



THE Darwinian



Education

Darwin alumni, Fellows and students demonstrate how the study of Education equips them to change lives across the world.

Also inside:



On our 60th anniversary, alumna Dr Susan Kress shares her memories as one of Darwin's earliest students



Emeritus Fellow Dr Roger Whitehead explains how a chance meeting in Uganda led him to Darwin



Alumna Dr Rachel Meller on piecing together her family history, and how Shanghai became a wartime refuge for Europe's Jews

A Message from the Master

Dr Mike Rands

Now We are Sixty



Sixty years ago a group of visionary senior Fellows of Trinity, St John's and Gonville and Caius Colleges initiated the creation of the first Cambridge College for postgraduates while travelling together by train to London. As a direct result of this conversation, Darwin College was founded under the Mastership of the biochemist Professor Sir Frank Young, who recruited its first 12 Fellows and 12 students. Its purpose was clear:

for the advancement of education, learning and research for postgraduate students.

Darwin College is now home to around 750 students every year, as well as 70 distinguished Fellows and a rich mix of other members. We have just under 10,000 alumni in 147 countries, many of whom are leaders in research, education, government, the private sector and a wide range of charities – and all of whom are making an impact.

From the outset Darwin was different. It stimulated intellectual dialogue among Fellows and students, with no segregation between them. It fostered interdisciplinarity and an inclusive, egalitarian and informal culture, and was the first College to admit both women and men from its foundation.

The College is based in a cluster of family homes, including that of three generations of the Darwin family beginning with Sir George Darwin, Plumian Professor of Astronomy and Experimental Philosophy at Cambridge and the second son of the naturalist Charles Darwin, who purchased Newnham Grange and the Old Granary in 1884. When subsequent generations of the family moved away from Cambridge they generously agreed that the College could bear the family name. We are proud of our ongoing association with the extended family, who remain integral to the College community. Since 1964, the College estate has grown considerably but its core is unchanged, adding to the ethos of family-friendly informality.

By June 1964, Darwin College had a vision, a name and a location, but it was also able to announce its first major benefaction. A generous gift of £500,000 (equivalent to over £10 million today) from the Rayne Foundation, then chaired by the philanthropist Sir Max Rayne, enabled the College to create its iconic Dining Hall and the Rayne Building linking Newnham Grange and the Hermitage. Since then, a growing number of alumni have supported the College in numerous ways, from mentoring students, supporting studentships, promoting the College to potential applicants and funding the improvement of our facilities for student life. We are deeply grateful to everyone who helps make Darwin a better place to live and learn.

“We have just under 10,000 alumni in 147 countries, many of whom are leaders in research, education, government, the private sector and a wide range of charities – and all of whom are making an impact.”

This edition of the *Darwinian* focuses on education, which alongside learning and research forms our core purpose. And the contributions that follow beautifully illustrate our College’s strengths across the educational spectrum and its contribution to wider society.

Vice-Master Sara Baker’s innovative research in the Education Faculty demonstrates intellectual rigour and a cross-disciplinary approach through her application of evidence-based practice and the science of psychology to understanding early childhood education. Similarly, the teaching and research of former clown, actor and contemporary novelist Darwin Fellow Annouchka Bayley, blends the creative arts with education demonstrating an interdisciplinary approach. This is replicated in the scholarship of many other College Fellows in their respective departments and faculties across the University, and spills over into College life during seminars, meals and in Dar Bar!

The story of Bea Simpson’s PhD at Darwin is a powerful example of the amazing impact our students can have. She not only explored the relationship between early learning, literacy and imprisonment, but also set up a charity to support early childhood education in her home country, Uganda, while completing her postgraduate research. Alumna Isang Awah’s story highlights Darwin’s appeal to scholars at all stages of life: she joined Darwin as a mother of four from Nigeria and was accommodated by the College throughout her PhD. She and her family found a welcoming community at Darwin, regularly eating together in the Dining Hall, and Isang managed to find time to run the Afro-Asian food stall at the Darwin Food Festival while completing her studies. She now combines her research and personal passions as Head of Advocacy at the Global Parenting Initiative.

One of my first encounters with the College was meeting Roger Whitehead as Chief Usher for the Darwin College Lectures, something I have enjoyed for over 30 years. I was therefore especially interested to read of his introduction to Darwin and how he came

to be one of the early Fellows and an exceptional Vice-Master. His account of introducing highchairs in the Dining Hall, inviting spouses to dine and convincing Privy Council of the value of having student representation on College Committees demonstrate the emphasis placed on inclusivity from the College’s inception.

As part of our 60th anniversary celebrations, I was very pleased to see that Laura, the editor of the *Darwinian* and College Communications Manager, is interviewing a range of alumni to share their experiences. I hope others, on reading these conversations, will be happy to share their own stories over the coming year.

Please do join us in 2024 to celebrate our first 60 years, as we look forward to the next six decades as a distinctive and successful Cambridge College delivering international impact and nurturing outstanding people and ideas.



Sara Baker

The Darwin Vice-Master and Professor of Developmental Psychology and Education explains how researching behaviour allows us to tailor early education, and how her four-year-old twins provide the perfect study.

For Darwin Vice-Master Professor Sara Baker, defining herself as an educationalist was a recategorisation which only occurred when she took up a role at Cambridge University's Faculty of Education. Although always interested in children's development and learning, with a particular focus on the early years, her prior career had been within the realm of psychology and cognitive brain science. "The Education Faculty at Cambridge is so big, and it has a good reputation across the disciplines, from historians to psychologists," she explains. "But it also has more connection with educational practice than I'd had before, and I've learned much more about what matters to educators."

American by birth, Sara grew up attending international schools in Belgrade, Vienna and Paris from the age of 11. She completed her Maîtrise in psychology and cognitive neuroscience at the University of Paris 8 Unit, before gaining her Master's and PhD at the Rutgers University Center for Cognitive Science.

"I originally applied for a PhD in cognitive science, but I ended up specialising in developmental science during my doctorate," she says.

At Cambridge she is Professor of Developmental Psychology and Education at the Faculty of Education, where her research uses methods from experimental psychology to look at large groups of children while considering the climate of the classroom and assessing the impact of that environment.

"We're looking at the differences between children, but also differences of behaviour in the same child,

and what's going on in a classroom when you see a child being more or less self-regulated," she explains.

Children's equilibrium was rocked by the disruptions to routines and learning as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, with surveys in the summer of 2020 very quickly reporting that children were having greater difficulty than usual in regulating their own emotions. Although the very young children whom Sara's research focuses on were not yet in education when the pandemic hit, the knock-on effect on schools, parents, and therefore on children themselves has continued.

Sara works internationally, for example as a Science of Learning Fellow for UNESCO in 2022. Her research on inherent individual differences of behaviour uses a synthesis of evidence-based strategies.

"They won't all work with all kids – that's where the judgement of parents and educators comes in."

For the past four years, Sara has had the ideal controlled experiment in place at home, in the shape of her twins on whom, naturally, she has tried out many of the behavioural techniques she has encountered.

"Having twins takes the pressure off in some ways as you see that there really is no right way of doing things – every child is different. It's reinforced my awareness of that. For example when we practice techniques for calming down, one of them really responds to breathing exercises, and the other responds better to counting. I'm very receptive to the idea that there are different pathways better suited to different children."

Through a grant from the Nuffield Foundation, Sara has been able to draw together research identifying commonalities in different forms of effective approaches to create free, flexible resources for teachers, parents, and early years staff. She delivers training to local government associations, and popular webinars explaining her findings.

