FROM THE EDITOR

This is the second issue of Ring True in the new design and, again, I hope it will appeal to our faithful readers. First of all I would like to thank all the contributors who wrote for this issue, offered photographs or otherwise provided information: I am truly grateful to you all!

Perhaps it is worth spelling out that I see my role as Editor as a co-ordinating one, which means that in the main I invite and solicit contributions, nudge authors along, and, with the editorial team, edit and adapt all material received to make sure that text and illustrations fit into the space available.

Occasionally some of the material will be more suitable as an item for www.WolfsonPlus.com or, if it’s longer, may fit better into the next Wolfson Review. Either way, please bear the College publications in mind, as they are a good means of telling your fellow Wolfson members what you are up to in your studies, research or wider activities.

Ring True and the Review go out to all members of Wolfson, and I feel that if only we knew more about your work and other excitements, we could share in them and celebrate more individual achievements. So please stay in touch and keep us informed – an email would be a good starting point. And that’s about as long as I would like an editorial to be….

Conrad Guettler
editor@wolfson.cam.ac.uk

WE APOLOGISE that David H Scarisbrick (Senior Member 1969) was reported in the Wolfson Magazine 2002–2004 as deceased, when he is in fact very much alive! David would be delighted to re-establish contact with Wolfson colleagues and friends via www.WolfsonNetwork.com
Eighteen months after I took up office as President, people are still referring to me as ‘the new President’, but for me the pleasures and challenges of the job have now become familiar. Being a Head of House in one of Cambridge’s 31 Colleges is a unique job, comparable only to a parallel appointment in ‘the other place’, the University of Oxford. It takes a bit of getting used to.

The public face of the Presidency is obvious: presiding over Formal Halls and Guest Nights, welcoming new students, saying goodbye to retiring staff, celebrating degrees with graduands and their friends and families, and generally being around in the College and getting to know everybody as far as is possible in such a large community. All of this could be summed up as the social side of the job, helping to foster a sense of community and loyalty to the College and make it an enjoyable experience to live and work here, and a happy time in retrospect.

Then there’s the managerial side of the job. A Head of House is not a CEO, more like the Chairman of the Board; this aspect of my work involves among other things presiding over the Governing Body, College Council and a number of committees, and keeping abreast of College business through the Bursar, the Senior Tutor, the Vice-President and the Development Director, especially in our informal Monday management meetings, where we deal with problems and crises that come up (not many so far, to my relief), and look forward to the coming week’s business.

Thirdly there’s fundraising, talking to people interested in helping the College, visiting alumni groups in various parts of the world, and working with the Development Director to prepare for our 50th anniversary commemoration in 2015.

Finally there’s the University. Increasingly, Colleges are having to co-ordinate their efforts to deal with Government pressures over access, fees and student numbers, and Colleges like Wolfson that cater for graduate and mature students need to make sure our voice is heard in a Collegiate Cambridge dominated by the big undergraduate Colleges.

All this sounds like a lot of work, and it is, though I somehow manage to do it at the same time as continuing with my duties as Regius Professor of History. But Wolfson is such a lively and friendly College that it is all an absolute pleasure!
RESEARCH & NEWS

HELLE PORS DAM, ARCADIA FELLOW

Helle is Professor at the Faculty of Humanities, University of Copenhagen and explains that "most of the Fellows in the Arcadia Programme have been librarians interested in exploring the role of academic libraries in the digital age." For her, this is a topic of great relevance too, as she is working on a project, funded by HERA (Humanities in the European Research Area) and by ESF (European Science Foundation), which concerns creativity, copyright and cultural heritage. "Many of my external partners are libraries, and the topic of digitisation repeatedly comes up."

