



MORE TRACKS FOR MORE TRAINS



'Waverley', the railway station - which in this 'City of Literature' is appropriately named after a set of novels - has recently been reconfigured, to give it more platforms and so increase its carrying capacity

Such reconfiguration is not confined to the bottom of the Mound. It has also

been happening in recent years at the top, in New College. The purpose has been similar, to give more tracks for more trains of thought and learning.

THERE ARE MORE DEGREES AT UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL

Bachelor of Divinity (BD) General
Bachelor of Divinity (BD) Honours
Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Divinity
Master of Arts (MA) Honours in Divinity
Master of Arts (MA) Honours in Philosophy and Theology
Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Religious Studies
Master of Arts (MA) Honours in Religious Studies
Licentiate in Theology (LTh)
Certificate in Pastoral Studies
Certificate in Theology

AND AT POSTGRADUATE LEVEL

Master of Theology (MTh) (by research)
Master of Theology (MTh) (taught)
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

WITHIN THESE DEGREES, THERE ARE MANY MORE COURSE OPTIONS.

To give coherence to the many subjects and achieve efficient management and planning, they are grouped together in subject areas. Until 2002 there were seven, but when in that year the former Faculty became a School within the College of Humanities and Social Science (one of the University's three Colleges), they were regrouped into four subject areas:

BIBLICAL STUDIES
ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY
RELIGIOUS STUDIES
THEOLOGY AND ETHICS

THERE ARE MORE STUDENTS – in session 2006-7 there were around 460, consisting of around 300 undergraduates and 160 postgraduates.

THERE ARE MORE STAFF – 30 academic staff, 9 support staff and various adjunct and honorary academic staff.

OTHER CHANGES

These changes of the last decade and more are not only those of size and range of activity. According to the latest review by the Head of School, they are also changes to its ethos and mission.

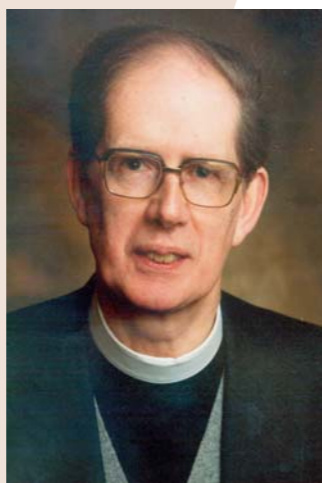
Once dominated by Church of Scotland ordinands, the undergraduate body is now largely a younger, school-leaver, liberal arts UK body. Around 50% of these are studying for the MA in Religious Studies, with at least 30% taking the MA in Divinity. Only about 10% of undergraduate students are training for professional ministry, although the School remains committed to this constituency and to maintaining more widely its links to faith communities.

The postgraduate community comprises a wide range of international students most of whose interests are still in one or more of the traditional Divinity disciplines; with several taught Masters programmes and relatively high PhD supervision loads, much staff effort has shifted towards postgraduate education.

Changes to the staff body are also apparent. With a recent improvement in its gender balance, the School has also become more ecumenical and multi-faith. The traditional disciplines of Christian theological education are increasingly taught within a more global context, and indigenous religions, Judaism and Islam are now part of the mainstream curriculum.

With the heavy concentration of postgraduate students in Theology and Ethics, this is the largest of the four subject areas. There has also been important growth since 2004 in Religious Studies, where the appointment of several new staff has created a critical mass of scholars in a burgeoning area of study; while this is largely committed to undergraduate teaching, there is some growth in postgraduate numbers.

SHAPE AND SPIRIT, OLD AND NEW



So the shape of things in New College has changed. Has the spirit?

Here are some accounts of that spirit, mostly as recalled by the late Alec Cheyne, writing for the 150th anniversary in 1996.

Back in 1900 Oswald Dykes of Westminster College, Cambridge spoke of 'the constant stream of

questing students from many churches' who were drawn to New College teachers by their 'awareness of all the current problems in their latest forms, combined with their unshakable loyalty to the Catholic and Evangelical faith'.

Only a decade ago Gary Badcock, who taught here at that time, claimed that 'the milieu of faith, and specifically faith as conceived in the Scottish Reformation tradition' had given to New College 'its commitment to learning, its international outlook, its placing of worship at the heart of community life, its stress on the centrality of Biblical authority, its pastorally-oriented theology, its openness to all the insights derivable from other disciplines, other systems of thought, other values, and its tradition of acting as a clearing house for theological ideas'.

Arriving nearly thirty years ago, Duncan Forrester spoke specifically of the education of ministers here and said 'In the modern world it is not enough to pass on an accepted and recognised pattern of ministerial practice; ministers must be enabled to think critically and theologically about their work, to innovate and to respond creatively and faithfully to unprecedented situations'.

Alec Cheyne himself spoke of the 'fusion of faith and critical scholarship' and the combination of 'openness to liberal scholarship with unapologetic devotion'. He claimed that here 'godliness and good learning, devotion and intellectual acuity, have never been far apart', and he saw this epitomised in John Baillie who was 'erudite, judicious, humane' as well as 'master of a beautifully lucid, almost poetic literary style'.

