrid, St Mary's 1962-66, worked mainly as a TEFL teacher. She was married to Miles Roddis, Hatfield 1959-64, who worked for the British Council.

Miles and I lived in Cairo from 1970 to 1975. Both our sons, Tristan and Damon, were born there. It was the time of the War of Attrition, which basically is a War aimed at grinding people down, wearing them out. Probably, only those who lived in Egypt at the time even remember it. What it meant to us was that our movements were very restricted. Most of the time we were confined to Cairo itself which was fine, as Cairo is a fantastic city with three main cultures: Pharaonic, Coptic and Islamic - plenty to keep one occupied. At the weekends, that's to say Fridays, we would venture out exploring the different parts of the city. The Egyptians love children, and the only trouble we ever had was firstly when the kids were in the pram face down and everyone wanted to turn them over (recent advice is that the Egyptians were correct and many cot deaths have subsequently been avoided, but at the time we were convinced that the UK advice was the right one), and secondly when everyone wanted to give them something to eat. In the end, I had to confine this to bananas which I could peel and hand to them myself!

These limitations also applied to journeys outside Cairo and if you wanted to go to Alexandria on the Mediterranean for a breath of fresh air, you had to travel either by the Desert road or the Nile Delta road, according to which was the flavour of the moment, and you were forbidden to stop en route. Thus, a friend of ours, a Geography teacher, who stopped to take a photo of a shaduf (an effective, basic system for raising water for irrigation from one level to another) was on the point of being arrested. And if you wanted to go to Luxor in Upper Egypt, as we did when I was 7 months pregnant, then you had to take the overnight, non stop train and sleep in the long, narrow bunk bed which didn't suit my profile at all.

Anyway, we were fine living in Cairo in spite of these restrictions. Then came the Ramadan War, or the Yom Kippur War, or the October War, or whatever you like to call it, in October of 1973. It was over in a trice. There was no bombing of Cairo, it all took place in Sinai, a good distance away. We donated our blood, worthy ladies in the British Embassy knitted balaclava helmets (it can get cold at night at that time of the year in Sinai!) but, of course, there was some tension and stress. So, come July, in the summer of 1974 we decided to go on holiday with another British couple and their 2 children, to Cyprus, for a bit of R and R. I did mention to Miles at the time that things were looking a bit tense there, but he dismissed this, saying casually, that it would mean fewer tourists, all to the good.

We rented a car between the eight of us! How did we fit in? I don't remember and I can't think, except I do remember that the adults used to fight to be the driver as that was the only seat you had entirely to yourself. We ended up in a rented apartment in Kyrenia, a lovely little town on the north coast, perfectly located for the Turks when they decided to invade. We were just opposite the famous Dome Hotel, which was fine until the Greek staff started shooting at the invading Turkish aircraft from the roof of the hotel. It took an announcement from the Turks that they would bomb the hotel unless this stopped to settle the matter.

I can't remember how many days we were holed up for. Enough time to run short of food, to draw British Union Jacks to take down to the underground garage when there was an air raid (I always seemed to be only half dressed at the time, having just had a shower or something); to celebrate a child's 2nd birthday with 2 matches and a boiled egg in an ice cream cone, and for Damon, aged 18 months, to come out with the fantastically evocative "go away, naughty bangs".

So, after however many days it was of being confined in our apartment and the underground garage, and hearing a jewelry shop being looted (the most frightening indication of all that law and order had really and truly broken down), the BBC world service (no internet or social media in those days!) on our huge, cumbersome, transistor radio which Miles had fortunately insisted on packing, told us exactly what we had to do to be evacuated. Drive to a nearby point. Park the hired car with the keys in the ignition and wait to be helicoptered out to a naval destroyer off the coast which would then take us to the south of the island from where we would be flown home in a lumbering RAF aircraft. Flown back to Britain, of course, except there was a wee bit of a problem as we had actually come from Egypt. The sight of young parents with two small children in a double buggy or running under the blades of a helicopter to board, was very newsworthy, and my parents received many phone calls from friends who'd see us on the BBC TV news to reassure them that we were on our way home!

The Royal Navy and the WVS were marvellous. I could have joined either one on the spot! As for consequences, for months afterwards we all jumped when there was a loud bang, but then we forgot all about it. Until maybe now, when we can see history kind of repeating itself, only this time for a much longer period of time and with the advantage? of the internet and 21st century communications.

A sad coda to this story is one of the adults in the anecdote now has Alzheimer's and no longer remembers the experience.



# Gill Cooper



## Memories of Mary's and Friendships from the 60s

St Mary's and the friends I made there have remained a very important part of my life. Over the first term of my studies in Durham I became part of a group of 10 girls (it was a ladies only college then!) – some with a room in the old building and some in the new and a goodly spread of subjects among us – English, modern languages, music, maths, sciences. We became firm friends and have remained so although sadly 2 are no longer with us.

After graduation we remained in contact though with some working in a different parts of the world, then marriages followed by children, it wasn't always easy to meet up very often face to face. As children grew up we did manage to meet up more regularly and as we grew nearer to retirement it became easier. Every 2 or 3 years one of us would sort out things to do in or near our home town – I live in a lovely little cathedral city and when I finished work became a volunteer guide for the cathedral and got my Green Guide Badge to become a city guide – so when it was my turn to host a visit I gave them the “full whammy”!

It has to be said that one of the best “meet ups” took place in Toronto, Canada – where one of the “gang” had emigrated with her husband many years ago. It was in 2015 and it was that year we celebrated our 50th anniversary of getting to know each other at Durham. We got to visit many places in Toronto itself, including the Royal Ontario Museum (the biggest museum in Canada) and the CN Tower where we ate lunch in the revolving restaurant at the top, had a wonderful theatre trip to the Canadian Stratford upon Avon where we enjoyed “The Taming of the Shrew”, visited Niagara Falls, had a little cruise on Lake Ontario, and made some more very lovely memories. If Covid allows it, our next meet up will be in York as two of the friends live in different parts of Yorkshire.

I read French and German at Durham and with 2 others of our group who also read French; the third year of our degrees was spent in France. And what a year! I thoroughly enjoyed working as an English language assistant in a small girls' school in Vichy and one of the two friends, Jean, was not too far away from Vichy so we arranged to meet up and visit somewhere not too far away together. We had booked rooms at a hotel and were very “miffed” when we got there to be told that we couldn't possibly be the ones who had booked “said” rooms – they were expecting two men! I am Gillian, usually called Gill, and the friend was Jean – hence the confusion: typical French male names = Gilles and Jean. Having seen our passports they did allow us to stay!

The best was yet to come... The year we spent in France was autumn 1967 through to July 1968 - 1968 being the year which became known as the Second French Revolution! It started in the May and was a period of huge civil unrest, lasting some seven weeks. It started with student demonstrations, followed by general strikes which the police heavily repressed as much as they could. France's economy came to a halt. Political leaders feared a civil war! You were only allowed to make a phone call in the case of reporting the death of a family member. There were no trains, no buses, no rubbish collections. Everything stopped! I couldn't get in touch with home so I did what President Charles de Gaulle did at one point – I escaped to Germany, where I knew a family. At that time a lot of wealthy “Parisiennes” used to go to Vichy, a famous spa town, to take their “cure”. I managed to get a seat on a bus specially sent to collect some of these ladies to get them home. The streets of Paris were in a terrible mess – cars double parked with no fuel, rubbish piled sky high, shops closed. From Paris I got a seat on a Belgian bus going to Brussels and once there I sent a telegram to my German friends asking them to meet me at the station in their town when my train arrived! When France came back to “normal” I returned to Vichy and to the school but with only a couple of weeks of term left to do, and then back to dear old England.

I finished my degree, did another year at Bristol to obtain my PGCE, and found my first job in teaching French and German. I still have many close friends in both countries especially due to being chairman of our city's twinning association which has a French and German twin town. Once I retired, in order to keep the old brain cells alive, I started to learn Italian and of course that took me to visit some lovely places in Italy.

