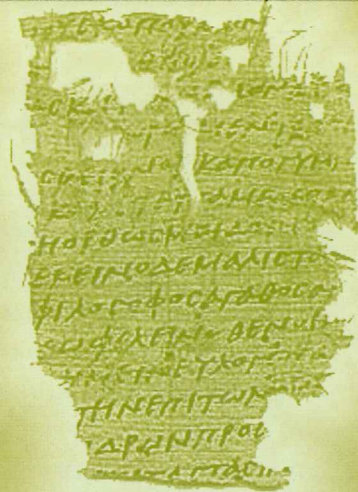


# Classics @ Cambridge



## The Classics Faculty on tour



*Reconstructing Pompeii with Jess Hughes (Newnham)*

Readers of this Newsletter may be forgiven for supposing that Professor Mary Beard has sole responsibility for broadcasting Classics to 'the wider world'. In fact the Faculty maintains a vigorous 'Access and Outreach' programme, aimed at extending the experience of Cambridge Classics to those traditionally or educationally cut off from what we do. This summer, for example, a group composed of teaching staff, research fellows and graduate students went up to Greenhead College, Huddersfield – a school whose curriculum offers neither Latin nor Greek,

nor even 'Classical Civilization' – for an intensive two-day taster of Classics for sixth-formers. Part of the school's own 'enrichment programme', this course began in the classroom, including introductions to Classical languages, art and poetry – then transferred to the precincts of Chatsworth House in Derbyshire, for the opportunity to apply those insights amid a Neo-Classical ambience.

*A new video, 'Classics at Cambridge', has recently been made by Clare Stocks and Steve Kimberley: it can be viewed on the Faculty website, [www.classics.cam.ac.uk](http://www.classics.cam.ac.uk)*



*Robin Osborne lecturing in the grounds of Chatsworth*



*Carrie Vout, Huddersfield sixth-formers – and a pile of Classics at Cambridge brochures in the foreground*



UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE

# The A G Leventis Professorship of Greek culture

Thanks to an extraordinary and unprecedented benefaction, with effect from 1 October 2008 Professor Paul Cartledge's personal Professorship in Greek History in the Faculty has been endowed in perpetuity (by the sum of £2,361,000) as the 'A.G. Leventis Professorship of Greek Culture'.

The A.G. Leventis Foundation supports educational, cultural, artistic and philanthropic causes in Cyprus, Greece, and elsewhere, and wishes to contribute to the development of the study of ancient Greek culture in its widest senses. It already has strong links with Cambridge, both personal and institutional, through the African Studies Centre and Clare College (where it funds a graduate

scholarship in Classical studies), as well as through the Faculties of Modern and Medieval Languages and of Classics (the



Paul Cartledge: the first Leventis Professor of Greek Culture

new Greek online lexicon project). This endowment represents a significantly enhanced consolidation of those links. For this is the first time it has endowed a chair in perpetuity here – or indeed anywhere in the world. For the purpose of defining the new Chair's scope, 'Greek' will be taken to refer to the periods before the foundation of Constantinople in AD 330.

Professor Cartledge's inaugural lecture, provisionally entitled 'Forever Young: Why Cambridge has a Professorship of Greek Culture', is scheduled to take place during the University's 800th Anniversary year, on 16 February 2009 at 5 p.m. in the Mill Lane Lecture rooms.

## De Oratore

Anthony Bowen, recently retired as 51st Orator of the University, reflects upon his speechmaking stint

The Orator has two statutory duties: to write addresses for presentation to other universities and institutions, and to present to the University persons on whom titles of degrees are to be conferred *honoris causa*, as a mark of honour. The first duty is occasional, and quiet: I wrote the University's congratulations to Aberdeen University to help celebrate its quincentenary in 1996, and I have written for universities in Poland and Spain which were claiming octocentenaries. The second duty is fulfilled once a year in high summer, and sometimes at other times, with processions and music, when the Chancellor himself, the Duke of Edinburgh, bestows honorary doctorates of Divinity, Laws, Science, Letters or Music on very distinguished people, from six to nine in number. (Sometimes, too,

honorary M.A.s are bestowed on long-serving members of the University staff.)

