

FROM KING'S TO KEBLE

Keble's warden-elect speaks about her new job



Averil Cameron, Professor of Late Antique and Byzantine Studies at King's College, London, will take over in October as Keble's new warden

The traditional warden of an Oxbridge college is academic, great and good. The next warden of Keble has all of these qualities—and something more.

She's a woman.

Not, in her words, a "raring-to-go feminist"—but nevertheless, a woman.

Professor Averil Cameron, who will take office in October, currently holds the Chair in Late Antique and Byzantine Studies at King's College, London. She's also the Director of Hellenic Studies at King's and a fellow of the British Academy. She studied Greats at Somerville, then progressed smoothly up the academic ladder at King's, beginning with the classics before moving to Byzantine and modern Greek.

Professor Cameron is currently editing three volumes of the Cambridge Ancient History and also has edited the *Journal of Roman Studies*. She has two children by her former husband,

fellow classicist Alan Cameron: Daniel, 26, graduated from the University of Manchester in geography and now works as an industrial consultant, and Sophie, 22, graduated from Cambridge in English and has a job with a publishing company. So much for academic, great and good.

Now let's talk about sex. Keble isn't exactly overflowing with women—the College was all-male until 1979 and currently has just one female don. The male-female ratio among undergraduates is nearly 2:1; among postgraduates, 4:1. Consequently, the appointment of Keble's first-ever female warden is, to say the least, an interesting move.

"It is a far-sighted and forward-looking move which has been very clearly thought about," Professor Cameron said. "They were very nice about the whole selection procedure, very civilized. They left a good impression.

"Certainly I hope to see more women here, and I think the fellows do too. I think this appointment will show Oxford something and it will show the world something."

How about Keble politics? "As a historian, I'm a believer in tradition. Nevertheless, I know Keble has been modernizing recently, and I welcome that.

"I want to gain the confidence of all members. I've read the aims of Keble's founders, and I approve of access for students from families of a non-university background."

Professor Cameron has yet to formulate any definite plans for her time at Keble. As she said, "I am an outsider to Keble, and I shall be learning." In view of Professor Cameron's record, however, it probably won't take her long.

R.A.C. ❖

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ABOUT THE BRICK

Welcome to *the brick*, a new newsletter written for Keble's former members by Keble's present ones.

Our aim is to give you a feel for the life of the College and its members, present and past, term by term. We hope you'll enjoy the mix of articles on events and issues affecting College life.

We especially welcome contributions from former members. Our address is *the brick*, c/o the Development Office, Keble College, Oxford OX1 3PG. We look forward to hearing from you.

K.K.S. ❖

ANOTHER BRICK IN THE WALL

Arco Building gets off ground as existing rooms are renovated

Work is well under way on the new Arco Building in the Fellows' Garden, the cornerstone of a master plan that will bring dramatic changes to Keble over the next two years.

The building, for which the American oil company Arco have contributed some £850,000 to date, will be completed next May. It will provide 93 suites for undergraduates, each with its own bathroom.

At the same time, the College has begun converting bedrooms in the old Victorian buildings into bathrooms. Under the scheme, some 154 suites will be transformed by the end of next year.

The College also plans to redecorate the rooms and corridors in the Victorian buildings and to create up to four seminar rooms in the Clock Tower.

The purpose of the improvements is twofold. When all of the projects are



December: The Warden looks on as Lodwick Cook, Chairman and Chief Executive of Arco, turns the sod at a ceremony marking the start of construction on the new Arco Building

complete, Keble will be able to accommodate almost all of its undergraduates in College for the duration of their courses. Keble will also be well-placed in the ever-

escalating battle to attract conference business.

Over the last decade, conference revenue has declined from 20% of the College's income to 10%. College officials project that upon completion of the ongoing and proposed improvements, this figure can be increased to at least 30%.

As Keble is one of the University's youngest and therefore poorest colleges, conference revenue, together with contributions from former members and benefactors, will be vital to the College's future.

"The financial challenge facing colleges committed to the highest academic standards is huge," said Roger Boden, the College's Development Director. "If Keble is to continue to provide the quality of tuition from which previous generations of students have benefitted so much, it has to become more self-reliant."



Nick Perry

June: Construction continues on the Arco Building in the Fellows' Garden

CHURCH MOVES IN KEBLE-RELATED WAYS

Chaplain consecrated as bishop after 22 years at Keble

After 22 years as Keble's chaplain, the Revd Dr Geoffrey Rowell was consecrated as suffragan Bishop of Basingstoke in a ceremony February 2nd at St Paul's Cathedral.