She is also involved in a longitudinal study, funded by the Lego Foundation, looking at children's play in Bangladesh, while a sabbatical last year allowed her to spend time as a researcher in residence in a nursery.

"There's so much that we don't know," she says of the continuing appeal of her field of interest. "Psychology as a scientific discipline is relatively young, and the methods we can use are relatively recent. Within that you have to develop very different methods to work with young children. So combining early childhood psychology with the idea that science can be applied in practice feels like a new frontier."



"There really is no right way of doing things - every child is different."

Annouchka Bayley

Dr Annouchka Bayley explains how clown school, the Silk Road and a globe-trotting childhood combined to bring her to Cambridge's Faculty of Education.



Educational consistency was not a feature of Annouchka Bayley's upbringing. Over the course of a peripatetic childhood, she attended 15 schools, from independent boarding to local state, across the United Kingdom and the United States, as well as a period of "no-school" while the family was based in Sweden.

"It wasn't home-schooling, it was just...nothing," she recalls. "My mother did attempt to teach me some spellings, though the only one I remember was 'belligerent', which possibly says it all."

Owing to what she describes as this "strange trajectory" Annouchka's A level results didn't reflect her academic potential and her options felt limited.

"But I then had this vibrant, amazing conversation with the head of faculty at SOAS who said "you should be here" and somehow made it possible. I studied the Silk Road (as part of a BA in comparative religion) and found it incredibly exciting."

After beginning a PhD "way too young" at the age of 20, Annouchka took some time out and, in the kind of zany and yet somehow inevitable non sequitur that her life story seems to be filled with, "ended up at a bilingual theatre company in Japan and found I really loved it." Having not stayed in any individual school long enough to get involved in theatre, drama was an undiscovered passion into which she threw herself with characteristic gusto. Returning to the UK she trained in the Jacques Lecoq method of physical theatre, before moving to Mongolia where she worked as a clown and trained in Mongolian singing.

“When I saw the job advertised, it felt like the culmination of everything I’d done up to that point.”

But after a few years of a globetrotting artistic life, it was clear that something was missing.

“I was living this very worthy, very broke life as a practising artist, back in the UK and in Paris for a while, but I really missed scholarship. Whenever I wrote notes in the theatre they were all multi-layered, and I really wanted to develop artistic ways of knowing that feed into critical ways of knowing.”

Annouchka returned to academia via an MA in Theatre and Performance at Warwick University, before a stint as an emerging director at the Royal Shakespeare Company. She then “brought it all together” in a PhD in Education, while continuing to perform in one-woman shows and beginning to publish her research.

Teaching performance skills in Pupil Referral Units and Further Education Colleges expanded her understanding of how the curriculum can be delivered, as well as education’s capacity to reach those students who sometimes get left behind.

“Those teenagers have their own way of knowing,” she says. “How can we develop better ways of listening, and knowing how to take students at their word?”

After developing an MA in Creative Education at King’s College London and co-designing two BA Liberal Arts modules at the Royal College of Art, Annouchka joined the Faculty of Education at Cambridge in 2020 as Assistant Professor of Education and Lead Co-ordinator of the MPhil in Arts, Creativities and Education.

“When I saw the job advertised, it felt like the culmination of everything I’d done up to that point. Everything I’m working on here is underpinned by post-human pedagogies, introducing Master’s students to the concept of challenging their basic assumptions, thinking about what it means to live a distributive life, not airbrushing aspects of our experience but thinking about what happens in the in-between spaces, unpacking our own experience and opening ourselves out in multiple ways.”

Students on the MPhil course vary from educators working in schools, museums, theatres, galleries and art schools, to lecturers wanting to consider their own practice, and those progressing to a PhD. Annouchka is justly proud of the fact that 75% of last year’s participants returned as mentors to their successors this academic year, stating that the course allows them to think in a different way to any other context.

The scale of Cambridge’s Education Faculty permits an interdisciplinarity that Annouchka regards as integral to her approach. With a reformulated Master’s programme, a newly published book on artistic research, and newly published novel, it’s an approach which is proving productive.

“Elsewhere I’ve encountered resistance or bias, either against the arts or against education – they were seen as two separate things. But interdisciplinarity is central to dealing with complexity. It’s like a huge carpet – you pull one end and all these other issues emerge. The whole point is the different ways of knowing.”

Mike Hirschfeld

How an MPhil at Darwin gave lifelong educator Mike Hirschfeld the most ‘intense and rewarding’ educational experience of his life.

After nearly three decades of teaching, including eight years as Rector of his own alma mater, St Paul’s School in Concord, New Hampshire, Mike Hirschfeld knows a thing or two about education. But when he stepped down following 24 years at St Paul’s, with the intention of taking a sabbatical, he decided he still had more to learn.

“I had started a doctorate years ago, but got side-tracked by my career and never completed it,” he explains. “So I said to my wife ‘would it be really self-indulgent to go back to school?’”

Mike and his wife, fellow teacher Liesbeth, moved to Cambridge in the autumn of 2019 so Mike could take up a place on the Faculty of Education’s MPhil in Educational Leadership and School Improvement. Their own children having grown, they had the freedom to carve out a little time for travel and learning.

“There were nine other students in the programme, and I think every continent was represented except Antarctica,” he recalls. “They were all considerably younger than me, and I benefitted from their energy and ways of thinking. We were living in a Darwin-owned apartment in Newnham, and the neighbourhood really embraced us. We loved the greengrocer’s, the pub, being able to live without a car... it was liberating!”

Mike accepted the offer of the headship at the Kent School, the independent boarding school in Connecticut where he and Liesbeth had both begun their teaching careers, shortly after starting his course in Cambridge.



“I reflect all the time on the intellectual community that was Darwin.”

"Kent was my first teaching job, fresh out of College. I met my wife here, got married here. I then spent 25 years at another boarding school, but it's been very special to come back."

Founded in 1906 by the Reverend Frederick Herbert Sill, Kent was established as "an elite school; not a school for elites", with a commitment to accessibility which it maintains today, with 35% of students receiving some form of financial assistance. Its 520 students come from 29 US states and 31 countries, and 93% are boarders. This allowed the school to take the ambitious step, when Mike began his tenure at the height of the pandemic, to offer boarding places to all day students.

"It was a difficult time to take up the role, of course, but we have a great team here and we made fortuitous choices. We had boarding capacity because there were some overseas students who didn't return, so we were able to operate as a whole-school 'bubble' and function more or less normally."

The outbreak of Covid-19 also cut short Mike's Cambridge experience, as the UK went into lockdown in March 2020.

"I was super sad when it ended early. I went home when the pandemic hit, and completed the course remotely. I was writing my dissertation by then, so I didn't miss out on too much of the course itself, but it would have been nice to have the companionship of my classmates a bit longer."

However curtailed, the experience of returning to the theory of Education at such a pivotal stage in his career has clearly had a significant impact on Mike's approach to his current position.

"It's sharpened my critical and analytical thinking abilities about schools, and as a school leader it's kept me focused on the school."

"I'm a lucky person," he acknowledges. "I went to some extraordinary schools in the US." (Mike studied History as an undergraduate at Princeton University, and has an MA in Liberal Studies from Dartmouth College.)

