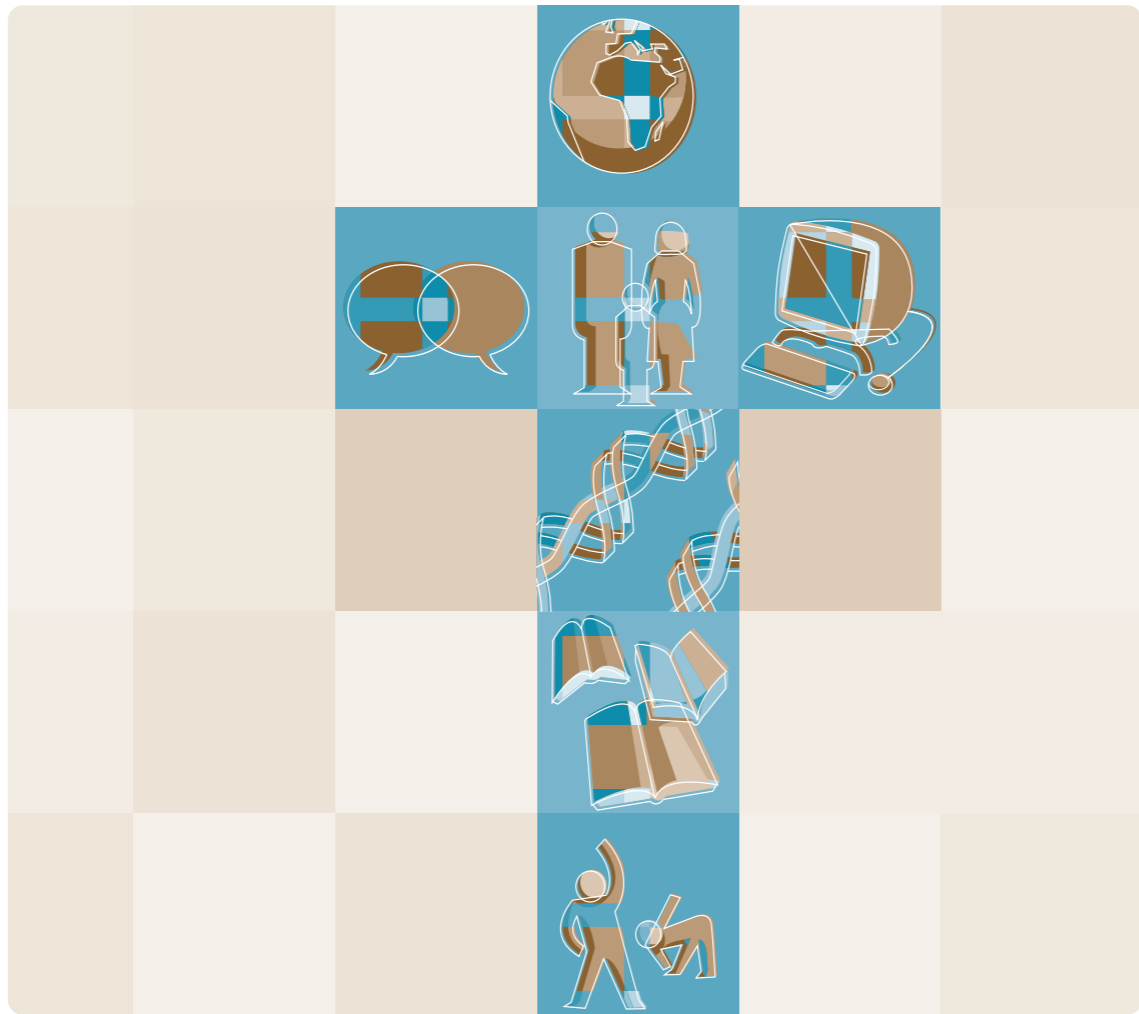


NEW COLLEGE Bulletin: 2004



Now Open

This autumn sees a relaunch and expansion of activities of New College alumni.

Until now, New College Union has organised meetings for its members while the College itself has offered some services, notably this Bulletin. These activities are now being combined, expanded and opened to all, without the need to opt in to membership of a union. They will be organised by a new joint committee of alumni and staff, the former drawn from a range of student generations and degree types.

There will be two standard events each year:

- (1) on the opening day of the session in September an **Alumnus Lecture** preceded by a service and followed by a lunch all prior to the College Opening Lecture

- (2) towards the close of the session, around the time of the Church of Scotland General Assembly in May, a **'Refresher'** event.

There will be **three means of communication** with alumni:

- (1) this annual printed Bulletin for everyone
- (2) email bulletins for those who request them
- (3) Divinity alumni material on the University website.

These will include College news, alumni news, notice of coming College public events, advice on reunions and possibly an ediscussion facility.

The aim remains to provide activities for the benefit of both the alumni and the College, offering to alumni a measure of continuing belonging, friendship and learning and to the College additional advice, promotion and funding.

Professor David Fergusson, the Head of School since January 2004 writes:



After an initial six months as Head of School, my head is still above the water level! I have sometimes been asked whether the work is as expected. For the most part it is, but I have come to appreciate better the sheer range and volume of activity in New College. Seldom a week passes but there are seminars, visiting lectures, social events, colloquia and mini-conferences. Amidst it all, the regular work

of administering, teaching, and supervising around 450 students continues. Highlights this past session have included Gunning Lectures from Professor Michael Welker (Heidelberg) and Marilyn McCord Adams (Oxford) and an important set of Giffords from Wentzel van Huysteen (Princeton). This enriching of our academic life by such distinguished guests is to the advantage of everyone, and we need to work at ways of advertising these events to a wider public of alumni and friends.

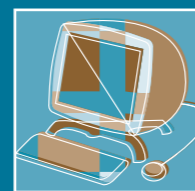
University restructuring is now behind us, and we have adjusted pretty well to life in the College of Humanities and Social Science. Next up is 'semesterisation'. From September 2004, we embark on an academic session divided into two semesters. The School of Divinity has resolved to examine all its semester courses prior to Christmas. This will create additional pressures, at least in the short term, but it will enable our overseas visiting students to complete all the assessment for their courses while also facilitating staff research leave. It will be a surprise if this does not eventually become the standard model across the University. The shift to two semesters will of course necessitate an earlier start to teaching in the autumn, but this will have the effect of advancing the graduation ceremonies to mid-June from 2005 onwards.

New College continues to oversee the publication of three academic journals and thanks go to those who have led our work in this field. Following the untimely death of our friend and colleague Ian McDonald, Alison Jack has now assumed the lead editorial role with the *Expository Times*. We look forward to the ongoing development of the journal under her direction. Alistair Kee continues to oversee *Studies in World Christianity* and is currently working on a strategy to increase subscriptions and move towards a quarterly issue.

Theology in Scotland is edited by David Lyall. With his editorial board, he is exploring new directions for the journal's form and content. We are also delighted to announce the appointment of Sara Parvis to a lectureship in Patristic Studies. Already a British Academy post-doctoral fellow in the School, she will take up her new post in 2005.