My love of languages really kicked off in Durham and my affection for Durham will always remain.

# Rebecca Daniel



Rebecca is a marine biologist, award-winning science communicator, and Director of The Marine Diaries. She speaks of her work since graduating from Durham in 2017.



Many of us have lost our connection to nature. When was the last time you walked outside without texting on your phone? When you stopped to listen to birdsong, or went outside to watch the sunset (and didn't just catch a glimpse through your window)?

In western society, a trend of industrialisation and urbanisation, combined with the rise of online and virtual entertainment (like TV, social media, and online gaming), has led to us spending almost all of our time indoors. And given more than half of the world's population lives in urban areas, our 'outdoors' is increasingly man-made.

Ultimately, we have forgotten that we are part of the natural world, not separate from it.

This disconnect is a major barrier to environmental conservation, because people tend to only protect what they care about; research shows that people without a connection to nature and an understanding of how we directly depend on (and influence) it, are less likely to take positive action on the environment.



After graduating from Durham, I went on to complete a masters in Tropical Marine Biology. A few short months into my course, in December 2017, The Marine Diaries was founded. Two course friends and I came together with a shared belief in the power of storytelling to inspire ocean conservation.

The Marine Diaries is a not-for-profit organisation on a mission to connect people with the ocean. We communicate ocean science using storytelling and digital media - bridging the education gap between the scientific community and general public. Information alone rarely changes attitudes, beliefs, or behaviours. But stories have been around for the whole of human history. They are more engaging and memorable than facts and figures, and crucially, tap into our emotions. Our team of voluntary storytellers (who are also scientists, journalists, and filmmakers) are dedicated to sharing science-based and solution-led stories to change the hearts and minds of the public on key issues, and inspire positive ocean action. Through our campaigns, projects, events, articles, and social media we provide free, accessible resources to people of all ages and backgrounds - connecting people with the ocean, wherever they may be. Collaboration is central to our philosophy. We work closely with strategic partners who share our vision, and collaborate with other ocean-friendly organisations, businesses, and individuals to deliver our projects. The Marine Diaries also acts as a platform to elevate the voices of others working towards ocean conservation.



To date, our largest project has been the Marine Ecosystem Diaries. Launched in 2021, this nine-month ocean literacy project highlighted the importance, threats, and conservation of nine different marine ecosystems - from coral reefs to mangrove forests. Through short films, illustrated posters, articles, social media, and digital events, we shed light on vital topics such as blue carbon, biodiversity, and the blue economy. With more than 130 collaborating artists, researchers, videographers, and NGOs, we provided educational materials to over 50,000 (and counting) students, educators, and organisations around the globe. The films have also been screened internationally at 7 festivals and are in 2 travelling programs.

Now, we are working with one of our 1% for the Planet partners to turn this project into an e-learning course. We are also looking for partners to translate the materials into different languages, and funding to distribute them on the ground to communities in the Global South.

Studying at Durham definitely inspired me to get to where I am today, running a conservation organisation. My BSc in Biological Sciences gave me a solid foundation and understanding of biology, which was massively helpful when studying for my masters. It was also whilst at Durham that I got my first taste of conservation fieldwork. On my course's field trip to a safari park in South Africa, I learnt how to collect field data, track animals, and identify different species. It was a fantastic way to see conservation in action. Through Durham I was also able to gain experience during my summer holidays; volunteering with sea turtle conservation in Greece, and working on bio-pesticides in the University's biology lab. I'm super grateful for these early experiences in the field of conservation.

# Poetry from H. Gabrielyan

## The Legend of Androcles

I saw a shelter in the cave,  
To enter it and save the conscience  
From all the gossips of the world  
That test the steadfast coast like oceans.

I entered cave and sought seclusion,  
Albeit the darkness was around  
I thought my eyes were disillusioned  
By murk of whispers all unbound.

'Illuminate my path, oh soul,  
I beg you to enlighten further',  
Who seeks, he finds: I wasn't all alone  
I wish I didn't beg it rather.

An either dream or genuinely real:  
A lion slowly walks to me,  
His shaggy mane I couldn't steer,  
He smells the greed my presence freed.

I prayed and made my mind untouched  
From all distractions of the human dust,  
I prayed, and saw a giant scratch,  
A thorn in lion's paw, a wound of past.

'What are my hardships next to his?  
A barely noticeable speck',  
Thus spoke my inner voice. I breathed,  
I stared at him, and wrecked the fears.

I touched him. He remained tranquil  
The silence in the cave and minds of two  
The genuineness of my soul and will  
Released the pains a lion has been going through.

I looked at him. There wasn't any motion  
His patience tested the sincerity of deeds  
The silence aided self-devotion  
To safely gather the Ecclesiastes' seeds.

I recognised this lawful Spirit,  
It wasn't dictum of false preachers,  
It is the Providence, which did it,  
God's tear of empathy in all of creatures.

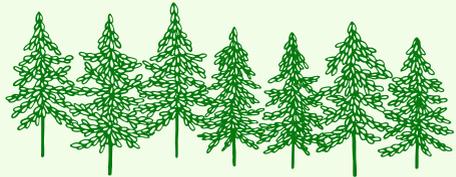
And thus I found in lion's cave my rest,  
The freedom of my choice to groom  
If homo homini just lupus est  
I would prefer cogito ergo sum.



## Mist and Snow

A morning mist,.. a morning haze  
Detach my mind from mundane vanity.  
I burned my past in stunning blaze  
To set amongst my sins a parity.

The snow will vanish all my thoughts  
Once clock of life delineates a halo.  
My path ends up with three suspension points,  
The bitterness of which no one can swallow.



# St Mary's College Society (SMCS)

Sandra Ward, acting President of the St Mary's College Society, gives an update on future alumni events

This year sees SMCS return to normal service at last with a revised membership structure, a new student support fund, SMCS biannual newsletters replaced by features in the College magazine, an improved Website and Facebook page, and the return of the Annual Reunion.

By the time you receive this magazine, it will be shortly after you have finished your time at Mary's. The Society is delighted to welcome all of you as SMCS Life Members – new graduates and postgraduates alike. We'll be in touch with each of you shortly with a formal welcome email.

In its present form the Society dates from 1920, though inviting alumni back to College for a meeting with current students and staff goes back further to 1902, when an Old Students Society was formed. Its principal aims, and ours today, are to facilitate continued contact of alumni with one another and with St Mary's; to support the academic and social development of current students; and to contribute to College Life whenever we can. One critical component of SMCS activity is the Annual Reunion and this returns in September - the first time it's been practical since 2019. The programme of activities isn't yet concrete but includes, as always, the AGM, a Chapel Service, and the SMCS Grand Reunion dinner. We honour College milestones and 2019 saw us celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Women's Hostel, the granting of Collegiate status, and the name, St Mary's College. Next year, we're looking forward to working with College to mark its 125th Anniversary.

Mechanisms for student support activities have, throughout the Society's existence, been focused on the alleviation of student hardship. Most recently this included a book fund, travel bursaries, and, for post graduates, bursaries to cover costs of conference registration. During the pandemic, funds for laptops and assistance with accommodation fees were given priority. We're now excited to announce the launch of a Learning Resources Fund beginning in the 2023/24 Academic year. This will be open to all current students and applications will be sought three times each year. Materials covered include e- and print prescribed text books and other reading materials, software, video and other recordings. Access to learning and research materials such as access to private collections is also considered as are subscription type materials e.g., software licenses and consumables such as print credits. Applications will be assessed by a small panel of SMCS and College representatives with the target of turning these around quickly.