The first Orator was appointed in 1521. The original statement of intent survives (I translate): 'Since the University's interest has often been brought into danger owing to the want of letters imploring the aid of great men against our adversaries...and each person has declined the trouble, partly on account of the small amount of reward, and partly through fear of the power and influence of those against whom the letters ought to have been written...we enact...that one public orator shall be chosen on whose shoulders shall devolve the burdens to be described etc.' What danger? Noblemen, for one, with their eye on land disappearing as college endowment; for another, Henry VIII himself. He might have shut down the universities, church institutions as they were and licensed by the Pope, as well as the monasteries, but he was narrowly

persuaded that he and his kingdom needed men trained and able to train others in law and medicine and especially in Protestant theology. The universities survived, but the need for an eloquent spokesman (which is what orator really meant) survived also.

The most distinguished person to be Orator to date is surely George Herbert, poet and priest, who served from 1619 to 1627. He wrote to a friend: 'The Orator's place (that you may understand what it is) is the finest place (job) in the University... for the Orator writes all the University Letters, makes all the Orations, be it to King, Prince, or whatever comes to the University.' Three pieces of Herbert's Latin oratory survive, three pieces, alas, of fulsome flattery of royalty; they are not very interesting, but I quoted his poetry when I could, most recently in 2006 in honouring the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams.

How did I go about composing my speeches? I got told the likely names at Christmas. I then consulted the Press Association's Archive of Cuttings. It used to be kept in Fleet Street, but now reposes in a large County library at Skirlaugh outside Hull. There, stored person by person in large brown envelopes, I could read what's been written in the better newspapers any time in the last 50 or so years, especially feature articles from the Sunday supplements. (Distinguished scientists, especially if foreign, don't usually make it into our newspapers, but then, I could find out about them in Cambridge.) Recently the Archive has gone electronic, but the vital older stuff is still on paper.

The speeches preoccupied me all through the Lent term as I gathered my information, seeing people who knew the honorands (but never them themselves, in case they might feed me what they wanted said), reading their books if they wrote, studying their judgments if they were judges, understanding their experiments if they were scientists, looking at their paintings, listening to their recordings – whatever. I looked especially for something memorable: a good remark, a good story, which seemed to catch the essence of the person. There isn't time for a biography: I had about three and a half minutes per person, as was impressed on me firmly by several of the University officers when I took over as Orator. My predecessor on his first outing had slightly misjudged it, and things ran half an hour late, and the Duke was not amused. Each speech contains from 220 to 230 words of Latin, one

side of A4. In that time I tried to persuade my audience (who by then were beyond persuasion, of course) that this was someone they were right to honour.

