

# HAAS

## Heythrop Association of Alumni and Staff

Edition Thirteen

December 2014

**W**ELCOME TO THIS EDITION OF THE HEYTHROP ALUMNI MAGAZINE. With many changes happening at Heythrop it's not been possible to produce a full magazine, but in an effort to keep in touch this slimmer edition gives a flavour of some of what's been happening over the past months, together with information about some forthcoming events. In October, at the AGM, I (Simon Gillespie) was re-elected President, with Chris Kendrick as Treasurer and Helen Granger as Secretary; Alan Rainer has stepped down from the Committee after many years, as has Ben Lund-Conlon; Bill Russell and Jenny O'Neill continue on the Committee, and Jill Bulman has been elected anew. Annabel Clarkson continues as the College Liaison, and Alex Jozsa as HSU Liaison. Many thanks to all of them for their hard work and untiring efforts on behalf of the wider family of Heythrop College!

*Simon Gillespie HAAS President  
BD (2005); MA Canon Law (2008)*

## Heythrop's Future ?

*At the recent AGM we were very grateful to Fr Michael Holman, Principal of Heythrop College, who addressed the meeting and explained the reasoning behind the current negotiations over Heythrop's future.*

Fr Holman confirmed that Heythrop was in conversation with St Mary's University, Twickenham, about a partnership or merger for financial reasons. He explained that since the 1970s much had changed:

- The many Jesuit, diocesan clergy and religious staff who had worked for a reduced salary were now fewer in number and they had had to hire other teachers at full cost.
- The way funding had been given to the college had changed, meaning more administration costs.
- The expectations of the student experience had risen, to include internships and career advice and it was difficult to compete with larger universities.

The free market in Higher Education meant that universities could expand and specialise, the larger universities attracting more research money and students.

To preserve their ecclesiastical faculties and denominational identity and ensure that Heythrop's mission would continue, Governors had determined that the best way was to continue negotiations with St Mary's. The University of London had been kept fully informed of the situation.

Heythrop College is continuing its discussions with St. Mary's University after both institutions have completed due diligence on the other.

*The College then issued the following statement on Monday 1 December, updating the present position.*

Following agreement from the Governing Bodies of both institutions, the talks will now explore potential models of partnership with a view to reaching a final decision by Easter 2015.

At its meeting on Thursday (27 November), Heythrop's Governors discussed the position for current students. They have confirmed that all current students at Heythrop College will continue to receive degrees from the University of London upon successful completion of their studies. This continuity of education is guaranteed. A group of staff and students has already been established to focus on this over the coming months. Additional resources will also be made available to the Heythrop Students' Union to develop the wider student experience during this period.

The Governors also considered recruitment to the College in September 2015. In the circumstances, they have decided not to admit undergraduates for University of London degrees.

Recruitment will continue for postgraduate programmes and for the professional



programme for the Catholic priesthood. The College has consulted extensively inside the College, including with student representatives and outside the College, including with the University of London, with the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and with the Society of Jesus.

Commenting after the Governing Body meeting, Principal Fr. Michael Holman said: "The governors of Heythrop College have been looking at ways in which its valuable and important mission in the teaching and research of theology and philosophy can be maintained and developed in years ahead.

"We are all well aware of the challenges we face in meeting the costs of an autonomous college of the University of London. These challenges are all the greater in the more competitive world of higher education which this government has been introducing. The gap between income and expenditure has been bridged for many years by the Society of Jesus but their capacity to continue to do this is limited.

"The discussions with St Mary's offer us an opportunity to secure Heythrop's mission in the form of a strategic partnership with another institution which shares our Catholic educational tradition. We will continue and deepen our talks with a view to preparing a proposal which both governing bodies will consider by Easter 2015. In the meantime, our focus is on continuing to support our students and staff."

# What are the links between Theology and the Arts?

A PRESENTATION GIVEN FOR THE RELIGIOUS DRAMA SOCIETY [RADIUS] AND A SHORTENED VERSION OF A PAPER GIVEN AT THE SHAPED BY BEAUTY CONFERENCE AT HEYTHROP COLLEGE, 26 JUNE 2014

Theatre, like theology, asks the big questions of life. When I trained as an actor, I was thinking about the same things for the characters I was portraying, as I was when I was discussing as part of my theology degree. Both subjects require us to deal with the puzzling and less pleasant side of human nature. I will talk about the concept of **truth and being truthful** for both actor and non-actor, the benefits of being **creative** and why **imagination** is key.