When funds permit, the Society has also funded gifts to College: design of the College crest, furnishings and lighting for the Chapel, and a glass cabinet for display of archive items. Two benches were gifted in 2013 and 2015, in memory of students Helen Hawcroft and Euan Coulthard, who died during their time at Mary's. SMCS will shortly commission a wallboard celebrating key dates in College History to be positioned on the North Wall of the dining room.

From Michaelmas Term 2023, matriculating students will be asked for a small levy to support SMCS; this levy will fund lifelong membership of SMCS on graduation. The Pandemic disrupted the process, but before the end of 2023, we will have invited all 2023, 2022 and 2021 alumni to consider making a one-off donation of £30. These donations will enable SMCS to continue to foster alumni-college relations and to fund our support for current students. Donations will be entirely voluntary, but really do help.

Developing the programme for this year's Reunion is proving a steep learning curve given the three- year gap. For those of you who will attend the 2023 Reunion, I look forward to meeting you in College, at our various meals and, of course, the Grand Reunion Dinner. Please include the AGM as a priority on your personal weekend agenda – elections of your Committee need to be as representative of the SMCS demographic, as practical.

Do watch out for the Wall display being assembled by the College Archivist, Anne Elliot, always worth seeing, and this year's "Going down the decades: years of the threes". This promises to be fascinating and unexpected.

SMCS is currently reviewing its Website and Facebook pages so that Society news is easy to find and current. These can be found at: <http://www.stmaryscollegesociety.co.uk/> and <https://www.facebook.com/StMarysCollegeDurham/>. College has recently launched a LinkedIn site at: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/st-mary-s-college-durham-university/>. This is great for professional networking and career development.

SMCS welcomes your news and stories for publication, either on the sites, or in the College Magazine and the Alumni Update.

# In Memoriam: Professor Dame Rosemary Cramp

## 6th May 1929 – 28th April 2023

Anne Elliott Pays tribute to Professor Cramp, a distinguished archaeologist and central member of St Mary's

Professor Cramp played a unique part in the life of St Mary's for many years. Her infectious enthusiasm and stimulating conversation made it a huge pleasure to be in her company whether socially or academically. She was an energetic college tutor 1959-69. She represented the SCR on the Governing Body from 1965-1978 and thereafter made a lively contribution to SCR events.



The College enjoyed celebrating her achievements. In 1993 she became the College's first Honorary Fellow described by Principal Joan Kenworthy as a "distinguished archaeologist and long-standing friend and member of St Mary's Governing Body". In May 1996, the University held a Special Congregation for the conferment of honorary degrees in celebration of one hundred years of degrees for women in Durham. Among those honoured was Emeritus Professor Cramp and St Mary's contributed to the ceremony.

In 2011, Professor Cramp was appointed Dame Commander of the British Empire and St Mary's hosted a dinner and lively discussion with her to celebrate the award of her DBE in recognition of her services to scholarship. She was already a CBE (Commander of the British Empire), awarded in 1987.

To mark her 90th birthday the University gave a dinner in her honour on 10 May 2019 held in St Mary's. Many of the flowers and foliage were chosen because of their particular meanings which reflected some of her characteristics. The herb rosemary represented mental strength, wisteria suggested longevity, and lilac vitality. A lecture followed the dinner: 'Archaeologist, art historian, inspiration - Rosemary Cramp at 90' by Emeritus Professor Martin Carver in the Rosemary Cramp Lecture Theatre, the Calman Centre.



Rosemary Jean Cramp was born in Leicestershire and grew up on a farm where her interest in archaeology began as a child on her discovery there of the remains of a Roman villa.

At Oxford, she studied English including the Anglo-Saxon epic poem 'Beowulf'. When she came to Durham from St Anne's College in 1955 she brought her interest in history, literature and language, ideal ingredients for archaeology. At Durham she was instrumental in founding the Department of Archaeology in 1956. She started as lecturer in Anglo-Saxon Antiquities and Archaeology then developed the Honours School of Archaeology. She was Durham's first female professor and was Professor of Archaeology for 19 years 1971-90. She found the blend of field and academic work "utterly satisfying".

Her special field was early monasticism, early mediaeval sculpture and Northern archaeology. Her most notable work included the excavations of the twin monastery of Wearmouth-Jarrow. She was well placed to lead investigations near Durham with its Anglo-Saxon heritage and Bede's writings. She spent 30 years on the two sites central to Bede's life and focal points for learning. It was the first investigation of a known monastic site. Among many revealing artefacts, she found coloured glass, the first evidence of glass-making in post-Roman Britain. Many former students have vivid memories of not only excavating under her strict guidance but of her formidable yet inspirational enthusiasm and dedication.

As Emeritus Professor she continued to publish and lead the completion of the Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture which had never been catalogued before. The 16th volume will be her work on the East Midlands. She held many eminent positions and was much honoured; for example, Fellow of the British Academy 2006; Gold Medal from The Society of Antiquaries of London for distinguished services to Archaeology; honorary degrees from Universities of Bradford, Cork, Leicester and Cambridge.

All will cherish proud memories not only of her unique contribution to archaeology as a whole and to Durham University but also of her inspirational qualities and personality. Combining science with history, language, literature, art history and excavations, she moved archaeology forward as never before.

# In Memoriam: Professor Ann Loades CBE

Elizabeth Fisher Pays tribute to Professor Loades, a cherished Tutor at Mary's and the first woman Professor of Theology at Durham.

My first encounter with Ann Loades was in Michaelmas term 1964 when, as a sixth former, I came up for interview. Miss Ann Glover (as she then was) had signed the letter of invitation with a strong and bold signature. So, I was not surprised to see a statuesque, confident person but I was surprised by how youthful she was. She had only just been appointed Resident Tutor and College Librarian weeks before having spent a couple of years at McMaster. It was years later that I discovered that, although fulfilling the role of Senior Tutor, she was called Resident Tutor because she was younger than all the other tutors who were resident in college at that time.

When I arrived as an undergraduate the following Michaelmas, Ann became my college tutor, though in those days the title was 'Moral' Tutor. Those of us fortunate to have her knew how assiduously she exercised this role. Since I was following in her footsteps by reading Theology, I experienced a little extra kindness when she gave me some of her books but all of us were invited to social occasions each term.

Ann was something of a role model for us students not just because she had a phenomenal appetite for work but also because she was the epitome of a well-rounded person. She was doing her PhD while being Mary's Resident Tutor, she taught ballet in Newcastle on a Saturday morning. She did needlepoint, and was a skilled dressmaker. It was she who made sure that Mary's basement had rooms for games and sewing. Later, she would even make my 'going-away' dress.

One thing we young women in an all-female community appreciated was that she actually brought a man - her fiance - into meals on high table! She married David in December 65 and they moved into a flat in what we called the 'New Building' now Williamson - rather a public place to begin married life. Later, they moved to a flat which they shared with 3 then 8 students in South Street. Here, those of us lucky enough to be invited to be flat sharers enjoyed her home-made bread, and were grateful for her willingness to help with laundry. She went far beyond what would have been expected of any landlady, yet alone a tutor. But that was Ann, ever ready to go the extra mile.

Ann, was not at Mary's for decades. She left Mary's in 1973 after 9 years, and she went on to be a pivotal member of the department of Theology, and to leave many glass ceilings shattered- the first woman Professor of Theology in Durham, the first woman to be appointed CBE for contributions to the study of Theology, presenter of a television show among other achievements.

If you think by all I have said that Ann was just a sweet-tempered easy going person, think again! She could and did command a room. She could and did challenge our views. She could and did say more with a sniff than most people can say in a paragraph. She was indeed made of tough stuff - she had to be as she forged a path through the jungle of a man's world.

Ann was a very loyal friend to so many of us. She came to our weddings, even (my) golden wedding celebrations, wrote references for jobs. She sent cards when she heard that we had given birth to children. She congratulated us on any success -small or impressive-we may have had. We are so much the better for having known her.