If Alec Cheyne's is one voice (as beautifully lucid as Baillie's) which we can no longer hear but still reverberates in print, another is that of Noel O'Donoghue, who died on 22 September 2006 in his 86th year. When he retired in 1988, he wrote the following for this journal:

'What do I see for New College as I look ahead? Perhaps the best way to answer this is to ask myself what I have seen a-sowing and a-growing over the past 17 years since I first looked at John Knox's statue and John Knox's statue looked at me. Over the years nobody has tried to remove the statue and nobody has tried at least successfully to remove me. John stands for the plain Word of God for plain people; and I have stood for the rainbow shining through the rain, so that all the plain words dance and sing together like the folk who listen to the Fiddler of Dooney and "dance like a wave of the sea". New College has managed to find room for both of us and my hope as I look across the valleys of time is that the common pursuit of truth and godliness may continue. In my time successive administrations have opened to new and many-coloured visions yet have managed to keep somehow the feel of the plain word and the uncluttered Kirk. I think the particular strength of the Church of Scotland Presbyterian tradition, from which New College has come, is that it has a large amount of space within it and not a lot of furnishings of its own to fill that space. There is a lot of room and so it can function as an open Faculty of Christian Theology and is able to include an objective study of the whole field of religion. This happens nowhere else in such a unified and comprehensive fashion, as far as I know. It is this openness that has allowed, in my own case, an opening towards the world of prayer and 'spirituality' on the one hand and towards the 'lost' and precious world of Celtic Christianity on the other. The more these openings reach out in various directions the more it needs that central matrix of belief and practice which the Church of Scotland provides. My prayer is then as I look towards the future that all the colours of the rainbow may touch that old statue of John Knox but that the statue itself remain in all its solidity and sobriety.'

Ian Wotherspoon, an alumnus, writing in the January issue of The Scots Magazine, goes so far as to say 'New College has not only been a home to religious endeavour and agile minds, but also to strong hearts and great dreams...bearing witness, as it has done so often before, to the generosity of the human spirit'.

A particularly measured comment was that of the late Alan Lewis, who, on leaving the Faculty in the 1980s for the United States, said 'While no-one who knows us from the inside would romanticise our present reality, or even our past, we do know how much of our history is a little awesome, and how much there is of today to be excited by, as of tomorrow to be hopeful for'.

Today in 2007, what would be a sober estimate of the relation between the College's somewhat awesome history, present excitement and future hope? Have the changes in the body of staff, students and subjects, as well as in the wider social and cultural context, changed not only the vocabulary but also the presuppositions, not only the shape but also the spirit of the place? This is no rhetorical question but one to which this journal invites serious responsive discussion.



THE HEAD OF THE SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

writes



The past session has been marked by significant progress in the development of our buildings. The central library hall was repaired and decorated last summer. This was followed by the restoration work on the quadrangle, after which a decision was taken by the University to pedestrianise the area. Even more significant was the opening of the Ramsay Lane Centre in the building once occupied by the

Tolbooth Parish Church. This restoration work, generously financed by the College of Humanities and Social Science, now provides the School with excellent study and social space for much of its graduate community, while also creating a new home for the Andrew Walls Library and the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World.



Following a difficult year of transition for the Centre, it is good to report that its important work now prospers within the New College buildings. All of this has brought additional burdens upon Janice Barbour (School Administrator) and Jessie Paterson (Computing Officer), and we have been grateful for their efficient and cheerful management of these changes.

The School's academic staff has grown further, with two new posts added in recent months. Dr Christian Lange joins us from Harvard Divinity School to take up a new lectureship in Islamic Studies, the first of its kind in the School of Divinity, while Dr Daryl Balia has been appointed to a four-year post to lead the Edinburgh 2010 project. This will entail the facilitating of several international research projects on Christian identity and mission, culminating in a large conference to mark the centenary of the 1910 conference of the world churches in Edinburgh. Both colleagues will enhance the School's submission to the forthcoming research assessment exercise.

Last autumn, the Church of Scotland undertook a validation visit of the School. This resulted in a positive report that reaffirmed the commitment of both sides to maintaining New College as a centre for the training and education of ordinands. Although their numbers are smaller than in previous generations, they continue to play an important role in the life of the student body. The professional formation of ministers has been part of the University's *raison d'être* since its foundation in 1583, and it will remain so in today's more ecumenical and multi-faith context. In celebrating this part of our heritage, we offer our congratulations to Sheilagh Kesting, a New College graduate, on becoming the first woman minister to serve as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

At the end of my term as Dean and Head of School, I shall pass my responsibilities to Professor Larry Hurtado in the summer. The School is appreciative of his



willingness to assume this role, and I know that its leadership is in safe keeping. Amidst the all-consuming demands of our higher education bureaucracy, it is worth recalling John Macmurray's comment about what we find when we track the state to its lair – merely a collection of overworked and worried persons, not at

all unlike ourselves, doing their best to keep the machinery of government working as well as may, and hard put to it to keep up appearances! But I can end on a happy note by thanking academic and administrative staff for their constant support, encouragement and forbearance, and by recording gratefully the immense enrichment that derives from being involved beyond New College in that wider community that comprises the University of Edinburgh. It was Macmurray who also claimed that 'all meaningful action is for the sake of friendship'.

DAVID FERGUSSON

THE PRINCIPAL OF NEW COLLEGE

writes



The twelve months under report have memorably recalled to me the liveliness of the wider New College family. Mid-June 2006 saw former students from seven decades and many more countries join present students and staff for a weekend celebrating our 160th birthday. August united a party from one of Seoul's largest churches and the Korean community in Edinburgh in a bi-lingual service in Mayfield Salisbury Church for the dedication of a plaque celebrating the work of John Ross. A graduate of the United Presbyterian College at Synod Hall (which united with New College in 1900) and an able linguist, he worked for many years in Manchuria; his contacts there with Korean merchants facilitated the translation into Korean of the gospels of Mark and Luke and the spread of Christianity in a country closed to foreigners. Ross had joined the congregation of Mayfield Free on his retirement. Already extremely warmly received as Principal of New College on my first visit to Korea a couple of weeks later, I felt that my stock increased considerably when I was able to claim that in my earliest years I had attended the Sunday School of the same (then North) Mayfield Church. When in Seoul, I attended the first meeting of the new alumnus society of Korean New College graduates. The joint annual meetings in November of the American Academy of Religion and the Society of Biblical Literature (in Washington DC in 2006) always provide an opportunity to catch up with many of our (especially North American) alumni. And our day conference in March celebrating the work of John McIntyre drew former students from as far as Japan.