For many actors, the message they communicate on the screen or on the stage is more honest than what is acceptable to talk about in so-called real life, and that includes the church. Ironically in the theatre, within the framework of pretence and under the label of entertainment, we are presented with a picture of how people really are. It seems that it takes creativity to bring us to our senses.

But is 'creativity' so very external? In Channel Four's series **The Bible: A History** in 2010, various well known people were looking at faith in the modern world. I was particularly interested in Howard Jacobson's episode (24 January) where he was investigating creativity and religion. He said he wanted to access the imaginative necessity that drives people to believe and concluded that mystery, uncertainty and doubt were the very elements that make creativity: creativity roots us in our own drama. Jacobson seemed to be saying that it was the creative process one goes through to find faith that is important and what one then does with this. Jacobson says of novels: *'Novels matter...because they show how each individual life feels to the person living it. Until we are able to enter into another's understanding of himself, we are imaginatively deaf and blind. Not to be sure is not cowardice... In our unstable and brutal world we need more people willing to admit they are unsure, not fewer.'* Former Chief Rabbi Dr Jonathan Sacks says it is man's search for God that is the driving drama in the Bible.

So it strikes me that the ability to 'wonder' is key to our existence to be meaningful. **Wonderment is part of our mission to lead a truthful life, even if we struggle to know the truth.** As Jacobson illustrates, not to search is synonymous with not having an imagination and we can't live without this. My point? **The institutions of Belief and the institutions of the Arts are more closely related than we think – the entry audition to both requires one element: imagination. Searching and wonderment is the continual journey of the actor, the church community and every human being.**

Art uses what is real and takes us into the world

of pretence or 'out of the ordinary', in order to bring us back to what is real. It is the unknowability of something that makes it interesting. Even if our questions are not answered, we need platforms - both pulpit and stage - from which to ask them and perhaps it is consolation that the ambiguities remain. To go back to the start of this talk, it is the search that is important as this is what creates the journey. For an actor, once they grasp what is real, they can then communicate this in the 'make-believe' setting of the stage or the film set.

We become real by exploring the unreal or the intangible. Belief in God is not concrete, so you will see my analogy here. We explore belief in God, we ask questions, and each time we become a little more in tune with ourselves. **As an actor**, imagination equips me to cross the border between myself and the person I'm playing. **As an audience member**, imagination is the equipment from which we can gain empathy to not only understand actors on a stage but the people we encounter in daily life. Imagination in this sense is the bridge from one human to another.

**As a church leader**, imagination is a key tool for any church leader to communicate to his or her congregation. **As a church-goer**, you have to make the jump between sitting in the pew to understanding a gospel story and its wider meaning, and imagination will help you make that internal leap. If a **church leader** can be creative and even dramatic to help their congregation understand faith, the Bible and the concept of God, it is likely to not only be a more real experience but whatever point they are trying to make at the end of it is likely to be believed. **My point is that having a biblical imagination is likely to make the truth, or a truthful concept, easier to grasp.**

So long as there is humanity there will be need for drama, and more broadly the arts. Plays, like the stories in the Bible, are never just about their external subject matter - they always point to something more. We therefore need tools such as the imagination to interpret both religion and the arts. The play *Ghosts*, by Henrik Ibsen, about many things including the unfaithfulness of a husband to his wife resulting in their son being born with syphilis, caused the playwright Brecht to say that it became irrelevant as soon as syphilis became curable. But as Samuel Beckett replied, **"You are human and there's no cure for that."**

Anna Wheeler  
BA Theology 2003

Anna graduated with the BA Theology in 2003 and went on to train as an actor after teaching abroad. Her day job is in Further Education but she is also involved in various musical and dramatic projects outside of this. Her interest is in the links between the humanities and the arts. She keeps a blog at <http://openplatforms.wordpress.com>

## LOST CHILD FOUND AT CHRISTMAS

Accountability, responsibility –  
not on my patch.  
Who cares? No one shares.  
Can't find a match.

