Dr Patricia Fara, Senior Tutor

Clare College
January 2015

**Commemoration of Benefactors, Friday 13 March**

The annual Commemoration of Benefactors, which takes place this year on Friday 13 March, is the occasion when the College comes together to give thanks for the benefactors who have founded, sustained and enriched Clare over the last seven centuries. The Commemoration of Benefactors is also the main event at which the College celebrates its undergraduate and graduate scholars – the students who, like you, have achieved excellence in their courses. The Master and I therefore very much hope that you will be able to attend the service and the dinner; details are on the attached invitation.

As you know, like the other older Colleges in Cambridge, Clare was originally a semi-monastic institution. This occasion is based on centuries of tradition, and it provides an opportunity to reflect on what it means to belong to an academic community that embraces not only those who are currently at Clare, but also – albeit more symbolically – those of previous generations who have lived and worked here. Clare College could not exist as it does today without the generosity and foresight of its donors over the last few hundred years.

The Chapel Service at 6pm is an integral part of the Commemoration of Benefactors. Members of all faiths and of none are encouraged to participate in this event, which pays tribute to a long-lasting scholarly community dedicated to excellence. The service chiefly consists of a formal recognition and reading of the history of the major gifts to the College, which provides the focus for an expression of gratitude to past and present benefactors; it also includes an address by a distinguished visiting speaker on the theme of benefaction. This year’s speaker is Loretta Minghella, who read Law at Clare in 1981. Loretta is a lawyer by training who, after practising as a criminal litigator, began a career in financial regulation in 1990. The first Head of Enforcement Law, Policy and International Co-operation for the Financial Services Authority, she also chaired the International Organisation of Securities Commissions' Standing Committee on Enforcement and Information-Sharing. In 2004, Loretta became Chief Executive of the Financial Services Compensation Scheme, in which capacity she oversaw the payment of over £21bn in compensation to victims of bank and other financial failures. In recognition of her contribution in that role, she was awarded the OBE in the New Year's Honours 2010. She leads Christian Aid's involvement in Aprodev (a group of 17 European church-related development agencies) and is a member of the British Overseas Aid Group (BOAG) and the Disasters Emergency Committee.

As befits a formal occasion, the dress code for the Commemoration of Benefactors service and dinner is black tie (i.e. dinner jacket and bow tie for men, evening dress for women) and academic gown (doctors wear scarlet). Thanks to benefactors, grants are available from a College fund for students who do not have their own black tie to cover the cost of hiring it for the evening. Please contact Shelley Spaxman in the Tutorial Office for further details.

The College takes great pride in your academic achievement, and I look forward very much to celebrating your success with you at the Commemoration of Benefactors on Friday 13 March.

Yours sincerely

Dr Patricia Fara