May took me further down memory lane. The month began (1-3) with a very successful residential reunion in Newcastle, Co Down, of students of the late 1950s and earlier 1960s: similar numbers of Irish and Scots plus one German. The optimism about political developments on that island was palpable. The Friday evening of that week saw a dinner in College for students of the 1970s and 1980s, with Father Noel particularly in mind. And a couple of weeks later we welcomed alumni older and newer to the traditional lunch during the Church of Scotland General Assembly.

I am full of admiration for the way in which David Fergusson has led the School of Divinity, and wish him very well in his forthcoming sabbatical year. All the more am I delighted that the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland has appointed him the next Principal of New College, from summer 2008.

GRAEME AULD



Dr Elizabeth Koepping, Acting Director of the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World, on a visit to Seoul, meets the new alumni society of Korean New College graduates

INTRODUCING IN PRACTICAL THEOLOGY



Dr Cecelia Clegg, who in session 2005-6 became Lecturer in Practical Theology and Director of the Centre for Theology and Public Issues, combines an academic background in both Systematic and Practical Theology with a wide range of pastoral and ecumenical experience. The combination of theology and practice, which comes naturally to her, has been very evident in the special focus of her work in the last decade, namely Reconciliation. This was the field both of her teaching in Trinity College, Dublin (Irish School of Ecumenics) and of her work in Northern Ireland with Protestant and Catholic Christians, dangerously at odds with one another over identity and political influence. Her interest in reconciliation goes back to her doctoral work and was enhanced by special training in conflict transformation under John Paul Lederach in Eastern Mennonite University. From this developed her skill in mediation, her ability to teach it to others and her theological reflection on it. Ample evidence of this is in her co-authored book (with Joseph Liechty), *Moving Beyond Sectarianism*, her Belfast handbook for inter-church groups, her courses for Irish church leaders on how to manage violent communication and develop non-violent alternatives, and most recently her 'Handling Conflict' module in the Masters in Ministry programme. A distinctive feature of all this work is her integration of theological and psychological principles, which she draws together from those two elements of her training.

The roots of Dr Clegg's work on reconciliation lie yet deeper, both in her personal past and in the gospel as she understands it. Conscious from childhood of the violence and division which break people both from one another and within themselves, she was surprised at an early age by the number of her peers at school and elsewhere who sought her out as a mediator. This new-found skill then developed in work with individuals and with groups. But what made this work of reconciliation a vocation, not a job, was an overarching vision of the cosmic Christ, bringing all into all. A quite early vision of the almost inexpressible beauty of unity has become progressively clearer to her (though its full implications far from clear). This leads her now to declare that reconciliation is nothing less than an imperative of the gospel and that the church's mission is precisely to be a reconciling community. At a time when justice is often given a pre-eminent position in theological thinking, she agrees with Miroslav Volf, who puts reconciliation higher, with justice as but part of it.



IN CHRISTIAN ETHICS



When Professor Oliver O'Donovan took up the chair of Christian Ethics and Practical Theology at the beginning of session 2006-7, he was already well known internationally. After lecturing at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford from 1972 to 1977 and Wycliffe College, Toronto from 1977 to 1982, he had been for 24 years the Regius Professor of Moral and Pastoral Theology and Canon of Christ Church at the University of Oxford. He was also known through his many books and his various visiting professorships in this country and around the world, including such far-flung places as St John's College, Hong Kong, the Gregorian University, Rome and Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena. His work as a priest of the Church of England, a member of its General Synod and a participant in its ecumenical dialogues was also familiar.

To say that his activity has been directed to Christian ethics is scarcely to narrow the focus, since it is, in his words, 'a potentially interminable topic', tempting the unwary to try to be expert in everything. One has to specialise, and his specialism is Christian political thought. This is evidenced by even a small selection of recent titles: *The Desire of the Nations* (1996); *From Irenaeus to Grotius: A Sourcebook in Christian Political Thought, 100-1625* (1999, co-edited with Joan Lockwood O'Donovan, his wife); *The Just War Revisited* (2003); and *Bonds of Imperfection: Christian politics past and present* (2004, with his wife).

More broadly, he seeks to articulate the basic moral concepts to be derived from the gospel, believing Christian ethics to be integral to Christian theology, not detachable from it yet distinguishable as the point at which its proclamation or understanding 'turns itself into the questions which we have to confront on our immediate horizon'. He considers that this responsibility to face our immediate, contemporary lives and tasks can only be properly discharged out of the resources of the two millennia of living Christian tradition – and therefore with the help of 'old books' as well as new ones. Some of today's 'new' questions are far from new, while those that are, benefit from light shed on them by past interpreters of the tradition, not least Augustine, who had 'all the best tunes' of Christian ethics and to whom Professor

O'Donovan has paid particular attention. Another less popular focus of his attention has been the 17th century Reformed Dutch jurist, Hugo Grotius, widely regarded as the father of international law.

