



Centre for Medieval & Renaissance Studies, Oxford

In Association with
Keble
College



Welcome to the CMRS Newsletter!

Issue 1: Winter 2012-13

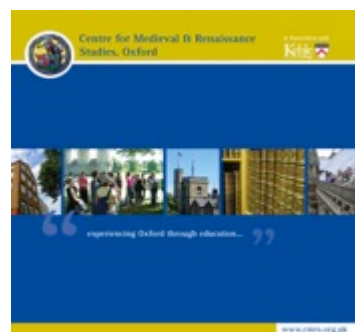
This is the first in a planned twice-yearly series of newsletters for the alumni and all kinds of friends of CMRS. We will keep you up to date with the latest developments at St Michael's Hall, our activities in Oxford and further afield, and our plans. But this is your newsletter as well as ours; we'll be delighted to hear of your doings and to share the news with the wider CMRS community.

Please send your items to Dr Diana Wyatt c/o
enquiries@cmrs.org.uk



“experiencing Oxford through education...”

www.cmrs.org.uk

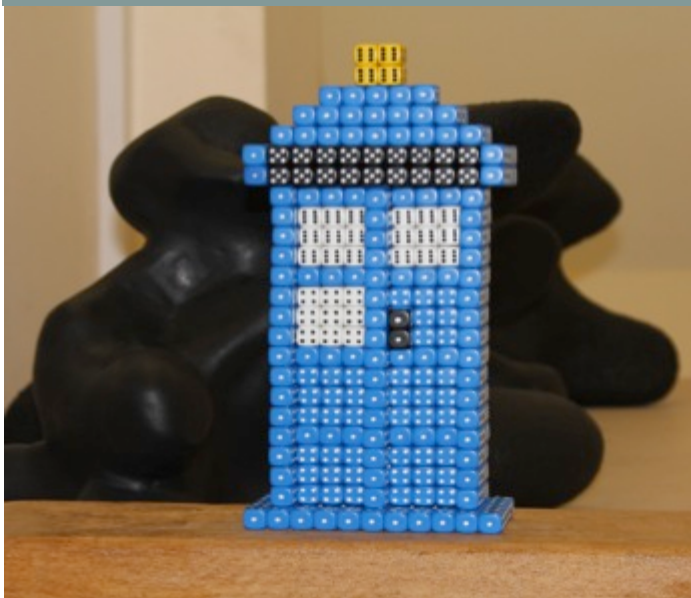


New-Look CMRS Publicity

This newsletter is part of a wholesale redesign of CMRS publicity building on the success of our new website which went live in Autumn 2011. We now have postcards for wide distribution, for example at Study Abroad Fairs, and a new prospectus will be distributed early in January 2013. (Electronic texts of both are already on the CMRS [website](http://www.cmrs.org.uk).)

The focus has been to ensure all CMRS publicity materials are instantly recognisable wherever you might find them, giving everything a branded, up-to-date, vibrant and eye-catching look, providing information, photos and current news in many forms keeping everyone in touch and well informed of all CMRS activities and opportunities...

New Art Initiative at CMRS



Dr Sandy Feneley's Plinth Sculpture Competition inspired Autumn Semester students to heights of invention!

Dr Feneley challenged students to emulate the temporary sculptures on the Fourth Plinth in Trafalgar Square, London, by offering prizes for the best artworks designed for our own JCR plinth on the first landing at St Michael's Hall. This handsome plinth in English Ancaster limestone was given to Dr Feneley by her own tutor Mr Greene (whose other former pupils include Simon Verity, who produced the British contribution to the 9/11 memorial in New York). Our picture shows the superb first prize-winner, 'Bigger on the inside' (backed by some of Dr Feneley's own sculptures): a wonderful tribute to the qualities of British culture and of St Michael's Hall itself!

Autumn Semester 2012 Students



Our picture shows Autumn Semester students on their way from their splendid Thanksgiving feast to a Keble JCR Bop (theme: 'American High School'). Apart from cheerfully confronting British stereotypes, this semester's students worked hard (one student estimated he had written 40,004 words!), and participated in a huge range of activities from the OU Company of Archers through lacrosse and basketball to Keble Chapel Choir. Some even found time for travelling. 36 students came from 16 different colleges and universities, and had 16 different majors including business administration, molecular biology and electrical engineering as well as those in the liberal arts and social sciences.

On the right, our Autumn 2012 students are pictured celebrating the end of a very full semester of work and play with a Christmas party in the Lecture Hall, hosted this time by staff and faculty. Party games, wine and mince pies, Dr Sandy Feneley's Plinth Sculpture prize-giving, and the students' own Secret Santa (you can see some of the gifts in the photo) made it a relaxed end to their autumn in Oxford.