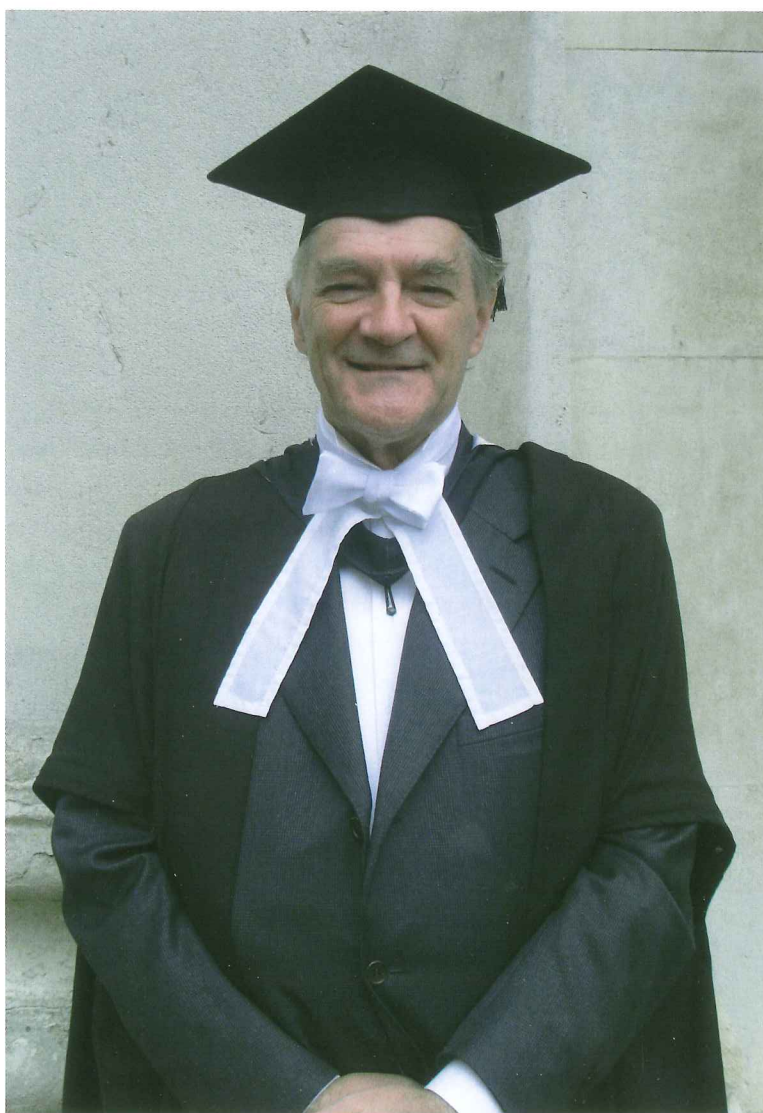
I composed in principle in Latin, and that means classical Latin. Not for us Orators the Vatican's evasion of coining new words for unclassical things, but sometimes you have to invent. In writing for Gordon Moore, the man who developed microchips, I decided that explaining a transistor would take too long; I coined *transistor*, gen. *transistoris*, 3rd declension masc. After all, it's an entirely classical word in its composition. What I looked for to get started was something which would go well in Latin, and I constructed the speech from there, finding out slowly whether that bit would start the speech or end it or go best

somewhere else. Shape and rhythm of speech matter hugely.

Sometimes I ventured into verse. Roman poets had a wide variety of verse forms from which to choose for different purposes, and in verse you can be even more compact than in prose. I recall the speech for Desmond Tutu. He was walking down the street as a child in South Africa with his mother when a white man raised his hat to her and greeted her. That white man was Father Trevor Huddleston. For the boy Desmond it was a life-focussing moment. There's a poem of Horace which starts off, 'I was walking by chance down the Sacred Way,' and I thought, I'll use that to tell this story, and it got the speech going. Quentin Blake, artist and first Children's Laureate, once illustrated some of Hilaire Belloc's *Cautionary Tales*: I liked

his picture of the deathbed of Henry King, whose chief defect, you will remember, was chewing little bits of string. There was the grieving family, standing round the bed, including a wonderfully drawn sympathetic sorry cat. I chose a chatty metre and turned Belloc's poem into Latin verse until it was time to mention the cat (which is not in Belloc's poem), and so broke into the Quentin Blake story. But I returned to the poem to finish, revising it to say that 'breakfast, dinner, lunch and Blake are all the happy child should take.'

At the same congregation we honoured Johnny Dankworth and Cleo Laine: you can see why being Orator is often fun – and also why it is scary fun. How do you describe what they do in Latin? Latin for jazz, anyone?



