Welcome to the Winter 2008 edition of Petrean News. On behalf of all at the College, Angela, Neil and I wish you a wonderful Christmas and a very happy New Year.

Petrean News is slightly longer this term. College members have sent us some welcome lengthy articles – they are particularly interesting, and we hope that you enjoy reading them.

One of the frustrations in our work is the number of ‘lost’ College members that we have. So, once again, may we appeal to you to assist us in reducing the ‘lost Petrean’ list? Please take a look at the newly re-designed Petrean pages of the College website, www.pet.cam.ac.uk, and see if you know the whereabouts of anyone from your matriculation year group.

At this time of year it might be more usual to show you a traditional picture of a holly sprig, but I thought you might prefer to see some pictures which have a summer flavour to them, particularly during this unwelcome cold snap! Above are two pictures of our flowering Strawberry Tree (Arbutus unedo L.), situatated in the Deer Park.
RECENT EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Dinner to mark the 20th anniversary of the first graduations of women Petreans: 5th September 2008

2008 marked the twentieth anniversary of the first graduations of Petrean women. To mark that special milestone in the history of the College, women members of the College were invited to a reunion dinner at Peterhouse on Friday, 5th September 2008. Some 40 members of the College were present, many coming also for tea and a tour of the Ward Library, where a special display of books and articles by women Petreans had been arranged; some stayed on to Saturday, for an informal discussion chaired by the College's senior woman Fellow, Dr Sophie Jackson, and for lunch. The occasion was very much enjoyed by those present. A further dinner will be arranged in September 2012, to mark the start of the 25th anniversary of the first graduations, when it is hoped that many more women Petreans will wish to join in. Invitations will be sent in due course.

Petrean Dinner for members who came into residence in the years 1971–1975: 20th September 2008

This September's 'Petrean Dinner' saw the return of Petreans who matriculated between the years 1971 and 1975. Sixty-one members across all five years gathered together for an enjoyable evening. The Petrean Dinner for 2009 is scheduled for 19th September, for members who came into residence in the years 1986-1990. Invitations will be sent to those concerned.

West End ‘London Drinks’ Evening: 16th October 2008

The second Peterhouse Society ‘London Drinks’ evening of the year was held on 16th October 2008 in the West End of London. It was hoped that this new second annual event would prove as popular as our regular ‘London Drinks’ evenings in April, held in the City. This certainly proved to be the case. We had an extremely good turnout, and the evening appeared to be a complete success. Mr Martin Thompson (matric. 1973), a member of the Peterhouse Society Committee, comments on the evening as follows: 'I have to be the best-qualified attendee to write these few lines, as I turned up first (apart from our host, Neil Plevy), and struggled to catch my last train home. This was the first West End drinks evening, and was held in the basement rooms of Cafe Koha, literally a stone's throw from Leicester Square Underground Station. The rooms certainly filled up to capacity over the evening and there was a loud hubbub of conversation. I always find it fascinating to exchange notes on subjects like careers and families, and this was no exception; Petreans certainly offer variety. Whilst open to all, these evenings hope to attract a good proportion of recent graduates, and that aim seemed to have been achieved. I look forward to the West End version becoming equally as established an event in the calendar as the City drinks evenings.

Remembrance Sunday Service: 9th November 2008

The Dean of Peterhouse, the Revd Dr Stephen Hampton, writes: 'On 9th November there was a special service in the College Chapel to mark Remembrance Sunday. Petreans who either have served or are currently serving in the Armed Forces were in attendance, and were hosted by Ensign William Eucker (matric. 2008), who is a serving Officer with the US Navy. Wreaths were laid before the War Memorials in chapel by Edward Dickins (matric. 2005), a member of the Cambridge University Officer Training Corps, and by James Winchester (matric. 2007), a member of the Cambridge University Air Squadron. The names of the Petreans who fell in the two World Wars were read out; the Last Post was sounded from the Organ Loft; and the Two Minutes' Silence was observed. The Chaplain-General, The Ven. Stephen Robbins QHC, preached a memorable sermon, reminding the College that the intellectual freedom which we enjoy was won, and is being preserved, at great human cost to the armed forces.'
COLLEGE NEWS

The Fellowship

Professor Adrian Dixon (Fellow 1986-2008) was elected Master from 26th June 2008: a biographical note on Professor Dixon is available on the website at http://www.pet.cam.ac.uk/fellows/akd15/akd15_master.pdf.

Two Research Fellows have recently left the Fellowship on the expiry of their tenure:

- Dr Edward Anderson, Research Fellow in Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics, 2004-2008, now lives in Paris;
- Dr Roman Roth, Research Fellow in Classics 2004-08, is now a Lecturer in Classics at the University of Cape Town.

The following elections were made with effect from 1st October 2008:

- Lord Wilson of Tillyorn, Master 2002-08, elected to an Honorary Fellowship.
- Professor David Watkin (Fellow 1970-2008), formerly senior Fellow and University Professor of the History of Architecture, elected to an Emeritus Fellowship (Mr Martin Golding (Fellow since 1970) thereby became senior Fellow).
- Dr Andras Zsak, Department of Mathematics, formerly of the University of Leeds, elected to an Official Fellowship in Mathematics.
- Dr Christopher Gorham Lester, Department of Physics, Bye-Fellow of Peterhouse 2005-08, elected to an Official Fellowship in Natural Sciences (Physics).
- Professor William James Stirling, CBE, FRS (matric. 1972), formerly of the Institute for Particle Physics Phenomenology and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research), University of Durham, elected to a Professorial Fellowship in Theoretical Particle Physics, as Jacksonian Professor of Natural Philosophy.
- Mr Benjamin Andreas Bahr, formerly of the Albert-Einstein Institute, Golm, and Darwin College, Cambridge, elected to a Research Fellowship in Theoretical Physics.
- Dr Mark Andrew Williams, formerly of Jesus College, Oxford, elected to a Research Fellowship in Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic, specifically Celtic Studies.
- Dr Stephan Hofmann, Research Fellow of Peterhouse in Engineering 2004-08, elected to a Bye-Fellowship.
- Dr Catherine Rebecca Nall, formerly of the Centre for Medieval Studies, University of York, elected to a Bye-Fellowship.

