



The restored ceiling of the Hilda Besse Building

Dear Antonians,

I am writing as the academic year starts in the most unusual fashion in the College's history. During the last few days, 282 new students from 63 different countries have started at St Antony's, along with a further 283 who are continuing their studies from previous years. The vast majority have had to self-isolate for two weeks to help contain any C-19 outbreak and our induction event took place on-line as will matriculation next week.

Exactly half a century ago today, the college also had an interesting start to the academic year, albeit one of a completely different nature. On 8 October 1970, the Hilda Besse Building was opened by the former British Prime Minister and then-Chancellor of the University of Oxford, Harold Macmillan.

I had hoped to be able to share with you pictures of this significant event in the history of the College but, despite a detailed search of the archives and a call to those who might have been there, none have surfaced. As one of those approached, Michael Whitehead (BPhil Politics, 1970), put it: 'In today's world, I would have whipped out my mobile and taken a photo for posterity. Unfortunately, that was something we all lacked in those

days.'

According to the Hon Dr Dov Zakheim (DPhil Politics & Economics, 1970) however: 'I recall how amazed we were at the ultra-modern and modernist new building with its wonderful facilities - the buttry, the dining hall, and the common rooms. Harold Macmillan's remarks were warm and welcoming'.

Please scroll down to find a brief update on the renovation project, upcoming milestones and pictures of the works in progress.

I am genuinely touched as well as extremely happy to be able to report that, despite everything else that is going on in the world, Antonians from across the world and across the generations have shown extraordinary support for the Hilda Besse renovation campaign. In just over a year since we launched the campaign, we have secured more than £7 million towards the total refurbishment cost of £10 million with more in the pipeline.

If you would like to join the campaign as a donor, year champion or would like to have your name to appear in the renovated Hilda Besse Building as we endeavour to complete the funding of the project, do please get in touch with my colleagues in the Development Office. For their contact details, please follow [this link](#).

I hope that as many of you as possible will be able to join us for the major celebration of the reopening of the Hilda Besse in 2021. This time we will ensure that there are photos to pass on to posterity.

In the meanwhile, please keep safe and well in these challenging times.

Roger Goodman, Warden

8 October 2020

Update

The renovations have continued throughout the lockdown period, albeit at a slightly reduced pace due to the need for social distancing, some supply issues and design challenges related to the extensive concrete repairs, and the mechanical and electric infrastructure to support the kitchen.

The quality of the work is outstanding (the asphaltting of the roof has been nominated for the 2020 UK Asphalt Prize!) and the building will look better than ever when it is finished, particularly as the gardens outside will be re-landscaped to show it off to its best effect.



Visual Images

By clicking on [this link](#), you will see a range of pictures that gives a good sense of the renovation project (©CBRE).

For pre-rendered images of how the Hilda Besse will look after renovations, please click [here](#).

Schedule

The Hilda Besse renovation works are scheduled to be completed on 7 December so that the building can be reoccupied early in the New Year.

Just before that, on 23 November, the second part of the project will commence: the re-landscaping of the quad. Its completion is planned for 12 April 2021.

Artistic impressions of the re-landscaping can be found [here](#).

The temporary [Hilda Box](#) will be removed from site during the Christmas break commencing on 8 December 2020.

Support

We are keen that as many Antonians as possible have a chance to be involved with the

campaign and have the opportunity to be represented in the Hilda Besse building.

A gift of at least £250 will be acknowledged on a Donor Board next to the entrance of the Dining Hall with others from your matriculation year. Pledged gift payments can be spread over several years.

There are various initiatives taking place for particular groups of Antonians to get together to raise funds for the Hilda Besse, for example former members of the Boat Club, Football Club, scholarship holders, ambassadors and Visiting Fellows.

All donors to these mini campaigns, no matter the size of the gift, will be equally credited on Donor Boards throughout the building or, for example, by jointly naming a table in the Dining Hall.

If you are interested to start a similar campaign for a group of Antonians you were part of, please contact Sara Gordon at: sara.gordon@sant.ox.ac.uk.

There are also a number of individual naming opportunities (see here). These can be discussed with Wouter te Kloeze who can be reached at wouter.tekloeze@sant.ox.ac.uk.

For all the information about the Hilda Besse campaign, naming opportunities, tax-efficient giving, and how to donate, [please click here](#).

Thank you for your generosity,

Martyn, Sara and Wouter



Watercolour scheme for the Senior Common Room as proposed in 1970 (kept in the College Library)



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62 Woodstock Road, OXFORD, OX2 6JF