The 1869 Foundation lunch for 2013 was held in College on Sunday 19th May. The weather was kinder than last year, enabling us to appreciate the lush gardens which Head Gardener, Steve Kidger, had been working on hard all spring.

Drinks were served at midday in the Senior Combination Room in the Grove, the original 1817 building that now forms the centrepiece of what we used to call the Huntingdon Road site before the main Porters’ Lodge moved to Storeys Way.

We moved to the Hall for a delicious lunch complemented with excellent wines. Fitzwilliam catering has come a long way since we were undergraduates 30, 40 or even 50 years ago. However Lasdun’s Hall remains unchanged, and celebrates its half-century this year.

The Master welcomed guests from all corners of the United Kingdom and from across the Atlantic, before regaling us with odd snippets from Oxford wills. An important point was made, however, that the generosity and far-sightedness of Fitzwilliam members had resulted in £400,000 in bequests in the last year, including that of Miss Mary Thatcher. For the last time Professor Lethbridge presented 1869 Foundation certificates and pins to those attending their first Foundation event. Next year Mrs Padfield, our first female Master, will be hosting the reception.

After lunch we assembled outside the Auditorium for the photograph before entering to hear presentations from two of Fitzwilliam’s current postgraduate students. To ring the changes we heard from two social scientists, rather than the usual scientist and arts student.

The first was Sam Strong, who read Geography as an undergraduate of the College and is now taking his MPhil prior to beginning his PhD. Sam’s talk was on the British riots of 2011, and in particular the rioters, the vigilantes, and the ordinary men and (especially) women that came out to clean the streets in the aftermath of the violence.

The second presentation was by Maggie Desmond, formerly an undergraduate at George Washington University in Washington DC. Maggie’s research is concerned with the Teach For America programme, and as a former TFA teacher who had worked on a rural homestead in Hawaii she was able to share with the audience both her personal and academic thoughts on the subject.

Following some lively debate we made our way to the Chapel. Showcasing the talents of our students, the afternoon concert is always a popular element in the day’s schedule. Music Director, Francis Knights, had organised a programme of Elizabethan sonnets and songs to celebrate the 450th anniversary of the birth of composer John Dowland.

Readings of poetry by Thomas Wyatt, William Shakespeare and Andrew Marvell by Fitzwilliam students Shobha Prabhu-Naik and Iain Butler, were interwoven with music from the English Renaissance. Marie Lemaire, accompanied on the guitar by Robert Mathias, sang two songs by John Dowland, and sopranos Sarah Jones and Jane Horgan sang canzonets by Thomas Morley. Junior Organ Scholar, Charles Gurnham, brought to life the wonderful harpsichord with pieces by Giulio Caccini and Edward Johnson. The final performance by four members of the Fitzwilliam choir – Sally Graham, Rosie Busiakiewicz, Jon Cooper and Jonathan Woolgar – was of songs by Thomas Tallis and John Farmer. They were ably conducted by Senior Organ Scholar, Pawel Rzemieniecki.

We look forward to challenging the Music Director to come up with yet another inspiring concert at next year’s 1869 Foundation lunch. Please put the event in your diaries now:

Sunday 18th May 2014
Master & Fellows
Professor Robert Lethbridge
& Vera Lethbridge
Dr Helen Bettinson (1982)
Dr John Cleaver (1969)
Francis Knights
Revd Professor David Thompson
& Margaret Thompson

Life Fellows
Dr David Bowyer
& Hermann Niederste-Hollenberg
Dr Geoff Walker (1955)
& Anna Walker
Barry Landy
& Rosalind Landy

Former Fellow
Dr Rodney Edrich

Friends
Dr Elizabeth Harris
& Mark Harris
Professor Lee Burns
& Brenda Cameron

1947
Dennis Doyle
& Dianne Fraser

1949
Grp Capt Alan Silvester
& Mary Silvester

1953
Revd Anthony Brown

1954
Ian Barrett
Noel Pilling
& Alison Gilderdale (1980)

1955
Geoff Harrison
& Pauline Harrison

1956
Revd Jeremy Arthern
& Susan Arthern

1957
Philip Boden

1958
Roger Graham
& Irene Graham

1959
Edwin Brooks
& Pat Brooks
Selwyn Image
& Jane Image
Marcus Judd
& Gillian Judd
David Gosling

1962
Oliver Bennett
& Farida Bennett
Bill Grant
& Meg Grant

1965
Robin Bell
& Denise Bell
Geoffrey Hawkes & Jenny Stevens
Dr Tim Johnson

1966
John Roebuck
& Wendy Roebuck

1967
David Stewart
& Mary Stewart

1969
Andrew Oakes
& Amanda Oakes

1972
Simon Cross

1980
Houston Putnam Lowry
& Dr Carole Lessard

Students
Sam Strong (2009)
Maggie Desmond (2012)
& Francisco Lewis (2012)