Additionally, Professor Ivor Norman Richard Davies, a distinguished Historian, was elected a Visiting Fellow of the College for the academic year 2008/09.

Professor David Metzer, School of Music, University of British Columbia, was appointed as a Senior Research Associate for October and November 2008.

Ms Julie Adams Kirshner, visiting Fellow in the Centre for Business Research, Cambridge, was re-appointed as a Senior Research Associate for the academic year 2008/09.

The College regrets to announce the deaths of the following Honorary Fellows:

- Professor Frank Walbank, CBE, FBA (matric. 1928), Honorary Fellow 1984-2008, died on 23rd October 2008, aged 98.

**Festchrift for Professor David Watkin**


**Sir John Meurig Thomas (Master 1993-2002): forthcoming lecture**

On 27th January 2009, Sir John Meurig Thomas will address Cambridge University Scientific Society, on the subject of *Unpredictability and Chance in Scientific and Technological Progress*. Cambridge University Scientific Society lectures are intended mainly for undergraduates, but are also attended by senior members and members of the public.

**North Pole adventure**

In April 2009, Nathan Allen (matric. 2008), a first-year undergraduate reading Natural Sciences, will attempt to become the youngest person to trek solo to the geographic North Pole. Nathan (pictured below) writes of his forthcoming venture: ‘I have reached an age in my life where I’ve realised that I want to do something worthwhile and special. I opened my map to pick an exotic travel destination, and turned immediately to the Arctic. ’I’d worked on a scientific project in Siberia and fell in love with it. So in April 2009, I’ll attempt to become the youngest person to trek solo to the geographic North Pole. The trip has been described as ten times harder than climbing Everest, so I’ve got some intense training to do, particularly relating to endurance. ’I’m raising money for the Prince’s Trust, but I also need corporate sponsorship to cover my costs – all my clothes need to be custom made: a blister in this environment could lead to frostbite.’ Further information can be found at [www.solonorthpole.com](http://www.solonorthpole.com).

![Nathan Allen](image1)

**New Science Publication**

Miss Jennifer Berry (matric. 2006), a Natural Sciences undergraduate, has recently become involved in the production of a new magazine, called *Weevil*. This is a student magazine that focuses on alternative paths in science. It is a place for the scientific exploration of unscientific topics, and for a non-serious look at some scientific issues. The publication provides light-hearted reading material for scientists and non-scientists alike and is available online at [http://www.srch.ucam.org/weevil](http://www.srch.ucam.org/weevil).
Peterhouse Boat Club, Michaelmas Term 2008 (article by Will Richards, Captain of Boats)

The aim for all the Boat Club's squads this term was to lay foundations for races later in the year and, more specifically, to achieve certain positions and times in the Fairbairn Cup.

The first main event of term was the Winter Head. The Senior Men entered two crews (finishing 2nd and 5th in their categories), alongside two visiting crews from Merton, our sister-College in Oxford. After an entertaining dinner attended by both Clubs the results were announced, and I'm pleased to say both the Peterhouse IV and VIII finished ahead of the Merton VIIIs.

The Novice Men's squad fielded two VIIIs for the Fairbairn Cup, finishing 17th and 58th respectively. This was after encouraging performances in the Queens' Ergo Competition (8th overall), and respectable performances in the November novice regattas.

As part of our overhaul of novice training within the Club, the Novice and Senior Women's squads were combined in what turned out to be a very successful experiment. Two VIIIs were put out for the Fairbairn Cup, with the Novice VIII finishing 14th, and the Senior VIII finishing 13th, amongst the Colleges. The results bode well for the Lent Bumps, when compared to the crews to be chased next term.

However, for the second year running, the outstanding Fairbairn's performance came from the Senior Men, with the IV finishing second to First and Third Trinity Boat Club by only 1.26 seconds. The Men's VIII also performed well, finishing 19th of the Colleges, and comparing very well to our Lents opposition, despite the crew not being our fastest possible eight.

The Cross Keys Boat Club, comprising former members of the Club no longer in residence, fielded a Fairbairn's Men's VIII (46th) and, for the first time, a Women's IV (12th). We hope to see the number of Cross Keys crews carry on increasing in the coming years. It was also pleasing to see large numbers of Boat Club alumni at the Fairbairn's Dinner, and we encourage any former members who are not already on our mailing list to email us at development@peterhousebc.org, so we can ensure that invitations for future dinners and events reach you.

In summary, a successful term for the Club, and a promising start to the year. We look forward to seeing many Petreans during the Lent Bumps (24th to 28th February), or the Head of the River Races in London next March.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The Windows Suite goes Down Under

The Peterhouse Chapel Windows Suite, by Mr Barry Ferguson (matric. 1960, former Organ Scholar), was first performed by Mr Ferguson and other former Organ Scholars during the Peterhouse Society Gathering in June 2007 (see Petrean News: Autumn 2007). This production is now being taken to Australia and New Zealand during December and January 2008/09; money raised will be donated to the Peterhouse Chapel Fund. The two December performances in New Zealand have already taken place; the remaining performance will be held on Friday 23rd January at 7.00 p.m., at All Saints' Cathedral, Bathurst, New South Wales, Australia.