A debt of gratitude is owed to Jay Brown for his wise and diligent leadership of the School during an important transitional period. Having gone the extra mile to accommodate my research leave, he is now enjoying some long overdue leave of his own. We wish him well as he returns on a more full-time basis to important scholarly work. His finely crafted and moving address following our Christmas lunch is reproduced on pages 14 and 15 of this issue of the Bulletin. It repays reading.

And, finally, we now bid farewell to our neighbours, the MSPs. This seems to have been a happy association for all of us. Notwithstanding the controversy surrounding the building's long delay and its financial traumas, we wish them well in their new parliamentary home. When not in use by the Church of Scotland, the General Assembly Hall will now become available as a conference venue for hire by the University. We look forward to taking advantage of this new facility within the New College buildings.



THE WEB SITE
www.div.ed.ac.uk
HAS BEEN GIVEN A NEW LOOK
AND IS WORTH VISITING.

Professor Graeme Auld, the Principal of New College, writes:



I write this shortly after participating in an Edinburgh Presbytery passing out service for one of our candidates for the Ministry of the Church of Scotland. Like last year, the occasion was much appreciated by all involved. And that leads me to regret that other Presbyteries have not continued to mark formally the end of university study for the future ministers in their care, as happened when candidates used to be licensed.

We derive great benefit from the several students from continental Europe who spend all or part of a year with us. Our student exchange with the Evangelischen Stift in Tübingen is an important element in this. We knew that we owed this to Professor Norman Porteous, but often debated among ourselves whether the exchange was inaugurated in the later 1930s or the later 1940s. It turns out that neither was wholly true; it was in summer 1960 that the first exchange students from Edinburgh went to the Stift. But a letter to Porteous from Professor Artur Weiser (then Dean in Tübingen) shortly before the outbreak of hostilities, shows that they did have such a relationship in mind over twenty years earlier.

I am very fortunate in my colleagues. I had a very cordial working relationship with Jay Brown during my first fifteen months as Principal, as he was negotiating the change from being Dean of a Faculty to Head of a School. And this is quite as true with David Fergusson, who succeeded him as Head of the School of Divinity at the beginning of 2004. Each is very highly respected elsewhere in the university; and both have a keen sense of the several personae of New College.

New College Union has been discussing for some time how we might better cope together with at least some of these faces. It has decided bravely to disappear and hope to reappear: at the AGM (on ascension day), the talk was more of death and resurrection! The changes are detailed elsewhere.

New Staff

At the beginning of last session we welcomed, as Lecturer in New Testament Language, Literature and Theology, Dr Paul Foster, BSc, Dip Ed, BEd, MSt, DPhil.



After teaching mathematics for a time (in Australia, where he had spent much of his childhood), he determined to deepen his Christian faith by learning the original biblical languages. He has not regretted it and encourages those who study theology not to be put off by the time

commitment involved, as it pays great dividends in authentic engagement with the biblical writers and their worlds. His learning curve was obviously steep and steady and has led him by way of research in Murdoch and Oxford Universities to Edinburgh. Along this way his focus has sharpened to the gospels, with a particular interest in Matthew; in his recently published book he parts company with the emerging consensus that the community behind this gospel was Jewish rather than Christian. His interest in the canonical gospels has now broadened to include the non-canonical ones, in particular the so-called Gospel of Peter (a 'bizarre' text and not the only one bearing his name); this interest in later writing also includes Ignatius of Antioch. While he loves Greek as a language and is interested in textual criticism, he is fully at home in the New College tradition that holds together the trinity of 'New Testament Language, Literature and Theology'. Indeed he finds his new home very congenial, both because colleagues have been 'unfailingly friendly and welcoming' and because he finds a real sense of community in scholarship, which he calls 'academia in its traditional and richest sense'. He points out that it is now rare to have several New Testament or indeed biblical teachers in the same place, enabling interaction, collaboration and mutual accommodation of one another's gifts and interests. Two activities have particularly delighted him: the weekly seminar of all the biblical scholars, and the autumn weekend away, which builds community among students and staff, especially the new ones of both kinds. This contented newcomer to Scotland, who describes himself as placid, confesses that his moments of ecstasy are rare - when England beats Australia at cricket.

More recently, Dr Sara Parvis, who is currently British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow, was appointed Lecturer in Patristic Studies. Her appointment will take full effect in 2005. She introduces herself and her work:



I was born, believe it or not when you hear my English-American accent, in Aberdeen, so I suppose I could claim to be part of the North Eastern Mafia currently at New College. I have been in Edinburgh, though, from a very early age, with a brief twelve-year excursion down south (Oxford

and London) and a year in Rouen as part of my first degree in English and French. I came back here in 1998, married, and have been at New College ever since, first as a PhD student (under Professor David Wright) and then as a postdoctoral fellow.

My subject of expertise is the fourth-century Arian controversy; more specifically, the role of the theologian Marcellus of Ancyra in the Arian controversy. Marcellus is famous for teaching that Christ's kingdom would have an end (he meant the kingdom of Christ's millennial reign on earth after the parousia, although this is not always recognised). The book of my thesis, *Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345*, is to be published soon by Oxford University Press. Like all theses, it argued that previous scholarship had got it all wrong, in this case by accepting what second-generation Nicene supporters like the Cappadocians said about the original Nicene Fathers instead of trying to understand the latter in their own terms. I also argued that the one who really got everything right was Athanasius - not a position likely to win any prizes for originality, especially at New College.

I have much enjoyed getting to know New College, especially the Ecclesiastical History tradition here. I have really learned a lot tutoring the first year course, History of Christianity as a World Religion, for example (now two half-courses). I was always a big fan of Liberation Theology, but the sheer diversity of 'non-Western' Christianity in the modern period was very new to me. Since diversity and multiple identity are two of the current big issues in Patristics and in Late Roman studies generally, there are a lot of very interesting parallels that can be drawn with the period of Christian origins.

Despite Scotland's distinguished history of Patristic scholarship (admired by John Henry Newman, among others), mine appears now to be the only dedicated post in Patristics remaining in this country, and even one of relatively few that survives in the UK (an isolated epiphenomenon in the discipline generally, I hope, given the subject's strength in Germany, France, the US and Australia). But within New College, at least, the subject is extremely strong. According to my calculations, there are currently at least seven other full-time staff members with teaching or research interests between the second and eighth centuries, besides our two distinguished Honorary Fellows, Professor Emeritus David Wright and Dr Paul Parvis, who specialise in the subject. Some of the seven, of course, might see their task as proving that Patristics is not a discipline that should be studied in isolation, but only in conjunction with broader cultural or theological trends or movements. But I am aware just how envious most of the world's isolated, misunderstood patristicians, beavering away on what is not infrequently deemed by their own colleagues to be merely an obscure area with little relevance to the real world, would be of the situation here.



Publish and be...

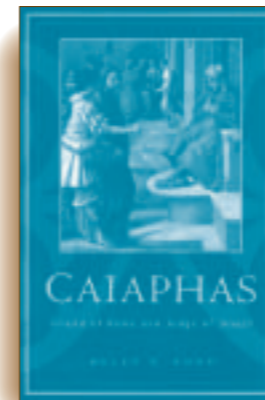


No fewer than 9 of our staff have had books published recently.