This engagement with the Christian tradition past and present clearly does not exclude engagement with those outside it, and Professor O'Donovan has been to the fore in broad public discussion of ethical issues. He stresses the complexity of this scene, in which people's moral views are not always neatly integrated into their overall world views, but form 'offshore islands'. For example, serious atheists and agnostics may have in their moral stances 'the last surviving fortress of Christianity', whereas Christian believers may derive their morality straight from the newspapers or journals. Thus lines of moral agreement and disagreement do not coincide with confessional ones. In this complex situation, Professor O'Donovan believes that the church's role is to be the pre-eminent place where the difficult questions confronting humanity are responsibly faced in all their painful complexity. Why? Because 'faith in the risen Christ, in God's purpose for the world is a summons to intellectual attentiveness', including attention to exactly where we are and what are the current and often unrecognised pressures of sin and resistances of virtue in our world. By contrast, all of us tend to act 'in a world in which we do not exist', settling for what we made of it *last* time, reacting as unthinking automata, and thus misconstruing our situation and missing both its greatest threats and its best hopes. Concentrating not unnaturally on what is closest to us, we treat the larger issues with a mere wave of the hand. While there is no shame for church people if they do not know the answers to the moral questions, there is if they either evade the questions or copy the fashionable answers; for their task is to 'expose the questions before the eyes of God, of scripture, of faith'.

IN ISLAMIC STUDIES



If your great passion is to make the unfamiliar familiar and the familiar unfamiliar, and thereby help people to question their preconceived ideas of others and of themselves, what could be a more exciting privilege than to be given a free hand to devise and deliver a whole programme of teaching on an entirely

new subject? This is the happy situation, as he sees it, of Dr Christian Lange who in April of this year became New College's first ever full-time Lecturer in Islamic Studies, after training in Tübingen, Cairo, Paris, an Omani madrasa and Harvard, followed by teaching in Harvard.

Given the widespread ignorance and misunderstanding of Islam, this appointment is timely. Dr Lange brings to it not only scholarly knowledge, historical, literary, linguistic and theological, but also direct experience of living in Muslim majority countries, especially Morocco, Oman and Iran. Fluency in both Arabic and Persian has helped him to be increasingly at home both in the Islamic texts and in the Muslim families, whose hospitality has received him and in whose lives the texts have lived.

His general area of expertise is the history of religion, with special reference to its influence on political and social organisation, as in the sociological tradition of Max Weber. Within that broad field, his specialism is the history of Islam's late-middle period (11th to 13th centuries in CE terms), primarily in the 'fertile crescent' that includes Egypt, Syria, Iraq and Iran. He resists the tendency to treat Arabic and Persian cultures separately; so his study holds together, for example, Arabic chronicles and Persian poetry. In a similar preference for combining what is commonly separated, he will soon see published his integrative study of law and eschatology in Islam. Similarly pioneering is his current work on Islam's notions of the body and his co-editing of a book on public violence in its history.

Through this appointment, New College can expect much that is new, not only to students and others who know little or nothing of Islam but also to many who know much. This passion for crossing cultures and making the unfamiliar familiar (and surprising) is not, however, Dr Lange's only one. Add German football and his cello. Fellow string players will be welcome!

IN PREPARATION FOR EDINBURGH 2010



Attending a preparatory conference for Edinburgh 2010 in April in the Assembly Hall, (from left to right) Rev Dr Daryl Balia, Rev Dr Sam Kobia, General Secretary, World Council of Churches and Rev Val Ogden, Director, Selly Oak Centre for Mission Studies, where Dr Balia previously worked.

Daryl Balia from South Africa, who joined the staff in April in the new post of Research Director and Project Manager of Edinburgh 2010 introduces himself

'SERVING GOD'S MISSION TOGETHER

Some might say that I am driven by mission and more mission. From my undergraduate life I have always been taken up by questions about the mission of the church in the world. With further study (in France, Germany and the United States) and work in situations of social, political and economic upheavals, I soon learnt that the church's mission in action does not always measure up to God's mission exemplified in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ. Mission might have been about activities of a missionary age but mission today is about rediscovering the gospel imperative in contexts marked by plurality and diversity and where the North-West axis of power has been supplanted by a South-East one. This shift may not be apparent to those who share the greater concentration of economic resources, but we cannot get away from the fact that MISSION can no longer be about what white Christians do for the conversion of Africans, Asians and Latinos!

Considering current levels of migration and the rise of Pentecostalism, we probably have more missionaries (in the classic sense) moving in the 'opposite' direction than was evident in 1910, when the great World Missionary Conference took place in Edinburgh. The change of outlook now required must be based on careful reflection, thorough study and prayerful commitment, as we dare not make the mistakes of the missionary century just past. It is still a time, though, to celebrate the best from the past and the coming of something new; perhaps a paradigm shift for mission again is in the offing.

My working life has been spent mostly in my native South Africa where I worked as a Methodist pastor, university academic and government reformer. The experience of developing a national integrity strategy under Nelson Mandela's inspiration is something that shapes much of my thinking about how to do God's mission in a world so full of itself. I understand the political environment much better now and, with two years of living in the UK behind me, welcome the challenge of directing the Edinburgh 2010 project. My personal strengths are my networking background, research interests and administrative experience which combined with my 'southern (dis)comfort' may make a difference, because it matters now that the centre of gravity has shifted.

Edinburgh 2010 we hope will contribute to a new and fuller understanding of what it means to be engaged in mission from a Christian theological perspective, one informed by the riches of a diverse world of cultures and traditions, and one which will contribute to an ongoing engagement with the study of World Christianity here at New College for years to come.'

