

Karen Tai

This week I have finally begun to feel "settled in" to my new home in Oxford! I want to begin by expressing my gratitude to Rotary International and the Global Grant Scholarship, which has made all this possible. In particular, I am grateful to the Rotary Districts 5770, 5830, 5680, 5810; Rotary Clubs of Lake Houston, North Shore, Pasadena, and Newbury; Rotarians Sandy and Bud Forster, Colin Gershon, Bill Davis, and Chris and John Philip.

I have mentioned before that this next year is not my journey, but rather our journey. As such, I have been thinking about how to best share my experiences and time at Oxford with all of you. After experimenting with several platforms, I have decided that the best medium is sometimes the most simple! I will be creating biweekly (2x per month) newsletters to share updates and pictures.

On the topic of updates - I have recently matriculated! Matriculation at Oxford is a ceremony which marks the formal admission of students to the university. It typically takes place the weekend after the first week of classes. Students have to dress in sub fusc (black gown, skirt, tights and mortar board for women) and sit with their college for a brief ceremony conducted entirely in Latin at the Sheldonian Theatre. Fortunately, we were able to have the ceremony in person this year. It was a great moment to reflect upon the centuries of academic tradition that have persisted and held constant for millions of students. I have attached several photos of myself and other Lincoln College students on Matriculation Day this past Saturday (Oct. 16th).

In terms of academics, we have dived right in! This week is our second week of Michaelmas term and we are already learning and having deep discussions about global health, epidemiology, and statistics. In total, there are 26 postgraduate students in my course (Global Health Science & Epidemiology) and together we span over 16 different countries. What I find most valuable is listening to the perspectives offered by students who grew up in vastly different societies and environments than I have. It also benefits to have students come from a multitude of backgrounds - from medicine to social science and even economics! We have much to learn from each other and I look forward to continuing to getting to know all of my course mates further and engaging in conversations with them.



### **2021 -22 Cohort of MSc Global Health Science & Epidemiology Students**

As I finish settling in, I also hope to become more involved with Rotary and attend the speaker events at the R.C. of Newbury every Monday night. Today, I was able to pop into the R.C. of

Newbury's speaker meeting. The speaker was Flight Lieutenant Kerry Bennett, an RAF pilot and aspiring astronaut. She gave a phenomenal presentation and reminded all of us about the importance of perseverance—to view every failure as an opportunity for growth. I know I will be thinking of her story as I begin hearing back from medical schools regarding decisions in the next 6 months.

If there is anything you would like to see or hear about, please do let me know at my email below. Thanks for following me on this incredible journey and I will see you all soon in the next newsletter in November!

Cheers,  
Karen Tai

My mailing address is:  
[karen.tai@lincoln.ox.ac.uk](mailto:karen.tai@lincoln.ox.ac.uk)



## Pictures from Matriculation





## Lincoln College – My New Home!



Front Quad of Lincoln College, which was founded in 1427 by Richard Fleming, Bishop of Lincoln. The college was named after his cathedral as 'The College of the Blessed Mary and All Saints, Lincoln.' One defining feature has to be the beautiful ivy that lines the Front Quad walls. During summer the ivy is a lush green, but in autumn it turns beautiful shades of red and purple. You can see the ivy just beginning to turn in the photo!



**Left: Lincoln College Library** | **Right: Lincoln College Main Hall**

Lincoln has arguably the most beautiful college library in all of Oxford! This has been a go-to study spot for me, as it is located right in the city-centre. The library is housed in the converted 18th century All Saints Church. When it's not cloudy, the sunlight will shine through the stained glass, creating colorful projections on the library wall.

The Main Hall is where both graduates and undergraduates can eat meals in the college. At Lincoln, there are formal dinners every day for dinner, where students must wear their gowns in order to be seated for a candle-lit three course meal. While I typically cook for myself, I do sit for formal hall once or twice a week to catch up with friends or meet new students.