Peterhouse Camerata Musica


  Schubert  Lieder after Rückert and Göethe's West Östlicher Divan (1819)
  Brahms  Lieder Op. 32 after Hafiz
  Schubert  Lieder after Platen
  Brahms  Lieder Op. 47

Since winning the Lieder Prize at the Cardiff Singer of the World Competition in 1997, Christopher Maltman has built a distinguished career in recital and on the operatic stage. Last summer he made a triumphant debut at the Salzburg Festival in the title role of Mozart's Don Giovanni. Other engagements this season include Silvio (I Pagliacci) at the Metropolitan Opera; Marcello at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; Oreste
(Iphigénie en Tauride) at the Hamburg State Opera and Aeneas (Dido and Aeneas) in Paris.

- **Tuesday 10 March 2009, Simon Trpčeski, piano.**
  
  Chopin  Mazurkas Op. 24  
  Chopin  Mazurka Op. 17, no. 2  
  Chopin  Sonata No. 2 in B flat minor, Op. 35 ‘Funeral March’  
  Debussy  Children’s Corner Suite  
  Prokofiev  Toccata in D minor, Op. 11  
  Prokofiev  Sonata No. 7 in B flat, Op. 83

One of the finest young virtuosos of the piano, Simon Trpčeski has made a series of acclaimed debut appearances since 2005: with the New York Philharmonic, the San Francisco Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, London Philharmonic, LSO, and, with Vladimir Ashkenazy, the Philharmonia Orchestra. His debut recital, for EMI, received the Editor’s Choice and Debut Album awards from *Gramophone* magazine.

Performances take place at 8.30 p.m., in the Friends of Peterhouse Theatre, Peterhouse.

**Peterhouse Music Society**

Please contact Dr Mark Berry (mkb1002@cam.ac.uk), in January 2009 for full details.

**History Society**

- **Monday 9th January 2009**, Mr Hywel Williams (Historian and former Cabinet advisor): *Charlemagne*.
- **Tuesday 3rd March 2009**, Professor Patrick Salmon, (Petean, matric. 1971, Head of Historians at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office): *Mrs Thatcher and German unity*.
- **Monday 16th March 2009**, Dr Stephen M. Lee (Torquay Boys’ Grammar School): *George Canning and Liberal Toryism*.

Meetings take place at 8.45 p.m. in the Parlour. Please contact Tanwen Berrington (thb29@cam.ac.uk) for full details.

**Kelvin Club**

- **Tuesday 3rd February 2009**, Professor Philip Dawid (Statistical Laboratory, University of Cambridge): title to be confirmed.
- **Tuesday 17th February 2009**, Professor Simon Baron-Cohen (Autism Research Centre, University of Cambridge): title to be confirmed.

Meetings take place at 8.30 for 8.45 p.m. in the Lubbock Room. Please contact Mr Joel Taylor (jet60@cam.ac.uk), for further details.

**Politics Society**

Please contact Mr Andrew Noakes (an315@cam.ac.uk), in January 2009 for full details.

**The Perne Club**

- **Thursday 22nd January 2009**, Mr Ed Emery (matric. 1966): title to be confirmed.
- **Thursday 12th February 2009**, Dr Magnus Ryan (Fellow of Peterhouse): *Lawyers, Politics and Language in the Middle Ages*.
- **Thursday 5th March 2009**, Dr Joseph Sassoon (independent scholar based in London): *Iraqi Refugees: Implications for the Middle East*.

Meetings take place at 8.15 for 8.30 p.m. in E1, Old Court.
Lawyers’ Dinner, 26th September 2009

A special reunion dinner is being arranged for Petrean Lawyers on Saturday, 26th September 2009. Such an event was last held in 2004 and was attended by some 41 members. Full details of the 2009 dinner will be circulated nearer the time to those who read Law at the College or whose professional careers are in the law.

YOUR NEWS

Lieutenant Commander Bill Young (matric. 1985)

Bill Young served as a Regular Royal Navy Officer, 1991-999, and is now a Royal Naval Reservist and journalist.

The photograph above shows Bill Young being interviewed by local TV during a bridge repair operation in central Basra. Bill writes as follows on his recent experiences in Iraq:

‘The mobile phone rings while I’m in the shower. It's not an unusual occurrence, except that in this case I’m covered in soap before I take my 30-second allowance of shower water – a pistol and body armour (as well as my phone) are close to hand. The caller is from a Basra radio station wanting a quote on when the British are withdrawing from Iraq. Wrestling with a towel in one hand and a phone in the other, I wondered whether the Arabic word for withdrawal could also be translated as retreat before launching into a well-rehearsed statement in my capacity as Arabic media spokesman for the coalition forces in south-east Iraq.

I like to think that Petreans are a far-flung lot who don’t settle for a routine, well-paid professional job (if only I’d worked harder) in the City (ha!), and in eight years in the Royal Navy followed by a career in journalism I have met a few. To fill up my copious spare time as a newspaper reporter, I continued my naval service as a Royal Naval Reserve Officer, enjoying training courses and the odd trip to sunny places as a maritime logistician.