Helle says: "When I was lucky enough to become an Arcadia Fellow during Michaelmas Term 2011, my husband and I decided to stay in Wolfson rather than to get ourselves a flat somewhere in town – a wonderful decision because it enabled us to get to know a number of Wolfson’s interesting Faculty members and students." Her contribution as an Arcadia Fellow is on the new discipline 'Digital Humanities'. What especially interested Helle, she says, was "why many scholars in the humanities are reluctant converts to the use of the new digital media in their research – why they tend to think that there is too much ‘digital’ and too little ‘humanities’ in Digital Humanities."

MEREDITH HALE, SPEELMAN FELLOW

Netherlandish Art in Cambridge

Wolfson College celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Speelman Fellowship in Dutch and Flemish Art in September 2011 with an international conference, Collecting and Scholarship: Netherlandish Art in Cambridge.

The conference took place in the Lee Hall and the event was generously funded by the Speelman family. It was attended by Anthony, Marie Anne and Lucy Speelman as well as prominent scholars and curators in the field. Further details are at www.WolfsonPlus.com

FINE ARTS COMMITTEE REVIVED

Margaret Greeves, Fellow

The Fine Arts Committee has been revived and has framed a policy for the College's modest art collections, and their development.

The College collects works of art in order to enhance the environment and the aesthetic experience of all its members (as for example with the College gardens), to celebrate the history and development of the College and its achievements, to reflect the cosmopolitan nature of its membership and to encourage artistic activity. The Committee is in discussion with a number of museums and collections for the loan of works of art for the buildings and the grounds.

The Committee welcomes donations of works of art that have a distinct connection with the history of the College or reflect the distinction of its members at a national or international level in any sphere of activity.

A new display of paintings, drawings and artefacts recounting the founding and growth of the College will be mounted in the Combination Room over the summer months.

We regularly update news on the Wolfson website. For a direct link, you can scan this QR code with your mobile, or visit: www.WolfsonPlus.com
BECOMING VICE-PRESIDENT

John Naughton
When I was elected Vice-President in September 2011, the question my children asked was: “Dad, what is a Vice-President for?” It’s a good question: the College Statutes specify some particular roles for the Vice-President, but in the main they boil down to standing in for the President when he is away. (The big job – supervising the election of a President – is, mercifully, unlikely to crop up on my four-year watch!)

I find that I am an ex-officio member of a large number of College committees, and Chairman of two, which means that I’ve had a crash course in how the College is run – and have also become adept at handling large volumes of paperwork (the papers for a recent meeting of the Fellowship and Membership Committee came to 23 MB in electronic form). So I’m on a crusade to reduce the production of paper. If the Bursar can make the catering into a cashless operation, surely the Vice-President can do the same for paper?

More importantly, I’ve been asked by the President to produce a Strategic Plan for Wolfson, which is turning out to be a fascinating challenge: the College has been a start-up on a growth path for a long time. But now it has reached early middle age and it’s time for a careful assessment of what we want to do next. This is especially important given that the University is poised to embark on a significant new expansion in North West Cambridge which will accommodate lots of postdoctoral researchers and postgraduate students. This represents a very big change in our environment and we need to think hard about what it means for us. That famously enigmatic Chinese wish – “May you live in interesting times” – has suddenly acquired a special resonance.

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RESEARCH & NEWS

NEW YEAR HONOURS FOR TWO WOLFSON MEMBERS. Carrie Herbert, who studied for her PhD at Wolfson, was awarded an MBE for services to education as the founder of the pioneering Cambridge-based charity Red Balloon, which works with bullied children.

Matthew Moss, Senior Member, and Private Secretary to the University’s Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, was made a Member of the Royal Victorian Order (MVO).

THE COLLEGE IS ENORMOUSLY GRATEFUL to the late Emeritus Fellow Bill Ridgman, who left a considerable bequest to Wolfson in his Will. Part of the gift is to be used for the proper installation of the bell from Great St Mary’s Church, which stands outside the Chancellor’s Centre. Bill was a frequent ringer of that bell, being, for many years, the President of the Cambridge University Guild of Change Ringers and also, for a number of years, a Cambridge Youth ringer at the University Church, Great St Mary’s. His son, Tom, is also a Fellow of Wolfson. The remainder of Bill’s legacy is unrestricted, and the College anticipates utilising the gift for student support.