Speaking after his appointment, Dr Rowell echoed former Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie's remark that a priest must be "an actor and an antique dealer".

"I anticipate a wonderfully varied job at Basingstoke, and one that will also have a national role," he said. "My priority is to shape a vision for the diocese."

Although he is clearly aware of the political implications of his appointment from the Catholic end of the Church, Dr Rowell foresees an important "healing process" taking place.

As for his parting advice to the College, he said, "Remember the strong gentleness of John Keble, his poet's sense of vision, his pastoral



Keith Ellis/ARPS

The Rt Revd Dr Geoffrey Rowell (right) with the Archbishop of Canterbury and former Keble members Sir David Williams and Peter North, the Vice Chancellors of Cambridge and Oxford Universities respectively

reverence of others, and his sense of the overarching mystery of God and the beauty of creation."

The Revd Philip Knights assumed the duties of college chaplain for the last two terms of the year. The Revd John Davies, who was a student at Keble under Dr Rowell in the 1970s, will become Keble's permanent new chaplain next term.

In other Keble-related church news, the Rt Revd Michael Turnbull, Bishop of Rochester, has been appointed to succeed David Jenkins as Bishop of Durham later this year.

After starting his career with a BA in geography from Keble in 1958, Dr Turnbull served in a variety of posts in the dioceses of St Albans and York before a stint as Chief Secretary of the Church Army. After that, he was assigned to Rochester, where he spent four years as archdeacon before being consecrated as bishop in 1988.



Courtesy of the Church of England



Emmanuel Franks

The Most Revd and Rt Hon George Carey, Archbishop of Canterbury, at the Ascension Day service in the Chapel.

The College Visitor, the Most Revd and Rt Hon George Carey, Archbishop of Canterbury, delivered the Ascension Day sermon in the Chapel May 12.

The Archbishop, who praised John Keble's "personal holiness, scholarship and unswerving commitment to his Church", discussed the theological dilemma of Christ's ascension, with emphasis on the manner and meaning of His departure.

He urged the congregation not to let the "theological truth of salvation" in Christ cause them

to lose sight of the importance of social and political change, citing the recent inauguration of Nelson Mandela, which the Archbishop attended, as an example of such change.

Later, in an apparently indirect reference to Dr Rowell, who was also present, the Archbishop recalled John Keble's commitment to unity and renewal before stressing, "The Church needs its Catholic wing just as that tradition needs the rest of us." He then referred to the recent meeting in London of various bishops, including Dr Rowell, from this wing of the Church.

NAKED WOMAN IN HALL!

The story behind Keble's least appreciated and most notorious painting

What is it? That's the question that Keble students have been asking for years about the nine-metre-wide oil painting hanging over the entrance to Hall. Now, at long last, comes the answer. The painting is entitled "A Story From Boccaccio" and was painted by G.F. Watts in 1844. It's currently on loan from the Tate Gallery, which claimed to have no space for it.

As the title suggests, the painting depicts a story from Boccaccio—specifically, from his *Decameron* (circa 1350). In the story, the young gallant Anastasio falls in love with the daughter of a noble. After she tells him to go away, he goes for a walk in the woods to think things over. There, he sees a half-naked, bloodied damsel running towards him, followed by two fierce bloodhounds and a knight in shining armour.

In passing, the knight reveals himself to be Guido, Anastasio's dead uncle, who had committed suicide after being spurned by a cruel woman. Both were condemned to eternal punishment: Guido to hunt the woman he loved, the woman to be hunted by the man she scorned.

Every time Guido catches her, he must cut out her hard heart and throw it to his dogs. She is then restored to life, and the chase begins anew.

Anastasio learns that Uncle Guido's Travelling Torture Act passes through that very grove every Friday. So, naturally, he invites the love of his life, along with some friends, to a feast the following Friday in the grove.

As the feast ends, the Chased Maid arrives with the Hounds of Hell and Guido the Killer Knight in tow. (This is the scene portrayed in Watts' painting.) Guido repeats his story,



Anastasio and friends in G.F. Watts' "A Story From Boccaccio"...

Anastasio's beloved takes the hint, and she agrees to marry him. They are married the next week and live happily ever after.

