



Chairman's Newsletter January 2022

Dear Oxonians,

Happy New Year!

Following a series of successful events over the past year the Society is in rude health*. There has been a large inflow of members especially following the Tri-University dinner with many of them studying for Executive MBAs at Saïd Business School. Membership at the close of 2021 stood at a record 85 and comprised as follows:

- Paid Current members: 74
- Good Contacts/Honorary: 4
- Student members: 7
- Total: 85
- Lapsed members: 15

It is hoped that all of you, lapsed or otherwise, will renew your membership in 2022. We are very grateful for our active and diligent Membership Secretary, Mette Ahlefeldt who shepherds this expanding flock.

* For non-Brits "rude health" means "vigorous and healthy".

Forthcoming events

First off the block will be a talk accompanied by cocktails to be followed by dinner on **24th February at the Cercle Munster.**

"Sin, Sex and Salvation: The Ritual of the Churching of Women in post-Reformation Denmark-Norway and beyond", by Dr. Mette M. Ahlefeldt-Laurvig.

Drawing upon her doctoral work, Mette will retrace the ritual of churching which served to readmit women into Church and society after childbirth. Rooted in Levitical childbirth impurity, and common throughout late-medieval Europe, it was a rite that celebrated the married matron, shamed the unwed and challenged the Lutheran clergy.

Mette holds a DPhil from Oxford University (2019). She is currently an associate member of the Faculty of History at Oxford, and in autumn 2021, she became an External Collaborator at the History Department of Luxembourg University.

The event will start at 18:45 with cocktails followed by the talk. For those who wish to join us, there will be a dinner. The price for the cocktail and talk will be €20 with a further €50 for the dinner. Please email mette.ahlefeldt@gmail.com if you are interested in attending either:

(i) Talk & Cocktails only (ii) Talk & Cocktails and Dinner.

Association sans but lucratif, R.C.S. Luxembourg: F478 • Registered office: c/o David Clark, 17 Avenue Guillome, L-1651 Luxembourg. Bank Account: BCEELULL IBAN LU21 0019 1755 3010 3000.

Committee: David Clark (Chairman), Jan Könighaus (Vice-Chairman), Jos van Bommel (Webmaster/Vice-Chairman), Harriet Stone (Secretary), Agnieszka Walczak (Treasurer), Henri Dupong (Counsel), Mette Ahlefeldt-Laurvig (Membership), Gérard Schockmel, Marta Roberti, Dan Schmit.



Further details including a menu will be forwarded soon.

Please email mette.ahlefeldt@gmail.com if you are interested in attending either the talk and cocktails only or both the talk and the dinner. Further details including a menu will be forwarded soon.

Our next scheduled fixture will be a major event to be held in conjunction with the Bridge Forum Dialogue at the Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce on **10th March 2022 at 17:30 for 18:00.**

“Power and Diplomacy in the Technological Age” by Tom Fletcher CMG with Arlette Conzemius and Urban Gillström as discussants.

Tom Fletcher CMG is a former British ambassador to Beirut and former foreign policy adviser to the British prime minister. He is now principal of Hertford College Oxford as well as Visiting Professor of International Relations at New York University.

He is publishing a new book to be launched in February entitled “Ten Survival Skills for a World in Flux”. His last book was entitled “The Naked Diplomat”. The talk will be chaired by Hugo Woestmann, former secretary-general of the European Investment Bank and by David Clark. Two eminent discussants will respond to Tom Fletcher. They are Arlette Conzemius, former Ambassador of Luxembourg to Brussels and to NATO and Urban Gillström who is leading the Greenworlder, a social media network dedicated to sustainability, growing globally from its HQ in Luxembourg. He previously worked at Accenture in the Communications, Media and Technology (CMT) sector and at Hewlett Packard Enterprises.

Ernster Bookshop will have a stand at the talk and Tom Fletcher will be happy to sign copies of his book.