"But none of my prior educational experiences was as intense or rewarding as my eight months in Cambridge. The sustained and singular focus on one subject was really fun. I'm still in touch with my cohort, and I reflect all the time on the intellectual community that was Darwin – the benefit of sitting with people at lunch doing vastly different things. It was such a meaningful time – in many ways it was transformational."

Isang Awah

After taking on a PhD as a mother of four, alumna Isang Awah is putting her research into practice to support parents globally.

When Dr Isang Awah began her PhD in Education in 2015, she was a mother of four with an excitingly eclectic CV. Her academic credentials included a Bachelor's degree in Biochemistry and a Master's in Literature and Creative Writing, while her professional experience included stints as a scriptwriter, film producer and entrepreneur, as well as over 10 years as a stay-at-home parent. But it was the creation of a company crafting personalised books reflecting African children's lives and culture which proved the springboard to a new passion and focus.

"Shortly after my Master's degree, I founded MyRainbowBooks Limited, an educational publications company which is committed to engendering a reading culture in Nigeria through the publication of well-written personalised storybooks that are tailored for African children," Isang explains. "As a way of giving back and encouraging children to read and engage in creative writing, I initiated an annual free-to-enter national creative writing competition for children in Nigeria, organised by MyRainbowBooks in partnership with the E-Gaps Foundation. I mention the competition because it helped me to identify a research gap in an area that I was, and still am, passionate about, which is getting children and young people to do more leisure reading."

The competition demonstrated what Isang perceived as a shortfall in the reading and writing abilities of the participants. Having already contemplated taking on the challenge of doctoral studies, this realisation sharpened her focus.

"My involvement in the writing competition fuelled my motivation and guided me on what area to research. You see, the volume of entries we received, and the ingenuity in many of the short stories and poems were exciting. However, the quality of writing in many of the entries was below standard, and

this got me thinking about what could be done to improve the literacy skills of Nigerian children."

Isang channelled this concern into research on reading for pleasure, working with a group of children aged between nine and 12 years old, and examining the extent to which they read as a leisure activity, and the factors that affected their reading engagement.

"My study throws up thought-provoking insights that could help parents and educators gain better knowledge of how some young children of primary school age in Nigeria read, as well as the key factors that influence their reading motivations and engagement. In addition, it offers parents, educators and policy-makers evidence-based recommendations on ways that children may be helped to enjoy leisure reading so that they voluntarily choose to read again and again."

With no preconceptions about the Cambridge collegiate system, Isang stumbled across the Darwin website having taken the practical approach of searching for a College which met her needs: exclusively postgraduate and offering family accommodation.

"I loved the things I read on the website, and the beautiful images of the College, all of which made Darwin appear welcoming. So, when asked my College preference in my application, I chose Darwin. I had a truly lovely experience and have fond memories of my time there, from eating in College with my husband and children, to teaming up with two friends to run the Afro-Asian stall at the Darwin Food Festival."

On completing her doctorate, Isang joined The Accelerate Hub, an interdisciplinary research hub at the University of Oxford's Department of

Social Policy and Intervention that works with adolescents, policymakers, and NGOs to make cost-effective interventions that can improve the lives of children and adolescents in resource-limited settings. Subsequently, she took on a role which neatly combines her research and personal passions, as Head of Advocacy at the Global Parenting Initiative (GPI), run by the same department.

"I work with national governments, UN agencies and the NGO and FBO sectors to support the uptake of evidence-based playful parenting programmes, and also empower and support the GPI national research teams to lead on advocacy for the uptake of the Parenting for Lifelong Health programmes. My role nicely intersects with my academic interests because I am interested in social issues and literacy, and I am committed to improving outcomes for children and young people, especially in the Global South."

Her own decade focused on raising her children, and her continuing involvement in their lives, combines with her professional expertise to make her a perfect fit for the role.

"Parenting plays such a crucial role in addressing social issues, and positive parenting practices, including nurturing a supportive and loving environment, can prevent negative outcomes such as delinquency, school dropout, substance abuse, and antisocial behaviour etc, and thereby contribute to a healthier society. It is quite fulfilling to do work that I genuinely care about, work that contributes to improving outcomes for children and families. And I feel lucky that I get to work with really lovely colleagues who are just as passionate as I am about the work that we do."



"I am committed to improving outcomes for children and young people, especially in the Global South."

Current students

Two Darwin PhD students tell us how their very different pathways led them both to provide practical support for education in Africa.

Bea Simpson

For Bea Simpson, a PhD in Education was a return to first principles. After training in law, she had returned to her native Uganda and worked with the African Prisons Project, supporting those in prison to understand the criminal justice system and work towards qualifications in law. But the overwhelming prevalence of poverty, low educational attainment and illiteracy in those she was working with led her to feel she was approaching things from the wrong angle.

“Justice is supposed to be equal for all, but I didn’t see this in practice,” she says. “Justice is not extended to you if you’re poor or illiterate. I wanted to be a conduit for extending justice to everyone, as to me that’s what law is.”

The project had a significant impact, enabling many of those Bea worked with to leave prison sooner than they otherwise would have, and Bea and her team were invited to share their work at the UN Sustainable Development Goals in 2015. But her discomfort with the continuing need for the project’s existence grew.

“There were always more and more people coming through the system, so we were always going to have a job. However, the injustice of people spending longer periods on remand than they would have served had they been found guilty was not only unjust but also an inefficient use of limited public resources. I realised that what was actually needed was for people to be educated in the first place so that they could have a skill set to rely on for a livelihood. 90% of prisoners that I worked with in Uganda and Kenya were illiterate or semi-illiterate.”

Bea drew a direct line from the correlation between illiteracy and incarceration to the high dropout rates seen in Uganda’s



primary schools at Year 3 level. A shift to English in the classroom sees pupils who speak a different language at home left behind, with a startling 70% both illiterate and innumerate before secondary school.

“The policies around language use disadvantage people in more rural areas, as those in towns tend to grow up speaking English at home. When I realised that just 0.5% of girls who start school in Uganda will go on to tertiary education, I was really shocked.”

Attracted by the possibility, at Cambridge’s Faculty of Education, of studying education from the perspective of international development, Bea applied for a PhD. Simultaneously, she began developing practical solutions closer to home, and set up a charity, Tusome Africa. It brings support for early childhood education directly to the children most at risk of dropping out, training volunteers to offer activities and engagement to out of school children.

“We have these amazing women working for us – I’m in awe of them,” says Bea. “We give them a bicycle, a bag of books and educational resources, and when they’ve worked for us for a year we try to find funding to properly train them as early years teachers, giving them a career, status and opportunity.”

While Bea claims that naivety about the challenges ahead played its part in giving her the courage to launch such an ambitious solution, the astonishing double act of pursuing a PhD on one continent while running a fledgling charity on another seems to have been mutually supportive. She graduated last year with the MPhil component of her degree, a celebration delayed by pandemic, and hopes to complete her PhD this year.

“The courage to set up the charity came the minute I was accepted at Cambridge,” she says. “I knew that it had to do more than just get me a degree – it had to have a wider impact. Cambridge has really shaped my understanding of education, and Darwin has been at the centre of that. Seeing our volunteers in action gives me an incredible joy which fuels me.”

Regina Guzman Correa

In 2010, Regina Guzman Correa was pursuing a Master’s in Public Diplomacy at the University of Southern California. With a BA in Communication Studies and Art History already under her belt, and a developing career in the world of museums, the degree represented a slight change of direction. But she had no idea that a four-month internship would prove the most influential aspect of the programme.