JUNIOR RESEARCH FELLOWS’ NEWS. Maria Ttofi has been awarded a two-year Jacobs Foundation/Newton Trust postdoctoral Fellowship starting in September 2012.

Research by Saroj Velamakanni and co-authors on intracellular signalling molecules was published in Nature in January 2012.

STUDENT ANDREW GOLDMAN WAS JOINT WINNER in the CUMS Concerto Competition 2012. He played the first movement of Prokofiev’s Piano Concerto No 3 in C. He will perform with the CUMS Symphony Orchestra next season, and at the Mary Bevan Recital in College on 17 June.

THE WOLFSON CARBON REDUCTION COMMITTEE has held its first meeting and is about to commission an energy audit for the College prior to deciding how best to tackle reducing the carbon footprint of all our activities.

NEWS in Brief
MEET THE COLLEGE

Wolfson’s many members make up an energetic community. Ring True reports on some of them, and the ways in which they contribute to College life.

ZAN DHESI
STUDENT

Zan joined Wolfson with quite an unusual background. She recalls: “Aged 26, I was working as a doctor at University College London Hospital. Having passed my exams to become a member of the Royal College of Physicians the next step would have been to apply for specialisation jobs. However, I decided to take the road less travelled, and instead applied to study a BA in Classics at Cambridge; a long-standing aspiration of mine.”

Being such a diverse College, she says, “Wolfson greatly appealed to me, although initially, I was somewhat apprehensive about studying a discipline that is so different from Medicine. However, the plethora of topics the Classics course offers, and the support from the College and Faculty, helped allay these concerns, and I am delighted to have the opportunity to study topics ranging from Aristotle to Renaissance Latin poetry.

Academically it has provided me with adaptable interdisciplinary skills that are equally applicable to Medicine. Furthermore, I think of Medicine as an art as much as a science, and feel that a degree in a humanities subject is an asset to any doctor. My time spent here studying Classics has undoubtedly helped me gain a new, wider perspective on life outside the familiar world of Medicine.”

OZ ARUCH
STUDENT AND WCSA GREEN OFFICER

As WCSA Green Officer, Oz is keen to “make Wolfson more environmentally friendly and aware”. After completing his military service in Israel, Oz moved to Berlin to study Philosophy and Anthropology. Whilst there, he won an international parliamentary scholarship from the German Bundestag, and explains: “I became a parliamentary assistant to a Green Party MP and my interest in environmental matters has grown stronger since. Now, alongside my course in International Relations, I am interested in promotion of a ‘green’ agenda for Wolfson.”

He says, “I am engaged in raising student awareness through regular emails and promoting activities like the Cambridge Green Week and Wolfson Green Formal Halls.” Although being here for just one year poses constraints, nevertheless, he feels that “through re-establishing the green reps’ network in College, as well as close co-operation with green teams in other Colleges, it is possible to effectively make a sustainable contribution.”

As a member of Wolfson’s Carbon Reduction Committee, Oz intends “to play an active role and help to set the College on a greener path.”

ANNA JONES
FELLOW, FORMER COLLEGE LIBRARIAN AND TUTOR

Anna became College Librarian in 2005 and has just left Wolfson to become Librarian of the Department of History and Philosophy of Science.

She explains that her role of a College Librarian in Cambridge is a very special one, saying, “Managing a collection closely tailored to the needs of a College community, especially one as varied and regularly changing as Wolfson, is stimulating.” She finds relating that service to provision elsewhere in the University is both challenging and rewarding. “Far from being lonely,” she says, “the job is full of contact with people.”

Anna has also served as a Tutor for the past three years. She recounts, “This has been an enormous privilege and I quickly realised that it was less about having the right answers and more about slowing down to listen. I’m grateful to some very inspiring people who have taught me much.”