In 2006 the call went out for Reservist volunteers willing to spend two years learning Arabic before trying it out on some locals. Even though we suspected where these locals would be likely to live, several of us from my Reserve unit stepped forward, and before we knew it we were called up and sent to the Defence School of Languages (DSL) near Slough. A 1970s concrete block in the middle of some pleasant parkland, DSL may not be as venerable a centre of learning as Peterhouse but, to its advantage, it forced me to spend less time eating toast in my draughty rooms (some things it did have in common) and more effort learning Arabic. The Arabic language looks suspiciously as though someone has sat down and designed it. Every word comes from a common root system and there is a pattern to everything. The script is totally phonetic too, and the ‘alphabet’ not much longer than our own. The disadvantages are the total lack of the double entendres and puns that lighten long summer afternoons in the classroom, and the difficulty in pronouncing many of those letters with a throat not hardened by the desert sun and sand.

After fifteen months in the classroom, the first thing that hit me and my colleagues when we arrived in Iraq is that the people, and especially those in Basra, don’t even speak Arabic, but a strong dialect spliced with Farsi. However, I also learned that being an interpreter is as much about flexibility and good guesswork as it is about vocabulary, and I quickly became adept at nodding politely, agreeing lots and desperately listening out for enough key words to piece together the
subject of conversation. Taking a leaf from politicians, barely understanding the question posed is actually an advantage, allowing me to answer the question I wanted to be asked. And if it does go wrong I can hope my comments will be attributed, thanks to the difficulty in transliterating my name, to one of our Korean allies, Major Pill Yong, or perhaps to the Dutch sailor, Commander Bull Yonk.

On the positive side of staring down the wrong end of my second six-month deployment in eighteen months, I was amazed to see how things have changed since I last hunkered down behind sandbags in Basra Airport last year. Largely, I found the locals friendly, and enjoying the relative peace they’ve had since March. This has allowed me to get out and about in my capacity as official media spokesman, and to tick off a few sites of interest that would have required a near-suicidal attitude to tourism to see last year. The notorious Basra Palace is now a quiet, run-down symbol of Saddamist pomp, built in mock-Babylonian style; the Corniche looks much like Beirut’s, and is equally distressed after a civil war; and the Shat Al Arab Hotel, one of the places to stay when flying around the world in the 1920s, now looks like a derelict Roxy Cinema, full of squatters and with a roof used as a toilet.

However, some things haven’t changed since last year. The body armour is still heavy, but great for shedding the pounds, as are the portaloos, the use of which still require the lung-capacity of a pearl-diver in order not to inhale. We also sleep in individual breeze-block and steel ‘coffins’ – small shelters containing a bed, which are supposed to protect us from anything short of a direct hit from a Chinese-made missile. The only thing falling on us this time is rain, something I hadn’t seen here in all my eight months of service so far. The sand is being turned into plaster of Paris, which gets everywhere, but the air is cool and fresh for once (which, unfortunately, the flies enjoy as well). Yet I almost miss the thrice-daily rocket alarm, followed by the spontaneous game of Sardine as we all squirm under bits of furniture. It kept us on our toes (or stomachs).

Work in media operations is giving me a front seat to see what happens out here. While escorting British journalists around town recently I walked down busy shopping streets on a typical Thursday evening in an Arab city, trying to blend in with bulky body armour, helmets and rifles. We enjoyed tea in a street cafe and kebabs in a downtown restaurant, with Iraqis who were friendly, talkative, and positive about their future. The best part of the job is the people I have to deal with. The Iraqis are generally friendly and welcoming, and I have to be prepared to accept numerous cups of ‘shy’ - stewed tea containing at least 5 sugars – imagine boiling Coca-Cola.

The soldiers in the Iraqi Army are a resilient, cheerful lot, full of the traditional humour of any squaddie everywhere, despite the shortage of kit, squalid living conditions and unreliable pay system. Driving around in an Iraqi Army Hum-Vee, one day I noticed a bullet strike on the thick glass-block window to my side. I thought, at least the armoured glass works, before the driver cheerfully pointed out the bullet mark was on the inside. And not forgetting our own side. Some, like the eccentric, pipe-smoking young cavalry officers, happily reinforce the best stereotypes of what makes the British armed forces unique. I’ve also met polite and intelligent young infantrymen, who are our interface with the Iraqis and are equally pleasurable to work with.

I’ve seen some fantastic sites in southern Iraq. The marsh and its people are as exotic as when Wilfred Thesiger visited them in the 1950s. We arrived in Hum-Vees rather than tar-coated punts, but the people were just as welcoming.
Visiting the US air base at An Nassaria you can't help but notice the Ziggurat of Ur and its sheer bulk. The massive brick structure, older than the Pyramids of Egypt, sits on an archaeological site, ninety per cent of which lies untouched and relatively safe within the air base. The Shat Al Arab waterway, lined by date palms and used by fishermen, looks like the Nile; and Basra City has avoided the modernisation of other Gulf cities, a truly Arabic city in the midst of a desert. I hope to return in ten years as a tourist, and suspect that I won't be the only one there – and that I shall feel fortunate to have been here in one of the few countries so far left free from backpackers.

Mr Duncan Collis (matric. 1993)

In the Autumn 2008 issue of Petrean News, we mentioned the significant role that Duncan Collis played in rescue efforts after the Sichuan earthquake in China. Duncan has been living in China for the past six-and-a-half years, primarily pursuing his fascination with caves. This has taken him on expeditions to many obscure locations across South-West China. Material produced by Duncan and other expedition members was used to support Wulong County's successful bid for inclusion in UNESCO's World Natural Heritage list last year, and he has recently acted as a consultant to the World Bank on the protection of caves close to a proposed highway elsewhere in China. He writes as follows:

‘On the day of the earthquake I was at home in Wulong, some 400km from the epicentre. There was a noticeable tremor, but it was not particularly alarming. Immediately afterwards, I found out that it had been a major ‘quake and that the epicentre was near Chengdu, dislodging masonry, breaking windows and cracking walls. The city was in a state of alarm, with most people sleeping in cars or camping in parks and gardens.