Ann made a huge and lasting contribution to the college as a whole, and to many of us as individuals. In recognition of what she did for Mary's she was made an Honorary Fellow in 1999, the centenary of the founding of the college as the Women's Hostel in the University. Might it not be fitting, as we approach the 125th anniversary of our college for a room to be named in her honour?



# In Memoriam



## Jennifer Trotter

Mary's was saddened to hear of the death of Jennifer Trotter (1972-75). She studied for a degree in anthropology and remembered her time at Mary's with great affection. Her niece described Jen as a 'forever hippy' who went on to enjoy a rewarding and truly varied life, as a social worker and latterly in microbiology labs. Mary's had instilled in her a thirst for knowledge and she went on to get a degree in Environmental Science and in Biomedical Sciences. She had a deep love for animals, surrounding herself with hens and goats in a garden full of bees and vegetables. In addition to giving a legacy to animal charities, Jen generously left a legacy to support the students in Mary's. As her niece put it: "If she could have, she'd have lived alone with animals and studied at St Mary's for the rest of her days".



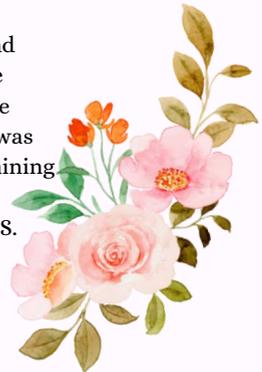
## Margaret Bloomfield

Margaret Bloomfield (1944-1948) has died at the age of 96. She graduated from St Mary's College with a degree in English, but stayed for a further year to obtain a teaching diploma. She dedicated her working life to education, starting as Assistant English Mistress in High Storrs Grammar School for Girls in Sheffield. She went on to be the head of Frederick Gough School in Scunthorpe. She maintained a close affection to St Mary's, providing regular donations and leaving a legacy for Mary's students in financial hardship "in gratitude for my four happy years at St Mary's which made possible my rewarding career". Along with so many of the generous donations from our alumni community, her gifts help to transform the lives of students.



## Marie Alexander

The College was saddened to hear of the death of Marie Alexander (1954-57) nee Brown. After a short period as a nurse and then a secretary, Marie decided to go to university. She studied in philosophy and psychology at Mary's. After graduating, she quickly developed a flair for research, which led to a long and distinguished career in the field. She became Director of Research a creative advertising agency. Moving from market research to personnel research, she became a Director at Social Policy Research. As befits a Mary's alumna, she was the author of an influential report on equal opportunities and vocational training for women for the European Community. She became a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts in 1993. In retirement, she worked as lay chair within the NHS. She was recently recognised by the University for the consistent generous donations and we are delighted that she was able to visit St Mary's with her family in 2021 for her 90th birthday.



# Mary's Students Benefit from Alumni Generosity

The St Mary's Student Opportunities Fund was established last academic year, to simplify the way in which current Mary's students can access established bursaries, funded through generous donations from Mary's alumni.

We are passionate about Mary's students being able to become culturally aware, develop a global perspective and have confidence to achieve their full potential, and the Student Opportunities Fund assists students attain this.

At the beginning of each term, Mary's students are invited to apply to the Student Opportunities Fund for an award from one of 20 bursaries held at Mary's. Awards typically range from £50 - £200 and are decided by a funding committee.

I am delighted to report that over the past academic year, 45 Mary's students have benefitted from the kindness of alumni who have set up funds with the specific purpose of assisting students to further their personal and academic development. Recent awards have included: travel expenses (cultural and academic related); sports tournament costs; academic conference fees; cultural trips; accommodation costs for summer programmes and purchasing of academic books.

Students have communicated just how much these awards have meant to them and it is wonderful to read their reports on the experiences they have been able to access as a result.

Emma Gray  
Assistant Principal



# St Mary's College Women's Football Club



**Sadhika (Second Year, Law), and Frances (Second Year, Religion, Society, and Culture)**

## **How has it been being Club Captains?**

We have loved being club captain because we have not just been able to encourage people of different year groups to play football but also have been part of a fun positive energetic team. It's been really fun because it's a varied group of people which makes it very chill and there's no pressure related to abilities or socials.

## **What have your responsibilities been?**

Sadhika: I had made it my mission from freshers' week to recruit new members to the club. Ranging from most of the freps joining our club, to freshers who had never played before, SMCWFC really expanded as a club. We also coordinate with different teams and with Team Durham which further increased Mary's presence within the college football sphere.

Frances: As Co-Captain, I have led training sessions, been in goal, published social media posts and communicated with Team Durham and team members.

## **What have been some of SMCWFC's successes this year?**

Our great fight against league winners Trevs v. South, an overall stunning turnout from people who've never played football before, and amazing team spirit. Our winning streak at the beginning of the season was definitely a strong start to the revival of SMCWFC and we only hope that it grows bigger and bigger.

## **How has being part of SMCWFC contributed to your experience of the Mary's community?**

Overall it has helped us reach out to a wider community at Mary's, feel more involved, and be a part of an accepting and wholesome community. Charlotte Ramsdale, a player, gave her opinion: It has been really rewarding meeting new people across different year groups I wouldn't have met otherwise. I feel really encouraged by the mix of abilities and ages as there are people to help me develop my skills and people who play on the same level as me so I don't feel too bad.

## **What would you say to those considering joining the club?**

If you're looking for a friendly, no pressure and welcoming community with a mix of talents then SMCWFC is the place for you. Get involved! Starting football in first year was one of the best decisions we made, it has been super fun and while starting with no experience at all, we have since then loved being Co-Captains and are so excited for the new exec to take over and see what SMCWFC's future holds!

## **What are your hopes for the future of the club?**

Continue recruiting new members, encouraging people of all year groups to get involved, have a kick about join the fun and see what it's like being at SMCWFC.

See you on the pitch!



# St Mary's College Netball Club

Emily Perkins (Third Year, History and IR), and Meghan Clifford (Third Year, Law)

## How has it been being Club Captains?

It has been so rewarding to be Club Captains this year! As members throughout our time at Durham, it has been the perfect end to continue the legacy of SMCNC friendships, atmosphere and socials. In our first year, we really looked up to the third-year netballers, especially throughout COVID when we did not fully understand what Mary's was all about and it has been so gratifying to be able to hopefully offer similar advice and guidance to the freshers!

## What have your responsibilities been?

Logistically with over 100 members, it has been mostly about ensuring everyone is playing to the right level, with the right equipment and training times, as well as making sure everyone feels included. We also oversee the 5 team captains to ensure all can field a team every weekend. We have helped organise charity games with Rugby, 3am Charity Netball for Volunteer Zambia, and a Tour to Lisbon! Seeing SMCNC go international with the help of our Tour Sec, Bea, was definitely a highlight and emphasised to us how special this society really is and how sad we are to leave!

## How has the club improved and expanded this year?

This year the club has massively increased in size with the addition of two new teams! The new E Team has enabled the club to increase its inclusivity and allowed social members to play weekly matches with no pressure on the outcome. We also introduced a Men's Team this year. It has been met with such enthusiasm which was really positive to see, breaking down the gender boundaries which come with netball being described as a 'girl's sport'. It would be amazing for a Men's League to be implemented by College Netball in the near future! We also received the College Development Fund this year which helped to bring SMCNC to the next level. With £400 from College, we were able to buy new balls, bibs, bags and, most essentially, a speaker for training! The new balls really helped training as we could conduct multiple drills at once. We are extremely grateful to the Treasurers and JCR for providing us with additional funding!

## What have been some SMCNC highlights this year?

SMCNC has had too many highlights to name! For us, a huge

highlight was winning Sports Club of the Year at PGN and getting to celebrate with three tables of netballers. Nights like PGN, AGM, Tour, and every social accentuate the connection between every member and how lucky we are to have a club of so many people where you could be sat next to or playing with anyone and you know you will have a great time. We have also played boozy balls twice this year which was a very funny experience - cans in one hand and a netball in the other. The boys' games have also been a highlight in their comedic value but also the triumph of them learning the rules and getting involved. We may not be winning the league tables but the solidarity in SMCNC is irreplaceable.