So, how is this story relevant to Keble? Here are a few possible explanations:

- The painting offers a cynical moral on Love, depicting man as "an enemy to himself" (and to his bank account) as well as portraying the "cruelty of women".
- Guido's sword-and-dog routine can be seen as a metaphor for modern-day "sharking". (Definition for members graduating before 1979 available on request.)
- The High Table simply likes to ogle a naked woman over their port.

Ultimately, however, Boccaccio and Watts extend a helping hand (and a knowing wink) across the centuries to students of the College. Keble men are encouraged to imitate Anastasio



...and the Chased Maid

and invite prospective girlfriends to dine in Hall to take a subtle hint. Keble women, on the other hand, can readily identify with the feeling of being chased by a pack of dogs. After all, some things never change.

KEBLE DRAMA MAKES SPLASH

Thespian scene flourishes in “redbrick madhouse”

All the world’s a stage, especially the world of Oxford drama. And in that world, Keble is playing an increasingly prominent role. A profusion of talented thespians and technicians has led to a large number of plays featuring Keblites. Here’s a quick look at three of the plays originating from the redbrick madhouse this term.



Vani Ravinthiran, Rachel Harrison, Theodora Sutcliffe, and Amanda Kelly in “The Chrysalids”

“You Might As Well Live”

Imagine a half-Jewish, female, alcoholic, New York version of Oscar Wilde, and you’ve got a glimpse of Dorothy Parker, the 1920s American wit and subject of the one-woman show “You Might As Well Live”.

The self-destructive poet was played by Jacqueline Haigh, who won the award for best adaptation in the freshers Cuppers competition last autumn. Haigh also co-wrote the show with Dermot Canterbury.



Hugh Welchman in “Eclectical Belief”

“The Chrysalids”

The Keble-based Outburst Theatre Company presented a vibrant, daring adaptation of John Wyndham’s classic science-fiction novel “The Chrysalids”.

Set in a post-nuclear world where people are always on the lookout for mutants, the play tells the story of 10 year-old David (Antony Edgar), who discovers that he is telepathic.

Jo Woolf directed an entertaining show, replete with bubbles, smoke machines, and an extraterrestrial visitor.

“Eclectical Belief”

Put together three short plays exploring the tensions of belief in our times, and the result is “Eclectical Belief”.

“Miner’s Monologue”, the story of an ex-miner’s disillusionment with media manipulation, was written and performed by Hugh Welchman, while

“L’Idée de Dieu” and “Piece” were adapted by Seb Martineau from works by Milan Kundera and Iain Banks.

Overall, the trilogy, like much of the rest of Keble drama this term, was hard-hitting and thought-provoking.

D.M.C. ♦



Gabi Fleming in “The Chrysalids”

DIPSOCS: IN OR OUT?

Keble's Governing Body slashes number of students pursuing Special Diploma

In a recent meeting, Keble's Governing Body voted to reduce the number of students pursuing the Special Diploma in Social Studies (DipSoc) next year by 43%, from 21 to 12.

On the surface, this decision might seem less than newsworthy, since the Governing Body is constantly juggling quotas for students pursuing various courses.

But the DipSoc is not like other degrees—nor, in fact, is it technically a degree at all. All 21 students pursuing the DipSoc this year are men, and almost all of them are athletes. In fact, students pursuing the DipSoc made up a majority of Keble's 10-man contingent in Oxford's 15-man side for the varsity rugby match last December.