Anna hopes to keep in touch with College via the Contemporary Reading Group, saying, “Being surrounded by books all day, it’s good to have an excuse to read some for pleasure from time to time!”
From the president

David Buck
Butler to 2011

David retired from his role as Butler last autumn, and the College held a farewell reception in his honour in December. “Work at Wolfson was a complete change for me after my previous 30 years with the Prison Service,” says David. “When I saw an ad in the paper in June 2002 for the Wolfson opening, my wife and I thought I would suit this position, given my earlier experience in catering with the Merchant Navy and in hotels.”

His first big dinner for 150 went very well, he says, “thanks to the professional attitude of the College’s long-experienced waiting staff and the way in which everybody supported each other.” Although David remembers a Fellow saying in jest, “You treat us all like prisoners!”, David’s reply was that both a College Butler and a Prison Officer had a very similar role in man management! However, David firmly believed in maintaining the highest standards of service. He is proud that he allowed neither cameras nor mobile phones at Formal Hall as these would have detracted from a convivial dining experience.

The work of a Butler is varied: there are staff matters to attend to as well as getting everything ready for dinner, including the College silver as needed, and looking after the wine cellar.

“I had a wonderful nine years at Wolfson and enjoyed the friendly atmosphere with people treating me as an equal,” he says. David also has happy memories of many Wolfson Course members. He describes Jack King, a previous Bursar and instigator of the Wolfson Course, as “one of nature’s gentlemen.”

David is a keen golfer and had visions of playing golf every morning when he retired. But first he has to get through two hip operations and then he looks forward to getting his handicap down!

Katie Hammond
Gates Scholar

Katie joined Wolfson in 2011 as a Gates Cambridge Scholar, and is pursuing an MPhil in Multi-Disciplinary Gender Studies.

“I was drawn to Wolfson for its internationally diverse population of students,” says Katie. “I have really enjoyed the opportunity to meet such an eclectic group of people from such different backgrounds.”

Katie comes from Ontario, Canada, and has a background in legal studies. Her academic interests involve looking at issues of social justice and human rights from a legal perspective, and at their impact on disadvantaged groups in society. She seeks to examine the legislation being put in place to regulate assistive reproductive technologies; in particular, the impact on women of Canadian legislation surrounding egg donation.

“Wolfson has made my transition to Cambridge an easy one,” she says. “What I love here is the strong sense of community among the students. I really appreciate the emphasis at Wolfson to get involved with the multitude of societies, clubs and activities on offer; personally I enjoyed being part of the women’s rowing team last Term.”

Ian Smith
Butler from 2012

Our new Butler joins Wolfson from Darwin College, bringing many years’ experience of College life. Before working at Darwin, Ian studied Hospitality Management at the University of North London (now London Metropolitan) and worked at a country club in Connecticut, USA. In his earlier career, he worked at Wolfson from 1986 to 1988, then for Jesus College and Trinity Hall as a Waiter, and spent seven years at Pembroke College where he reached the level of Butler.

Ian says he is delighted to be taking up the helm at Wolfson, and has plans to utilise the College’s large collection of silver, as well as introducing mints and table linen to Formal Hall. He says: “I am pleased to be back at Wolfson again after so many years. The College is a very friendly place, especially the staff who work here, and everybody has been very supportive towards me. I hope Wolfson will benefit from the experience I bring from other Colleges.”
Robert, Professor of European History at the University of Sydney, spent Michaelmas Term 2011 as a Visiting Fellow at Wolfson and at the Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities. A specialist in colonial history, he used his time in Cambridge to begin a new project on the banishment of indigenous rulers by colonial authorities.

Robert says: “Current events have seen the exile (or worse) of deposed dictators, but British and French colonial officials also disposed of local ‘potentates’ who stood in their way. The British, for instance, exiled the last Mughal emperor to Burma in 1857, and sent the last Burmese king to India in 1885. The French banished three emperors of Vietnam, the last queen of Madagascar and several Moroccan sultans.”