EVENTS FOR ALUMNI IN SESSION 2007-8

1 THE OPENING DAY EVENT

THURSDAY 13 SEPTEMBER

12.30pm

LIGHT COMMUNAL LUNCH

2.00pm

INAUGURAL LECTURE BY PROFESSOR

OLIVER O'DONOVAN

on 'David Hume's Surprise: "Is", "Ought" and the Transition of Reason to Faith'

3.00pm

COMMUNAL TEA

2 FRIDAY 2 MAY 2008

Evening

ALUMNI DINNER FOR 1990s AND 2000s

GRADUATES

3 MONDAY 19 MAY 2008

12.30 pm

ALUMNI LUNCH

4 It is also hoped this session to inaugurate a short conference, probably in March, for the public as well as alumni on a popular topic within one of the School's subject areas, for example on the Richard Dawkins type of atheism or on contemporary Islam.

Please note: for the Opening Day and the May lunch, simply arrive and pay for the meal on arrival, but for the May dinner for the 1990s and 2000s graduates and for the day conference (when announced) please register with the Alumni Officer.

CENTRE FOR THEOLOGY AND PUBLIC ISSUES (CTPI)

CTPI was founded in 1984 to promote reflection and research on important public issues to which Christian theology can make a constructive contribution.

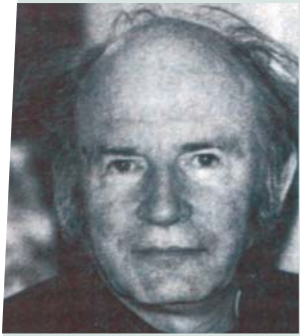


The University has always valued the link between academic work and the community in which it is set. CTPI continues this tradition as a unique meeting place for theologians, social scientists, church leaders, policy makers and the public. Theology sheds a distinctive light on many issues of public concern, as can be seen from the work CTPI has done on poverty and welfare, justice and the penal system, peace and international security, suicide and public health, finance and ethics, citizenship and faith communities' relationship with government. Currently, the Centre is in the latter stages of the Scottish case study of a large international study (14 countries) on the relationship between faith and attitudes to human rights in young people. Its researchers have involved more than 850 young Scots in Christian, Muslim or secular backgrounds in the project.

Having worked with a particular model for more than 20 years, and given the different societal needs that are becoming apparent, CTPI is embarking on a wide-ranging review and consultation about its future direction before launching its new programme for 2008.

CECELIA CLEGG

REMEMBERING



DR NOEL DERMOT O'DONOGHUE, who died in Edinburgh on 22 September 2006 at the age of 85, was a Lecturer here from 1971 to 1988. A Carmelite monk from Kerry and the first Roman Catholic to teach in New College, he has been

described as 'one of the most respected and adventurous writers on the mystical tradition of Christianity' and as a 'modern master of Celtic Christianity' (before the latter became fashionable and possibly misinterpreted). Generations of students speak of their minds opened and lives affected by the truths that he not only conveyed but also lived. The editor of this journal at the time of his retirement wrote 'His deep appreciation of Plotinus and the neo-Platonists, his uncovering of Heidegger's *aletheia* and his pilgrimage through contemporary French philosophy generally amazed and regularly delighted his classes, and his concern for spirituality found resonance among the students'. She also pointed out that the title of his valedictory article, *The Scribe De-Scribed*, was 'a joke after the manner of Jacques Derrida: an entirely Noellish gesture'. Soon after arrival here he accepted the invitation of some of the students to become a member of the 'Stair Community', a group of people who lived together in neighbouring flats on the same Council-house stair in Edinburgh's West Pilton and made themselves available to the local community; this became his home. Shortly before he died, his last book was published: *Adventures in Prayer: Reflections on the Christian Mystics – St Teresa of Avila, St John of the Cross and St Theresa of Lisieux* (2006: London, Continuum. £9.99)



One of our alumni, REV PROFESSOR JAMES BARR, Regius Professor Emeritus of Hebrew, Oxford University and Distinguished University Professor Emeritus, Vanderbilt University, who died in California

on 14 October 2006 at the age of 82, was Professor of Old Testament Literature and Theology here from 1955 to 1961. In the course of his long academic career he also held chairs in Presbyterian College, Montreal (prior to his service here), Princeton Theological Seminary and

Manchester University, as well as Oxford and Vanderbilt Universities. He had visiting professorships in Jerusalem, Chicago, Strasbourg, Otago, South Africa and Heidelberg.

He has been described as a 'biblical scholar and Semitist who changed the way of approaching the exegesis of the Hebrew Bible'. His 1961 book, *The Semantics of Biblical Language*, and his 1968 book, *Comparative Philology and the Text of the Old Testament*, dominated much biblical scholarship for the rest of the century. Highly competent in all the Semitic languages, he combined great linguistic erudition and semantic wisdom with deep theological insight and interest, producing many books both for scholars and for a wider public. His desire to make the Bible accessible to the latter was exemplified in two related books, *Fundamentalism* (in 1977) and *Escaping from Fundamentalism* (1984), which a colleague of his described as his attempt to 'set a conservative faith in an acceptable context for an intellectual enquirer'.

A PERSONAL STORY

Clifford Hughes, who was a BD student here at the time of the 145th anniversary in 1991 and who, with fellow-student Peter Donald, performed a 'cabaret' for the occasion, was moved by last year's 160th anniversary to write this:

I incorporated the history of New College into the broader context of some five hundred years of the music and culture of the Scottish Church, Court and Countryside. In this light-hearted programme I used a 'trinity' of voices: my speaking voice to narrate the story; my alto voice for music, say, of 1550-1625, with Peter at the spinet; and my tenor voice. Ten years later (January 2001) voice cancer was diagnosed and a laryngectomy operation left me, literally, speechless.