Our world's about money.  
Is that its main goal?  
Commercial Christmas and spending –  
is that its real soul?

Father Christmas, Santa Claus –  
he's good for the shops.  
Mince pies, obese turkeys  
not able to hop.

Cuddly toys, fairy lights  
that's now the scene.  
Jingle bells and robins –  
we're all now so keen.

Where's Jesus, you say,  
the child and the mother,  
the sheep, the shepherds,  
the wise dudes and other?

In the shops is the answer,  
in the presents you buy.  
Can't see him, can't find him,  
perhaps he is too shy.

He's not there to be seen,  
but there all the same.  
He's our maker and model  
and the purpose of our game.

So find Jesus in the melee,  
the chimneys, the nativity.  
He's with you in the crowds,  
the bustle and activity.

Give joy to your Lord,  
celebrate the big event.  
God dispatched the Child Jesus,  
it's to you he was sent.

John Lowe  
MA Christian Ethics, 2007  
[john.lowe@regentcoaching.com](mailto:john.lowe@regentcoaching.com)

I AM WRITING IN FURTHER TO THE INVITATION IN THE HEYTHROP MAGAZINE OF SOME MONTHS AGO, ASKING STUDENTS WHAT THEY HAD GONE ON TO DO . . .

The MA in Christian Theology teaching was rigorous and compassionate, a remarkable lack of ego amongst the tutors. I learnt that it is what we do that matters – or try to do - not what we think we do or talk about.

Then I studied the post-grad diploma in psychology with the Open University. Some interesting stuff about the mind but also a lot of academics building their reputations.

During all this time I looked after my children.

Four years ago I qualified as a Solicitor. I have worked on several large cases as well as smaller ones. I specialise in dealing with fraud. My theology helps me keep balance when I encounter the evidence of misguided actions by some people and their greed which harms or even devastates other lives.

Alan Shenton  
MA Christian Theology 2004





# Heythrop College

The Specialist Philosophy and Theology College  
of the University of London

400  
YEARS

1614-2014

**D**URING THIS 400TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR, Heythrop Alumni have retraced some of the footsteps of our forebears, making visits to 'Old' Heythrop (in Heythrop, Oxfordshire), 'Middle' Heythrop (in Cavendish Square, London) and a return to the present site, in Kensington Square..

The visit to Cavendish Square, to what is now the Kings Fund, saw about 20 alumni enjoying a brief tour of the ground floor of the building, together with Afternoon Tea, and reminiscences from staff and students who were there between 1970 and 1993. Although the internal layout has changed beyond recognition, the familiar exterior has remained much the same, with the striking sculpture of Jacob Epstein's *Madonna and Child*.



In May, a slightly larger group travelled on the bank holiday to rural Oxfordshire, where we were joined by Dr Gerry J Hughes for a guided tour of the 'Old' Heythrop buildings and grounds. We enjoyed a very fine lunch, before having some free time to explore further, and imagine what life must have been like for students in former times, in so remote a location.

The highlight of the year came on 5 June, when 40 alumni and their guests gathered in Kensington Square for a drinks reception at the present Heythrop site, before travelling over the High Street to dine in the Royal Garden Hotel. It was a wonderful evening, meeting friends old and new, and reminiscing about lectures attended (and missed!), essays finally written, and the whole panoply of student life. As the evening—and indeed the 400th year—drew to a close, Dr Peter Gallagher (on behalf of the Principal) wished all the alumni well, thanked us for our contribution to the life of the College, and proposed a toast to the College's future and all that that might bring.





# Heythrop's History

After our HAAS AGM on 23 October 2013, Michael Walsh, former librarian at Heythrop College, gave a short talk on the history of Heythrop from Louvain to London: Theology on the Hoof. Michael was writing a book to mark Heythrop's 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary and his lecture gave us an entertaining preview of it.

Heythrop College is named after the Oxfordshire village where the college resided from 1926 to 1970 before it moved to London, first to Cavendish Square and thence to its present home in Kensington Square but it claims direct descent from the house of studies founded in Louvain in Belgium in 1614 for the education of Jesuit priests, to which English novices were sent. Michael went into the question of its continuity and showed that the college of staff and students survived the various moves from Louvain to Liège to Stonyhurst and St Beuno's, to Heythrop and then London, and continued even during the papal suppression of the Jesuits for over 40 years.