Marcella Althaus-Reid, *The Queer God* (London; New York: Routledge, 2003); *From Feminist Theology to Indecent Theology* (London: SCM Press, 2004); and coeditor with Lisa Isherwood, *The Sexual Theologian: Essays on Radical Sexuality & God* (London: New York: Continuum, 2004)

Graeme Auld, *Samuel at the Threshold: Selected Works of Graeme Auld*, Society for Old Testament Studies Series (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004)



Helen Bond, *Caiaphas: Friend of Rome and Judge of Jesus?* (Louisville; London: WJK, 2004)

This, the first ever book on Caiaphas, follows her earlier *Pontius Pilate, in History and Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998)



James Cox, coeditor with Gerrie Ter Haar, *Uniquely African? African Christian Identity from Cultural and Historical Perspectives* (Lawrenceville, N.J.: African World Press, 2004)

Paul Foster, *Community, Law and Mission in Matthew's Gospel* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2004)

Peter Hayman, *Sefer Yesira*, in the series, *Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2004) - edition, translation and commentary on this early mediaeval Jewish mystical/philosophical text, key to the mediaeval Jewish mystical movement, the Kabbalah



Paul Parvis, with Kathleen Marshall, *Honouring Children: the Human Rights of the Child in Christian Perspective* (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 2004)

In this product of a project of the Centre for Theology and Public Issues, a theologian and a lawyer relate the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to the Christian faith.



William Storrar and Andrew Morton, coeditors, *Public Theology for the 21st Century* (London; New York: Continuum, 2004)

In this product of a colloquy arranged by the Centre for Theology and Public Issues, and also published in honour of its first Director, Professor Duncan Forrester, two dozen theologians from around the world review key issues and methods of the 20th century and anticipate those of the 21st.

With the flow of publications, it is hard not to miss some. Mention should have been made earlier of:

Nicolas Wyatt, *Religious Texts from Ugarit*, 2nd edition (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), an up-to-date translation and commentary based on scrutiny of the original tablets and the most recent academic discussion.



The Reverend Professor Norman Walker Porteous, MA, BD, DD, who was born in Haddington on 9 September 1898, died nearly 105 years later in Edinburgh on 3 September 2003. After military service from 1917 to 1919 (being at the time of his death the last surviving officer of

the First World War in Britain), he studied Classics in the Universities of Edinburgh and Oxford and Divinity in Edinburgh, with postgraduate study in Berlin, Tübingen and Münster. Minister of the parish of Crossgates in Fife from 1929 to 1931, he was Professor of Hebrew and Oriental Languages in St Andrews University from 1931 to 1935, then in Edinburgh University Professor of Old Testament, Language, Literature and Theology from 1935 to 1937 and of Hebrew and Semitic Languages from 1937 to 1968, being Dean of the Faculty of Divinity and Principal of New College from 1964 until his retirement in 1968.

On 14 June there was a full day of recollection of Norman Porteous, his life, work and times, led by historians and former colleagues, whose contributions will be duly published in the journal, *Theology in Scotland*.

Here is a very faint echo of what was said, as it resonates with the Editor's own memory of an inspiring and much loved mentor of countless students.

Norman Porteous was a man of many parts, not only in the sense that he combined his primary role as eminent scholar-teacher with sustained leadership of New College as long-term Senate Secretary and later as Dean and Principal, but above all in the great breadth of his culture. Reckoned to be the most widely read of his peers, he was conversant and at home with people of many disciplines and professions - and of none. It is no surprise therefore that, after graduating in Arts and Divinity in this University, he had difficulty in choosing as his specialism Old Testament or Systematic Theology, or that he combined great gifts as a linguist with a love of philosophy, or that he came to be regarded as the leading 20th century British representative of the Old Testament branch of 'biblical theology'. Greatly affected by his time in Germany, where he was probably Karl Barth's first English-speaking postgraduate student, he drew widely on German philosophy, theology and biblical study and became one of the main interpreters in Britain of the work both of Old Testament scholars such as Eichrodt and Von Rad and of theologians like Barth and his colleagues in the Confessing Church. He complemented this influence with that of British biblical scholars like Wheeler Robinson and Driver, and he retained a measure of critical distance from all of them. Though an Old Testament specialist, he worked closely with New Testament ones including Dodd and Bultmann, who was a particular friend. Though a Christocentric theologian, he was also close to Jewish scholars. So it is impossible to place him in a particular school. For him the truth that is lived was too subtle for that, and if he had one criticism of German thought, it was

that it was often detached from Leben. Not so his; he never lost sight of life in the raw, as he had known it not least in the killing fields of northern France or among the exploited miners of West Fife. In any case, how could one who chatted naturally and amiably with all and sundry, sharing with them his rich lore of memory and story, be out of touch with life as it is lived? This man who was grounded in the classics could well have said with Terence: "humani nil a me alienum puto."

His letters and unpublished papers are being lodged in New College Library.



We are sad to report that the Reverend Dr James Ian Hamilton McDonald, MA, BD, MTh, PhD, who taught Christian Ethics and Practical Theology and New Testament here from 1980 to 1998 as Lecturer, Senior Lecturer and Reader, died after a long illness on 24 May 2004. Born in 1933, educated at Rutherglen Academy and the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh, he was minister of Johnstone West Parish from 1958 to 1963, and Lecturer in Religious Education at Moray House College from 1963 to 1980, at which time he came to New College; then after retirement he became Editor of the Expository Times.

He has been described as an unusually talented teacher and a remarkably versatile scholar, who never ceased to be a 'gentle pastor'. Equally at home in school education, church worship, ethical thinking and New Testament exposition, he excelled in all. He believed in relating those different fields of study and in linking theory and practice. In exegesis he combined precise scholarship with large vision and engaging communication. As one colleague said, he handled the Bible with rigour, reverence and relevance. It was no wonder that he was loved by his students (who gave him a standing ovation when he retired) and no surprise that he was appointed Editor of *the Expository Times*. In the educational world he did not confine himself to Religious Education; for example, as Convener of the Church of Scotland Education Committee he played a crucial role in resolving a major dispute between teachers and their employers and was awarded the Fellowship of the Educational Institute of Scotland.

From his time at Moray House College when, as the Church of Scotland's Baird Fellow, he prepared curricular material for them, his writing was prolific. It started with a commentary on the Gospel of Matthew for schools, and went on to include: *Kerygma and Didache* (1980 and recently reprinted), *Encounter with God* (1983, 2nd ed. 1996, with Duncan Forrester and Gian Tellini), *The Quest for Christian Ethics* (1984, jointly with Ian Fairweather), *Jesus and the Ethics of the Kingdom* (1987), *The Resurrection: Narrative and Belief* (1989), *Biblical Interpretation and Christian Ethics* (1993), *Christian Values: Theory and Practice in Christian Ethics Today* (1995), and *The Crucible of Christian Ethics* (1998).

Characteristic of his fusion of theory and practice was his contribution to a collaborative work convened by his friend, the Durham New Testament scholar, Professor James Dunn on *The Kingdom of God and North East England*.

He is remembered warmly by colleagues and students not only as an enlightening and inspiring pedagogue but as a kind, generous and very lovable man, whose self-effacing modesty veiled a great breadth of knowledge and depth of wisdom. Our sympathy goes to his widow, Jenny.