“I spent the summer of 2010 in a small village in Tanzania, helping with a local micro-finance programme. The village was a tiny place, with no electricity or running water. Free primary education had just been introduced by the government, but its roll out was very slow and it took a while to reach rural communities. So there were loads of kids running around who weren’t in school, and we spent every afternoon with them.”



When Regina returned to the United States, she and fellow student Katie Moorehead were determined to find a way of supporting the education of the children they had come to know. So they set up an initiative which quickly became known as the Waka Waka Project.

“The year that we were there, the World Cup was held in South Africa and Shakira’s Waka Waka song was everywhere. The children all went mad every time it was played, and it just felt like the only possible name, especially when we discovered that in Swahili ‘waka’ means ‘light’, or ‘spark’, which is exactly what education can provide.”

For the past 12 years the Waka Waka Project has supported the same group of 15 children, sponsoring them to attend private English medium schools. Several of this first cohort have now begun university degrees, a significant achievement in a country where just 34% of the population complete secondary education and less than 2% of the workforce have university degrees.

“Lots of children have to drop out of the government system for various reasons, but non-formal schooling that would allow them an alternative route to education is very under-funded, and private schools are expensive. Also, while primary education is in Swahili, there’s

an abrupt switch to English at secondary level, so 70% of children drop out before completing basic education as the language of instruction makes it very difficult to learn and pass examinations.”

For over a decade Regina has returned to Tanzania each summer to reconnect with the children, to visit schools and meet with their teachers, and to see the wider impact of the project. From the beginning, she and Katie decided to offer depth of opportunity to a small number of children whom they could commit to supporting for the long-haul, rather than providing more limited help to a greater number. However, there has been a spillover effect on the wider community, from parents being able to save up to send younger siblings to private school, thanks to the sponsorship of an older child, to a room originally built to provide space to complete homework, which now fulfils multiple village functions.

“It’s a very personal project,” explains Regina. “Almost all of our funding comes from donations from individuals, and we send all of our supporters regular updates so that everyone can see the direct impact even a small amount of money can have. We’ve been able to change these 15 lives through education.”

For Regina herself, the project has generated a deep long-term interest in education in sub-Saharan Africa, which has shaped much of her life following that first visit. She completed a Master’s in Development Studies at the LSE in 2020, and is now in the third year of a PhD in Education at Darwin.

“I’m focusing on secondary education, and the policies around non-formal education in Tanzania. I never realised how privileged I was with the education I had until I saw what it’s like to be 10 years old and not go to school.”





Sandi Toksvig shares plans to map the world from a female perspective

Sandi Toksvig joined students, staff and Fellows for lunch at Darwin in November to discuss her ambitious new project to document and digitise the global difficulties faced by women, as well as their achievements.

The writer, broadcaster and founder of the Women's Equality Party, an alumna of Girton College, has returned to Cambridge to take up the newly launched Q+ Fellowship. Created by the Department of Sociology, the Fellowship is intended to provide opportunities for LGBTQ+ alumni to spend time at the University conducting research or developing an idea, while supporting their connection to Cambridge. Sandi, who has been elected as a Bye-Fellow of Christ's College for the 2023–24 academic year, is pursuing her goal of creating an interactive "Mappa Mundi", to present data and statistics on the challenges and limitations imposed on women across the world, acknowledge and celebrate their successes, and provide a platform to share their stories.

Sandi and **Brigid Gildea** of Jesus College's Curiosity Incubator, who is collaborating with her as co-founder of the project, joined the Master and other Darwin members to present their vision and intentions, and to seek and share ideas and suggestions. They also met the College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion steering group and heard from students on efforts to support inclusion throughout Darwin, as well as the impact and importance of Sandi's emblematic role as a visible LGBTQ+ presence in Cambridge.



Photos: left © David Johnson

Darwin Ball recognised as most sustainable in Cambridge

Congratulations to the May Ball committee, whose efforts to ensure that this year's celebration had as little environmental impact as possible have been recognised with a Platinum accreditation from Sustain-a-Ball, making it officially the most sustainable ball in Cambridge.

Overseen by the Cambridge University Environmental Consulting Society, Sustain-a-Ball provides advice to Colleges on how to reduce waste and host a sustainable celebration, as well as highlighting their achievements.

Darwin's 2023 May Ball was the first across the University to offer exclusively plant-based refreshments, and sustainability was at the centre of planning from the beginning. The College's score was 30% higher than that required to achieve a Platinum accreditation.

"I am thrilled to hear that we have achieved a Platinum accreditation for the Sustain-a-Ball results," said **Sophie McSherry**, Green Officer for the May Ball Committee 2023. "Our 92% percentage meant we came first out of all the Colleges participating this year, which is a great achievement for Darwin! We successfully hosted the first 100% vegan May Ball, put in place strong waste and recycling systems, and enforced strict energy policies for the event. We hope this sets the standard for future May Balls across all Colleges at the University of Cambridge!"



Portrait of Richard King presented to College

The family of the late **Richard King CBE**, Fellow of and generous benefactor to Darwin, presented the Master, Dr Mike Rands, with a portrait of Richard on Friday, 10th November. The portrait provides a fitting memorial of someone who contributed widely to College life over many decades, and will in due course be displayed in the Richard King Room, named in his honour.

Richard was elected as a Fellow in May 1986, providing a deliberate and valuable point of connection between the College and the world of industry. As Managing Director of Cambridge Electronic Industries, and President of the Society for the Application of Research, his perspective was distinctive and much appreciated in an otherwise academic setting. Richard gave regularly and generously to Darwin in a personal capacity and supported its fundraising efforts.

Richard died in June 2020, aged 90. We were delighted to welcome his son, Gary (pictured above), to present the portrait on behalf of the family.



Darwin family album returns to Newnham Grange

Darwin family member **Charles Littleton** has kindly presented a photograph album to the College which includes pictures of his mother **Cecily Darwin Littleton**, as a child at Newnham Grange – now Darwin College.

Born in 1926, Cecily, who died in 2022 at the age of 95, was the great-granddaughter of Charles Darwin, and the granddaughter of Sir George, Plumian Professor of Astronomy at Cambridge, who purchased the house in 1885. Cecily's father, the physicist Sir Charles Galton Darwin, was born in the house in 1887, and died here on New Year's Eve 1962/3. Her mother, Katharine Pember, was a mathematician.

Cecily studied Chemistry at Somerville College, Oxford, where she specialised in x-ray crystallography, before moving to Philadelphia as a Research Fellow at the Institute of Cancer Research. She married John Littleton in 1951, and spent the rest of her life in Pennsylvania. While raising her four children she maintained lifelong scientific interests, including using early computers to support astronomical research at Haverford College in the 1960s.

Her son Charles joined the Master and College members for tea after presenting the album, which is now held in the Darwin College archive.



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Darwin family contributions to Cambridge Philosophical Society donated to College

Dr Claire Barlow (above), President of the Cambridge Philosophical Society, has presented the Master with copies of CPS journals including contributions by Darwin family members from the 19th and 20th centuries. These include articles by three of Charles Darwin's sons: George, Francis and Horace. Sir George Howard Darwin (1845–1912) was CPS President twice between 1890–1892 and 1910–1912, while his brother, the botanist Francis Darwin, took the role between 1896 and 1898. George Howard Darwin's son Charles Galton Darwin also contributed articles to the journals.