At this time, I was Minister of St Mary's Haddington. Every second Saturday in May, St Mary's is the locus for an inspirational ecumenical pilgrimage which concludes with Prayer for Healing. Because it attracts many Catholics and Episcopalians, the strident voices of a group of ultra-protestant dissidents would be raised each year, led by the redoubtable Pastor Jack Glass. Despite our theological differences, we would chat together amicably before the Service, and Jack – aware of my developing illness – promised to pray for me. Did he know then that he was suffering from terminal cancer? There was prayer from other sources too. I was privileged to welcome Archbishop (now Cardinal) Keith O'Brien who, I later learned, sent out a diocesan letter urging his Catholic congregations to

pray for me. Closer to home, I was surrounded by the prayerful support of my family, my friends, and the folk of St Mary's. What an awesome rainbow-coalition of prayer!

Did it work? Looking back over five years, I can confirm that I travelled along a route mapped out by the eminent counsellor and psychotherapist Elisabeth Kubler-Ross. The loss of my voice was truly a bereavement. My life had been voice-centred as a teacher, singer and preacher. Suddenly – there was nothing, I couldn't even whisper. I passed through the denial stage. 'It can't be true. It must be some sort of virus – suck another Strepsil!' Sometimes I still wake in the morning with thoughts that it was just a dreadful dream. I experienced anger which is expressed in the 'Why me?' question. I suppose I did my fair share of bargaining. I certainly encountered depression even despair. I thought my life was effectively over. I gave away my books; I threw out lots of personal ephemera: I binned my sermons! Gradually the answer to prayer broke through.

The apostle Paul wrote to the young church of Philippi: 'in whatever state I find myself, I have learned therewith to be content'. On another occasion, to the church in Corinth, he speaks of 'rejoicing' in his infirmity. Theologians have long argued about the nature of 'the thorn in the flesh to torment me' about which Paul complained. I've even heard the proposition that it was his mother-in-law! Paul learned to live with it and triumph over it. Paul's recipe, contentment and rejoicing, looks to me like celebration. Tack that on to Kubler-Ross and I had reached the stage of acceptance of the reality of my situation and the inspiration to get on with my life with a new voice – a fourth voice. The Philosopher in Ecclesiastes sums it up pithily: 'There had been a time to weep. Now, it's time to laugh!'

KEEPING IN TOUCH

This annual Bulletin is one of three main forms of communication with alumni. The two others are the rather more frequent email circulations and the website. Readers who use electronic media are encouraged to do two things:

- 1) refer regularly to the College website www.div.ed.ac.uk; it is kept up to date with news and other information
- 2) email Andrew.Morton@ed.ac.uk giving your email address, if you wish to begin receiving the email circulations; the number of those who already receive them (around 1000) could be doubled or trebled...

SHOWING YOUR COLOURS

Alumni who would like to wear the New College colours (purple, white and black) in the form of a tie or scarf should email Andrew.Morton@ed.ac.uk or write, saying so. If there is sufficient demand, a supply will be arranged.

Talking of colour - Scot Finley, now in Blue Ridge VA, claims responsibility for persuading the organisers of the New College in 1986 to produce it in colour for the first time ever.

MAKING IT POSSIBLE

Many potential students, undergraduate and postgraduate, local and international, are prevented by the cost (for a postgraduate year c£14,000 including living costs). **Forms are available** for contributing to either the Access Bursary Fund, the James S Stewart Scholarship Fund or (for Korean postgraduates) the John Ross Fund.

RETIRING



Linda Stupart, Secretary to the Head of School, has retired after no less than 37 years working for the Faculty/School and even more for the University as a whole. In addition to gifts from the School, the University and the Church of Scotland ministerial candidates, she received from the hands of a suitably attired herald (Dr Jane Dawson) a 'mediaeval' scroll signed and sealed by successive Deans granting 'Dame Linda' the 'Freedom of New College'.

Marget Acton, Librarian of the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World, also leaves us after 17 years to be the Librarian at the new Church Missionary Society headquarters in Oxford..

LEAVING SCHOOL

While the College participates with the rest of the University in Open Days for potential students from schools throughout the United Kingdom, it also arranges its own special 'Religious Studies and Theology Open Day for Local Schools'.

HONOURING



Professor Jay Brown of Ecclesiastical History and Professor Duncan Forrester, formerly of Christian Ethics and Practical Theology, have been appointed as Fellows of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

Professor Andrew Walls, formerly of Christianity in the Non-Western World, has received the Distinguished Career Award of the American Society of Church History.

Professor Frank Whaling, formerly of the Study of Religion, has received the Institute of Contemporary Scotland's James A Whyte Award for Services to Religion; this award, together with comparable ones for other areas of service, confers Fellowship of the Scottish Academy of Merit and the title of Scot of the Year; the one previous recipient was Dr Alison Elliot.

Professor Graeme Auld of Hebrew Bible was presented, at the Washington meeting of the Society for Biblical Literature, with a volume in his honour, *Reflection and Refraction: Studies in Biblical Historiography in Honour of A Graeme Auld*, edited by Rezetko, Lim and Aucker (2007: Brill Academic Publishers)

Awards are usually given for many years of achievement. Something rather different was inaugurated on 11-14 May at Heidelberg University, the John Templeton Awards for Outstanding Theological Promise, 12 *per annum* given to new scholars, based on their first book or PhD thesis. Professor Larry Hurtado was invited not only to be a member of the international selection panel but to give the address at the opening session in the Alta Aula.