Fletcher’s interesting bio can be found at:

<https://www.hertford.ox.ac.uk/staff/tom-fletcher>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Fletcher_\(diplomat\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Fletcher_(diplomat))

The blurb for his new book is here:

<https://www.amazon.fr/Ten-Survival-Skills-World-Flux/dp/0008447802>

The highlight of the Year and perhaps the decade will be the Benelux and Rhineland Reunion on the weekend of 6-8 May in the run-up to Europe Day on the 9 May.

Benelux and Rhineland Reunion, Luxembourg, 6-8 May 2022

Activities will largely take place within walking distance or connected by Luxembourg’s modern tram line, which like all Luxembourg’s public transport is free of charge. Events include:

Association sans but lucratif, R.C.S. Luxembourg: F478 • Registered office: c/o David Clark, 17 Avenue Guillome, L-1651 Luxembourg. Bank Account: BCEELULL IBAN LU21 0019 1755 3010 3000.

Committee: David Clark (Chairman), Jan Könighaus (Vice-Chairman), Jos van Bommel (Webmaster/Vice-Chairman), Harriet Stone (Secretary), Agnieszka Walczak (Treasurer), Henri Dupong (Counsel), Mette Ahlefeldt-Laurvig (Membership), Gérard Schockmel, Marta Roberti, Dan Schmit.



- A plenary session on Saturday afternoon, Chaired by Catherine Léglu, Vice-Rector of the University of Luxembourg. Speakers will include senior current and former members of the European Court of Justice, the Court of Auditors, the European Investment Bank, a.o.
- A visit to the museums and fortifications on the Kirchberg plateau
- A guided visit to the old town and to the Luxembourg Parliament.
- A Brazilian style dinner with Salsa and Samba dancing (instruction provided) on Friday night.
- An organ concert at St Michel Church, the oldest church in Luxembourg
- A gala dinner at the Cercle Munster in the Grund on Saturday evening.
- And on Sunday, a visit to the casemates and/or the Moselle Vinyards.

Those who want to enjoy Europe Day in European Capital of Culture 2022, Esch-sur-Alzette, may wish to stay an additional few days. The European Commission is arranging events in Esch and in Belval, site of Luxembourg's spectacular university buildings amongst the historic blast furnaces.

A full agenda will be circulated shortly. Do mark this in your diaries and encourage any contacts you have in Belgium, the Netherlands, the Rhineland to come.

Other events in the planning stage for the coming year include:

- Talk by Dan Schmit on the different voting systems in Europe. Dan took his MPhil at Oxford and his DPhil at the University of Luxembourg and is now on the staff of the Chambre des Députés.
- Possible visits to Metz and Nancy or the UK. Members are encouraged to email David Clark (dclark@pt.lu) with their preferences or suggestions.
- Visit to the Luxembourg Institute of Science and Technology, to be arranged by Dr. Gérard Schockmel.
- Visit to the Raschpëtzer, the antique aqueduct in Helmsange, to be arranged by Marta Roberti.
- An evening of games and game theory. An interactive talk by Dr. Jos van Bommel.

Past events

Association sans but lucratif, R.C.S. Luxembourg: F478 • Registered office: c/o David Clark, 17 Avenue Guillome, L-1651 Luxembourg. Bank Account: BCEELULL IBAN LU21 0019 1755 3010 3000.

Committee: David Clark (Chairman), Jan Könighaus (Vice-Chairman), Jos van Bommel (Webmaster/Vice-Chairman), Harriet Stone (Secretary), Agnieszka Walczak (Treasurer), Henri Dupong (Counsel), Mette Ahlefeldt-Laurvig (Membership), Gérard Schockmel, Marta Roberti, Dan Schmit.



Looking at our events over 2021, who would have thought that we have been through a pandemic. Our diligent Vice-President and Webmaster Jos van Bommel has recorded most of these on our excellent website, www.oxford.lu.

After participating in an online quiz night organized by the Belgian Oxford Society (we came in second), we had, during the final days of the confinement, an online seminar on the different approaches of investing in stocks, lead by our vice-chairman Jos van Bommel. From our homes, we had an interactive evening, with plenty of discussion.