The Cambridge Philosophical Society holds a vast archive of material dating back to its foundation in 1819, including the journals which began in 1822. Darwin Fellow **Dr Edwin Rose**, an AHRC Early Career Research Fellow from the Department of History and Philosophy of Science oversaw the collection of the journals from the CPS archive. Dr Rose said:

"It is a delight to see the donation of such important articles to Darwin College."

Development Office News

We were delighted this year to welcome **Fiona Duffy** as Director of Development and Alumni Relations.

Fiona joined Darwin last year, working with the Development Office in a consultancy capacity. Following the departure of Sam Venn, she fulfilled the role of Interim Development Director before, after an extensive recruitment process, being appointed to the position permanently.

The Master, Dr Mike Rands, said:

"Fiona brings a wealth of experience to Darwin. Most recently, she was Director of Development at Murray Edwards College where she led a successful fundraising campaign. Prior to that she worked in development roles at University College, London and the London School of Economics as well as The Imperial War Museum. As we enter into our 60th anniversary year, I look forward to working with Fiona, Hannah and a new Development Team to enhance our fundraising and alumni relations activities."



Fiona said:

"I'm delighted to be appointed at a very important moment, as we anticipate the 60th anniversary of Darwin College. The support of alumni and donors, with time and expertise as well as philanthropy, will be fundamental to the success of the College in the coming decades. I look forward a great deal to meeting alumni around the world as well as in College and working together towards these ambitious goals."



Karina Malets joined the Development Office in October as Research and Donor Relations Manager.

Originally from Ukraine, Karina has recently completed an MPhil in Development Studies at Clare Hall, where she subsequently worked in a temporary role in the Development Office. She previously worked for the American Embassy in Kyiv, whose removal to Warsaw she managed following the invasion.

Karina will work with Fiona and Hannah to promote the College's fundraising ambitions and our relationship with our supporters. We are delighted to have her on board.

Appointments and awards

Alumnus **Professor Simon Thompson** (MPhil Criminology 2018–19), has been honoured by His Majesty The King, with an MBE for services to clinical psychology education and healthcare improvement.



A specialist in clinical and forensic neuropsychology, Simon's honour recognises his efforts in setting up a new service for people with dementia and learning disabilities, his co-founding of collaborative research between France and the UK into Multiple Sclerosis, and his service as an Expert Witness to the courts in neurology.

Three Darwinians have also been appointed Commander of the British Empire (CBE) in the New Year's Honours List.

Honorary Fellow and alumna **Professor Liz Robertson** (PhD Genetics 1978), whose pioneering work in developmental genetics demonstrated that genetically altered embryonic stem cells could introduce mutations into the germline of mice, receives the CBE for Services to Medical Science.

Alumna **Professor Ann Prentice** (PhD Biology 1974), whose research into the nutritional requirements for population health has focused on the effects of calcium and vitamin D, looking at nutrition in both affluent and resource-limited societies, is awarded the CBE for Services to British and Global Public Health Nutrition.

Alumnus **Dr Andrew Mackintosh** (PhD Physics 1978, and Darwin Research Fellow 1983–85), is the founder of the Royal Society Enterprise Fund, former CEO of Oxford Instruments, and current chair of Sphere Fluidics. He receives the CBE for Services to Science and Technology, and to Enterprise Development.

Alumnus **Dr Chanon Pornrunroj** and fellow researchers at the University of Cambridge Yusuf Hamied Department of Chemistry have developed a portable, solar-powered device which can create clean hydrogen fuel and purified water from contaminated water or seawater.



Chanon, who completed a PhD at Darwin in Chemistry in 2023, is the co-lead author on a paper published this week in 'Nature Water' demonstrating the device, which is inspired by the natural process of photosynthesis.

"It's so tolerant of pollutants, and the floating design allows the substrate to work in very cloudy or muddy water," he said. "It's a highly versatile system."

A new approach to vaccine technology could provide protection against viruses and their variants before they arise Nature Biomedical Engineering reported in September.



Research led by Darwin Fellow **Professor Jonathan Heeney** has resulted in a 'future-proof' vaccine candidate which appears to trigger an immune response to coronaviruses ranging from Covid-19 to SARS.

"Unlike current vaccines that use wild-type viruses or parts of viruses that have caused trouble in the past, this technology combines lessons learned from nature's mistakes and aims to protect us from the future," says Professor Heeney.

"It opens the door for vaccines against viruses that we don't yet know about."



Congratulations to former David Mackay Research Associate at Darwin and Cambridge Zero, plant scientist **Dr Angie Burnett**, who has been appointed as one of the first programme directors at Aria, a new government-funded agency which aims to bring together disparate areas of expertise to unlock scientific and technological breakthroughs.



Congratulations to **Dr Amal Awad**, who graduated from Darwin with a PhD in Arabic-Islamic Philosophy this summer, and has been awarded a Postdoctoral Fellowship by The British Academy to pursue further research at Cambridge.



Darwin Fellow **Professor Flora Samuel** leads a team from the Department of Architecture which has been awarded one of four new £4.625 million Green Transition Ecosystem grants by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC).

The grant will enable the team to create a Community Open Map Platform (COMP) for Future Generations to chart the green transition on the Isle of Anglesey/Ynys Môn.

"Climate change cannot be addressed without revealing and tackling the inequalities within society and where they are happening," Professor Samuel said.

"Only when we know what is happening where, and how people are adapting

to climate change can we make well informed decisions.

"The aim of this pragmatic project is to create a Community Open Map Platform that will bring together multiple layers of spatial information to give a social, environmental, cultural and economic picture of what is happening in a neighbourhood, area, local authority, region or nation."



Congratulations to Darwin PhD student in the History and Philosophy of Science, **Miguel Ohnesorge**, who has been awarded a Freer Prize Fellowship by the Royal Institution of Great Britain.

Granted annually to two doctoral candidates researching the history of science, the Freer Prize is awarded on the basis of candidates' ability to identify and communicate the potential of their research to provide insights into present day challenges, and to contribute to shaping equitable and sustainable futures.

Miguel's research explores the history of attempts to determine the shape of the earth empirically and to understand it theoretically, blending historical, philosophical and scientific questions by looking at how history can inform debates about the roles of measurement, statistical inference, and theory-testing in science.

We were saddened by the deaths of the following Darwin members and friends of the College this year.



Professor Sir Ian Wilmut OBE

(PhD Agriculture 1967)
7 July 1944 – 11 September 2023

Part of Darwin's earliest cohort of students, Professor Wilmut led the team responsible for one of the 20th century's most iconic scientific breakthroughs, the cloning of Dolly the sheep. Her creation has had a lasting legacy in the field of stem cell research.

Professor Anne Ferguson-Smith, Darwin Fellow and President of the Genetics Society, said:

"Ian of course was best known for his pioneering work with Keith Campbell on mammalian cloning and the production of Dolly the sheep from an adult cell. However, Ian's research focused on areas ranging from cryopreservation of gametes to regenerative medicine; his contributions to embryology and reproductive biology over the years have been very impactful. He will be sorely missed."



Lord (Igor) Judge

19 May 1941 – 7 November 2023

Former Lord Chief Justice and, until his death, Commissary of the University of Cambridge. Lord Judge was a Distinguished Associate of Darwin and served as Visitor to the College from 2008 – 2013.

Former Master Professor Mary Fowler recalled that during the first year of her Mastership, which overlapped with Lord Judge's final year as Visitor, she "spent several most enjoyable formal evenings in his company."