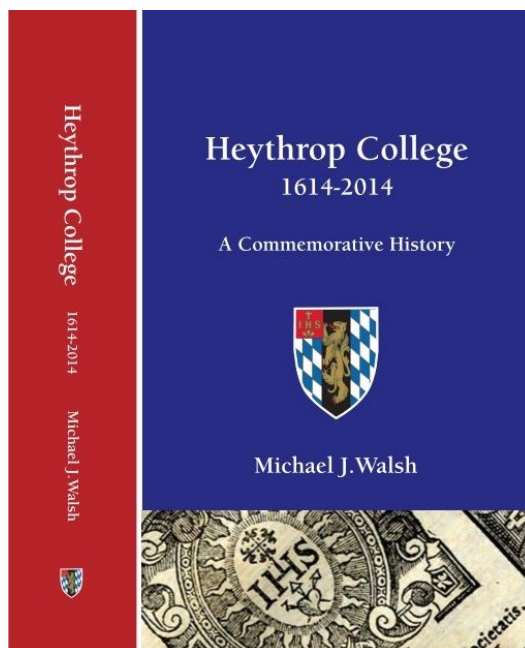
From the beginning the education itself was fairly wide – not only were philosophy and theology taught and the Biblical languages of Hebrew and Greek, but also polemics, the art of refuting heretics, and various sciences especially mathematics, optics and astronomy so that Jesuits could hold their own with learned men. There was an observatory in the grounds in Liège and sundials designed by a Jesuit which impressed

the future Charles II so that he asked for one for his palace gardens when he became King. Documents such as the 1632 "Customs Book" showed that the daily life of the students and their teaching and exam systems remained much the same for 300 years until the 1950s. It was at Heythrop during the 1960s that the facilities were opened to other religious orders and to diocesan priests but it was too remote and the decision was made to move to London and become one of

the colleges of University of London. Now lay people outnumber the Jesuits and other religious as students. By the end of the talk staff and alumni had a better appreciation of their college, the oldest Jesuit institution with a continuous history.

The Book on sale, and can be ordered from the College (contact Annabel Clarkson, a.clarkson@heythrop.ac.uk), price £10 (& £2.50 for p&p). To give you a taste:

*"The College which is now Heythrop has a long and distinguished – if somewhat peripatetic – history. Founded by the Society of Jesus in Louvain in 1614, it managed to survive the Suppression of the Society, though after moving back to England in 1794 it nearly succumbed to the hostility of the English bishops. In this commemorative history, Michael Walsh talks about the College's various locations, and explains why it moved; he describes the people who taught in it and the lives of the students who studied in it; and he discusses what was taught, not least the surprising amount of science that used to find a place in the Jesuit curriculum."*



## Two Forthcoming Heythrop College Book Launches

**Centre for Philosophy of Religion, Heythrop College**

### *Philosophy of Religion: Towards a More Humane Approach*

Professor John Cottingham

### *God, Value, and Nature*

Dr Fiona Ellis

### *The Evidence for God*

Professor Keith Ward

**Tuesday 9 December 2014 at 6.00pm**

The Loyola Hall, Heythrop College

There will be short presentations from each of the authors followed by a wine reception, and an opportunity to purchase the new books.

*There is no charge for entry  
but please register with k.scott@heythrop.ac.uk*

**Heythrop Institute: Religion and Society**

cordially invites you to attend the book launch of

### *A Theory of Catholic Education*

published by Bloomsbury on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2014

written by **Dr Sean Whittle**

with a response by

**Dr Michael Kirwan SJ, Head of Theology at Heythrop**

**Thursday 11 December 2014 at 6.30pm**

Preceded and followed by a wine reception

*Copies of the book will be available at a significantly reduced rate*

RSVP to Alex Mandich : a.mandich@heythrop.ac.uk

by Monday 8 December 2014

*Sean Whittle is a Post-doctoral Research Fellow at Heythrop. He is an alumnus of Heythrop, having completed the BA and MTh in the 1990s. He completed his PhD in the Philosophy of Education at the Institute of Education, University of London, in September 2013. Sean is a secondary school teacher of RE and has over twenty years' experience of working in Catholic schools in London.*