Hello & Welcome Back to the HMC alumni newsletter. We had such a good response to the first attempt, that we have been spurred on to produce another! As we said last time, for alumni news, however, this will involve you sending things in to us – so please do: we really do like to hear from you!

Starting with ‘improvements to College’, there’s a lot to report. The principal building work for the last few months has been on what used to be called Hesket House, now Oxley Ching. We’ve put dormer windows into the roof to create new, en suite student rooms (almost all rooms in college are now en suite, in fact), as well as renovating the rooms on the floors below. The dormers are designed to mirror the originals on the second floor of the main building, on the other side of the quad. The work’s nearly finished, and students will definitely be in there next term.
The Fab Four!

No, not the Beatles, but our very own HMC Fab Four!

Last year, for the first time, college took a record number of four Economics and Management students. Brilliantly, all four of them got distinctions in Prelims at the end of the year.

L-R: Shawn Tan, Yi Ming Tan, Khi Huin Shek and Kia Kiat Goh

Life isn’t all academics: they list hobbies which include music, travelling, and going to debates at the Union. Shawn works for Oxford Strategy Group - a student-run consultancy that provides strategic advisory services to both for-profit and non-profit organisations. So far, he has worked with a variety of clients, including a charity and a Southeast Asian mobile application start-up. We’re also very proud of Shek’s exploits in the pool: he’s a Water Polo Blue!
We were very pleased to hear from former PPE student Julian Bank about the birth of his second son, Mattis Fietje, last November. Mattis joins proud older brother Jesse Finian – here along with Julian and mum Heidi.

STOP PRESS: For this year’s Oxford Artsweeks in May, College is hosting a staff and student show. This will include former students. So if you are an artist in any medium, and you’d like to submit work for inclusion, please contact Sue Killoran or Lesley Smith. We’ll also host a concert that week, so do contact Myles Hartley if you’d like to be involved.
Sue Killoran, our Fellow Librarian writes:

Niall Sheekey is our (relatively) new Assistant Librarian. Niall has been with us just over one year and has settled in very well. Niall (pronounced like the river) is from County Wicklow, Ireland and received his secondary school education in the Irish language, so speaks Irish and English as a native. He studied History and Irish at University College Dublin, and History at the University of Edinburgh. Studying continues as he works towards completing his MA in Library and Information Science, by distance learning, from Aberystwyth University. The observant of you will have noted that he has a foot in all four nations of the British Isles! He knows Oxford well, having previously worked for St Hilda's College as a library trainee and has had various jobs with the Bodleian Library in Legal Deposit Operations, the Oxford Research Archive, and the Radcliffe Camera and Old Library reading rooms. Niall 'plays to win' a variety of sports, mostly korfball in the Oxford City team and, impressively, as a member of Ireland's national team. He claims to be a retired Irish dancer, but the feet were flying, along with the kilt, at the College Burns’ Night on 25th January, so the skills are definitely not lost. Not only can he dance, he plays the mandolin. If you fancy a long walk in the country, Niall's your man, and if you like quizzes, you had better be good to be on his team. Niall hopes to appear on the next series of Only Connect with some friends...we'll let you know when he's on!

Mo Hall writes: Currently writing a novel, but I've been at it about eight years. If it ever gets published I'll let you know! I am, however, devoid of ambition now, so it might take some time. The writing is an end in itself.

From Barbara White: I am living in Spain these days, and visit Oxford only infrequently, and that only because my son lives nearby. I left last century, 1997. Did Eng Lang and Lit with Gill and Ann. Them was the days.

Jessica Shortall, MBA 2005-6, recently published her first book, Work. Pump. Repeat: The New Mom's Survival Guide to Breastfeeding and Going Back to Work (www.workpumprepeat.com). This was followed by her first TEDx talk, 'The American Case for Paid Maternity Leave', which has received public words of support from the U.S. Secretary of Labor, among others, and has more than 12,000 views in its first week online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SJyE40koQyA&index=1&list=PLsRNoUx8w3rMwPgmKexZdkPVW0BNk733A
We started with building into a roof, so we’ll end with repairs to a floor. The mosaic floor in the entrance lobby has long been slowly suffering degradation; but thanks to an un-earmarked donation last term, we’ve had a little money to sort it out. Here’s the kind of decay the floor had suffered:

and here it is skilfully being made good as new! We’re conscious of the lobby as the first part of College people see, so it’s good to be able both to preserve our wonderful 19th-century heritage and to make a good impression on visitors.