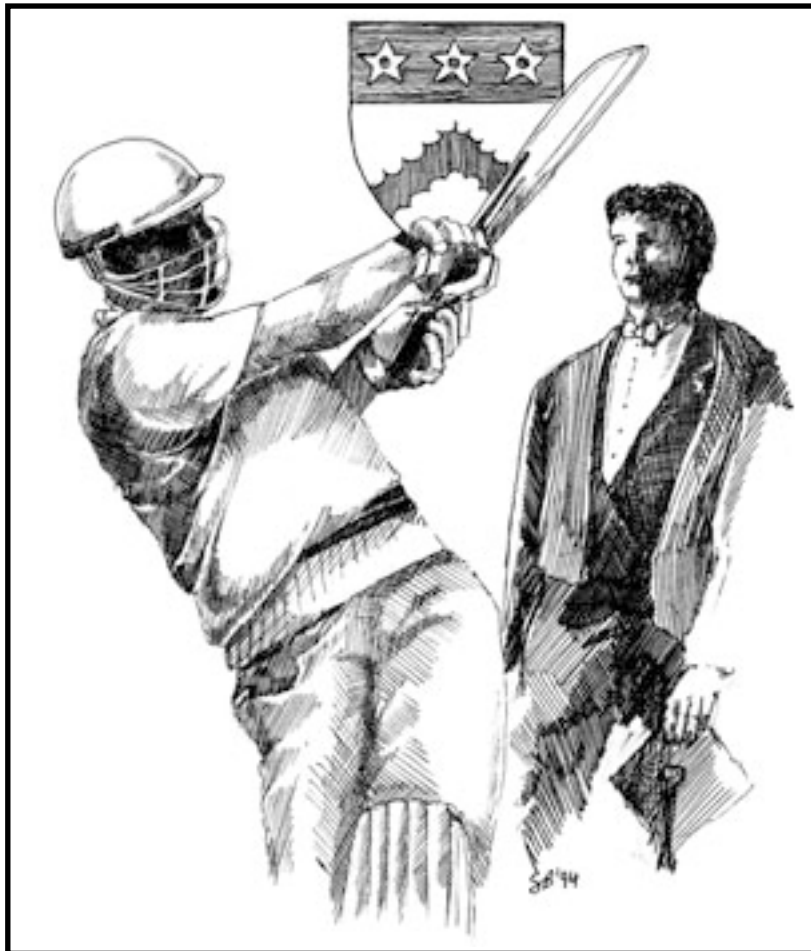
At first, this massive representation might seem to be a good thing, promoting Keble's profile in the news media. But the DipSoc has been hit in recent months by negative publicity in the press, as pundits have questioned whether what *The Oxford Handbook* called Keble's "relaxed admissions policy" for the DipSoc may have led to its disproportionate presence in University sports squads.

Critics suggest that Keble's reputation as a haven for athletes may be deterring students of high academic standing from applying. They also criticize the academic standards of the DipSoc and argue that the large numbers of students pursuing the DipSoc—far greater than those in any

The DipSoc, however, is not without its defenders, whose case was put by Dr Paul Hayes in an article in last year's *Record*. They argue that since the DipSoc is a diploma and not a full-fledged degree program, criticisms of the DipSoc for having lower academic standards are invalid. Moreover, while the standards required for the Diploma may be less demanding than for degree courses, all of the DipSocs come to Keble with degrees from other institutions, and many go on to further degree courses in Oxford.

The debate seems likely to continue for some time to come. It raises central questions about the College's purpose, the balance between academic and other activities, and the nature of the image Keble projects externally. Whether the cut in numbers of students pursuing the DipSoc will defuse the controversy or lead to calls for further cuts, however, is anyone's guess.

K.K.S. ❖



Sport and academia: can they co-exist?

other College—have adversely affected the balance of Keble's social life. Last autumn, the MCR Committee circulated a petition to the Warden claiming that the sheer number of DipSoc students was creating "social disharmony" within the MCR.

We would welcome the views of former members on this or any other subject covered in *the brick*.

KEBLE DOMINATES SPORTS SCENE

Successes in Cuppers, Eights crown banner year

Keble has traditionally been a strong sporting college, and this year has been no exception. With victories in football and rugby Cuppers and strong performances by College entries in hockey, netball and rowing, Keble has done nothing to damage its reputation. Here are some of the highlights—and few lowlights—from the end of the sporting year.

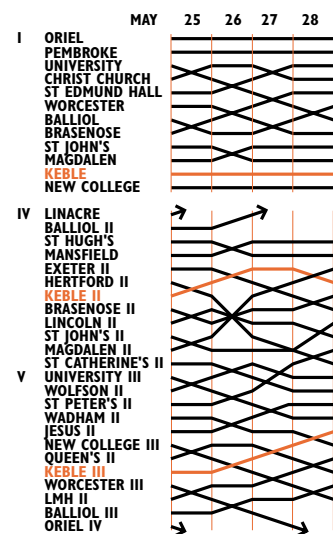
Rowing

Things are looking up for Keble rowing. Leading the way in summer Eights were the women's second team. The crew, made up largely of former first-team rowers, were on their way to winning blades after three successive bumps, including one near Donnington Bridge, before missing out on the final day. The women's first team were solid, if less spectacular, holding their own in the competitive first division with one bump in the four days of competition.

