



Message from the Master

Dear Alumni and Friends of St Benet's Hall

Welcome to our Michaelmas Term Newsletter! In these pages you will find plenty of exciting stories from our life and work in the Hall. During 2015 we are planning a series of meetings in Oxford, London, Houston, Washington DC, New York, and Vienna. We very much hope to meet with you at one or more of these occasions, to learn about your lives and careers, and to share with you our plans for the further development of St Benet's. We greatly value your support and friendship.

With every good wish for Christmas and the New Year

Werner G Jeanrond
Master of St Benet's Hall



Meeting Minds: Alumni Weekend in Europe, Vienna, 24-26 April 2015

Join us in beautiful Vienna for the fourth *University of Oxford Meeting Minds: Alumni Weekend in Europe*, which is set to be the largest gathering of alumni in mainland Europe in 2015. All European-based University of Oxford alumni will be receiving details of this programme directly from the University, including information on how to book.

As part of this weekend, St Benet's will be hosting a special dinner for alumni and friends of the Hall at the residence of Ambassador Philip McDonagh and his wife Ana on Friday 24 April at 8.30pm. The dinner is free of charge but places are strictly limited. If you would like to attend, please email penelope.lane@stb.ox.ac.uk or telephone 01865 280555.



Picture above: Schönbrunn Palace Vienna

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If you have any news items, articles, or photographs you would like to submit for the next edition of St Benet's News, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please email alumni@stb.ox.ac.uk

Michaelmas Events

Alumni & Friends of the Hall Lunch, 21 September 2014



As part of the University's "Meeting Minds" alumni weekend, St Benet's Hall hosted a special Sunday Lunch on Sunday 21 September. We were delighted to have His Excellency Ambassador Philip McDonagh as our pre-lunch speaker, and to welcome back to the Hall alumni and friends.

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB: 80th Birthday Celebrations



Before the beginning of the new academic year, St Benet's co-hosted a luncheon in honour of the Very Rev Dom Henry Wansbrough, OSB, for family, friends and members of the St Benet's community. The occasion was organised by his sister, Miriam James, to mark the occasion of his eightieth birthday. Fr Henry was Master of St Benet's Hall from 1990-2003.

Professor Werner G Jeanrond, the present Master, toasted Fr Henry and spoke warmly of the affection held for him by many alumni of the Hall. Professor Jeanrond also thanked Fr Henry for his enduring legacy and expressed admiration for both his stewardship of the Hall and famed roller-blading skills.

As well as serving as Master, Fr Henry is a renowned Biblical scholar with numerous publications to his name; he was editor of the *New Jerusalem Bible*. Fr Henry was Titular Cathedral Prior of Norwich (2004–2009) and a Member of the Pontifical Biblical Commission (1997–2007). He is Titular Cathedral Prior of Durham (2009-) and Alexander Jones Professor of Biblical Studies within the Department of Theology, Philosophy and Religious studies at Liverpool Hope University (2011-). Fr Henry continues his research at Ampleforth Abbey where he teaches, serves as a chaplain to the school, and tends to the gardens, among other things.

Pictured: Fr Henry leading one of his famous Holy Land tours in the Old City of Jerusalem, 2013.

Michaelmas Events

Tuesday Night Guest Speaker: Alumnus Philip Noel



Mr Philip Noel was the first of the academic year's Tuesday guest speakers. Philip, who read PPE at St Benet's, spoke about his subsequent career in the City and more recently in theatre production. He also entertained the table with anecdotes of life in the Hall under Dom James Forbes OSB, Master, 1964-1979.

Pictured: Philip chatting with current members of St Benet's in the Calefactory.

Tuesday Night Guest Speaker: Bishop John Arnold

The Hall welcomed Bishop John Arnold, Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster and recently-appointed Bishop of Salford, as our guest speaker at dinner on Tuesday 25 November. The Bishop, who is chair of CAFOD, emphasised the importance of development in charity work. He described some of the projects he has been involved in and the jarring effect of returning to central London after spending time in some of the world's poorest countries and territories, including a recent visit to the Gaza strip. Dr Frances Reynolds, the Presiding Fellow, thanked the Bishop for presenting such a "moving and inspiring" talk.