The Reverend Professor **James Bruce Torrance, MA, BD**, died on 15 November 2003 at the age of 80. He served in the Royal Air Force, studied at Edinburgh, Marburg, Basel and Oxford, was parish minister in Invergowrie from 1954 to 1961, and on the staff of New College from 1961 to 1977, first as Lecturer in Divinity and Dogmatics in History of Christian Thought and later as Senior Lecturer in Christian Dogmatics. From 1977 to 1989 he was Professor of Systematic Theology in the University of Aberdeen and for a time Dean of the Faculty of Divinity.

A Tribute

At the service of thanksgiving for James Torrance, Professor Jeremy Begbie recalled a morning in autumn 1976:

'I'd been persuaded to do a theology course to fill a gap in an arts degree. The first lecturer was James Torrance. I'd never really opened a Bible up to that point. But I was completely captivated. By two things. First, he seemed to be having the time of his life. He had about him the aroma of a feast that I knew I'd never been to, a banquet I'd not yet enjoyed. And the second thing that captivated me? The God he talked about seemed to be very hospitable and welcoming.

I could never be the same again. Stepping out of that lecture room was the first step on my journey to a living faith.'

We give thanks for the following former students, who have also died in the past year:

in 2003

Basil G Hardy, 5 July

Ian M Mackenzie, July

David S A Grieve, 8 September

James G S Thomson, 9 October

James S Marshall, 31 October

Robert R Samuel, 16 December

Robert R Brown, 24 December

in 2004

James L Hepburn, 11 February

Ian S Sandilands, 18 March

WHICH COLLEGE?

New College has long had a dual character (not Jekyll and Hyde, though what human institution or individual does not have that duality?); for since the 1930s it has been both a college related to a church and a faculty of a university. The recent change not only replaced 'faculty' with 'school', but incorporated the 'school' in a 'college', the College of Humanities and Social Science. So when we simply say 'the College', it is not always clear whether the missing qualifier is 'New' or 'of Humanities and Social Science'.

Part of the hope for the new structure was that there would be more interdisciplinary cooperation. This seems to be happening, with New College playing a significant role in it. Two very live issues in the world are the relations between Islam and Christianity and those between science and religion, and key players in the interdisciplinary work on these are respectively Professor David Kerr and Professor David Fergusson.

Encouragement

It is good to be able to report that donations to the **James S Stewart Scholarship Fund**, which had reduced to rather a trickle in recent years, have flowed faster in the last, with gifts amounting to at least £6000, raising the total since the start to over £65,000.

At the same time, members of New College Union have contributed over £1000 to the Access Bursaries Fund to enable those with limited finances to study here.

But the need remains great.



Children - of all ages - who are familiar with the TV town of Balamory know Archie the Inventor (the one on the left); what they may not know is that he (Miles Jupp) is in his final year at New College.

With thanks to the BBC and Argyll, the Isles, Loch Lomond, Stirling and Trossachs Tourist Board



Viewers of the film, *Man to Man*, may spot the quad.

From Accounting to Divinity - A mature student at New College

I suppose that when, at the age of 53 and after 30 years with the firm, I elected to retire from PricewaterhouseCoopers and the challenging but very rewarding job as Chairman of the Asia Pacific region, to read Divinity at New College, I should have expected the oft-repeated questions that were to follow. Why go to university now? Why Divinity? Are you going to be a minister?

The first question was easy to answer. As a young man in a hurry, I went straight into articles from school, passing on university. It was a decision that I came to regret - and I promised myself that I would remedy that decision by going to university at the end of my career instead. And so I did - armed with much (mostly unsolicited) advice from our children as to how I was to behave as a student - including, "remember, you are not in charge any more!"

But why Divinity? Will you be a minister? Certainly, there was an element of faith seeking understanding, but the question - and the frequency with which it is asked - illustrates the lack of appreciation of the sheer richness of a Divinity degree in both the business world and, alas, in the student community.

Of course, if the ministry calls, a Divinity degree is required. But it has so much to offer others too, whatever their faith or spiritual inclinations (or absence of them). The Old Testament includes some of the greatest history, literature and poetry ever written - the New Testament, the beginnings of a truly extraordinary story (whatever your beliefs) of how a man executed two thousand years ago in a non-descript backwater of the Roman Empire, leaving just a handful of followers, was to change the world - and hugely influence its philosophy, politics, music, art and literature. How the institutions that wrought these changes worked - the good, idealistic people and the outright nakedly ambitious and bad ones as well; the intriguing world of ecclesiastical politics, the complexity of theology and its impact on art and architecture; a wonderful richness of people, places and ideas. The growing realisation that Christianity developed in the relative vacuum of the West - and that the biggest challenge that we all face (after repairing our own parochial rifts - long overdue) is how we understand, respect, value and work with the other great faiths of the world.

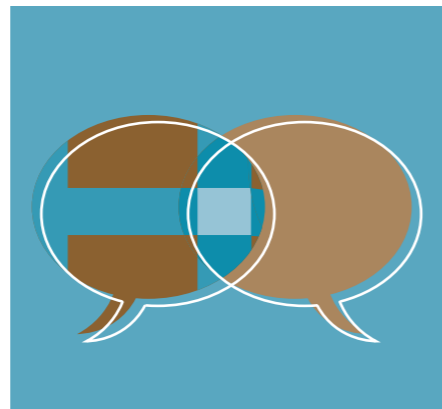
So briefly put, a Divinity degree does not only prepare one for the ministry. It is an extraordinarily suitable preparation for a wide choice of careers - in law, politics, teaching, social services, business management - and yes, even accounting. At PwC we recruited literally thousands of graduates; we were privileged in being able to pick the best in class. We found that we could very quickly teach these talented graduates the accounting skills that they would need - and that our most successful recruits - the ones that raced to the top - were those from what were rather curiously dubbed "non relevant degrees" (ie not accounting and/or economics) - and who came to us with open minds, curiosity and a broad outlook and perspective.

And where better to get such an outlook than reading for Divinity? After years of running a professional practice and taking black and white, yes/no decisions on a daily basis, hiring or firing, buying or selling, reporting on whether something was right or wrong, true and fair, it has been a real luxury to dwell on issues on which there are no "right" answers, but only a point of view; it has been wonderful to work in an environment where you don't have arguments looking for a stark conclusion, but rather "conversations" seeking an understanding. Instructive too has been the realisation - and one that has grown year on year as I moved through modules on the Old and New Testaments, the struggle (both intellectual and physical) to define Christian Orthodoxy, the Reformation, the Creation of Protestant Scotland, Christian attitudes to other religions, the manifestation of theology in art (and vice versa), Judaism, the Holocaust and Zionism - of the vital (and so often absent) importance of tolerance, understanding and respect for the views and attitudes of others.

Having spent four years at New College (and what a great city Edinburgh is!), there is no doubt in my mind that a Divinity degree is an excellent preparation for a wide range of careers - something that I believe is undersold (do I still sound like an accountant?) by Divinity faculties (schools?) across the country - and unappreciated by students (and their school advisors) as they pore over their UCAS forms.