INNOVATING

A brand new qualification has been devised – a Graduate Diploma in Theology and Religious Studies, open to those with a degree in any other subject who wish to study Theology or Religious Studies or both, whether just for itself or as a step towards postgraduate study in it. Details are at www.div.ed.ac.uk/Graduate_diploma.

It is also possible to take individual courses in the School, not for a qualification, on a pro rata payment basis.

Another innovation is that those with a University of Edinburgh undergraduate degree undertaking postgraduate study receive a 10% discount on the self-funding element of the tuition fee.

Those wishing to brush up or develop their knowledge of Greek can now do so at the Edinburgh Greek Summer School, a new joint initiative of the School of Divinity and the School of History and Classics (this year from 23 to 29 July).

BEING AT HOME

The College is frequently at home to wider academic events and enterprises.

In May it hosted the first meeting of the International Edinburgh Prophecy Network, convened by Professor Hans Barstad, a specialist in Hebrew and Ancient Near Eastern prophecy.

In July it hosted the 4th International Ecumenical Film Conference, on this occasion focused on 'Peacemaking in the World of Film: from Conflict to Reconciliation', Dr Jolyon Mitchell being a leading academic on film and religion, theology and ethics.



NEW COLLEGE GARDEN, now properly paved, lit and tended, is adding to the growing *al fresco* lifestyle of this Northern city.



WELL! is the cryptic inscription on one of the slabs on the newly laid quadrangle. The 'dig' did indeed uncover an ancient one.

This journal welcomes THE MOD-ERATOR, the new student newspaper provided by the School of Divinity Student Council. Its latest issue, the 10th, is typically versatile, containing both a learned conversation on Systematic Theology with Professor Daniel Migliore from Princeton and a series of suggestions headed 'If Students Wrote the Bible' including 'Instead of creating the world in six days and resting on the seventh, God would have put it off until the night before it was due and then pulled an all-nighter'.

BEING BORN

Three members of staff have given birth in the last year, Helen Bond of New Testament, Christine Love-Rodgers, the Librarian, and Miriam McHardy, CTPI researcher – all had sons.

REGULAR AND IRREGULAR

A man, who claimed to be a regular church attender, said he came once a year when his daughter had a child baptised.

The College's regular annual events have included:

for students

the Weekend Away in October (this time at Carberry Tower);



the Burns Supper in January (with a memorable address and poetry recital by Tom Fleming);

the Ball in April;

for alumni



the Alumni Lecture in September (when Dr Alison Elliot spoke on 'In Search of Wisdom in University, Church and Places in Between: the full text is on the website); a dinner in May for graduates of the 1970s and 1980s (in 2008 it will be for the 1990s and 2000s); a lunch in May addressed by the Head of School.

Alumni have also joined students and staff for the visiting lectures and special seminars such as:

Gunning Lectures in November on 'How God Became African' by Professor Gerrie ter Haar;

CTPI seminars in February on 'War, Weapons and Peace' with Professor Oliver O'Donovan and The Rt Rev Alan McDonald and on 'The Case for the Abolition of War in the 21st Century' by Professor Linda Hogan; the Media Lecture in March on 'God at the BBC' by BBC's Head of Religion and Ethics, Michael Wakelin; the Gunning Lecture also in March on 'The Different Power of God: the Witness of Christianity and Islam' by Professor Daniel Migliore.

This year there have also been one-off events, notably two.

The 160th anniversary celebration in June 2006 attracted over 160 alumni from all student decades from the 1950s to the 2000s and even one or two from the 1930s and 1940s



A day conference in March 2007 marked the distinguished contribution of the late John McIntyre as teacher, scholar, churchman and university leader (the papers from the conference to be published in the journal *Theology in Scotland*). John McIntyre was not long survived by his wife, Jan, who died on 13 October 2006, aged 94. The hospitable tradition of that household was continued by their daughter, who generously entertained the whole conference of 50 or more people to an evening meal.



ALUMNI ON THE MOVE

Bob Gillies, serving the Scottish Episcopal Church, was appointed Dean of the Diocese of Dunkeld and Dunblane on 1 January and then on 29 April, barely four months later, elected as Bishop of Aberdeen and Orkney.

James Johns, lecturer in Biblical Studies at Houston Baptist University, has started a teaching project in sub-Saharan Africa, entitled 'Ha-Moreh' (Hebrew for 'teacher').

John Payne has just moved from being Chaplain to Toorak College, Mount Eliza to being minister of Berwick Uniting Church; he reports that alumni in Melbourne marked the New College 160th anniversary with their own celebration.

Sara Hart, recently graduated, is working for Medair in Afghanistan.

The Very Rev Roy Sanderson, probably our oldest alumnus, now in his 100th year (his centenary due on 23 September) has moved into residential care in North Berwick.

BOOKS

BY ALUMNI

Few people are still publishing in their late 80s; IAN FRASER, writer of many books, still is. His latest is *The Way Ahead: Grown-Up Christians* (2006: Wild Goose Publications). It comes out of a life devoted to a worldwide process of self-liberation of 'laity' from 'hierarchy' and in the belief that 'to be engaged with Jesus Christ in transforming the world is to be part of only one definitive ministry alongside his, that of the whole church. More official forms of ministry must never take over, though the history of the church has thrown up plenty of examples of this defect'.