Pictured: Dr Frances Reynolds, Bishop John Arnold, Christopher Bridgwood and Br Cuthbert Elliott OSB in the Calefactory.

Michaelmas Events

Visiting Scholar, Dr Göran Rosenberg Book Launch



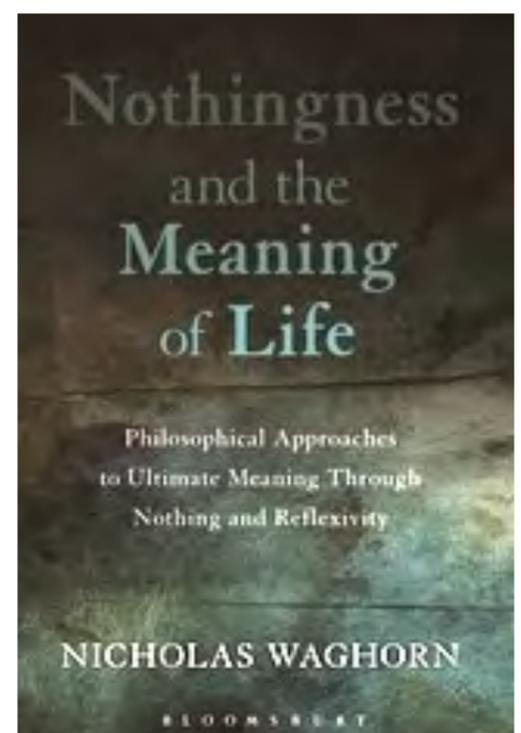
On Friday 21 November 2014 at 3pm, St Benet's Hall hosted a book launch on behalf of our Visiting Scholar, Dr Göran Rosenberg. Dr Rosenberg presented his award-winning childhood memoir, *A Brief Stop on the Road From Auschwitz*, which has just been published in English by Granta Books (see: <http://grantabooks.com/A-Brief-Stop-on-the-Road-from-Auschwitz>). This book, although explicitly not yet another "Holocaust book", nevertheless attempts to bring one single Holocaust survivor back to life again. In doing so it also brings to life the deeply human dimension of that everlasting rift in our civilization which we have come to identify by the name of Auschwitz. It also raises the issue of memory; what to remember, and how, and ultimately why.

Pictured: Sam Marks (JCR President), Dr Göran Rosenberg, Professor Werner G Jeanrond (Master).

St Benet's Hall Research Seminar

Dr Nicholas Waghorn, Fellow and Director of Studies in Philosophy at St Benet's, gave the first St Benet's Research Seminar of the academic year. Nick discussed the question 'How much meaning is enough?'. This was the third in a series of termly seminars whose primary purpose is to enable those at St Benet's who are doing scholarly research or pursuing graduate studies to get to know each other's work better and to share knowledge and ideas.

The seminar also gave the Hall the opportunity to celebrate the recent publication of Nick's book *Nothingness and the Meaning of Life: Approaches to Ultimate Meaning Through Nothing and Reflexivity* (Bloomsbury, August 2014), pictured right.



Sports Update

By Sam Gomersall, 2nd year Theology undergraduate

This has been a strong term for sports at Benet's with many Benetians representing University and other colleges' sides. The Freshers have immediately got involved with Andy Fanthorpe playing for the University Hockey 1st team. It is a fantastic achievement from a first year to be involved in any University 1st team, but especially in such a competitive hockey side. He has helped the team to a mixed start to the season, but they will be looking to progress after the Christmas break and win their Varsity game. Another fresher, Charlie Settrington, has also been training with both the University squash and Lacrosse teams. Dominic Abbott has started up cheerleading, competing for the level 3 stunt and dance teams. Finally the Worcester 3rd team have been helped out by Gus Streeting and Tim Bonvoisin.