## How has being part of SMCNC contributed to your time at Mary's overall?

Having been in lockdown for the majority of first year, it was hard to meet like-minded people at the start of my time at Mary's. SMCNC provided an opportunity to branch out into different year groups and across different buildings in Mary's to meet people with similar interests to me. I have met some of my closest friends at SMCNC that I would never have met without the club and for that I am so grateful. Without SMCNC, my time at Mary's would have been so much duller. I would not have had the opportunity to attend fortnightly socials, raise money for multiple charities, play boozy balls for the first time, or attend a netball tour to Portugal with 45 of my closest friends. Being a part of the club has significantly improved my time at Mary's and it forms a core part of my Durham experience.

## What would you say to those considering joining SMCNC?

I would 100% recommend joining SMCNC. The club has an incredibly welcoming environment and anyone can join, even boys! We have 6 different teams ranging from very talented players to those who had never picked up a netball before university! You will have the opportunity to mix with other year groups and those who you have not yet met in your own year. We train once a week, and matches are played at the weekend, with socials also occurring frequently. Despite being the biggest club in Mary's, everyone is known, welcomed and valued! You will not regret joining!



# St Mary's College Volleyball Team

## Voices from various Players

### **Dariimaa Sukhbataar (Fourth Year, Liberal Arts)**

As an amateur volleyball player, St Mary's volleyball was a fantastic place to foster my skills doing a sport I really enjoy. I have learned valuable skills such as patience, teamwork and communication, as well as getting used to the pain of the ball hitting on my arms. The training sessions were held with the other colleges so we got to meet other players, as well as learning from them. Many DU players led the sessions and were more than happy to teach us. Besides, the people I met and the friends I got closer with was the most valuable aspect of the club. During Easter term when we no longer had 'official' trainings, we were still close as a team and would regularly meet up to do casual trainings together. We even got a volleyball net for the club to do sessions in the summer at the racecourses. The volleyball club was one of my favorite things to be a part of this year, I have nothing but love for the team. The support we all showed each other was the key to the spirit of our club, we helped each other improve and lifted each other's spirits when it was down. I hope the club will continue to thrive over the years and gain much appreciation, it deserves it.

### **Adnan Jinnah (Fourth Year, Natural Sciences)**

Mary's volleyball has been a highlight of my university experience. The team has been exceptionally welcoming and friendly, even during moments when I made a few too many mistakes. I started as a complete novice in volleyball, which made joining a bit intimidating, but the team was more than happy to include me. The first term at the University is spent on practice, which is enjoyable, and in the second term, we have the opportunity to participate in weekly games. In the third term, we take part in tournaments.

While they can be a little daunting, they are incredibly enjoyable. I would highly recommend Mary's volleyball to both beginner and experienced students!

### **Jenni Wang (Third Year, Law)**

I joined Mary's Volleyball because I wanted to try something new and commit to a hobby. It turned out that I also really enjoyed the social value it added. I didn't really get to excel at the sport but I remember matches where I noticeably improved. This was particularly the case when I researched more into the rules which helped me to predict who would take the ball and where it would go. However, my tendency to overthink about the principles of the game brought down my performance at the same time, because volleyball is a game which really requires fast reaction times and the ability to just move myself. Nonetheless, Mary's Volleyball is far more laid-back and beginner friendly than any other clubs out there. It is a rare and beautiful community you don't find anywhere else!

### **Catherine Brock (Third Year, Geography)**

Mary's volleyball is very welcoming and fun. It is never too competitive - we want to win but playing well and having fun is always more important. My most memorable match was the final league match where we played really well - despite losing in the end. I also remember the two matches we won - the first because it was our first win; the other was in festival of sport, where we beat Trevs. It was a bittersweet comeback from the first time we had lost ever so slightly to them. On the other hand, I've gained friends and solidified friendships alongside volleyball skills. It is me working on something I'm not very good at, and realising that I've made tangible progress is really special!



# St Mary's Chapel Choir

Jess Simpson (Fourth Year, Music), and Jaz Margalit (Second Year, Music)

## The Choir

*Jaz:* It has been a privilege to organise the chapel choir events with Jess this year. After singing with the choir last year, I was keen to continue my participation - I was thrilled to hear that I would be conducting. The various choir events such as Evensongs, Compline and Poetry and Music Evenings are fantastic opportunities for the Mary's community to come together, relax and reflect in both religious and secular ways.

*Jess:* I've been part of Mary's chapel choir since my first year. Having the most experience, and being a music student, I had led choirs before and have a strong interest in music. It's nice to be able to uphold tradition through choir events which have been happening for so many years now - 35 years ago my mum was part of Mary's choir! It's also important for the College to have a space for people to come and reflect, be still, be quiet, be peaceful.

## The Chapel

*Jaz:* Mary's chapel is a beautiful space for our choir, which is non-auditioned and open to members from any colleges. It is constantly changing each year with new members from across the University joining. Everyone has to opportunity to practise and enjoy ensemble work without a lot of pressure.

*Jess:* the chapel is still very much a part of Mary's and is steeped in years of history. Since it is in the attic of the Northeast Building - some distance to the main, Fergusson building - it is away from the busyness, the hustle and bustle of everyday college life. It's also a gorgeous room with bespoke furniture and architecture, and we are so lucky to be able to use it as a College as lots of colleges don't have spaces like this. Having events here really helps affirm Mary's identity, and as the choir is made of/open to members from all colleges, it shows Mary's off in a great light.

## The Experience and Highlights

*Jaz:* It has simply been fantastic this year. Jess has been an excellent Co-Director of Music and together we have had a lot of fun! The best moments of this year have certainly been those that took place in the wider community. Our trips to the local prison have been enriching for all of the choir and we look forward to maintaining that relationship. The highlight of the year, however, was definitely the Christmas service at the cathedral. The choir worked incredibly hard to ensure that the concert was to a brilliant standard. Jess, Andrew and Peter ensured a highly successful evening.

*Jess:* I'm amazed at how far I've come since first year and how the College has been supporting me. There were challenging times with the choir this year, with people coming down with freshers' flu or getting busy in the exam season; there has also always been the challenge that Mary's is a non-auditioned choir, so we get a range of singers from those who have sung their whole lives to those who have never read music before. Two of my favourite moments of this year have been the cathedral service at Christmas, and the visits to the local women's prison - they've both been great opportunities to show the community what the choir are capable of.

## The Future

*Jaz:* We hope to continue regular services, poetry and music evenings, in addition to maintaining our relationship with the local Women's prison. It will certainly be a challenge to continue without Jess at my side who has been an incredible co-Director of Music. Nevertheless, I know that whatever the next year has in store, it will be a success.

*Jess:* Jess: Even though I will be graduating, I've got every confidence that Jaz will lead and continue her excellent work from this year. It would be great to see more people getting involved, as with the growth of congregation this year - from fewer than a dozen people in the first term to 30 in the summer term. The choir sang one of my compositions in the cathedral this year, so I endeavour to write more music for the choir, and expanding their repertoire with other student and alumni works.



# St Mary's Origami Society

Zareen Hyatt (Second year, Maths), and Nadia Hussain (Second year, Natural Sciences)

Origami society is one of Mary's newest societies. You may remember us persuading you to vote for the creation of this society in a JCR meeting, and since then we have put our budget to good use (with colourful origami paper and lots of snacks!).

We started this society as we are both passionate about origami, and we aimed to create a relaxing and enjoyable space to share our love for this art form. Our sessions are open to people of all abilities – so whether you have made hundreds of paper cranes, or struggle to fold the paper in half when making a Christmas card, we adapt our sessions for everyone. Another bonus is the friendships we form, and even if the end product looks more like a worm rather than a dragon, we definitely bond over the experience!