He explains that his study “examines the circumstances of the forced abdications of various kings, sultans and other traditional rulers, looks at their lives in exile, and considers their posthumous place in national historical narratives and commemoration.” His hope is that this research undertaken at Wolfson will contribute to a better understanding of the relations between colonial rulers and indigenous elites.

HeLEN LIMA DE SOUSA

STUDENT

Helen is a final year PhD student in Brazilian Literature focusing on national myths created after Brazil’s independence from Portugal in 1822. She says: “I enjoy learning about other cultures, which is why cosmopolitan Wolfson College stood out for me.

My own contribution to Wolfson’s vibrant atmosphere is the Capoeira Society which I set up in 2008. It provides twice-weekly Brazilian martial art classes and so far we have held three grading ceremonies and have taken part in a variety of College events.”

Her most important role, she considers, is “that of mother to my two-year-old daughter. Juggling motherhood with research and running a College Society is hard, but the College and my Supervisors have been incredibly supportive. I try to follow a strict but manageable timetable, and my daughter’s smile always picks me up after a busy day at the library.”

ANDREAS BULLING

JUNIOR RESEARCH FELLOW

Andreas studied Computer Science at the Technical University of Karlsruhe before taking a PhD in Information Technology and Electrical Engineering at ETH Zurich.

He moved to Cambridge in September 2010 with a two-year postdoctoral Fellowship awarded by the German Alexander von Humboldt Foundation to develop novel algorithms at the Computer Laboratory.

He says: “Before coming to Cambridge I wasn’t familiar with the concept of Colleges as they don’t exist in this form in Germany and Switzerland. I quickly noticed how strongly social life in Cambridge is linked to the Colleges and it therefore didn’t take me long to apply for a Junior Research Fellowship at Wolfson.” During his interview he felt “welcome and at home in a very friendly environment”.

Andreas very much enjoys College life and is glad to be at Wolfson where he has met many other postdocs from different disciplines. "Although the Computer Laboratory is on the West Cambridge Site,” he says, “I try to have lunch in College as often as possible and I have already had many inspiring discussions with different members of the College.”

Almost immediately Andreas joined the Wednesday Lunchtime Seminar Series’ organising team and he is “very happy to make his contribution to College life in this way.” See the schedule at: www.wolfson.cam.ac.uk/seminars/lunchtime

ROBERT ALDRICH

VISITING FELLOW
PhD MENTORING

Chris Town, Fellow
Following a successful pilot scheme last year, Michaelmas Term saw the introduction of Wolfson’s academic mentoring scheme. All Wolfson PhD students have the opportunity of being assigned a mentor; one of our Fellows or Senior Members working in a related subject.

About 100 participants are currently signed up to the programme, which aims to provide PhD students with additional informal support and advice in areas such as building networks of contacts; managing research and other commitments; academic publishing, and collaborations. The arrangement is also a way of fostering closer interaction between graduate students and other members of Wolfson, building on our strengths as a community.

Many students have found mentoring to be a very positive experience. A PhD student said, “My mentor helped me to pull through a difficult term in my research. Words cannot describe how grateful I am to have a mentor and to be a member of Wolfson College.”

Keep an eye out for the launch of the career mentoring scheme – to help all Wolfson members at every stage of their careers – with the launch of the new website. Contact alumni@wolfson.cam.ac.uk for details.

SPORT

Qash Ahmed, WCSA Sports Officer
Our College has a strong sporting record and this year is no exception: we have a promising group of individuals who are Cambridge Full Blues in boxing, rowing and tennis. These student athletes will be encouraged to apply to WCSA for a bursary based on their sporting success.

ROWING

Evelyn Tichy, Boat Club Captain
Over 100 freshers tried rowing during Michaelmas Term. The influx of a number of experienced rowers strengthened the men’s squad and the women were happy to find that a senior cox had joined the WCBC ranks.