Introducing our Library Protection and Student Welfare Officer

One member of staff who deserves a special mention in this newsletter is Signor Uccello, Library Protection and Student Welfare Officer, who has completed his debut year in this new post. Skilled in stress management and of particular service to students during essay and exam crises and, he has been keeping everyone entertained with his regular blog and evening soirees – smart black tie affairs!

Summer activities at CMRS 2012 and 2013

During summer 2012, we welcomed students and faculty to CMRS for a range of events and programmes.

- In May the Elmhurst College annual **'City As Text'** course included lectures, explorations of Oxford, Cambridge and London, and research projects on historic Oxford personalities.
- Elmhurst faculty were also the mainstay of the sixth **Jack Coopersmith Faculty Seminar** in June, which saw ten days of formal papers, discussions and visits opened by a welcoming dinner at Keble.
- In July CMRS was delighted to host a major symposium, **'Rhetoric in the 21st Century'**, which attracted 20 leading international scholars to explore the future of rhetoric studies around the world. Through the good offices of Professor James J. Murphy (UC Davis, Emeritus, and a long-standing friend of CMRS, pictured above), an experimental format saw lectures from invited experts complemented by responses, discussions, and a culminating debate. The *Proceedings* of the symposium are due for publication in 2013, and we hope this pioneering event will bring forth much scholarly fruit.
- In July and August, resident **CMRS Research Fellows** enjoyed using Oxford's superb library network to further their exciting research in several fields.



Below is another wonderful prize-winner from the Plinth (see p. 2): a Halloween-inspired tribute to our very own Dr Mark Philpott, complete with glasses!



In Summer 2013 CMRS will be welcoming another 'City As Text' group and one led by CMRS alumna, Christen Oganowski. We are also excited to be hosting the summer school of the celebrated **Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies**. In addition, we look forward to welcoming more research scholars, and a number of exciting other plans will be announced on the website shortly. We are delighted to be able to offer so many opportunities to strengthen international scholarly collaboration – long may they thrive!



Consortium Celebration in Oxford

The Principal of CMRS and the Warden of Keble College, Sir Jonathan Phillips invited the Presidents of CMRS Consortium members and their delegates to Oxford in late September to celebrate the first year of the CMRS Consortium of Colleges and Universities. Led by Middlebury College in Vermont, this Consortium aims to foster CMRS's relationships with a network of US academic institutions, provides information to prospective students, and supports CMRS activities like faculty conferences and research fellowships.

Most of our guests stayed at Keble College. They were given a tour of the College facilities enjoyed by CMRS students, took afternoon tea, and heard a talk from Keble's CMRS Career Development Fellow, Dr Tracey Sowerby on *Renaissance Diplomacy and the Arts of Power*. After a brief rest, the guests were formally welcomed by the Warden before dinner in Hall where they were joined by fellows of Keble, members of the CMRS Board of Directors and Academic Board, CMRS staff and students.

The next morning, after a short walking tour of Oxford, the visitors were entertained at St Michael's Hall by staff and students who showed them the recent improvements to teaching rooms, study-bedrooms and recreational areas before a relaxed gathering for coffee and chat in the Room of Requirement (also known as the computer room), and a lecture from the Principal. Proceedings closed with a buffet lunch at Keble.

The Celebration was pronounced a great success, and helped to build personal relationships among Consortium members, CMRS staff and faculty. We look forward to welcoming other Consortium visitors to Oxford over the next few months.

Other Consortium News

After its first year in operation the Consortium Agreement was reviewed, redrawn and re-signed in July by the President of Middlebury College, the Warden of Keble and the Principal of CMRS, and then circulated to other members for their approval.

In addition in recent months, two new members have joined the Consortium, the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, Virginia, and Notre Dame de Namur University in Belmont California. This brings total membership of the Consortium to 21 colleges and universities.

News of Staff/Faculty/Tutors

Dr John Feneley, although now retired from the role of Principal of CMRS, remains as actively involved as ever in his capacity of Chair, and is working constantly to expand and enhance the Feneley Library at St Michael's Hall – as is amply witnessed by the article on the next page. Dr Sandy Feneley continues to run the library on a day to day basis and to engage with the students, constantly encouraging them to read, think and exercise their creative impulses: see article and pictures of our Plinth sculptures on other pages.

Dr Philpott represented CMRS at the first European conference of the Forum on Education Abroad in Dublin in December. He much enjoyed meeting friends and colleagues from a number of Consortium Members, and other colleges and universities which have sent CMRS students over the years. He also relished making some new interesting contacts, and learning from the presentations. He enjoyed rather less the emphasis of some of the Irish speakers on 'colonial oppression'.



Dr Nicholas Crowe's *Jeremias Drexel's 'Christian Zodiac': Seventeenth-Century Publishing Sensation* will be published by Ashgate Press in February. This will be the only scholarly edition of any of Drexel's work, and also includes a translation of the text from Latin, Introduction and Notes. The 'Zodiac', a bestseller in its time, is a remarkable example of religious iconography and spiritual self-help, and this edition draws out the deep interconnections it suggests between religion, mysticism and scholarship in Early Modern Europe.