Our society is always open to new members, and we base our sessions around our members' suggestions for what we should make each week, allowing us to promote both creativity and mental wellbeing.

There is some opposition in College to new and esoteric societies being established. However, we believe that a huge part of what gives Durham its reputation for great student life is the ease with which anyone can get involved either at college or university level, take their own initiative and build a community to represent themselves.

We would encourage anyone who has thought of starting their own society or who has an interest in sharing their knowledge or hobbies to give it a go! And remember – you don't have to go it alone, as becoming a co-president is a great way of sharing the responsibilities of running a society, and can also be great fun.

There's really nothing stopping you at Mary's!

# Student theatre at Mary's

*Melissa Redman, co-president of Mary's student theatre company 'Foot of the Hill' talks to us about the shows FHTC have produced this year.*

Theatre has always formed a central part of the St Mary's College community. The drama society was established within the first three years of St Mary's founding, and has continued to exist in ebbs and flows for over a hundred years. I am pleased to say that, for lack of a better phrase, Foot of the Hill has been "in its 'flow' era" this year: an appropriately camp description of the flourishing theatre scene that Mary's resident theatre company has created.

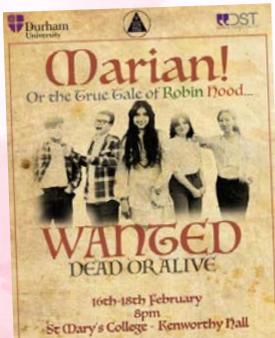
FHTC began this year with Nikolai Gogov's *The Government Inspector*. A political farce set in 1900s Russia, the play follows a story of deception and self-deception. The play saw many new faces take to the stage and to the directing realm: executed wonderfully by a cast of majority Mary's freshers, and by first-time director Alvi Lindborg-Koh, these Durham debuts could not have made us more excited for these people's future theatrical endeavours.

*Michaelmas* was completed with our annual Panto, which was written by the wonderful Emma Clarke and Zareen Hyatt and assisted by Linus Cheung. Entitled "Snow White and the Seven Freshers", this featured familiar JCR faces, FHTC veterans, and freshers alike - a wonderfully festive way to end the first academic term.



We hit the ground running in Epiphany with "Workshops Week" - an opportunity to experience whistle-stop tours of all aspects of theatre including directing, producing, and stage managing! We welcomed a range of DST veterans to lead these sessions - thanks must be given to Dylan Bunyan, Carrie Cheung, and Rhiannon Morgan, as well as our own exec's Ella-Rose Vella, Gwilym Davies, Jacob Vellucci and Jacob Marshall for imparting their wisdom.

FHTC's next endeavour for the term was "Marian, or the True Tale of Robin Hood". This sold-out modern spin on an old classic followed themes of identity, self discovery, and a hilariously camp Prince John going about his usual evil. While the cast affectionately referred to the show's writing and plot as reminiscent of Wattpad fanfiction, this show was perhaps my favourite in the FHTC calendar. It embodied Mary's ethos of acceptance and community, which are both messages we were very proud to carry forward.





Third term for FHTC has been similarly jam-packed, as we recently saw the return of our (now annual) 48-hour musical. For those unfamiliar, the cast are given 48 hours to rehearse and throw whatever they have formed onstage in the name of charity. This year, we supported SUDEP Action, a charity supporting those affected by sudden epilepsy and their families which was suggested to us by a member of our creative team who felt

particularly passionate about supporting this cause. Directed by Niamh Williams and headlined by Marco Morgan as Troy and Mary's own Emma Race as Gabriella, one can only describe the evening as hilarious. While we are yet to tally up numbers, we are looking at a rough total of £250, an amount we are proud to donate and are sure will be warmly received by the charity.



As I write, opening night for our summer term musical "Return to the Forbidden Planet" is only a few nights away - I can only recommend people buy their tickets, as this jukebox take on Shakespeare's Tempest isn't a musical to forget.



Olga Kwan as Captin Tempest, Georgie Hubbard as Miranda (left) with Alvi Lindborg-Koh as Ariel (right), Scout Pemberton as Doctor Prospero

**Reviews for "Return to the Forbidden Planet":**

"One of the most hilarious and unapologetically chaotic musicals I have seen in Durham" - *DST First Night*

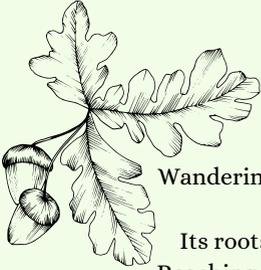
"The production team have managed to transform the unconventional space of Mary's College Dining Hall into the mechanical inner workings of a spaceship through a well-crafted set of tiered scaffolding." - *Palatinate*

Leading FHTC with Jacob this year has been a pleasure and an absolute privilege. We entered this year with firm aims to re-establish FHTC as a company with college at its core; as this year and our co-presidency draws to a close, I can firmly say we have created something really special. This would not have been possible without the continued support of our principal Adrian, under whom performing arts at Mary's has flourished in his time here so far: we remain eternally grateful for his support. Jacob and I leave FHTC in the capable hands of Shannon Hill and Emily Power; we are eager to see what they have in store for FHTC next year.



# Mary's Poetry Competition 2023

For this year's poetry competition the prompts were 'Slipping', 'A dying fire', and 'Serenity'. There were many amazing submissions with a wide variety of poetic forms being used but the following two poems by our competition winners, Rebecca Wilkes and Izzy Mitchell, really stood out. Congratulations Rebecca and Izzy.



## The Search

Wandering clouds whirl all around the uppermost branches of the old oak tree,

Its roots have long been twining ever deeper into the soil of the earth,  
Reaching and searching for the hope of the hearth, coiling through stones,  
And bones, and damp decay, lost trinkets, and a squirrel's hoard of acorns.

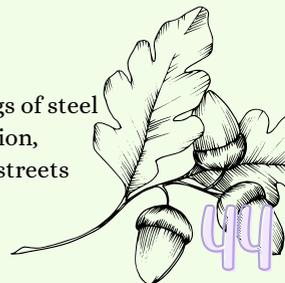
While its branches twist upward and turn toward the sun,  
Following a path made of light and bathing in the warmth of its rays,  
Although these branches will be the very first to feel the rain.

— A fluttering and a rustle and the delicate dove takes flight from above,  
As I lie down in search of shapes in the clouds  
that twirl in wisps and form comforting pillows of pearl.  
I watch for a time as clouds turn into castles, turn into swans, turn into  
flowers,  
turn into something unreachable, erased in a swirl.

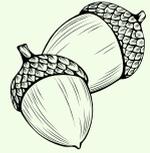
All the while, that soft-plumed dove soars and dives across the blue  
canvas,  
And a curious squirrel takes an interest in the basket beside me on my  
blanket,  
Wicker lid, I'll ease it open and reach in to see what I can share,  
And extend a handful of berries and seeds for the creature to pick what  
they please,  
Whilst I wonder in which ways our lives might be the same.

The oak has weathered many a storm,  
Seen the squirrels through countless winters and  
Nested the gentle white doves

Since long before the grey clouds darkened and forged wings of steel  
From which fall heavy raindrops that dole out desolation,  
Since long before the drifting debris flowed through the streets  
And into the sea.



Since long before any hint of you or me,  
It's been growing from before I became I  
And it continues to grow while I become me.  
And I wonder what it may have seen,  
What wisdom those knots and rings may hold,  
And I wonder in which ways our lives are the same.  
This elder oak tree and this thing I call I,  
How long shall we gaze up in awe of the sky?



Through collapsing dreams and mirrors, countless winters, storms, and  
floods  
Of tears and wishful thinking, of plans that never happened and goals we  
may never reach.  
The endless space between stars, watching over since long before this oak  
became a tree  
And I began to grow into me.