The second years have also made an impressive start to the year. Sam Gomarsall made his debut for the Blues football team and has helped the Blues side to top their BUCS (British University and College Sport) league at Christmas. He was involved in an unfortunate 1-0 loss in the Brookes Varsity game in front of a capacity crowd of 700 at Iffley road stadium, and has also been selected for an exciting tour to Japan, which should be an amazing opportunity. Lance Baynham and James Wootton have helped the university Lacrosse teams to a successful start to the season. Lance has assisted the 1st team to win their BUCS league and he will hope to be involved in the Varsity game against Cambridge. Plenty have been involved in college rugby teams this term: Thomas Scrope, Ed Sparrow and Lance Baynham all have played for the Merton-Mansfield team; whilst James Wootton has aided the Exeter rugby team to gain promotion to Division One.

The third and fourth years have continued their strong sporting tradition. Iain Holland has continued to train and box for the Oxford University Boxing side whilst relinquishing his captaincy role. James Charteris-Black won the Oxford University Golf Team Trial and is secretary of the Club. Finally, Thomas Lambert played a crucial role in an unlikely Somerville football team's run to Cuppers quarter-final.



Student Update

By Sam Marks, JCR President



The Michaelmas term is one to look forward to at Oxford. After the long Summer, it is always welcome to return for a fresh year. But that is not to say there is no trepidation in returning, not least because the makeup of the JCR is always shaken up. This term we welcomed 16 undergraduates and 2 graduates (including the Hall's first female student) into the JCR, and into Oxford. As you can see from this edition of the newsletter, they have made their presence felt within Oxford, throwing themselves into sporting, dramatical and even the political scenes.

On the thespian front, two Benetians in particular should be mentioned. Tom Lambert, third year, now a regular on the drama circuit, starred in *His Dark Materials*, taking the role of Will. George Varley, Fresher, was

cast in *Ridley's Choice*, taking the part of the titular character.



However, there were also showcasings of the Hall's talent at the Benet's Smoker, (see picture top right) organised by students Sanesh Mistry and Cormac-Connelly Smith. The variety show once again showcased the musical and comedic talents of St Benet's. Cormac Connelly-Smith kicked off the evening with a satirical take on the history of the Hall. Tim O'Leary performed a selection of songs to guitar accompaniment (including a unique rendition of "All About That Bass"). Ezra Margulies gave a comical monologue from the point of view of a French-Jewish student at St Benet's. There were also entertaining stand-up routines from external students. The star performance, however, had to be from the Master, Professor Werner G Jeanrond, who treated the audience to a number of tunes on the accordion, which he had learned to play growing up in the Saarland.

Other big news for the JCR was the election of Roberto Weeden-Sanz to the position of President of the Oxford Union – a first in the history of St Benet's. We look forward to the lineup of speakers that Roberto will be organizing in Trinity Term 2015.

Towards the end of the term though, and in timely relief from Oxford's biting weather, is the coming of Oxmas to students' calendars. Benet's embraces this, continuing the tradition of the JCR decorating the Hall, an operation involving expeditions with students armed with sequiturs and wheelbarrow to Port Meadow to gather foliage. With the help of Nick Hanson, the Junior Dean, and Fra' John Eidinow's kindly donated tree, the JCR transformed the Hall into Benet's very own Winter Wonderland. This culminated in the two highlights of the term in 8th week. The first was the Hall Christmas Dinner - a formal exclusively for Benet's students and staff followed by a Carol service organised by student David Dunning, displaying the talent and gusto of the Benet's choir, and topped off with mince pies.



Finally, of course there was the JCR Christmas Party. Students, Fellows and guests were treated to a champagne reception, fantastic food, mulled wine and good company. It was also particularly welcome to see so many alumni return to the party, giving students the chance to catch up with old friends. Perhaps the highlight of the evening was the band booked by Social Secretary, Sanesh Mistry. Having just performed at Tiffany's in London, their medley of Christmas Jazz songs brought out the inner-Billy Elliot in many a Benetian.

Till the next time, have a Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year!

Conference Reviews

Review by Dr Brian Klug Senior Research Fellow in Philosophy, St Benet's Hall

Justice, Hope and Redemption: Jewish Perspectives

3 December 2014

On Tuesday 3 December 2014 St Benet's Hall hosted the one-day international and interdisciplinary symposium *Justice, Hope and Redemption: Jewish Perspectives*, held next door at Ertegun House, Oxford.