On July 3rd we enjoyed a wonderful afternoon at the Schuman Farm sipping Pimm's while catching up after a long time not seeing each other face-to-face. After a lengthy picnic – barbecue we decided to have a croquet game on the lawn, rather than the traditional cricket, among others due to the lack of cricketers. The croquet game was a great success, and we ended up playing with three teams simultaneously, each consisting of a changing number of members, the youngest being 3 years old.

During the summer we participated in a most enjoyable "croquet in the Park" at the Kinnekwies, organised by the Luxembourg Cambridge Society, where the young son of the former British Judge at the ECJ played some spectacular shots.

At our annual Fresher's dinner, we shared a meal with three freshers (BA Mechanical Engineering, BA Chemistry, and executive MBA), three current students, and alumni who helped with practice interviews, and student fairs.¹

The highlight of the year was September's Tri-Universities dinner at the Chateau Bourglinster organised this year by the OUSL. British ambassador Fleur Thomas and Luxembourg's minister of finance Pierre Gramegna were guests of honour while the address was given by Hubertus von Morr, former German ambassador to Luxembourg. He spoke about German Politics after the September elections. Eighty-seven alumni and guests attended an excellent and enjoyable dinner in magnificent surroundings. Our Treasurer Agnieszka Walczak had the unenviable job of monitoring payments from attendees at the three societies. The event broke even and a small gratuity was made to the staff of the Chateau.

In October we participated in a lecture given by Sir Michael Edwards who is the only British subject to be a member of the French Academy. The lecture "Thinking in Poetry" took place in the Protestant Church in conjunction with the Conference St Yves, the British Luxembourg Society and the Cambridge Society. It was even preceded by a major of the Luxembourg Pipe Band and an introduction by André Prum, from the Institut Grand-Ducal.

In December, we enjoyed a visit to the Kneip Art Collection arranged by Vice-President Jan Koenighaus and our member Enrique Sacau, CEO of Kneip. With great enthusiasm Bob Kneip explained to us the

¹ Volunteers to help with student recruitment and interview training are always welcome. Please contact Jos van Bommel josvanbommel@uni.lu



process of bringing together the extraordinary collection of Pop Art. Despite the renewed restrictions, 20 masked members enjoyed the visit and the cocktail and canapés generously sponsored by Kneip.

Book launch “Reclaiming Populism”. Participation in an online presentation was arranged by our former committee member Lisa Francis-Jones. It was an interesting presentation. The main theme was that people are less interested in the equality of income than in the equality of opportunity. The book thesis was that populism arises where the equality of opportunity was lacking. Paul Summerville and Eric Protzer are the authors. Ian Goldin, Professor of Globalisation and Development at Oxford participated.

Our Chairman attended a dinner hosted by the Oxford University Belgium Society at the Amigo Hotel in Brussels. Sir Jonathan Fauld spoke on relations between the EU and the UK. Sir Jonathan spoke eloquently and with knowledge. He is co-head of Brunswick in Brussels following a distinguished career in the European Commission. His final post was as Director-General of the Task Force for Strategic Issues related to the UK Referendum.

In short, despite the Pandemic, the Oxford University Society Luxembourg is alive and well, and growing in members and activities. This would not have been possible without the members of our Committee, especially my immediate predecessor and Vice-Chairman Jan Koenighaus. We welcome the new member of the committee Dan Schmit.

I wish you all the best for 2022, and look forward to seeing you in person at our events in 2022.

David Clark,
Chairman

Association sans but lucratif, R.C.S. Luxembourg: F478 • Registered office: c/o David Clark, 17 Avenue Guillome, L-1651 Luxembourg. Bank Account: BCEELULL IBAN LU21 0019 1755 3010 3000.

Committee: David Clark (Chairman), Jan Könighaus (Vice-Chairman), Jos van Bommel (Webmaster/Vice-Chairman), Harriet Stone (Secretary), Agnieszka Walczak (Treasurer), Henri Dupong (Counsel), Mette Ahlefeldt-Laurvig (Membership), Gérard Schockmel, Marta Roberti, Dan Schmit.