IRV BRENDLINGER has written

The Be Silent Would Be Criminal: the Antislavery Influence and Writing of Anthony Benezet (2006: Scarecrow Press, a division of Rowman & Littlefield), Benezet being John Wesley's main antislavery influence
Social Justice Through the Eyes of Wesley: John Wesley's Challenge to Slavery (2006: Joshua Press)

JOHN COUTTS has written

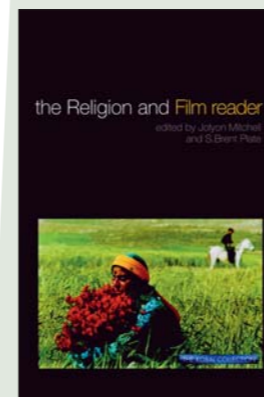
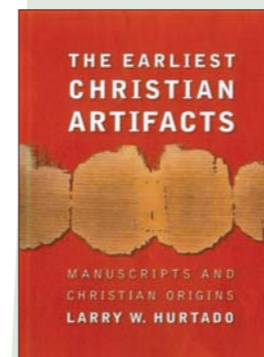
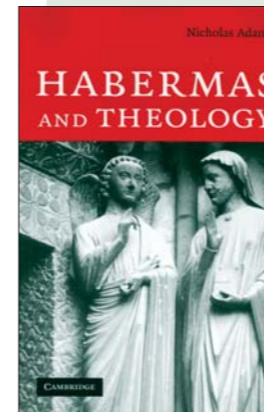
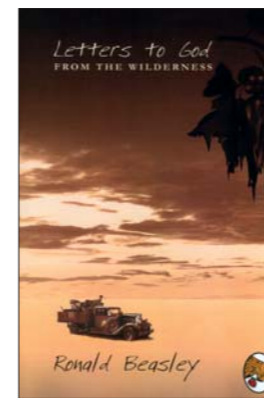
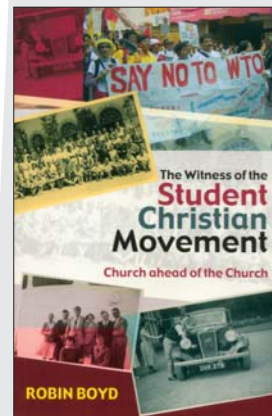
A Sackful of Plays and Poems for Christmas (2006: RG Publishing, 138 Ladysneuk Road, Stirling FK9 5NR)
Everychild and other poems (2006: RG Publishing)

ROBIN BOYD has written

The Witness of the Student Christian Movement: Church Ahead of the Church (2007: SPCK), a survey of a movement that greatly influenced the church in the 20th century

RICHARD A RIESEN has written

Professor A C Cheyne, An Appreciation (2007: Scottish Church History Society, c/o Rev Bill Graham, 48 Corbiehill Crescent, Edinburgh EH4 5BD)



NOT BY AN ALUMNUS

The New College community extends beyond its students and staff, past and present, to include a range of people who become involved in its activities, for example, through its Centre for Theology and Public Issues. One such was the recently deceased Ronald Beasley. Elizabeth Templeton, a former student and then staff member, has drawn attention to a book by him published after his death

RONALD BEASLEY, *Letters to God from the Wilderness* (2007: Shoving Leopard Press. ISBN 978-1-905565 -09-2)

Ronald Beasley, for decades a frequenter of New College though not an alumnus, was a dogged shaker of theological codewords and pious platitudes. These posthumously published letters express his ambivalence about the God he finds too silent in a bleakly distressed world. Huge themes – prayer, providence, death, sexuality – are explored in non-technical language, through the lens of his varied experience of contemporary society and human relationships. His candour should embolden readers to articulate their own ranges of hope, desire, frustration and bafflement about communication with God. An excellent resource for imaginative congregational use.

BY STAFF

From the many publications by members of staff, this small selection may give some indication of their range

DR NICHOLAS ADAMS, *Habermas and Theology* (2006: Cambridge University Press)

PROFESSOR MARCELLA ALTHAUS-REID (with Professor L Isherwood), *Controversies in Feminist Theologies* (2007, SCM Press)

PROFESSOR LARRY HURTADO, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts* (2006: Alban Books)

DR EWAN KELLY, *Marking Short Lives: Constructing and Sharing Rituals following Pregnancy Loss* (2007: Peter Lang)

DR JOLYON MITCHELL (co-editor with S. Brent Plate), *The Religion and Film Reader* (2007: Routledge)

DR JOHN MCDOWELL, *The Gospel according to Star Wars: Faith, Hope and the Force* (2007: Westminster Journals)

DR SARA PARVIS, *Marcellus of Ancyra and the Lost Years of the Arian Controversy 325-345* (2006: Oxford University Press)

DR MICHAEL PURCELL, *Levinas and Theology* (2006: Cambridge University Press)



2007-2008 ALUMNI DATES

THURSDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 2007
OPENING OF
SESSION EVENT

MARCH 2008 *(exact date to be announced)*
POPULAR CONFERENCE

FRIDAY 2 MAY 2008
DINNER FOR 1990s
AND 2000s GRADUATES

MONDAY 19 MAY 2008
ALUMNI LUNCH

See page 9 for details

New College at The University of Edinburgh

NEW COLLEGE MOUND PLACE EDINBURGH EH1 2LX

Head of School PROFESSOR LARRY HURTADO
Principal PROFESSOR GRAEME AULD

T 0131 650 8900
F 0131 650 6579
Email ANDREW.MORTON@ED.AC.UK
W WWW.DIV.ED.AC.UK

The New College Bulletin is published annually on behalf of the School of Divinity, The University of Edinburgh. The opinions expressed in its columns are those of the writers concerned and not necessarily those of the School of Divinity or of the University.

Editor DR. ANDREW R. MORTON
Designed by MICHAEL DANCER