On the men's side, the first team rowed over on all four days, maintaining their 11th place on the river. The second and third teams combined for an impressive five bumps.

Ian Streule, next year's Boat Club captain, saw positive signs in Keble's performance. "There is a lot of talent in the first year," he said. "If we get good freshers next year, the improvement will continue."

R.C.H.B. ❖



Rugby

The rugby season was one of mixed success. With a team dominated by five Blues, seven Greyhounds, and a Canadian international (Gareth Rees), Keble stormed unchallenged to victory in Cuppers, trouncing Brasenose 76-23 in the final. Blue Neil Martin scored five tries for Keble, who were captained by James Bryce, son of Scottish prop Hamish Bryce.

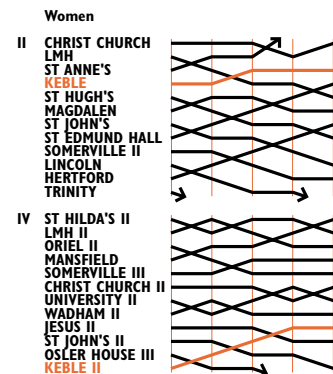
Unfortunately, Blues were ineligible for league competition, and with less first-year interest than in previous years, Keble were unceremoniously relegated from the first division.

L.J.S. ❖



Keble's rugby team performs a haka before the Cuppers final

Michael Tabot



Cricket

It was all going so well. Two convincing league victories, and the men's firsts were seemingly on their way to the title. But against Corpus Christi, Keble squandered a winning position with poor fielding. And the vital match against Brasenose was rained off, leaving the 'Nose league champions.

But it was in the first round of Cuppers that disaster really struck. Due to scheduling conflicts with various University matches, no fewer than 24 Keble players were called away, leaving a scratch Keble team to go down to defeat against Balliol despite a sparkling 31 from Ed Green.

R.C.H.B. ❖

PEOPLE

Keble student elected president of Oxford Union

For the first time in 15 years, Keble has produced a president of the Oxford Union Society. After a successful term as librarian, Peter Gowers romped to a landslide victory in elections last March.

The biggest turnout in Keble history voted overwhelmingly for Gowers, who as librarian interviewed such luminaries as Bob Holness and Ian Hislop.



Peter Gowers, Keble's first president of the Oxford Union in fifteen years

Under Gowers' tenure as president this term, the Union has seen a dazzling parade of well-known stars, including Henry Kissinger, Albert Reynolds, Leslie Nielsen, Billy Joel, and Chris Eubank.

Riding on Gowers' coattails were Nick Mather, who came fourth in Standing Committee elections, and Pete Waddell, who came first in balloting for the Secretary's Committee.

Like any diligent first-year medical student, Dharshan Kumaran spent a good part of his Easter vacation revising for anatomy collections.

However, he also spent two weeks in Iceland, and therein lies a good story.

Kumaran is an expert chess player. In fact, he's so good that he's only a few

victories away from becoming a grandmaster. While in Iceland, he played in a tournament against grandmasters from around the world.

Extremely modest about his success, he had only this to say when quizzed about his accomplishments: "I don't know how I'm going to pass collections. I've done nothing but eat, drink and think chess, and all the anatomical medicine I swotted over has receded from my mind!"

Incidentally, he passed.



Dharshan Kumaran: good at anatomy, even better at chess

Keble's rowing crews have been showing promise of late. But in the Christ Church Regatta last fall, something truly extraordinary took place.

Early in their first-round race, Keble's aptly-named Velociraptors crew clashed with their opponents Wadham and came across them. They then shot towards the City bank, where they narrowly avoided what would have been a spectacular collision by making an even more spectacular handbrake-like turn. Upon which one commentator quipped, "An interesting line being taken by Keble".

The high jinks weren't over, however. An incredulous Wadham then watched as Keble took off once more at ramming speed, passed them once again, and ploughed into the County bank, taking the nose off the boat and putting a two-foot split in the bow.

None of the crew was injured in the accident. (For a roundup of news from non-contact activities on the river, see page 7.)

While we're on the subject of Keble students in high places, Alexander Finch and Sebastian Madden kept up Keble's winning ways when they were elected in successive terms to the presidency of the Oxford Betjeman Society, one of the University's leading literary organizations.

Compiled by

L.J.S. ❖

the brick

the brick is written, designed and produced by current Keble undergraduates and graduates, with the assistance of the Keble Development Office.

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