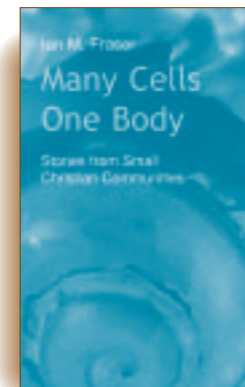
So any regrets? No, none at all - a wonderfully enriching four years that have served to stimulate areas of interest that I will enjoy excavating for years to come. No regrets, but one concern. It is clear to me that the powers that be do not begin to appreciate the untold harm that they will cause to our great learning institutions if they continue to ram increasing numbers of students through them without a corresponding increase in funding to support the infrastructure and teaching complements needed to cope with these numbers. But then that is a "conversation" for another place and another day.

Roderick Chalmers



AND SOME MATURE FORMER STUDENTS

Rev. Dr. **Ian M. Fraser**, an alumnus for over 60 years, has recently written up two significant developments with which he has been closely associated.



Ecumenical Adventure: a Dunblane Initiative (Dunblane: ACTS, 2003) is his account of the first decade of the life of Scottish Churches House, which he led from 1960.

Many Cells: One Body (Geneva: WCC, 2003) is his latest reflection on 'Small (or Basic) Christian Communities', with which he has been continuously involved around the world since his assignment to a special project of the World Council of Churches in 1969.

In both books, as in all his writing and working, he gives voice to countless others, especially the voiceless. Author of *Theology as the People's Work*, he has dedicated himself to the liberation of the so called 'laity' from their dispossession by clericalism and ecclesiasticism. The significance of those small communities in all continents is not only that they are face-to-face groups but especially that they are the initiative and action of 'ordinary' and especially held down people. The book shows how these groups represent a radical rediscovery of the original but now obscured meaning of 'one, holy, catholic and apostolic church'. Scottish Churches House is widely regarded as having been similarly liberating for the people from all walks of life and ways of belief and unbelief who have been drawn into its diverse and participatory events, and it has been claimed that several significant changes in the social, cultural and political life of Scotland in recent years are traceable to origins in those events. This detailed story of the first years is testimony to Dr Fraser's gift for discerning the big issues and discovering the people to tackle them.

Professor **L. Gordon Tait**, Mercer Professor of Religious Studies Emeritus of the College of Wooster, Ohio, who gained his PhD here in 1955 and was Honorary Fellow in 1991, has written a 12,000 word Introduction to a 2003 reprint edition of *The Works of John Witherspoon* (4 vols.) published by Thoemmes Press, c/o the University of Chicago Press. This follows his own earlier book, *The Piety of John Witherspoon: Pew, Pulpit and Public Forum*, published in 2001.

Rev. John Witherspoon, famous as the only clergyman to sign the Declaration of Independence, was also a main importer of Scottish realist philosophy into the new world, where, it has been said, it dominated intellectual life through the 19th century. Born in Gifford in 1723, educated at Edinburgh University, he served parishes in Beith and Paisley and then became the sixth president and leading professor of the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University).

His works include his lectures on moral philosophy and on eloquence, sermons and selections from his correspondence.



Duncan M. MacLaren has become the **University of Edinburgh Alumnus of the Year 2003**, the second New College alumnus to receive such an honour, the first being Ruth Patterson two years earlier.

Duncan MacLaren, who gained his MTh in Theology and Development in 1993, has been since 1999 Secretary General of Caritas International, probably the largest

international aid and development agency in the world, headquartered in Rome. Born in Dunbartonshire, he studied German and Celtic Studies at the University of Glasgow, taught in Switzerland, and after further research in Celtic Studies became the National Press Officer of the Scottish National Party and then Executive Director of the Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund. Not long after taking the relatively new interdisciplinary course on Theology and Development, he was head-hunted by Caritas International.

Librarian retires after 40 years



Eileen Dickson came to the Library in June 1964, served it full-time until 1968, part-time until 1990 and full-time again until 2004. For the last four years she has been the Librarian, and for the last two of these has combined that role with responsibility for the libraries of Moray House School of Education and the School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences. Her own commitment to 'keep on

learning' has enabled generations of students to do likewise, encouraged by her enthusiasm, imagination and not least her humour. This educational process has been particularly broad for students from overseas, including linguistic niceties like the difference between a quiche and a quaich. She will be greatly missed.

Those who use the spick and span library of today would be puzzled by the proposal of students 50 years ago that the exit from the stack rooms should be equipped with pithhead baths.

MORE READING RECOMMENDATIONS

Here is a second instalment of staff answers to the alumni worry:
'There are so many recent books on theology that I can't tell the wheat from the chaff.'

ON OLD TESTAMENT

Cyril S. Rodd, *Glimpses of a Strange Land: Studies in Old Testament Ethics* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2001)

The former editor of The Expository Times writes very persuasively that the Old Testament is able to help our ethical quest only through opening our eyes to completely different assumptions and presuppositions, motives and aims.

John Barton, *Reading the Old Testament: Method in Biblical Studies* (revised edition; London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1996)

Quickly established itself as a classic on first publication in 1984. Opens with a clear definition of literary competence. Readers worried by postmodern imperialism will warm to a champion prepared to name it absurd, even if diverting.

Walter Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997)

Destined to join the classic works by Eichrodt and von Rad. In this courtroom report, Israel offers core testimony about what Yahweh does and is, countertestimony which cross-examines the initial witness, unsolicited testimony concerning the nature of Yahweh as partner, and embodied testimony which focuses on the mediators between Yahweh and Israel.

ON EARLY CHURCH HISTORY

Everett Ferguson (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Early Christianity* (second edition; New York; London: Garland Publishing, 1997)

Excellent one-volume paperback, incorporating recent scholarship on all the main characters and movements in Early Christian studies. With contributions by top names in Patristics, including the present Archbishop of Canterbury, it is ecumenical, authoritative, informed and fun to dip into.

Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: a biography* (new edition, original 1967; Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000)

One of the classic historical biographies of the twentieth century. This new edition takes account of letters and sermons of Augustine only recently discovered.

...AND ON FUTURE CHURCH HISTORY

Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: the Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002)

It will be mostly Southern, poor, sometimes persecuted and largely Pentecostal-type. This is heady demographic stuff.

...AND NOT UNCONNECTED

R. S. Suggittarajah, *The Bible in the Third World* (Cambridge: 2001)

The new 2004-2005 session starts on Thursday 16 September.

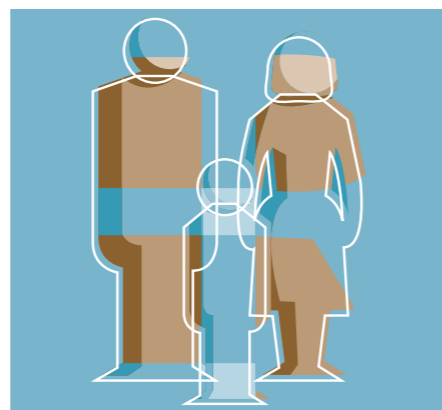
At 10am there is a service and the Alumnus Lecture by **Dr David Lyall** on The Making of a Reflective Practitioner.

At 2pm there is the Opening Lecture by Dr Jane Dawson on John Knox and the British Reformations.

