The Million-Pound Bike Ride

6.25am (check the Tower Clock!) of a pale September morning, and a valiant group of HMC cyclists gathers at the start of an epic journey.

Their mission? To ride to Cambridge, finishing up at our sister college, Homerton.

Their goal: to raise £1,000,000 of sponsorship for student bursaries.

Led by (who else?) the Principal, the intrepid band comprised (l-r), the library team of Niall Sheekey and Sue Killoran; Catering Manager Nick Jefferies; the Principal; University Vice-Chancellor Prof. Louise Ricardo (little did she know, when the Principal offered her a bike, that he’d ask her to ride it to Cambridge!); her husband – and HMC medic – Tom Jevon; retired law professor, Paul Davies; Economics tutor, Isabel Ruiz; and newly-minted PPE graduate, Philipp Zelter.

The quiet route to Cambridge is 88 miles. Could they do it....?
Students

Congratulations to third-year Egyptology Student Jordan Miller for winning second prize in the Dalai Lama Essay Prize (http://dlc.oxford.org/1680-2/), on the subject of compassion. Jordan will be presented with his prize by the Dalai Lama himself.

We welcomed 114 freshers this year which means we have an unusually large student body this year totalling 227. Amongst our intake was the first cohort of students reading for the part time MSc Taxation, and HMC also welcomed its first undergraduate Engineers. Unusually, we have a rather skewed gender balance with a ratio of one third female to two third males. This wasn’t intentional – just the result of who applied.

Good to see someone has got a map!

Is it the right way up...?
Congratulations to law tutor Kristin Van Zwieten. Zia Anya van Zwieten Desai, was born on 15 April.

Meanwhile...part way there... Niall and the V-C find they’re not so far from home!
Niall is just everywhere at the moment.... He writes:

‘Last February, The Korfballers (myself and two friends from my korfball club) travelled up to BBC studios in Birmingham to audition for Only Connect, self-described as a “quiz show in which connections must be made between apparently unconnected things, where patience and lateral thinking are as vital as knowledge” and well-known for being the hardest show on British television. Despite some nerves all around, we breezed through, mainly thanks to our annihilation of the dreaded Wall in record time. All of this was very exciting until the realisation that we would now have to go through with it and appear on national television in a primetime evening slot kicked in. Nonetheless, we steadied ourselves and made the even longer trip to Only Connect HQ (an industrial estate on the outskirts of Cardiff) where we recorded our first and potentially only episode. It was a fun and interesting experience; make-up, the green room, sound checks, lights, camera, action, and the lovely Victoria Coren Mitchell. We were victorious, however, setting a respectable score of 25 after storming away from our opponents in the final Missing Vowels round. Tune in to BBC2 at 20:30 on November 14th to see us take on the Shutterbugs in the second heat.’

Meanwhile, the travelling support team were working hard...
And so, at 5.04pm, after 9 hours in the saddle, they rolled into Cambridge... all still present and correct...and looking disgusting energetic and cheerful after 88 miles on the road! After a slap-up meal in Homerton, it was a coach back to Oxford. Here’s the Principal of Homerton with the riders and support gang. What an HMC team!

Niall writes...

“The intrepid cyclists assembled outside the gates of College at a blearingly-eyed early hour of 6:15am and set off on their 88-mile journey to the Other Place. Misfortune abounded for one member of the team as our Assistant Librarian was waylaid not once, but twice, by punctures, but otherwise it was smooth sailing. Fuelled by energy gels, cereal bars, egg mayo sandwiches and an indomitable spirit, and aided by their support team in the camper van and team car, the team steadily wound their way uphill to the half-way and highest point near Woburn, before enjoying a relaxing descent all the way into Cambridge, minus one or two remaining ‘small pull ups’ as our Principal and routemaster euphemistically described the tough hills. All told, they arrived into Homerton to be greeted enthusiastically by its principal, Prof. Geoffrey Ward, and enjoyed the hospitality and welcome of many Homertonians. £1 million was raised in total thanks to the generosity of five friends of HMC. Congratulations and thanks to all who took part. Shall we make this an annual event?”

Rather him than me!!!

The team raised £1m in promised sponsorship over the next five years... but if you’d like to add to that total, don’t hesitate to get in touch!