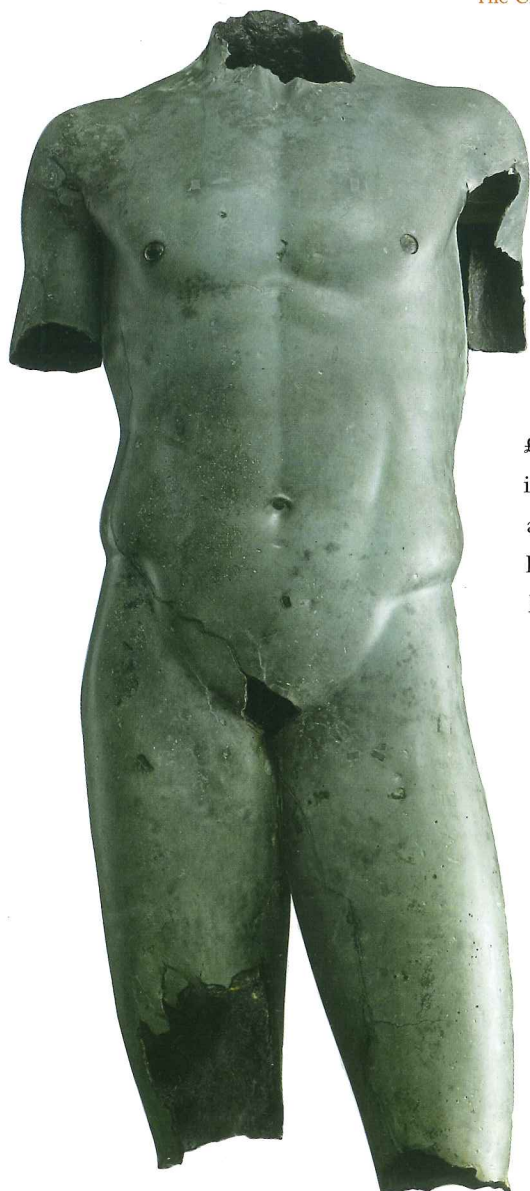
Anthony Bowen in his robes of office. He is succeeded as Orator by Dr Rupert Thompson (Selwyn), Lecturer in Classical Philology and Linguistics

# Fitzwilliam Museum

The Fitzwilliam Museum and the Faculty of Classics are jointly celebrating the award of a grant worth more than £250,000 from the Arts and Humanities Research Council. The aim is to bring together museum professionals and academics working on the art, archaeology and culture of Greece and Rome in preparing a new display of the Classical antiquities in the Fitzwilliam – one of the finest collections in the country. The award offers an exciting opportunity to bridge the gap that all too often exists between university-based research and museum-centred investigation and display. The Museum's Keeper of Antiquities, Lucilla Burn, and Senior Assistant



The Classical galleries in 1880 – since when the casts have moved to the Museum of Classical Archaeology



Keeper (Conservation), Julie Dawson, will be joined in the project by Mary Beard, Robin Osborne and Carrie Vout from the Faculty of Classics; the project will also employ a Research Assistant, Kate Cooper, and Conservator. More than £1,000,000 to fund the redisplay itself has already been raised from a variety of sources, including the DCMS / Wolfson Foundation Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund, Trinity College Cambridge, the A.G. Leventis, Stavros Niarchos, J.F. Costopoulos and Schilizzi Foundations – along with an exceptionally generous private

Bronze torso of an athlete, c. 2nd century BC, from Vani: one of the treasures from ancient Georgia (Colchis) currently on display in the Fitzwilliam Museum's exhibition, 'From the Land of the Golden Fleece' (until 4 January 2009)

donor. The gallery will close on 4th August this year, with the refurbishment expected to be completed by the autumn of 2009. The project partners were delighted to hear that their project was one of just thirteen out of fifty-two applications selected for an award from the AHRC, and hope that the collaboration will both add a new dimension to the renovation of the gallery and cement the already close relationship between the Museum and the Faculty.

## Donations

Classics at Cambridge flourishes thanks to the generosity of its many supporters, past and present. If you would like to contribute to the cause, please contact Holly Kinnear at the Faculty of Classics, Sidgwick Avenue, Cambridge CB3 9DA (email: [hk292@cam.ac.uk](mailto:hk292@cam.ac.uk))