The session's first series of special public events are the Gunning Lectures on 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11 November at 4pm by Professor **John J. Collins**, Yale University, Holmes Professor of Old Testament, on Biblical Studies at the Beginning of the Twenty-First Century.

Congratulations to **Helen Bond** on the birth of a daughter

Congratulations to **Nicolas Wyatt** on his recent marriage



Scholarships available for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Applicants

New ways of teaching with computers

Our School of Divinity team, **Jane Dawson, Kirsteen Murray and Jessie Paterson**, has been awarded a substantial grant of £27,910 by the Principal's E-Learning Project Fund to develop new E-teaching styles for postgraduates.

This money has been won thanks to a series of initiatives in undergraduate teaching we have undertaken in the School over the past three years that have used Virtual Learning Environments [a device which brings together computer tools for learning] to host course websites. These initiatives have produced some exciting new developments in teaching practice which have been enthusiastically welcomed by the students. In a range of Ecclesiastical History courses, we began by simply placing lecture notes, bibliographies and administrative information about classes on the website but quickly progressed to more sophisticated uses.

The first stage concentrated upon providing visual material pointing students towards the best available resources on the world-wide-web. This resulted in the creation of an 'image of the week' arising from that week's teaching, with students viewing a designated image and then making their comments online prior to the seminar discussion on the week's work including that image. We have found this specific link between face-to-face discussion and writing comments online is one of the most productive ways of using the new technology. It allows students to look at 'real' images and objects and make their own judgements which they share with the rest of the class via the online comments. In our evaluation of the courses with online seminar preparation, we found that students were better prepared for class and able to use that class time more productively than before.

The success of this first stage encouraged us to try to develop students' research skills at the Honours level. This academic year we have been running a 'Treasure Hunt' as part of the introductory computer sessions to familiarise students with the course website and with all the resources available on the web. The Hunt poses a series of fun questions which can only be answered by exploring a range of reliable external websites. For example, a small section of a sketch of a mermaid's torso was shown and students were asked to find out who the mermaid was and why she was being portrayed in this way. [Answer (no prize!) on <http://www.pro.gov.uk/virtualmuseum/maingalleries/kings/mary/default.htm>]

The latest grant will pay for such work to be extended to a taught Masters course. It will fund the creation of an elaborate course website incorporating specially-commissioned digital images from the University Library's Special Collections [our partner in this project], including in its entirety a unique, fifteenth-century manuscript Book of Hours of the Virgin Mary and St Ninian. It has a particular Scottish significance, being one of the few Books of Hours to contain devotions to specifically Scottish saints and possibly produced in Scotland [see picture]. It is planned to make this available to everyone at a later date via the University's Collection Gateway.

During the course the Masters students will be enhancing their research skills using a wide range of material in conventional as well as digital forms from other parts of Edinburgh University Library Special Collections and beyond. They will be expected to share their research findings with each other online as well as in class. It is hoped that the course website will be a stimulus and a focus for encouraging fully interconnected and mutually-supportive learning and research.

These new techniques can be applied to many other courses in Divinity and throughout the College of Humanites and Social Science. They will also form the basis for an article and conference paper for the Association of Learning Technology which will disseminate these ideas to a national audience.



St Ninian in episcopal vestments holding a book and the shackles which miraculously fell from a pilgrim as he approached the shrine at Whithorn. The pilgrim kneels in front of the saint asking for his prayers of intercession and an angel kneels on the other side holding a chalice.

From the 15th century manuscript Book of Hours of the Virgin Mary and

St Ninian, MS 42 EUL Special Collections [f. 72v].

SABBATH REST

'Sabbatical' is surely a misnomer, its relation to sabbath being at best remote; it certainly does not mean rest, if that implies cessation of labour. It may be a change, but is that really as good as a rest? For present-day academics, it usually means a concentrated effort of research and writing, essentials of the profession which are often difficult to include in a busy schedule of teaching and administration. Its value is that it affords time for more uninterrupted work and, one might add, space to allow a distancing, mental if not also physical.

Of the four staff members who had a sabbatical for part of last session, two, Peter Hayman of Old Testament and Stewart Brown of Ecclesiastical History, both of whom had had many years of special administrative responsibility, did not go elsewhere. Two others, however, did: William Storrar of Christian Ethics and Practical Theology went to The Center of Theological Inquiry at Princeton Theological Seminary, to develop his work in public theology, and Jeanne Openshaw of Religious Studies went to Bengal, her field of research for many years.

It is not possible in a publication like this to give an insight into the significance of all such sabbatical work, fruit of which in any case will be visible in forthcoming books and curricular programmes. For example, Peter Hayman's book is mentioned separately, and his new honours courses on Antisemitism and the Holocaust and on Zionism and the State of Israel are attracting a following. However, an occasional selective glimpse is possible; so here is what Jeanne Openshaw has to say from her recent sabbatical:

West Bengal, India.

The temperature crossed 38°C. An unrecognisable roar from the west heralded, in quick succession, sudden darkness, a dust-storm, lightning and thunder, torrential rain, and finally hailstones so large that several oxen were killed in the paddy fields. While my cook tore round the house fastening shutters, my first concern was to protect the computer and manuscripts on which the labour of several months depended.

On this last visit, my work concerned the lives of singer-saints called Baul (literally 'mad-ones'), as reflected particularly in Bengali verse autobiographies, to which I gained access in the course of many years' fieldwork. Bauls recruit from all strata of Hindu and Muslim communities in West Bengal (India) and Bangladesh, but largely from the rural poor. Whatever their provenance, Bauls privilege the human being over 'world religious' identities, such as Hindu, Muslim and Christian. Such ideas date back at least to the time of the Buddha (c. 5th century B.C.E.). According to a medieval Bengali song:

Listen my fellow humans -

The human being is the truth above all truths.

There is nothing higher.

Especially nowadays, adherents of the 'world religions' tend to see their faiths as alternative or even competing paths.

Bauls reject all these collectively on related grounds - that they are artificial constructs which divide person from person. Such critiques are of value not only to South Asia and indeed the contemporary world in general, but also to teachers of Religious Studies, who are sometimes accused of subverting world religious categories endorsed by the self-proclaimed faithful.

The history of these categories in South Asia is of interest here. In the British period, imperialists tended to think that 'religion' and 'caste' (rather than, for example, locality or



language) were the primary sources of sub-continental identity. Another European assumption was that only 'we' are rational individuals who can think outside our inherited categories and structures, while 'they' are passive victims of theirs. These notions combined with a series of British Censuses to effectively homogenise and substantialise categories such as Hindu, Muslim etc. This 'Orientalist' take (in the Saidian sense) on South Asian culture has to some extent

become a self-fulfilling prophecy, not only in the traumatic partition of the sub-continent, but also in the growth of chauvinist or fundamentalist movements based on world religious identities.