In the prophetic literature of the Hebrew Bible justice, hope and redemption go hand in hand. This nexus has strongly influenced modern political thought, both theological and secular. More than 40 participants heard six speakers from France, Sweden and the UK approach these themes from a variety of angles, drawing on theology, religious studies, Jewish Studies, philosophy, literature, and social theory.

Göran Rosenberg, writer and journalist, author of the award-winning novel, *A Brief Stop on the Road from Auschwitz*, currently a Visiting Fellow at St Benet's Hall, examined the thought of Marcus Ehrenpreis, a former chief Rabbi of Sweden. **Michael Löwy**, Emeritus Research Director in Social Sciences, Le Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris, discussed the early writings of Erich Fromm (1922-1930). **Alana M. Vincent**, Lecturer in Jewish Studies, University of Chester, focused on modern secular Jewish discourses, with particular attention to the treatment of forgiveness by Jacques Derrida and Hannah Arendt. **Victor Jeleniewski Seidler**, Professor Emeritus of Social Theory, Department of Sociology, Goldsmiths, University of London, explored the role of memory in Jewish tradition and its bearing on the importance of justice in relation to redemption. **Brian Klug**, Senior Research Fellow in Philosophy, St Benet's Hall, viewed the themes of the symposium through the lens of Diasporic time. **Jayne Svenungsson**, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology, Stockholm School of Theology, currently a Visiting Fellow at St Benet's Hall, critiqued the work of the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben in which law and liberation are seen as opposites.

The day concluded with a round-table panel in which all six speakers took part.

The sessions were chaired by four Senior Members of St Benet's Hall: **Mary Marshall** (Fellow and Director of Studies in Theology), **Frances Reynolds** (Fellow and Director of Studies in Oriental Studies and Presiding Fellow of the Hall), **Nancy Hawker** (Research Associate in Oriental Studies), and **Susan Doran** (Fellow and Tutor in History). Each paper was followed by a lively period of discussion, which continued in the corridors during the tea breaks, lunch and reception following the symposium.

Several attendees expressed the hope that there would be a sequel. The two convenors, **Jayne Svenungsson** and **Brian Klug**, are investigating the possibility of a book based on the symposium



Pictured above L-R: Göran Rosenberg, Victor Jeleniewski Seidler, Brian Klug, Jayne Svenungsson

Forthcoming Events

Professor Mario Monti **“Reflections on European Disintegration”**



Chaired by the Rt Hon Lord Patten of Barnes, Chancellor of the University of Oxford

Wednesday 21 January 2015, 3pm

St John's College Auditorium, St Giles, Oxford, OX1 3JP

Lecture followed by Q&A Session and Reception

Open to all to attend

Places must be booked in advance by emailing events@stb.ox.ac.uk or telephone 01865 280555

For further information, view <http://www.st-benets.ox.ac.uk/news>

This is the first of the William E Simon Foundation Lectures at St Benet's Hall, University of Oxford

Leadership in the Christian Church Study Day **Saturday 21 February, 10am-5pm**

Study Day Open to All, Ertegun House, 37A Giles, Oxford



Ingrid Betancourt, DPhil Student in Theology
Should Christians save the world?



Timothy C. Flanagan, Founder, Catholic Leadership Institute
Christmas every Sunday—a question of leadership



Revd Dr James Hanvey SJ, Master of Campion Hall
The importance of failure and desolation in leadership



Rt Rev Cuthbert Madden OSB, Abbot of Ampleforth
Christian leadership in the Benedictine tradition

Speaker and programme timings tbc. To book your place, please email events@stb.ox.ac.uk with name, address, telephone and email details. Please also supply any dietary requirements we should be aware of.

Event costs £25 per person, including lunch and refreshments. Concessions available. Payment to be made at the time of booking. Please send cheques made payable to “St Benet’s Trust” to Ms P Lane, St Benet’s Hall, 38 St Giles, Oxford, OX1 3LN.