Together with a friend, Matt Ryan, who runs a trekking business, I assisted as a member of the Chinese Mountain Rescue Team under the Ministry of Civil Affairs, in the northern end of Pengzhou County, a popular destination for Chinese tourists. In Pengzhou City we were issued with a pass to allow us through checkpoints and into the disaster area. Our team's role was to try to reach areas cut-off by landslides; to help any survivors we found; and to try and establish communications back to the local control centre. This mostly took the form of lots of walking in blazing heat with large packs.

On our first day in Pengzhou, we walked for around 12 hours in total, each carrying packs weighing up to almost 40kg. It was horrible to have to walk past collapsed buildings, knowing full well that there were most likely people buried inside, but those were our instructions – the Army was sending in large numbers of men after us with picks, shovels, crowbars and bolt-cutters, and there was little chance that our small group could have dug out any survivors by the time they arrived. Once we had passed the Army's heavy earth-moving equipment at the road-head, it was quiet, with very few people around. Dogs and escaped livestock wandered around ruined farms and guest houses, and birdsong filled the air as we made our way along the cracked and buckled road, which frequently vanished completely beneath huge piles of mud and rocks.

The first wave of our team had set off earlier, and we met them returning down the valley with the news that all survivors in the area ahead had either walked out or were making their way out of the valley, and that the Air Force was commencing airlifts of survivors who couldn't walk. We dropped medical supplies and food, and returned most of the way back down the valley to where the Army was setting up a field hospital. While we were preparing dinner, the Army dug a man out alive from rubble nearby, which helped raise everyone's spirits. That night we slept in a children's playground under a plastic canopy, next to a collapsed hotel. Horses on springs and see-saws shook with each aftershock.

On the second day we returned to base, and had to spend some time waiting for further instructions. In the afternoon we were sent in to try to get up another valley which had suffered several landslides. With only a few hours of daylight remaining, we could do little more than a short recce upstream to confirm that progress would have to be made in a series of rapid dashes between places of relative safety. We made plans to set off up the valley at dawn, and camped in between the Army and the Red Cross.

At 5.00 a.m. on the third day we were ready to begin the attempt to get up the valley. However, information had been received overnight that there was a local man who knew a way over the mountains to reach the area where there were believed to be survivors. This was potentially a safer option than a direct assault on the valley, and our team leader sent a group of us, including
local men, several Chinese members of our team plus myself and Matt, to carry supplies over the mountain.

There was considerable uncertainty as to how far we would have to walk and how much height gain would be involved, so we stripped the equipment and supplies we were carrying down to a minimum. It soon became clear that it would be a very long walk. The route was mostly pathless, and involved hours of thrashing through prickly bushes and, higher up, bamboo thickets. In places we had to cross landslides, and once we reached the long ridge towards the summit we encountered numerous deep fissures in the earth running along the ridge, which were a little worrying but at least provided us with gaps in the bamboo. The Chinese members of the team found fresh panda droppings among the bamboo.

We were in radio contact with base, where they obtained maps and tried to figure out what our route would be, based on the GPS readings we gave them. After 900m of ascent we were told we had another 300m to go, and the slowest members of the party decided to turn back. 300m higher and the mountain had grown; we still had 700m to climb. In the end we topped out at 2,850m, having ascended 1,800m. From this position it was possible for the Chinese members of the team to make shouted contact with a group of survivors. It is a remarkable property of most dialects of Chinese that shouted conversations can be held over distances of over a kilometre – try doing that in English!

It turned out that we had reached a group of forestry workers. Several had been killed by the ‘quake, but there were eight survivors. The survivors were all in good shape with only very minor injuries, and they had supplies of both food and water with them. They had spent the days since the ‘quake searching for a way off the mountains. A landslide had created a big vertical drop where the usual route went, and they couldn’t find another way. Guided by shouts from the local men in our group, the workers were able to make their way up to our position, and then, following our trail of chopped and snapped branches, they set off down the hill ahead of us - running! They did not need any of the supplies we had carried up for them, which was at once somewhat galling and a tremendous relief.

Survivors and rescuers gradually re-grouped on the descent, as night fell and the pace dropped. When we got back to base, rather than being allowed to fall into our pits, we were told that we were being sent back to Chengdu, three hours’ drive away to rest pending further instructions. Matt drove his jeep back after 15 hours of walking. After three days waiting on standby in Chengdu, we were stood down as we still had 700m to climb. In the end we topped out at 2,850m, having ascended 1,800m. From this position it was possible for the Chinese members of the team to make shouted contact with a group of survivors. It is a remarkable property of most dialects of Chinese that shouted conversations can be held over distances of over a kilometre – try doing that in English!

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**Dr Michael Griffiths (matric. 1949)**

Dr Michael Griffiths recently informed us of a reunion dinner held at his home for the Peterhouse Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union Group (CICCU). Dr Griffiths, formerly with the China Inland Mission in Japan and Singapore, writes of the reunion as follows:

‘The 1949-50 year was a remarkable one. We began the year with CICCU seven members, and finished with some twenty-seven. In a small College like ours, our contemporaries suddenly became aware of our existence. It was said that undergraduate conversions did not last, and that youthful enthusiasms soon withered away, but this does not seem to have been the experience of those of us at Peterhouse in those years, and we have kept in loose touch with each other ever since. Some, like Jock D.C.Anderson (matric. 1942) and John Hall (matric. 1949), died after serving as missionaries overseas: Jock as an ophthalmologist in Sindh and Afghanistan; and John teaching at King’s College, Budo in Uganda.

