



LEGACIES CHANGING LIVES



THE IMPACT OF LEGACIES

Nourishing succeeding generations

Whether it is through beautiful buildings, impressive facilities, or welcome financial support, every member of Fitzwilliam benefits from the generosity of previous generations. By leaving a legacy, you know you are helping Fitzwilliam thrive as an outstanding academic institution and warm community. All those who have loved the College can show their support in perpetuity by leaving a bequest - indeed, many choose to ensure their lifetime giving continues by endowing a gift in their will.

IN THIS NEW SERIES, WE WILL BE SHOWCASING SOME OF THE WAYS IN WHICH LEGACY GIFTS MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO STUDENTS TODAY.

In this issue, we focus on our student geographers and the inhabitants of A, B and C staircases who have enjoyed fantastic, transformative, opportunities recently thanks to the gifts of those who went before them.

JOHN & JENNY DUNCAN GEOGRAPHY FUND

In 2016 Dr John Duncan, together with his wife Jenny, left a legacy which would transform the experience of Geography students at Fitzwilliam. Together they established the John & Jenny Duncan Geography Fund, endowing a subject prize and creating a fund which would provide for geographical field trips and research in perpetuity. During their lifetimes, they had made a gift each year to support students on their travels, and they wanted to ensure this would continue after their deaths. Now, every year, Fitzwilliam geography students set off around the globe thanks to John and Jenny's generosity to explore cityscapes and glaciers, rock formations and mangrove swamps, broadening their academic and personal horizons.

"I really cannot overstate the value of being able to relate what I learnt from hands-on fieldwork to my academic studies back in Cambridge." Ellie

Ellie and Rahul are two second-year geographers who travelled to the dramatic Loetschental Valley in Switzerland for their glaciological fieldwork. Each day they would measure the glacier's melt, the changing weather at the study site, and even used a drone to create a 3D elevation model from aerial photography. They also took 144 wood core samples from tree and shrubs, measuring these under microscopes. By recording the rate of glacier melt and annual vegetation growth, they hope to contribute to the fight against climate change.



Chicago and its Millennium Park was the location for **George's** research into 'affective atmospheres', a nascent genre of cultural geography. He used auto-ethnographic methods to explore how atmospheres are created, and the role of the curator in designing public space to induce a specific feel. By interviewing park officials, security guards, academics, and members of the public, he was able to expand research and literature in English, drawing on the German literature which already exists in the field.



"The generosity of the John and Jenny Duncan Fund allowed me to go to America for the first time... I was also able to engage in a field of research that has the potential to drive cultural geography." George

In 2019 **Jo** travelled to Reykjavik, Iceland, exploring volcanic landscapes. She investigated how local Icelanders adapt and utilise the landscape in which they live, including baking bread in hot springs, and constructing buildings to cope with volcanic ash fall. Jo reflects, "the John and Jenny Duncan Geography Fund enabled me to carry out these excursions, and covered a large proportion of my expenses. I am very grateful for receiving this grant, as it has helped me gain a better understanding of volcanology and glaciers first hand."



A, B AND C STAIRCASES

A, B and C staircases, accommodation for first-year students, were completely transformed between 2015 and 2017, supported in part by the gifts which alumni left in their wills. With gleaming kitchens, comfortable social spaces, and bright bedrooms, this is now some of Cambridge's best accommodation. It's not just the amazing facilities though: our students are happier, healthier (and may even be inspired to work harder) in this upbeat, communal atmosphere.

"I'd say that overall feeling, of coming back after a hard day to the pleasant atmosphere, along with the large social space, was the best part.

It definitely enhanced my academic life, especially being so close to the library! Little things like comfortable ensuite showers just made the whole experience, in a small way, less stressful. It was a place that I could retreat to but also study in comfort.

The social areas were great for general wellbeing. I don't know how it would have worked at all without the social space in the kitchen and frankly can't imagine living without it! Many friendships were formed within that kitchen. I think it's fair to say that the social spaces in the kitchens were the centre of the social lives of many in my year, including myself." Kevin

Enjoying new kitchens
and social spaces