"It was always a pleasure to spend time with him," she said. "His interest in the College was sincere, appreciating Darwin's relative informality, and the very varied disciplinary and international backgrounds of our students and Fellows. He was interested in everything from the latest research, to the minutiae and the challenges facing the College, to the operation of the University, and most appreciative that we had not needed to call upon him to act as our Visitor. With his gentle humour Igor told of his birth in Malta in World War II during a bombing raid which he was fortunate to have survived, and of the importance of free expression. A good and strong friend of the College and the University."

Dr Jeffrey Caruso

(PhD Mathematics 1979)
7 August 1953 – 7 July 2023

Dr Coline Covington

(Diploma Criminology 1979)
6 January 1953 – 25 August 2023

Dr Pierre de Marneffe

(PhD Computer Science 1974)
19 August 1946 – 9 July 2023

Dr Gabriel des Rosiers

(PhD Psychiatry 1988)
17 June 1951 – 7 September 2023

Dr Anna Dyer

(PhD Anatomy 2000)
6 June 1967 – 7 August 2023

Professor Stephen Gaukroger

(PhD History and Philosophy of Science)
9 July 1950 – 3 September 2023

Dr Peter Kehoe

(Chemical Engineering 1971)
Former Research Fellow
16 October 1943 – 2 June 2023

Dr Charles Massie

(PhD Oncology 2001)
28 April 1978 – 5 May 2023

Dr Christopher Padfield

(PhD Engineering 1974)
Husband of Honorary Fellow Professor Nicola Padfield
27 August 1949 – 3 June 2023

Mrs Jean Robin

(widow of Gordon Robin, Vice-Master of Darwin 1974 – 1978)
30 September 1922 – 1 September 2023

Emeritus Fellow and former Vice-Master **Dr Roger Whitehead** recalls his introduction to Darwin in 1973



I first became aware of Darwin College in an unexpected way. It was in Uganda where I had been appointed Director of a British Medical Research Council establishment, The Child Nutrition Unit. One day, much to my surprise, there was a knock at my door and in walked Professor Sir Frank Young, a man I hardly knew. Apparently, he was on a rather delicate mission for the Inter-Universities Council, and he thought he might inadvertently have made some unfortunate diplomatic error. It was quite apparent to me that he had not done so, and I was able to resolve the non-existent problem with a quick telephone call.

Luckily for me, this chance meeting made us good friends for the rest of his visit. Chatting on our veranda in the evenings it became obvious that things back in Cambridge were very much on his mind. Perhaps talking to someone who had few links with Cambridge, and was unlikely ever to have again, it was easier for him to ponder over his responsibilities and aspirations for the developing new College, Darwin, of which he was the Founding Master.

I remember him explaining how the overall educational balance of Cambridge was changing, with a growing emphasis on graduate education. This meant that an increasing number of rather more mature students would be coming to Cambridge for the first time, graduates from other universities in the United Kingdom as well as from overseas to study for advanced research degrees. In some ways even more challenging was the fact that an increasing proportion of these would be women! Darwin had come into being as the first coeducational graduate College in Cambridge in response to this and, with a small group of Founding Fellows, had become Frank Young's primary responsibility and passion.

The deteriorating political situation in Uganda meant that I was shortly afterwards ordered to close my

“The College owes a great debt to Ruth Young for making it the friendly and understanding place it is.”

research unit there and I was appointed Director of the Dunn Nutrition Laboratory in Cambridge. On arrival I was lucky to be given dining rights by Frank Young at Darwin and shortly afterwards made a Fellow.

In 1973 Darwin College was much smaller than it is now. Although a new dining room had been built and limited accommodation provided within the College, many of the students were accommodated in houses in different parts of the city. For some this was convenient as they could live near their laboratory or other place of study, but it did mean that they might also become separated from collegiate activity, which at this time tended to centre around frequent Formal Halls. An unusual feature for the time of these Formal Halls was that the spouses of Fellows and graduate members were also encouraged to dine regularly in College. This development had been very much encouraged by the Master's wife Ruth Young, a psychiatrist by profession. The College owes a great debt to Ruth for making it the friendly and understanding place it is for the differing needs of more mature students. I remember one of my first tasks as a Junior Fellow was to chair a small meeting to decide how children might also be accommodated for less formal meals. One result was the provision of a couple of highchairs for lunch times, a feature which often caused amusement to visitors from other Colleges!

This was also my first experience of Cambridge College Governing Bodies. During this period we were not completely independent, but still subject to the guidance of the founding Colleges: Trinity, St John's and Gonville & Caius. Meetings were dominated by the development of Statutes and Ordinances which to my surprise had also to be acceptable to the Privy Council. One issue that went back and forth concerned our plans to have significant representation from the graduate students on the various College committees - it took



some effort to convince the Privy Council that a graduate College benefited from such an extended membership. To many of us responding to such challenges seemed like unnecessary bureaucracy, but through the Master's judicious chairmanship Darwin was able to evolve and reflect the needs of a graduate institution.

Since then we have had a series of excellent Masters who have introduced a variety of innovative educational developments, but we owe much to the careful stewardship of the first Master and his small group of Founding Fellows. Thinking back to those hopes and aspirations he talked to me about on my veranda in Uganda, I often wonder if Frank Young would be proud if he walked into the College today. I feel sure he would be.

Anniversary Alumna

Alumna **Dr Susan Kress** (PhD English 1966) recalls her experience as one of the first Darwinians, and tells us why, as a lifelong feminist, she's so fearful for the future.



When Susan Kress (then Susan Aaronson) arrived at Darwin to begin her PhD in 1966, the fledgling College had only been founded two years earlier. But the elements regarded 60 years later as distinctively Darwinian points of pride were already in place.

"The fact that it was an entirely graduate College really appealed to me. There were students from all over the world, so it opened up new horizons – it was incredibly international and cosmopolitan. And the fact that it accepted both men and women, at a time when all the other Colleges were single-sex, also attracted me, having grown up in the single-sex grammar school system after taking the 11 plus."

The novelty of creating a Cambridge College from scratch was not lost on this early cohort.

"The fact that it was new – yet within this place of great tradition and ancient towers – was really exciting."

With so few students, all studying at postgraduate level, there were far fewer hierarchies or divisions between Fellows and students than was the norm in other Colleges, although Susan disputes the idea that there was no dividing line at all.

"I wouldn't say we were buddies," she clarifies. "But there was definitely collegiality. I remember the librarian, John Oates, a genial, generous man – he was delightful. And the Dean, Philip McNair was very convivial. He and his wife would entertain us in their home, as did the Associate Dean, Sylvia Fitton Jackson."

There were 46 students at Darwin in the autumn of 1966, and the College was growing rapidly. Eating together in the evening was regarded as an important factor in fostering collegiate relationships.

"There was a strong sense of community," Susan recalls. "There was a sort of unwritten rule that you wouldn't talk about your subject at dinner, in an attempt to make the conversation more wide-ranging. I suppose so that you didn't get so isolated within your subject that you couldn't communicate with the wider world!"

After Darwin, Susan married fellow Darwinian Jack Kress and moved with him to his native United States. Following a brief stint teaching in Albany she began a 40-year career at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, upstate New York, as a literary scholar and feminist. She served as Vice President for Academic Affairs from 2006-12, and as Acting President during the sabbatical of the President, and

"The fact that it was new - yet within this place of great tradition and ancient towers - was really exciting."

has written an acclaimed biography of Carolyn G. Heilbrun, *Feminist in a Tenured Position*.