When Richard Spurin (matric. 1949), formerly with the Church Missionary Society in Kenya, arranged to stay with me, it seemed a good opportunity to invite two others living in Guildford to meet him too: David Falkus (matric. 1948), a Baptist, and the Revd Stanley Hemming-Clark (matric. 1949), a retired Anglican Vicar. Then we thought we would throw the net wider and invite others – some were unable to come because of frailty, but another five who had been in our College CICCU group in the early fifties made it – two lawyers, Robert Millett (matric. 1950) from Eastbourne, and Neville Orchard (matric. 1950) from Shaftsbury; John Hooke (matric. 1950), a retired Head of Religious Education in Southampton; James Taylor (matric. 1949), a Fellow of the College, 1960-64, and then a Professor in Charlotte, Carolina, now living in Sevenoaks; and David...
Steele (matric. 1950), another Anglican Minister, who, prior to retirement, spent a great deal of time working in Russia.

Imagine these nine octogenarian (or close to it) Petreans getting together in the Griffiths home for lunch, most of them not having actually met each other for more than half a century. It certainly helped to show that those who professed to be Christians as undergraduates did not necessarily fall away from faith in later life!

Professor David Lumsden (matric. 1967)

David Lumsden has returned from his two-year Sabbatical, teaching and researching in the huge south-western Chinese city of Chongqing, to take up the position of Chair of the Anthropology Department at York University in Toronto, Canada, thirty years after he was the Founding Chair of that Department. He has been named a winner of the 2008 National Great Wall Friendship Award by China's Central Government – received in a ceremony on 28th September in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. Professor Lumsden reports on his receipt of the award as follows:

‘On 27th September, I had the great honour of being given one of China's Great Wall Friendship Awards – given in Beijing's Great Hall of the People by Vice-Premier Zhang Dejiang. This Award is the highest honour that China bestows on foreign experts, for their contributions to China's development and to international friendship. China began giving this national-level award in 1991, and to date has recognized about 1,000 people. It is a competitive award: in the case of the awards for 2008, of the many thousands of active foreign experts, only 150 people were nominated. The nominations were then assessed by the State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs (SAFEA) and by China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and fifty winners were chosen. The winners came from nineteen different countries (I being the only Canadian) and included specialists in all areas. Each winner received an inscribed plaque and a gold medal. In my observation, each winner was someone who had already received a public honour at a provincial or other level. In my case, I had already received the Three Gorges Friendship Award from Toronto's Sister City, Chongqing's Municipal Government, which was one of the nominators for this national award, the other being Southwest University in Beibei District, Chongqing, my home-base for my recent sabbatical from York University.

The Awards ceremony took place in a white-and-gold room in the Great Hall of the People, with the rows of winners and their spouses facing a large red celebratory sign, in front of which sat thirteen Chinese officials, at a long table decorated with a line of red poinsettias. I had the honour to be one of the two foreign experts chosen to make a thanksgiving speech on behalf of all of the Award winners. That afternoon, we were treated to a report on the recently-concluded Olympics and Paralympics, by Mr. Jiang Xiaoyu, executive Vice-President of BOCOG. His comments on the Paralympics’ contribution to China’s ‘spiritual wealth’ was particularly interesting.
On 28th September, we were given a tour of the striking and crowded Capital Museum, with its testimonies to China's 5,000 years of accomplishment: this was taking place while China was achieving a triumph in space – its first space-walk. In the afternoon, we had a ‘free talk’ seminar with SAFEA officials to seek further ways of utilising, and caring for, foreign experts. In the evening, it was off to the Century Theatre for a special concert by the Chinese Philharmonic Orchestra (Mr. Long Yu, Conductor), a programme of Verdi, Dvorak and a Violin Concerto (Ms Xie Nan, Soloist) by China’s He Zhanhao & Chen Gang, with an audience which did not want the evening to end.

On 29th September, we were given a tour of the two iconic buildings of the Beijing Olympics – the Bird’s Nest and the Water Cube, both flooded by holidaying, fee-paying, Chinese families. In the afternoon another high-point for all the winners – a meeting with President Wen Jiabao himself. I had the honour of shaking hands with him. Off then to our last event, in the Banquet Hall of the Great Hall of the People, a National Day Gala Dinner for the PRC's 59th Anniversary, with President Hu Jintao and the rest of China's leadership in attendance along with some 1,600 guests, and a celebratory toast by Premier Wen. The next day, back to Toronto! Overall, an unforgettable honour and experience.

**Mr Frank Glyn-Jones (matric. 1941)**

Mr Frank Glyn-Jones recently visited the College with a group of friends. He writes as follows:

‘The Catenians is an international association of Catholic men. I organised a party of thirty members of the Catenian Circle from Eastbourne, with their wives, to spend three days in Peterhouse between 1st and 3rd September 2008. Dinners in Upper Hall lasted nearly five hours, with everybody changing places during the meals, leading to an unusual sense of bonding and the vocal enjoyment of the group. Drinks served in the Sex Club before lunches and dinners were lively affairs. I have to say that the food provided was outstandingly good, and the service was also excellent. I did a tour of Peterhouse and showed my guests the Hall, Fellows' Combination Room, Chapel, the Deer Park and the Scholars Garden. The Hall had just been extensively refurbished, and my guests particularly admired the stained glass by Morris, Madox Brown and Burne-Jones – the finest example of pre-Raphaelite work in the UK. I explained to my guests that the small wooden panel portraits in Hall, illustrating famous Petreans, were unique in Cambridge, and that the Chapel illustrates an important period of English church history. My tour of Cambridge included King’s, Trinity (with the superb manuscripts in the Wren Library), St John’s, the Round Church (with a film of the history of Christianity in Cambridge), Fitzwilliam, and Queens’. No doubt at all, the trip to Peterhouse was a tremendous success; everyone enjoyed it and I have received many plaudits from those who attended.’