Fundraising has been strong in Lent Term with the Club meeting its goal of raising £3,000 for a new set of blades for M1 through a 24-hour sponsored ergo challenge. And on a snowy Sunday in March following Lent Bumps, members and Friends of WCBC gathered by the river – with Pimms! – to celebrate the naming of three new boats: a beautiful new iV+ named ‘Capt. Jack & ZZ;’ a single scull named ‘Ingua’; and a reconditioned ‘Whiff’ (training scull) named ‘Bronwyn’.

BURNS NIGHT

Sam Thomas & Lorna Moore, Alumni
It happens every year, and it’s the opportunity to celebrate Scotland’s most revered bard, Robert Burns, and debate whether or not to eat the haggis. However, for me and my co-speaker, who were kindly invited to toast the lassies and laddies, this was also an opportunity to address the opposite sex with all those keenly felt irritations and adorations (see www.WolfsonPlus.com for Sam and Lorna’s toast speeches). As ever, Wolfson did not disappoint; the evening passed with much merriment, fine food, enthusiastic bagpiping and an energetic Ceilidh. If you’re a fan of good company, enjoy the wit of a master poet and think you’ve got what it takes to dance like a Scot, then come and join the celebrations next year (kilts optional).

MUSIC

Lynette Alcántara, Director of Music
The Saturday Lunchtime Concert Series continues to offer a wide range of styles and performers under the watchful eye of James Westbrook. Numbers in the Choir swelled to 60 singers in the autumn and it has been selected to perform at the 30th International Society for Music Education World Conference in Greece in July 2012. It is one of only three UK groups chosen.

The concert An Albert Memorial – A Concert for a Consort commemorated the 150th anniversary of Prince Albert’s death. The Choir and Chamber Singers sang works by Mendelssohn, Stanford, Walmisley and Prince Albert himself, and a rendition of Mendelssohn’s Frühlingslied was given by Wolfson pianists Tom Perski and Andrew Goldman.
FROM THE DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

KAREN STEPHENSON describes the latest alumni and development activities.

Fundraising
Wolfson’s students have felt the direct impact of the generosity of some very special donors this year.

We are delighted to report that two Wolfson alumni who studied Finance and Real Estate Finance here have made a very generous donation to support three students in these subjects this year.

In addition, six further students have been the grateful recipients of bursaries from Santander Universities. And the first beneficiary of the Oxford and Cambridge Society of Kenya scholarship is now studying at Wolfson.

These initiatives have made a real difference to the lives of the student beneficiaries, and we are enormously grateful for the generosity of these thoughtful new donors, as well as to those who continue to give such valuable ongoing support.

Thank you, also, to all our members who have responded so positively to this year’s Wolfson Annual Appeal: the total stands at £26,000 after just two months, and continues to grow.

Communications
We are grateful to everyone who sent us such positive comments about the redesigned Ring True and, later in the year, the Wolfson Review. We are delighted to hear that you enjoyed your new-look publications so much, and aim to bring you the same high level of content and design in each issue.

We are also pleased with the positive response to www.WolfsonPlus.com – the online news portal for more regular, and more in-depth, news than we are able to bring you in printed form. Tom Laws, our new Fundraising & Communications Administrator, is due to take up his post with us shortly, and will be working to bring you news via all these channels, as well as through the termly e-bulletin.

Please let us have your email address if you don’t receive the e-bulletin. In addition you can now find us in the following places:

facebook.com/WolfsonCollege
twitter.com/WolfsonCam
LinkedIn.com group: Wolfson College, Cambridge
flickr.com/groups/WolfsonCollege
www.WolfsonNetwork.com

Events
Our supporters Santander hosted a wonderful reception for alumni in Madrid in November, where Cambridge Vice-Chancellor and Wolfson Honorary Fellow Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz spoke of the University’s plans for the future.

Closer to home, we were delighted to see over 100 Wolfson members at our annual London drinks reception at the Oxford and Cambridge Club in January. Many thanks to everyone who made the evening such a success.