Her feminism developed in line with the wider feminist awakening in America in the early 1970s.

"I was clueless," she says of her time at Darwin. "You just got used to the fact that some things were unequal. Like the fact that, other than Darwin, there were three or four women's Colleges and all the rest were men only – it didn't occur to us that that was a problem. But once I got to the States there was a wind blowing. Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* had come out, and although it's much criticised now as too white, too middle-class, too straight – all of which is true – it was a hugely important book. I met women who opened my eyes, I joined consciousness-raising groups, and from then on I read literature in a different way and saw the world in a different way."

Recent backtracking on decades of progress towards gender equality in the United States, such as the repeal of Roe versus Wade, has left Susan distressed by recent political developments.

"My heart is broken – I'm looking at my 17-year-old granddaughter and deeply concerned by the stripping away of her rights."

Over the course of Susan's four decades at Skidmore, the college has transformed beyond recognition, rising up the ranks to become the first choice of many students from across the country and, indeed, from many countries. Its gender balance has also completely shifted.

"When I came it was changing from a women's college to co-ed. They made the switch in 1971, and I arrived in 1975. For a while it was considered a triumph if you had two men in a class you were teaching, but that gradually changed."

With an enhanced reputation have come ever changing student demographics.

"It's become a more desirable place to come, so we're getting many more applications and it's much more diverse than it used to be. But it's interesting to look at how diverse Cambridge was in the 1960s. People came from all over the world to study there."

Since her retirement in 2012, Susan has served on the board of her local public television station, as well as that of AROHE, the Association of Retirement Organizations in Higher Education.

"AROHE's mission is to transform retirement. To demonstrate the ways in which retirees are still assets to their communities, as well as to support their wellbeing. More and more of us are lucky enough to age, but that can lead to increased isolation, and we're not necessarily liked by younger people who want our jobs, our homes and their inheritance!"

Susan herself appears in no danger of retreating into isolation in the next phase of her life. As well as her active community engagement ("I can't lose the habit of service," she acknowledges), she is nurturing a newly discovered talent for poetry, with many publications to her name, and a book in the works.

"It's very joyful!" she says of this new pursuit. "It's bringing me a lot of pleasure."

Rachel Meller

Darwin alumna Dr Rachel Meller knew little about her mother's family, until a box of papers revealed an untold story and led to her literary debut.



Rachel Meller's story begins with a shocking loss. Three months after her birth in 1953 her mother, Ilse, took her own life. Rachel grew up knowing little to nothing about Ilse, with her only surviving maternal relations, her grandmother and aunt, on the other side of the world in San Francisco.

But a box of papers, concealed in a cabinet left to her by her aunt in the 1990s, provided some answers which Rachel has taken the past six years to piece together. In a moving and compelling new book, she brings to vivid life the relatives she barely knew, and illuminates a little recognised aspect of history, by following her aunt's experience as a Jewish refugee from 1930s Vienna to Shanghai.

Rachel completed a PhD on hormones and behaviour at Darwin in the mid-1970s, before pursuing a career in communication and training. *The Box*

with *the Sunflower Clasp*, her first book, was published in 2023. She talked to **Laura Kenworthy** about the poignancy of getting to know her family decades after their deaths, and the thrill of making her publishing debut at 69.

At what point did you discover the treasure trove of letters, photos and documents that your aunt Lisbeth had left you?

I knew that she had left me the cabinet after her death in 1996, but this thing inside wrapped in paper was a surprise. I looked at it immediately, but then I just put it to one side. And do you know, genuinely, when you've had something in the house for a long time it becomes invisible. I literally did nothing with it, until my brother-in-law gave me a book of interviews with Jewish wartime refugees to Shanghai, which included an interview with Lisbeth. That was in about 2012. I'd always wanted to write

a book, and with the combination of these sources and the University Library, I thought "I can do this." The seminal textbook on the period is at the UL and I literally owned it for about three years, I kept renewing it and renewing it.

When did it become clear that the focus was going to be your aunt, rather than your mother, who had an equally fascinating story coming to London on her own?

Well, the box was all about my aunt. The motivating force was I thought if I learn more about my aunt, and where she grew up, and the family history, maybe I'll find out more about the sisters and my mother. But also, I asked loads of people if they had heard about the Jews in Shanghai and virtually nobody I asked, who lived in the UK, knew about this story. So that motivated me to keep going, finding out more about my family but also thinking will people say "Really?! 20,000 Jews went to Shanghai? Why did they go to Shanghai?"

So did you grow up knowing anything about your mother and your family? Did your father try to make sure that they were part of your life?

No, not at all, the opposite. Ilse's name was virtually never mentioned. If I tried to ask my elder sister she tightened up, which is understandable because she was six when our mother died. In a way I was the lucky one because I didn't know what I was losing. So I could be more dispassionate trying to piece the story together.

"I knew that she had left me the cabinet after her death in 1996, but this thing inside wrapped in paper was a surprise."

But I didn't want to upset my dad, because he'd had a heart attack in his 40s and I didn't want him to get stressed by me raising these subjects again. And my stepmother, Ruth, would never have met Ilse – they must have talked about her but it was sort of taboo. I tried to ask my aunt what Ilse was like but as far as I remember I got nowhere. So I had to learn some things from reading history.

But you'd had some sort of long-distance relationship with your aunt?

Yes, I think from when she first started coming to England, maybe the late 1960s, early 1970s? I think it just became more common to fly. But she never went back to Europe to see her sister. I kind of hadn't appreciated it – it was only writing the book that made me realise, wow, she never saw her sister again after 1938.

Did they write to each other?

They did write to each other. Just recently, before my own sister died last year, she said "oh, you'd better have this," and there was this big plastic box. My nephew went through it about two or three weeks ago and found letters my grandparents had written to my mum from Shanghai. So they must have communicated, I now know that they did. But I had no evidence of that before so I had had to imagine that they knew what was going on.

It's an amazing gift to be able to bring them back to life and honour their experiences in this way. You're very honest about the fact that in real life you found Lisbeth

hard to warm to. I'm impressed, given that, by your commitment to understanding and presenting her perspective.

When I started the book, everyone said 'why would we read a book about someone you obviously don't like?' I had to tone it down! But I wanted to find out her story, and it's been cathartic – I think I've developed more sympathy for her. I always had sympathy for my mother because I know having worked on hormones and behaviour that you're at the mercy of these bloody chemicals. Mental illness is awful.

Yes, so your PhD was on hormones and behaviour – did you study medicine first?

I tried to study medicine – I wanted to be a psychiatrist – but the all-girls school I went to said 'oh, it's far too risky, you can't apply to six medical schools because if you get rejected by all of them you'll have nothing.' And actually that was completely the wrong advice, because all the medical schools saw that I'd applied to Sussex to do neurobiology, and they thought I wasn't serious about medicine. So I didn't get anywhere with medical school. But to be quite honest it was a huge relief because I'm so bad at dissections and practicals, and I'm squeamish and I panic and it wouldn't have been a natural fit!

So you went to Sussex, and then came to Darwin straight afterwards?

Yes. I enjoyed doing my research project at Sussex in the third year, and then I saw

this PhD at Cambridge advertised in the paper, on hormones and behaviour, so I thought well I'll be brave and apply.