**Professor Martin Partington, CBE (matric. 1962)**

We recently received an e-mail from Professor Martin Partington, who wrote: ‘You might like to know that I have just finished seven and a half years working at the Law Commission in London (five years as Commissioner, the latter two and a half years as Special Consultant). I led a major programme of work on the reform of the housing law – our reports are all available at www.lawcom.gov.uk. Despite the potential social importance of this work, the Government has not yet shown its hand on the extent to which it might take our recommendations forward (though a housing policy Green Paper due at the end of 2008 may give an indication). I have also retired from the University of Bristol, where I am now an Emeritus Professor. I was elected a Bencher of Middle Temple in 2006, and was appointed an Honorary QC in February 2008.

**Mr Philip Bovey (matric. 1967)**

Mr Philip Bovey recently wrote to us saying that it might be of interest to note that two lectures that appear in the latest edition of *Statute Law Review*, published by Oxford University Press, were given by Petreans: one by Mr Bovey (see doi:10.1093/slr/hmn002), and the other by Dr Roderick Munday, Fellow of Peterhouse (see doi: 10.1093/slr/hmn005). Mr Bovey writes: ‘I was asked because I was the head of the legal team responsible for the largest-ever Act of Parliament, the Companies Act 2006; and, no doubt, it was thought likely that the experience of such a project would be of interest to those concerned with the subject of statute law. Until my retirement last year I was a senior Civil Servant, ending as what was originally called an Under-Secretary, and later Director, in the (then) Department of Trade and Industry. I did lots of other interesting things in my career, but kept on coming back to company / financial services law, sometimes willingly and sometimes less so. As the lecture indicates, I was called back to do what became the Companies
Act 2006 because the project, which had been a significant part of the New Labour manifesto in successive elections, was in danger of failing. I was asked to do it three times. The first two times I refused, because I thought it was irredeemably flawed. The third time I was not given the choice. It was undoubtedly the hardest thing I ever did in my career. The lecture attempts to give a flavour of the difficulties, which were at heart political. By the time I wrote the lecture I had retired, but I still had to submit the text for approval before giving it, so some of my comments are coded; but the general reaction seemed to be that I had succeeded in saying something worth saying and of wider interest than just company law. That is certainly what I was hoping to do. Since then, of course, the change in the economic climate has revived the debate as to whether Anglo-American capitalism is the best approach, or whether the ‘stakeholder’ proposals for the way companies should operate, which many were arguing for, would have avoided the problems.

Mr Adrian Williams (matric. 1957)

Mr Adrian Williams wrote to inform us that he had just stood down after 15 years as Chairman of the International Society of Meccanomen. Details and pictures of Mr Williams’ retirement can be viewed at http://www.internationalmeccanomen.org.uk/. Mr Williams wrote of his experience: ‘It has been a tough, punishing 15 years. I should like to put on record that I have been greatly encouraged in my endeavours through the mentoring of senior Meccanoman and Petrean, Alan Partridge (matric. 1943), whose astronomical models and ping-pong ball-rolling machine are a worldwide legend in his own lifetime.’

Petreans and the Eggheads — a post-script

You might be interested to read that, following the recent televised defeat of Senior Moments against the BBC2’s Eggheads (see the Autumn 2008 issue of Petrean News), Mr John Maskell (matric. 1960), recently wrote to say: ‘Peterhouse can hold its collective head a little higher. It would appear that I should not have lost my round. Many people have been writing in to the producers of the programme saying that a ‘Scotch Bonnet’ is both a pepper and a mushroom. The programme makers are now reviewing the situation. That well known source of all knowledge, Wikipaedia, also confirms the facts!’

PUBLICATIONS

Dr Caroline Dodds Pennock (former Senior Research Associate)

Bonds of Blood, by Dr Caroline Dodds Pennock, a former Senior Research Associate of Peterhouse, now a Lecturer in Early Modern History at the University of Leicester, has recently been published by Palgrave Macmillan Publishers. Dr Dodds engaged with some of the research for this book during her year at Peterhouse. The book is a fresh approach to both the problems of understanding Aztec human sacrifice, and of characterising Aztec gender relations.
Dr Robert Middleton (matric. 1957)

The Odyssey guidebook *Tajikistan and the High Pamirs*, of which Dr Robert Middleton is co-author, was published in May 2008. This is the first travel guide to Tajikistan - where Dr Middleton initiated and co-ordinated the programmes of the Aga Khan Foundation from 1992-2003. A presentation of the book and an account of the early exploration of the Pamirs, under the title *Shadows of the Great Game*, took place at Asia House in London on 3rd December 2008. More information is available from Dr Middleton's website, [www.pamirs.org](http://www.pamirs.org); the book is available from Amazon and book stores.