For further information, view <http://www.st-benets.ox.ac.uk/news>

Forthcoming Events

St Benet's Hall Alumni Events, April 2015

Houston Texas, Washington DC, New York City

In April 2015, Professor Werner G Jeanrond and Fr Wulstan Peterburs (Procurator, Ampleforth Abbey and College) will be visiting Houston, Washington DC and New York City. There will be events at each of these cities for alumni and friends of the Hall, and we invite you all to attend and to spread the word!



Houston, Texas

On Tuesday 14 April 2015, Professor Werner G Jeanrond and Fr Wulstan Peterburs will be hosting a special drinks reception at the Houston Club, starting from 6pm. This reception will also include a talk by Professor Jeanrond on "***Roman Catholic University Education Today – Potential and Challenges***". To book your place, please email penelope.lane@stb.ox.ac.uk or telephone 01865 280555.



On Wednesday 15 April 2015, the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Andrew Hamilton, and his wife, Jennie, will be hosting a reception for Oxford Alumni & Friends at the St Regis Hotel, Houston. Details about how to register for this reception will be announced separately by the North American Oxford Office in the New Year. See their website at: <http://www.oxfordna.org/>

As part of this event, Professor Werner G Jeanrond and Fr Wulstan Peterburs will be hosting a St Benet's Hall dinner at the St Regis Hotel.



Washington DC

On Friday 17 April 2015, Professor Werner G Jeanrond and Fr Wulstan Peterburs will host an evening Drinks Reception for alumni and friends in Washington DC. The venue is to be confirmed, but if you wish to book your place in advance, please email penelope.lane@stb.ox.ac.uk or telephone 01865 280555.



New York City

On Monday 20 April, 2015 Professor Werner G Jeanrond and Fr Wulstan Peterburs will host an evening Drinks Reception for alumni and friends in New York City. This will take place at the University of Oxford North American Office, 500 Fifth Avenue (at 42nd Street), 32nd Floor. Further details to be confirmed in the New Year, but if you wish to attend, please email penelope.lane@stb.ox.ac.uk or telephone 01865 280555.

Supporting St Benet's Hall

Save the Date!

2015 Gaudy Announced, Friday 6 November 2015

The 2015 Gaudy has been confirmed to take place on **Friday 6 November 2015** in London. *Venue tbc.* We are delighted to confirm that our *very* special Guest Speaker will be the Rt Hon Lord Chris Patten of Barnes, Chancellor of the University of Oxford.

Further details to be announced, with invitations to be sent out later in the New Year. Important: if you have recently changed your postal and/or email address you may not receive these details. Do please ensure you inform St Benet's Hall of your current contact details by emailing: alumni@stb.ox.ac.uk or telephone 01865 280555.

Thank You to our Donors and an Opportunity to "Name Your Chair"

Every gift, no matter how big or small, directly benefits St Benet's Hall and our students. As the Hall relies on support, we are continually grateful to the kindness of our donors and would like to thank the following for their support this academic term:

- Col N H De R Channer
- Mr Brian Regan
- Mr Ben Fleetwood Smyth
- The H.W. Wilson Foundation

A unique way to support St Benet's Hall is by naming a chair in the refectory. By donating £250, a brass plaque engraved with the respective name will be affixed to the back of one of our dining chairs. This would also be a unique opportunity to name the chair on somebody else's behalf or to name the chair after yourself. If you would like to "name a chair", then please get in touch by emailing development@stb.ox.ac.uk or telephone 01865 280555.



How to make a Donation

To make a donation to St Benet's Hall, you can make a bank transfer with the details below, or send a cheque made payable to "St Benet's Trust" and sent to: Development Office, St Benet's Hall, 38 St Giles, Oxford, OX1 3LN, UK.

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Please also get in touch if you wish to set up a regular gift or a legacy pledge, and we can send you the forms that you need. You can also donate online using credit and debit details via the University's Oxford Thinking Campaign. The webpage for donating to St Benet's Hall can be found here: <https://www.campaign.ox.ac.uk/page.aspx?pid=2845>