After Darwin I was lucky enough to get a Mental Health Foundation Junior Research Fellowship to carry on. But the work I was doing became more and more practical, and I just don't find lab work interesting, however wonderful the question. And then I got married to the head of the lab. He wasn't my supervisor, but it felt wrong to stay. So I went to work on child behaviour at Madingley (Zoology's sub-department of Animal Behaviour), but after I had my first child in January 1982 I wasn't allowed to come back part-time.

So I got a job at Cambridge University Press subediting science books, which was fantastic, but I really wanted to be writing. I eventually got this very good job in a place with a totally flat hierarchy, which was originally called Information Transfer and is now called Acteon Communication and Learning. And I stayed for 29 years. So that's my career history – and this is my second career!

The Box With The Sunflower Clasp: Uncovering a Jewish Family's Flight to Wartime Shanghai is published in hardback by Icon Books, and will be available in paperback from April. Rachel is currently researching her next book, an exploration of research into consciousness and the possibility of its persistence after death.

List of Donors and Benefactors

The Master, Fellows, members and staff are very grateful to all who have supported us in the past year. Thank you to everyone who has volunteered or given, including those who wish to remain anonymous.

Additionally, we appreciate the significant support of those members who have given gifts of shares and either left or notified us of their intention to leave legacies to the college.

If you would like to give to the College, please use the attached donation form.

If your name has been omitted from the list, please accept our apologies. We are keen to record and acknowledge your support so please contact the Development Office so that we can amend our records and include you in a future listing of donors.

Donor List

This list includes donations from 1 December 2022 to 31 December 2023 and is categorised by the year you entered Darwin College.

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1989

Dr Tim Foxon

1990

Dr Miles Congreve
Mr Michael Cook
Mr Nikhil Sekhran
Dr Davin Yap

1991

Ms Angie Ang
Dr Jeremy Crowe
Mr Ian Hargrave
Mr Wyn Hughes
Dr Chuan Liu
Mrs Annemarie Moore
Dr Trudi Tate

1992

Mr Askari Chandoo
Dr Lara Hawkins

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Colonel Auberon Ashbrooke
Dr Anna Baldwin
Dr Emily Gardner
Dr Mari Kuraguchi
Mr Nick Lord
Dr Thomas Manke
Mrs Kathleen Orndorff
Dr Sivashanker Sathiamoorthy
Dr Jennifer Schooling
Mr Christopher Sparey-Green
Dr Tim Summers
Ms Parichart Thongyai
Dr Michael Wagner

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Miss Julia Jackson
Miss Belinda Moffat

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Dr Paul Perry
Dr David Robbins
Mrs Annabelle Simmons Juritz

1996

Dr Hitesh Chauhan
Dr Mark Horsburgh
Professor Muhammad Huda
Mr Raja Kumar
Mr Bohdan Solomka

1997

Mr Pablo Garnham
Ms Jane Marriott
Dr James Redman
Ms Heather Richards
Mrs Viviana Vieyra

1998

Mr Raj Lalsare
Dr Sheika Aragundi Leon
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Dr Pamela Abbott
Dr Rowan Burnstein
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Emeritus Professor Christopher Heginbotham
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Dr Michael Nirschl
Ms Greta Petersen
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Mr Nicholas Bethune
Mrs Katherine Restif
Dr Laurence Totelin
Mrs Sarah Warren
Ms Anna Wedig
Dr Konstantinos Zorbas

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Mrs Anna Al-Damluji
Dr Amanda Lucas
Dr Annabel Pinker

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Dr Patrick Boner
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Mr Nick Hartman
Dr Peter Hosking
Dr Isabelle Parsons
Dr Neil Roxburgh
Dr Klaudia Walter
Mr Michael Zgodna

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Mr Michael Blank
Miss Chloe Gallagher
Ms Iryna Goncharenko-Van Den Neste
Mr John Heesom
Mr Jesse Izzo
Dr Paresh Prema
Dr Sungho Yoon

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Dr Katharine Barden
Miss Jolene Chow
Dr Stephane Forsik
Mr Chris Ingate
Dr Maximina Yun

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Mr Philip Balbirnie
Dr Rosemary Francis
Mr Mark Heerema
Mr Thomas Howarth
Dr Yseult Marique
Dr Zoe Rutterford
Mr Nitin Tanwar

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Mr Alvin Abraham
Ms Monica Faraldo
Dr Alícia Higuero
Dr Gregory Jordan
Dr Pouria Moshayedi
Mr Aram-Christopher Sayadian
Mr Michael Vinson

2008

Mr Andreas Morakis
Ms Naabia Ofosu-Amaah

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Mr Samuel Atkins
Ms Amelie Deblauwe
Mr Olivier Grubestedt
Ms Annie Harvey
Mr Blair Lapres
Miss Hannah Lee
Dr Ivan Rajic
Miss Dasha Shalashova
Ms Amelia Tan

2010

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Dr Gregory Haslett
Mr Eireann Leverett
Mrs Danielle Melling
Mr Philipp William Mundorf
Professor Paul Zavala-Rivera

2011

Dr Amy Devine
Miss Zoe Lindesay
Dr Cherry Muijsson
Mr Kick Van Der Wel
Ms Jessica Zhang

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Dr Kif Liakath Ali
Mr Alexander Kokin
Mr Andries Waelkens

2013

Mr Tim Jones
Mr Ken Shinohara

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Mr Nahum Clements
Mr Richard Evans
Dr Valentina Ausserladscheider
Ms Veena Adityan
Dr Adnan Haider
Mr Richard Mervin

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Miss Zo Sweetland
Mr Denis Terpanov
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2016

Dr Alena Giesche
Dr Dionysios Manousakas

2017

Dr Momodou Jack
Dr Aurelia Li
Mr Yusef Rabiah
Miss Sophie Wrixon

2018

Mr Daniel Buhl
Mr Martin Wickens

2019

Mr Finn Anderson
Miss Louise de Thomasson
Dr Mark Frigerio
Ms Shruti Kumar
Mr Jacob Moss

2020

Mr Vincent Roy

2021

Miss Kessandra Ng

Friends, Fellows, Former Fellows, widows/widowers of Fellows, Visiting Members and Associates. (If Fellows are also alumni, they are listed by year above)

Dr Nicholas Branson
Dr Dora Cano Ramirez
Dr Robert Chu
Dr Howard Dobbs
Mr Joe Dodson
Ms Fiona Duffy
Mr Marc Feigen
Mrs Janine French
Sir Richard Friend
Dr Maria Garcia Rincon
Dr Philip Goelet & Mrs Anette Goelet
Dr Alan Grant
Mrs Paddy James
Dr Johan Lyhagen
Sir John Pethica
Professor Chris Sandbrook
Dr Robert Sandstrom
Ms Gayle Sawtelle
Dr Grant Tapsell
Dr Geoffrey Thomas
Dr Christine van Ruymbeke
Mr Sam Venn
Dr Kathleen Wheeler
Professor Roger Whitehead
Dr Michael Wilson



Alumni Events 2024

- 14 March** **Online Careers Network Event**
-
- 15 March** **In-person Careers Network Event**
-
- 15 March** **Alumni and Fellows Formal Hall**
-
- 14 June** **Alumni and Fellows Formal Hall**
-
- 5–7 July** **60th Anniversary Celebration Weekend**

We look forward to welcoming you back to Darwin, particularly in this, our 60th anniversary year. For full details of events and reunions, please see www.darwin.cam.ac.uk/alumni-and-supporters/alumni-events



Editor: Laura Kenworthy. We welcome short articles, pictures and news from all alumni. Correspondence to: communications@darwin.cam.ac.uk

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