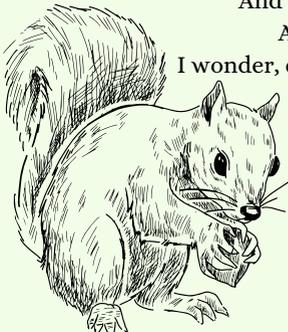
Before I ventured to find a path.  
Before I discovered how to smile.  
And — before I forgot.

The ashy clouds above us fire down their bullets of rain,  
While the strong winds attack from the sides,  
And the mind attacks from within.  
The tree will still stand strong,  
Yet I will fracture and fall once again.

The oak tree weathers the storm,  
Sees squirrels through the winter,  
Nests the gentle dove, and this time,  
Shelters me from pain.

I watch as the clouds part and turn to wisps of calm once more,  
Opening a space in which to search for shapes of hope.  
The squirrel emerges from amongst the roots, and the delicate dove  
begins to soar,  
And I wonder in which ways our lives might all be the same,  
And though I think the oak knows far more than me,  
I wonder, could it be there is one dream we have all been searching for?

The squirrel, the dove, myself, and the tree  
All looking for a break in the storm — serenity.



- *Rebecca Wilkes*

## 'the bees'

I am she  
with the bees.  
my trickling  
shower thoughts, pervading  
the quiet night.  
they hold you  
and let me go

I will say  
good night now  
and then  
slip into a  
deep, slow death  
until I must be  
caught in the morning

I will refine  
myself and think  
of every word  
before I speak it.  
do my thoughts  
reach you at the end of  
my sleeping?

it is different  
as I question you,  
but yesterday  
we were the same.  
we will not reach the  
end but the seconds  
crackle in my chest



as the flames do  
in November.  
we are each other's -  
a storm down  
my frozen back.  
who would I be  
without your hand?

I will not know  
this person,  
who stumbles  
below their own  
bleak mountain  
as you sleep in  
your own slow death

can we be  
unbroken?  
as whole as the flame,  
as quiet as the night,  
as alive as the bees?  
we show enough  
in our trying

and in the buzz  
of the trickle  
and the crackle  
of the beating.

- *Izzy Mitchell*

# Mary's Creative Writing Competition 2023

As with our poetry competition, the creative writing competition also used the prompts of 'Slipping', 'A dying fire', and 'Serenity'. We had some amazing submissions and read some incredible entries which all took the prompts in different directions ... however our winner was chosen quickly and unanimously. Congratulations to Metas Chongsoontornkul for your funny, winter-y, and highly relatable piece of writing based on a very unique Durham experience.

## I Slipped

Whoops.

I slipped.

I'm falling.

I'm oriented 90 degrees but not for long. You see, the way between Mary's and Trevs is treacherous, not just because of the combined asbestos content of those cursed hexagons or the fact that people from Trevs lurk in these dark corners (God bless their souls) but because this road freezes over every time the thermometer even flirts with the number 0. You'd think that this would be an easy fix, right? They could have lightly seasoned the ground in advance and save us the hassle, but I guess some problems are so insignificant that we wouldn't notice it until it snowballs out of control, like postponing laundry day until you summon the Laundry Chair, Collector of Musty Clothes. He watches me. He mocks my sloth.

80 degrees. It's -5 degrees right now. Degree... It's funny, don't you think, how we use the same word to describe completely different concepts. Like why is it that jellified milk, blood sausages, eggy-bready cups and God-damned haggis are considered puddings? While we're on that train, why is it that a murder can be both a group of crows and a fun teambuilding exercise? Why is 12 inches a foot? Who's foot? Is there a Giga-Foot, the supreme authority of feet? Who knows? Who cares? Mine are coming off the ground.

70 degrees. You know, "slipping up" is slang term of messing up. Indeed, I am very familiar

with "blunders," "gaffes" and "boo-boos," for I was born at a very young age and, ever since that day, it has been "oopsies" galore. In Reception, Mrs. Felicity called my mum in because I could not hold a pencil correctly. I still can't, apparently. In Year 1, I attempted to impress this girl I fancied by wiping off the art class tables as quick as possible. I remember gliding around them like a tiny ballerina before slipping and hitting my head on the corner. Clearly, I did not learn.

60 degrees. I slipped up. Over the holiday, my mum snuck a strange contraption into my suitcase. They're like little cleats that attach to the bottom of your trainers. They're alright. However, they're butt ugly so, in my infinite wisdom, I went without them. I think that she packed them because she knows I have an aversion to boots, which is nice of her. It's because back in the old country, every man must go through "military training," though it was mostly sitting around in the blazing sun and listening to propaganda. For what purpose, I can't say. I guess it's to keep Cambodia and Laos from having any funny ideas, those naughty rascals.

There was this one day where a sergeant was supposed to teach us about proper position for setting up an ambush but after reading the room, he realised none of us gave a toss. With nothing better to do, began a monologue about his life story, like I'm doing now, I guess. The sergeant was born in the countryside. He loved to work with cars and dreamed of seeing a Ferrari in real life. He wished to be a mechanic. His parents didn't approve for was no social capital in that line of



work. Lacking any formal education, he gave up on the dream and enlisted. He had nothing better to do. And here he was, trapped in a room with a bunch of rebellious teens. ‘Young man,’ he said, ‘look at me.’ His eyes betrayed that he was so, so tired. ‘Screw society. Save your soul. Lest you end up like this.’

50 degrees. I’m lucky that I’m not carrying my laptop with me, but I guess there’s some baggage. In year 10, I watched *Better Call Saul*, and it was awesome. I dreamed of being the kind of silver-tongued devil/lawyer that could get even the dodgiest of criminals out of jail. When I vaguely gestured to my parents that I was very vaguely interested in that career path, they (being of the East Asian persuasion) were elated. I geared my life around this one singular goal. I was what I dreamed. It was me. Then I realised that the prospect of wearing a funny wig and make a fool of myself in public is a bit terrifying. I much more have a penchant for napping, Netflix and making a fool of myself in public whilst not wearing a wig. But it’s too late to change course. I’m 5000 miles away from home. My wallet is thousands of pounds lighter. Plus, it’s slippery.

40 degrees. I can see the sky now. I can also see that the person in front of me has no idea I’m in freefall. Honestly, fair enough. I’ve always had the idea that if I’m going to be slipping and sliding, then it’s best not to drag someone down with me. That’s why I’ve been squatting in my flat all day, every day like a little goblin. I look at the back of his head and wonder about what his slips are. Is he also having trouble keeping balance in this increasingly slippery world that we’re on? I don’t know.

30 degrees. Quite a bit past halfway through the slip. They keep telling me ‘Hardy har, enjoy the time you have kiddo, ‘cuz the road’ll get much slipperier later in life.’ Geez. As ‘adulthood’ looms over my head, I wonder if I’m doing this right. I wonder if I took the wrong road down that lead me to this slip up, or maybe it’s been one long slide, slipping in slow motion. I’ve got all the independence, none of the

responsibilities and I’m spending it on a collision course with the ground. Maybe I should have done music? I don’t think the path they take is particularly icy- or at least Kingsgate has those arm rails you can grab. Don’t get me wrong, I understand that I have the privilege to be slipping on a road in this town, but part of me feels like it’s merely the force of gravity pulling me.

20 degrees. I slipped up. I don’t really care. I feel weightless. For this split second, there is nothing but me, the blue sky and the icy breeze. Relax my muscles. I had a good run. I accept the slip. Maybe I was just at the right place at the wrong time. But right before the ground disappears, I look ahead. It’s long and winding, icy and slippery, but it stretches on. In the distance a dog pops into view, wearing little doggie boots and a doggie jumper. It’s cute. I want to pet it. Oh, how cruel can fate be.