Dr Tim Voelcker (matric. 1952)

Dr Voelcker writes: 'Inspired by a Peterhouse Wine Society eight-day trip to Bordeaux, Burgundy, and Krug Champagne in 1954, as one of four undergraduates and a Fellow (Denis Mack Smith), I eventually found my way into the wine trade after a variety of other jobs. Eight years ago I sold the wine merchant business that I had started in Ipswich to a management buy-out and became a part-time graduate student of Naval History at Exeter University under Professor N. Rodger. I was awarded a Ph.D. last November. My thesis, extended and edited for a more general readership, was published in November 2008 as *Admiral Saumarez versus Napoleon - The Baltic, 1807-12* (Boydell Press). It stems from the discovery of a large archive of unpublished private letters between the Admiral and his wife during the five years that Saumarez flew his flag in HMS *Victory* as C-in-C of a large British Baltic fleet. The book charts the maritime and political history of the war in the Baltic, showing how, by his patient diplomacy, Saumarez frustrated Napoleon's attempt to impose his 'Continental System', leading to his invasion of Russia; and looks at the nature and motivation of Saumarez as revealed in his domestic letters and the private letters of the Swedish Governor of Gothenburg, his link with Crown Prince Bernadotte, the former French Marshal. If any Petrean is interested in buying a copy, these will be available directly from me for orders to my e-mail address, at £25 + £2-75 postage rather than at the publisher's price of £45 - timvoelcker@lineone.net.'
WHAT’S ON IN CAMBRIDGE – JANUARY TO MARCH 2009

Cambridge Arts Theatre:

- **Jack and the Beanstalk**, until 18th January. Cambridge Arts Theatre’s annual pantomime, starring Julie Buckfield, Matt Crosby and Brad Fitt.

- **Henri Ougi Dance Company**, 22nd and 23rd January. Returning to celebrate its 10th Anniversary with a retrospective programme of some of the best works by award-winning choreographer, Henri Ougi.

- **God of Carnage**, 23rd to 28th February. One of the most successful plays in the history of the West End, starring Richard E. Grant, Lia Williams and Paul Ritter.

- **Little Shop of Horrors**, 9th to 14th March. One of the longest-running off-Broadway shows of all time, starring Clare Buckfield, Alex Ferns and Sylvester McCoy.

For a full programme and information visit [www.cambridgeartstheatre.com](http://www.cambridgeartstheatre.com); box office: 01223 503333.

Cambridge Corn Exchange:

- **An Evening with Ricky Hatton and Frank Bruno**, 13th January. A fascinating two-hour celebration of the life and career of one of the greatest British fighters, featuring a guest appearance by Frank Bruno, who will take questions from the audience in a 40-minute Q&A session.

- **The Russian State Ballet of Siberia & The Russian State Ballet Orchestra**, 1st and 2nd February, performing *The Nutcracker* (1st Feb) and *Swan Lake* (2nd Feb). Formed in 1981, the Russian State Ballet of Siberia has quickly established itself as one of Russia’s leading ballet companies and has built an international reputation for delivering performances of outstanding quality and unusual depth.

- **Ross Noble, The “THINGS” Tour 2009**, 13th to 14th March. Voted one of the top ten greatest stand-ups of all time by Channel 4 viewers

For a full programme and information visit [www.cornex.co.uk](http://www.cornex.co.uk); box office: 01223 357851.

West Road Concert Hall:


For a full programme and information visit [www.westroad.org](http://www.westroad.org); tel: 01223 335184.
ADC Theatre:

- **Happy Ever After**, 13th to 17th January. A magical adventure, where you can create your own happy ending, as improvisers weave a fantastical tale from your suggestions.

- **Death of a Salesman**, 10th to 14th January. Visionary playwright Arthur Miller shows us a character on the edge, out of money, work and luck; and, in doing so, launches the blistering attack on the American Dream that brought him to international acclaim.

- **Guys and Dolls**, 10th to 21st March. Widely regarded as one of the greatest musicals of all time.

For a full programme and Information visit [www.adctheatre.com](http://www.adctheatre.com); box office: 01223 300085 (3pm – 7pm).

Fitzwilliam Museum:

- **I Turned it into a Palace: Sir Sydney Cockerell and the Fitzwilliam Museum**, to 17th March. This exhibition celebrates one of the most enriching periods in the history of the Fitzwilliam Museum; the Directorship of Sir Sydney Cockerell (1908 - 1937). It will examine his close relationship with leading artists, writers and collectors of the period. It will also explore Cockerell’s enormous impact on museum design and display in the early twentieth century. The exhibition will bring together for the first time Cockerell’s most spectacular acquisitions.

For a full programme and information visit [www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk](http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk); telephone: 01223 332900.

Kettle’s Yard:

- **Biennial Open Exhibition**, until 11th January. Showcasing the work of up to sixteen talented artists from the Eastern region.

Information at [www.kettlesyard.co.uk](http://www.kettlesyard.co.uk); telephone: 01223 748100.

Scott Polar Research Institute:


Information at [www.spri.cam.ac.uk](http://www.spri.cam.ac.uk); telephone 01223 336540.

Boat Race 2009

Sunday 29th March. For the third year running the University Alumni Relations Office will again be holding an alumni Boat Race event at Putney Pier, London. Join the the Vice-Chancellor for a celebration of the 155th annual Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race and – we hope – the 80th Cambridge victory during the University’s 800th anniversary year! The guest speaker will be Dr Mark de Rond, author of *The Last Amateurs: To Hell and Back with the Cambridge Boat Race Crew*. Tickets cost £95 per person and include drinks reception, lunch with wine, official Boat Race programme, tea and coffee throughout, prime location at the start of the race and on board plasma screens, enabling you to watch the whole event. This event is always sold out so early booking is strongly advised. Information at [www.foundation.cam.ac.uk](http://www.foundation.cam.ac.uk); tel. 01223 332288.

Don't forget you can always combine one of the above shows or exhibitions with a stay at College. Details of guest rooms, at special reduced rates for Petreans, can be obtained through the Conference Co-ordinator, Ms Anne Gifford, telephone 01223 338205 (anne.gifford@pet.cam.ac.uk).