Thank you also to those who were with us in Dublin for the Wolfson get-together, with one Press Fellow joining us from as far away as New Zealand. We advertise all our Wolfson events online at www.WolfsonEvents.com, so do double-check, especially if you are travelling, as you may find that we happen to be in a city you are planning to visit.

Many of our current students joined us for our Half Way Drinks reception in February, before going on to celebrate the mid-point of the academic year at Half Way Hall. We hold this event annually and were pleased this year to welcome back students we have seen in past years, as well as those only at Wolfson for one year.
Forthcoming Events
Shooting is almost complete for our Wolfson film, and we hope to begin the editing process soon. Thank you to all those who have given their time to support this exciting project.

Following the success of last year’s Bumps event, we will also have our marquee by the river for Friday of the May Bumps – 15 June. Keep an eye on www.Wolfsonevents.com for details.

The annual President’s Cup cricket match, between the Students’ XI and the President’s XI, will be held on Sunday 1 July. All alumni, Fellows, Senior Members and staff wishing to volunteer for the President’s team should contact the Bursar at college-secretary@wolfson.cam.ac.uk. The President’s XI regained the trophy last year after 10 successive wins by the Students’ XI.


The events calendar is updated every week on the website. For a direct link, you can scan the QR code with your mobile, or visit: www.Wolfsonevents.com

WCSA NEWS
Rasha Rezk, WCSA President

WCSA’s bops and fundraising events are continuing with various styles of music and international Formal Halls. This Term we have initiated a number of Formal swaps for Wolfson students to meet and network with students from other Colleges. Swaps have been held around Cambridge, and the lively attendance and enjoyable atmosphere have quickly led to new contacts and friendships.

We are also planning a joint event with St Antony’s College Oxford: students from our twin College will join us for a BBQ and some sports competitions, and of course we will visit them in Oxford.

INTERNATIONAL WEEK
Lan Xiao (David) & Marina Salorio-Corbetto, WCSA International Officers

Wolfson celebrated its rich variety of cultural backgrounds in an International Week this January. A Karaoke event on the Monday saw students sing songs popular in their own countries. To celebrate Chinese New Year, the CU Lion Dance Troupe performed before Tuesday’s Formal Hall. On Wednesday, we screened the award-winning Lebanese film Caramel, followed by a discussion on culture and post-civil-war life in Lebanon. Thursday night’s Dance Show featured our own Capoeira Society, the CU Indian Classical Arts Society and performances of traditional Kathak dance and South Indian Carnatic Music as a tribute to India’s Republic Day. British customs were not forgotten, with a Burns Night Formal Hall followed by a Ceilidh on Friday, and a traditional British tea party on Saturday. The week ended with a celebration of Armenian culture.

WOLFSO NOODLE CLUB
Naisheng Cui, Student

This is a conversation club to help non-native English speakers practise English through regular conversation with native speakers. In each session, you can enjoy tasty noodles, and also have an opportunity to engage in conversation with others on an interesting topic. Some reading material relevant to the topic (eg, a newspaper or magazine article) will be provided beforehand. Noodles symbolise long-lasting friendship in Chinese culture and this is what I am trying to achieve.
LET IT RAIN
PHIL STIGWOOD, HEAD GARDENER

2011 was the second driest year since 1900 in Cambridge, and annual rainfall totals have dropped every year since 2008 (from 600mm to 380mm in three years). Cambridgeshire is one of the driest areas in the UK and we are now under the restrictions of a hose pipe ban, with ground water levels being similar to those of 1976 when water had to be rationed. So unless we get a lot of rain soon, the many new plantings could get very thirsty indeed. You may well see the Garden team doing a ‘rain dance’ or two in the coming months!

The winter garden looked spectacular in the recent snowfall, following an unusually mild autumn and winter. Bulbs which peeped out from under a blanket of snow are now beginning to bloom.