Of course more nuanced and contextualised notions of 'religion' are ever-present in South Asia, and not only among Bauls. Self-proclaimed Hindus can be heard to say: 'There are as many Hinduisms as there are Hindus'. In the case of Hindus, such sentiments tend not to surprise us - indeed they used to be seen as an indication of lack of intellectual rigour by many Europeans. But what of Muslims? Despite the attempt to constitute Muslim majority areas as Pakistan in 1947, India itself still contains the second largest Muslim



population in the world. Bengali Muslims, albeit of the unorthodox variety called fakir, have a similar saying: 'There are as many Allahs as there are people'. This is interesting in two respects: the focus on immanence rather than transcendence, and the acceptance that Islam

is necessarily interpreted in many different ways. More widespread acceptance of the notion that diversity is the norm in religious life, rather than an aberration to be corrected or at least explained (for example, in terms of ignorance or corruption), would surely benefit this troubled world.

University teachers of Religious Studies have long drawn attention to the diversity within and commonalities across world religious boundaries. My own research also highlights indigenous sources (in this case both 'Hindu' and 'Muslim') for the critique of the world religious categories themselves. According to a Baul called Mani:

Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist and Christian -

You and I, female and male - these are not different...

The problem comes with religion...

Human beings are one and the same,

So what is the reason for all this discrimination?

Students from over 30 Countries



Values such as humanism and egalitarianism (including gender equality) are often assumed to be 'modern' and 'Western'. Indeed the 'Western' forms of such values generally espoused by South Asian elites have enabled Hindu chauvinists and Islamic fundamentalists to dismiss them as foreign to their traditions. Baul songs such as these are a reminder that there are indigenous sources for such values.

Religious Studies in Edinburgh has developed a focus on 'indigenous religions', a concept which, whatever its drawbacks, encourages consideration of context, especially locality. It also facilitates the study of contemporary religion from below, or from the margins, including women's perspectives. All this is in contrast to more conventional textual and historical 'world religions' approaches. Not that there is anything wrong with these. But it is important to recognise their limitations - specifically their marginalisation or even omission of non-elite and female voices - and to complement them with fieldwork and other contemporary perspectives.

OTHER WORK OUTWITH THESE WALLS

The staff's 'extramural' activity is not confined to publications and sabbaticals.

Professor **Larry Hurtado**, following the publication of his major book, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Early Christianity*, has had numerous international lecturing appointments, including in Israel at Ben-Gurion University in Beersheba, where Christian and Jewish scholars met, and in Sweden, Norway and the USA, as well as in London, Cambridge and St Andrews.

Dr **Marcella Althaus-Reid** has been Bishop Prideaux Lecturer in Exeter, lectured on Liberation Theology and Sexuality in the Methodist University of Sao Paulo in Brazil and has been invited to lecture on 'The Queer God' for the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand/Aotearoa. She now serves on the theological commission of Caritas International.

Professor **William Storrar**, through the Centre for Theology and Public Issues which he directs, has been developing links with similar research centres in public theology around the world; these include the Beyers Naude Centre for Public Theology at the University of Stellenbosch, the Centre for Theology and Society at the University of Pretoria, the Abraham Kuyper Center at Princeton Theological Seminary, the Irish School of Ecumenics, and emerging centres at the University of Manchester and the United Theological College, Sydney, Australia, where he has recently delivered the Livingstone Lecture on Global Citizenship. The Centre's conference on Global Civil Society to be held in Edinburgh from 4 to 8 September 2005 will provide the opportunity to plan further collaborative research among these centres.



Dr **James Cox**, who convenes the Religious Studies Subject Group, has become the President of the British Association for the Study of Religion (BASR) for the period 2003-2006.

This Association, now 50 years old, has in membership around 250 scholars of religion. It meets in conference annually, issues a Bulletin with scholarly content three times a year and publishes a series of occasional papers. It participates in

both the European Association for the Study of Religions and the International Association for the History of Religions.

Dr Cox, who has served both as its Secretary and as editor of its Bulletin, has become President at an important time, as its 50th anniversary conference in Oxford is taking a longer and more interdisciplinary view of the academic study of religion, under the heading, Religious Studies: Mapping the Field, and with the added participation of the Sociology of Religion Study Group and the British Buddhist Studies Association.

The College more widely has been and is closely involved with the Association, through former staff members, Professors Frank Whaling, Alistair Kee and Andrew Walls, a former president, and now through Professor Nick Wyatt and Dr Jeanne Openshaw, along with Dr Cox. Postgraduate students have regularly joined the Association and received bursaries to participate in its conferences. Its most recent Bulletin gave a report of the College's particularly strong development of the study of Indigenous Religions, and a temporary lecturer here last session, Dr Steven Sutcliffe, has edited a new volume of collected scholarly contributions, *Religion: Empirical Studies*, published by Ashgate in time for the 50th anniversary conference.

Snapshots of Nepali history available on the web

Our Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World holds a unique collection of material related to Nepal and the Nepali Diaspora. Entitled the Himalayan Collection, it includes the archive of the Nepal Church History Project, which is a collection of letters and other original documents, interviews with missionaries and Nepali church leaders, photographs, books and articles, all relating to the development of the Nepali Church from the 19th century to the present. A selection of its photographs is now on the web, on the University of Edinburgh Library's Collections Gateway www.lib.ed.ac.uk/resources/collections/.



Nepal, the world's only official Hindu state, was not open to Christianity until the 1950s; so earlier contact with Nepalis, notably by the Eastern Himalayan Mission of the Church of Scotland, was outside Nepal in North India, where

many Nepalis went to find work. So the earlier material in the collection relates to Christians in the diaspora and the work of missionaries along the borders of Nepal. However, from the 1950s it relates to the Christian church both in the diaspora and in Nepal itself. Although Christian worship has been allowed in the country since then, proselytising is illegal and foreign efforts at conversion discouraged. As a result the Church in Nepal has from the beginning been an indigenous church led by Nepali pastors and evangelists, and is one of the fastest growing churches in the world.

A fascinating aspect of the collection is that it shows churches growing from small group meetings into fully fledged churches, then drawing up constitutions and organising themselves into national groupings. Missionary archives like this one are increasingly drawn on by scholars from far beyond church and mission history who study political, cultural and social context; they illuminate aspects of life not recorded elsewhere, the faces and 'voices' of those whose perspectives might otherwise be lost.

The photographs on the University website provide a visual history, showing the various missionary organisations working among Nepalis, the development of the Nepali Church in Northern India and urban India, Bhutan and among the Gurkha soldiers in the British army, translation of the Bible into Nepali and dissemination of Christian literature and work among orphans and other disadvantaged groups.

The Nepal Church History Project Collection was deposited here soon after the archives of the United Mission to Nepal, brought here by its archivist, Betty Young in 1990, and subsequent additions have been made to it through the efforts of Cindy Perry, a missionary in the Himalayan region who undertook a PhD here, and the Nepali Church History Project Committee in Katmandu. From 2001 to 2003, with funding from the Shanti Charitable Trust, the International Nepali Fellowship, the McNab Trust and individual donors, documents and photographs were selected by Betty Young,

Cindy Perry and Professor Rajendra Rongong, and from them CD-ROMs were produced by Elizabeth Leitch, who also created a database of the holdings.

Why is this rare collection here? Basically because Nepal is not the peaceful little country which many think it is; the conflict between government and Maoist rebels has claimed over 8000 lives since 1996. We here can provide safe and secure storage and preservation, away from civil unrest and bomb blast, together with good access to researchers worldwide - whether by visit or via CD-ROM or on the University website (the last of these not easy for people in Nepal itself, hence the CD-ROM route). Further expansion is planned but only part-funded so far; so if you know of any sources...