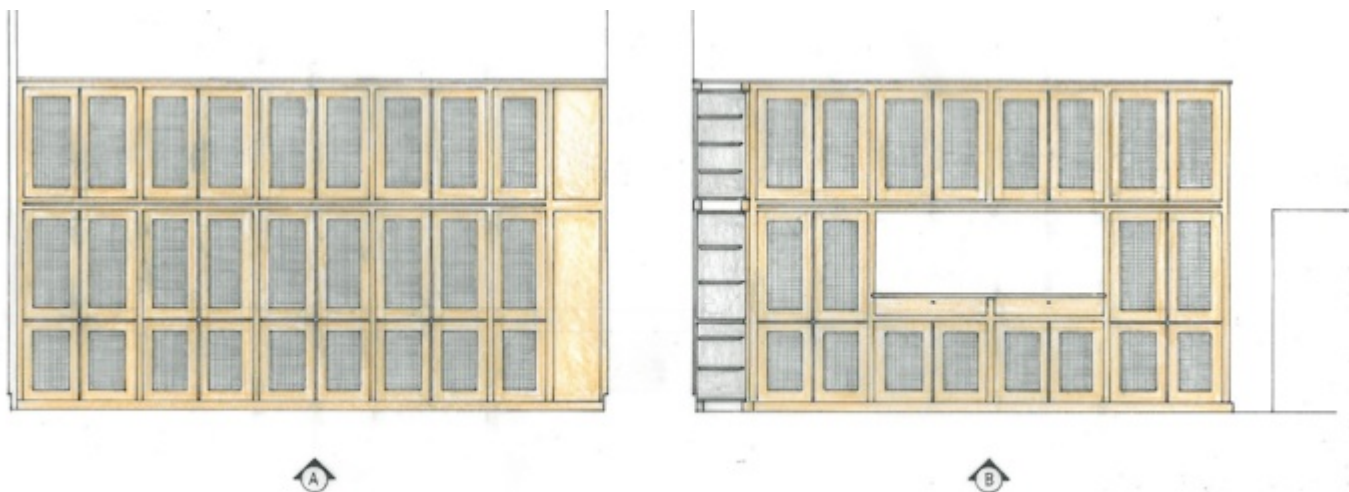
Dr Diana Wyatt has co-edited, with Professor Pamela M King of Bristol University and Dr Sue Niebrzydowski of Bangor University, Wales, Volume 43 of *The Yearbook of English Studies*. The volume, entitled *Early Drama*, features chapters by many distinguished scholars on a range of issues in early drama studies, such as the recent discovery of a manuscript of *Bewnans Ke (Life of St Kea)*, the only known Cornish saint's play (in fact the only one known from the British Isles!) to feature King Arthur. The volume will be published in early July 2013.

Alumna Drawn Back to Oxford!

Ariella Azoulay writes:

After my first semester at CMRS in the fall of 2010, I knew I had to go back to Oxford. I didn't know it in the hypothetical way my friends did, that is, I was not going to make distant future plans to return. I wanted to come back as soon as possible. I made the appropriate arrangements and applications and came back to St. Michael's Hall in the fall of 2011, but it still was not enough. To that end, I am currently undertaking a one year MA programme studying publishing at Oxford Brookes University, and I love this city as much now as I did when I first arrived two years ago. I have been doing work experience in publishing houses around England, including Oxford's own Wiley-Blackwell, and when I graduate next September, I will be making plans to stay in the UK permanently. I love living, studying, learning and working in Oxford and that love started with CMRS, a place that will always have a special place in my heart.

Feneley Library Developments



St Michael's Hall is often thought of as being like Dr Who's Tardis, 'bigger on the inside' (see sculpture on page 2! –Ed.). Nonetheless, CMRS is continually looking for ways to improve and make the most of the available space.

The first phase of a bespoke scheme of bookcases (A above) has been installed in the Room of Requirement during the Christmas Vacation, with the final touches to be added very early in 2013. New grilled oak presses, similar in design to those installed in the Mark Lee Baker Lecture Hall in Summer 2010, will eventually line two of the walls of this vast room. This will create an even more inspiring place to study under the grand Victorian timber ceiling. The bookcases will be a valuable addition to the current Feneley Library stack, adding much-needed space for housing the ever-expanding collection. At least 2000 books have been purchased by the Feneley Library Trust in the last year and it is hoped the bookcases will hold something in the region of 2500 volumes on completion.

The second phase of the scheme (B above) will include a display cabinet for small exhibitions of interesting items from the collection and will be added once funding has been secured. Watch out for more news...

Issue 2 of this Newsletter will be published in late Spring 2013, and contributions from readers will be very welcome. Please send them to enquiries@cmrs.org.uk by 2 April.

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