10 degrees. I snap out of it. It’s not too late to save my soul. I may be on this path, but I can keep going. This road connects to other roads which connect to even more roads which may lead to sights unseen and dogs unpet. Maybe with a little bit more care, maybe with a buddy next time to grab me in time or maybe even in those butt ugly cleats. I will walk this road. If not for me, if not for society, then for cute animals, napping, Netflix and making a fool of myself in public whilst not wearing a wig. What’s so bad about a wig anyways? Every time we fall, we get up and get on with it. I shield the back of my head. I’m not losing to an overconfident puddle

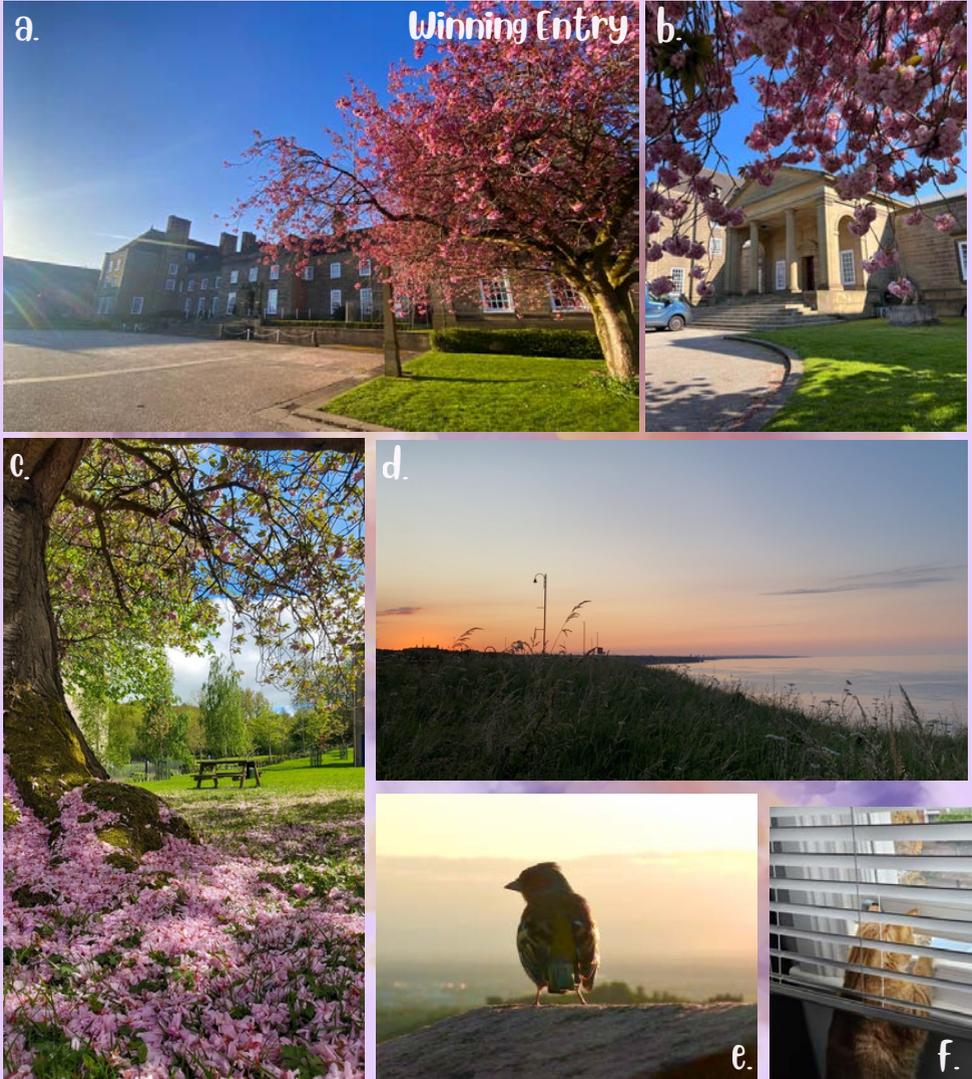
0 degrees. I make contact. The shock hits me first on the tailbone and works its way up my spine. My arms cushion my head as the back side of my hands take the full brunt of the icy floor. Little bits of snow fly up from under me. The floor is cold, my back hurts and my hands are freezing. I’ll feel it tomorrow, no doubt, but it will pass. The path goes on and the Sun shines still.

I survived.  
I stand.  
I keep walking.

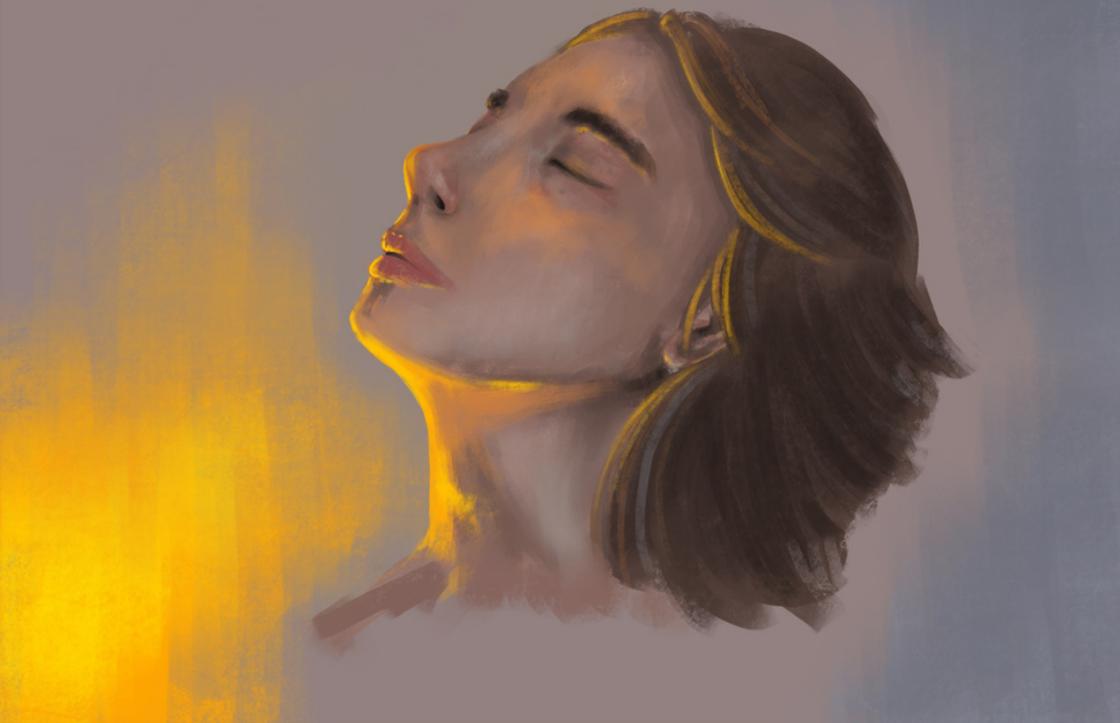
**- Metas Chongsoontornkul**

# Mary's Photography Competition 2023

The magazine photography competition was released during Easter term with the prompts of 'Wonder', 'Future Nostalgia' and 'Awakening'. Our entrants engaged with the prompts and tied them to Mary's life in a range of different ways. The winning photograph was taken by Caitlin Fox and can be seen on this edition's front and back covers. Find the rest of our excellent entries below. Congratulations!



a. **Caitlin Fox**, b. **Melissa Rumbold**, c. **Anna Gallagher-Gill**,  
d. **Holly Timmis**, e. **Mythili Pagedar**, f. **Lydia Batalona**



This year's winning artwork from our art competition by **Chelger Chiew**, first year Law student. Painted in the medium of digital art in response to the prompts 'Wonder', 'Future nostalgia', and 'Awakening'. A beautiful entry, congratulations Chelger!

## Acknowledgments

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**Sandra Ward and Anne Elliott**

**Our student and alumni contributors**

We hope you have enjoyed this year's edition of the Mary's Magazine,  
Katherine, Nara and Leo



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