The Dean's Farewell



My four years, first as Dean of the Faculty of Divinity and then as Head of the School of Divinity, were certainly eventful. For those four years witnessed the fundamental restructuring of the University, from Faculties and Departments, into Colleges, Schools and Subject Areas. As Professor David Kerr recently reminded the academic staff of the School of Divinity, my place in New College history is assured, as I was the last Dean of the Faculty of Divinity. Fortunately, amid all the changes, the community of learning at New College has retained its historic buildings, its superb library, its values and traditions, and its distinctive identity. And if the last Dean of Faculty, I was also the first Head of School in the new dispensation.

It has been an honour to have served as Dean and Head of School in an institution that forms such an important part of my life. Despite my Chicago accent, I have enjoyed a long association with New College. I first came to New College twenty-seven years ago, as a Fulbright Scholar from the University of Chicago. I fell in love with both the city of Edinburgh and New College during those years, and made many lasting friends. It was therefore with great pleasure that I accepted the offer of a permanent post at New College seventeen years ago.

There have certainly been changes in the twenty-seven years of my New College connection. Some valued colleagues have retired, some have passed on, some have a little less hair and some move a little more slowly. When I first arrived, in 1976, the large majority of students were men, and most were

candidates for the ministry. Nearly all the academic staff were men and most were ordained clergymen. We had a daily communal lunch of soup and a filled roll in the Rainy Hall, and this included prayer and the singing of a hymn or psalm. Many of the lecturers wore black gowns when lecturing, and opened their lectures with communal prayer. There were no computer labs and no PowerPoint illustrated lectures. The halls were somewhat darker, as there was coal smoke in the air, and the smell coming up from the breweries in the morning was pungent. Yet there was a love of learning, with lively debates in the common room (as well as ping pong), and large audiences filling the Martin Hall for special lectures. There was an ethos of service, with many students involved in volunteer community work. And there was an atmosphere of warmth and humour, with some wonderfully eccentric students and staff members who had the confidence to be themselves.

New College looks very different now. The halls are brighter, with fresh paint and better lighting, and the coal smoke and the breweries are gone. The academic staff no longer lecture in black gowns or open their lectures with prayer, and few are ordained clergymen. The communal lunches have passed away and the food in the Rainy Hall is certainly much better and more varied. There are computer labs and PowerPoint and websites and e-learning and all that. There are far more students. Fortunately there is still a warm atmosphere, a love of learning and of service, and a fair share of wonderful eccentrics. The majority of our students are now women, and I suspect it will not be long before the majority of our academic staff also are women. Far fewer of our students are preparing for the ministry, and the large majority are studying subjects in Divinity or Religious Studies in order to gain a liberal education, one that will prepare them for a variety of careers in our rapidly changing world. This, indeed, is one of the greatest changes that I have seen at New College in the past twenty-seven years. From primarily a vocational college for the preparation of clergymen, we have become a School of Divinity which offers, on the one hand, vocational training for the minority of students who will become ministers and Christian workers, and on the other hand, a liberal education for the majority of our students.

But what, some may ask, do I mean by the term 'liberal education'? The term is often used, but I wonder if we think enough about what we mean by it. New College is now largely a place of liberal education; it is the great gift that we convey to most of our students. But what do we mean by a liberal education? I believe that in speaking of a liberal education, we mean 'liberal' in the early nineteenth-century sense of the term - that is, in the sense of being open-minded, tolerant, generous, benevolent, and concerned for others, and we mean 'education' in the sense of a process of cultivation - that is, of training the mind for a lifetime of growth through openness to new influences. Thus, the person shaped by a liberal education is open to the ideas and beliefs of others, wishes to study other languages and other ways of thinking and acting, and is not quick to judge or dismiss. He or she reads, not to accept or reject the ideas encountered, but rather to weigh and consider the thoughts of others; he or she reads not to praise or condemn, but to comprehend and empathise. The person shaped by a liberal education is prepared for a lifetime of learning and of growth. That person has a sense of perspective, with an understanding of the human condition that will strengthen him or her against the adversity and suffering that touch us all. He or she is more concerned for the welfare and comfort of others, at home and abroad, than with his or her own wants or interests. The person of a liberal education will find

fulfilment in a life of service, in the knowledge that the greater happiness comes through working for the happiness of others. He or she values humanity in all its variety and cultivates mutual respect through good manners and civil discourse. There is perhaps no greater description of the fruits of a liberal education than that presented by the great Christian intellectual, John Henry Newman, in his classic study, *The Idea of a University*, based on a series of lectures delivered in Dublin nearly a hundred and fifty years ago, not long after our New College buildings were opened. In a memorable passage of that work, Newman portrays the person who has been shaped by a liberal education, whom he calls (in the regrettably non-inclusive language of his time) a 'true gentleman'. The person of liberal education, according to Newman,

carefully avoids whatever may cause a jar or a jolt in the minds of those with whom he is cast; - all clashes of opinion, or collision of feeling, all restraint, or suspicion, or gloom, or resentment; his great concern being to make every one at their ease and at home. He has his eyes on all his company; he is tender towards the bashful, gentle towards the distant, and merciful towards the absurd; he can recollect to whom he is speaking; he guards against unseasonable allusions, or topics which may irritate; he is seldom prominent in conversation, and never wearisome. He makes light of favours while he does them, and seems to be receiving when he is conferring. He never speaks of himself except when compelled, never defends himself by a mere retort, he has no ears for slander or gossip, is scrupulous in imputing motives to those who interfere with him, and interprets every thing for the best. He is never mean or little in his disputes, never takes unfair advantage, never mistakes personalities or sharp sayings for arguments, or insinuates evil which he dare not say out. From a longsighted prudence, he observes the maxim of the ancient sage, that we should ever conduct ourselves towards our enemy as if he were one day to be our friend.

In a world deeply divided by religious beliefs, ethnic identities and ideological convictions, the ideal of humane discourse described by Newman is all the more imperative. In a world full of self-righteous people prepared to destroy or silence those who do not share their beliefs, we need people of open and magnanimous minds, who seek understanding, mutual respect and reconciliation, and have an abiding sense of the human potential for good. It is right that the School of Divinity should provide such a liberal education; indeed, as an institution that historically has represented a belief in the eternal value of each individual, New College should embrace the ideal of a liberal education as integral to our historic mission and identity. It has been a pleasure and an honour to have served as Dean and Head of School these four years. I am gratified that the leadership of the School of Divinity will now be in the capable hands of my distinguished successor, Professor David Fergusson. And I hope that we may long continue to provide both vocational training in the ministry, and the cultivation and graces of a liberal education.



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University of Edinburgh
Box 47
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New College at The University of Edinburgh

NEW COLLEGE MOUND PLACE EDINBURGH EH1 2LX

Head of School **PROFESSOR DAVID FERGUSON**

Principal **PROFESSOR A GRAEME AULD**

T 0131 650 8900
F 0131 650 6579
Email divinity.divdev@ed.ac.uk
W www.div.ed.ac.uk

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Editor **DR. ANDREW R. MORTON**
Designed by **MICHAEL DANCER**

