

AARS THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN RHODES SCHOLARS

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Dear Rhodes Scholar:

Warm greetings to our approximately 2,300 members from **your** Association of American Rhodes Scholars. It has been a very busy Spring and Summer as we have continued to welcome our outstanding new Warden, Elizabeth Kiss (Virginia and Balliol 1983), and recently bid a fond adieu in Oxford to retiring Rhodes Trustee Chairman, Sir John Hood (New Zealand and Worcester 1976). We had a successful Board meeting in April in DC, where we again co-hosted with the Rhodes Trust a Welcome Home Weekend for Scholars recently returned from Oxford. In June, in conjunction with a series of end-of-term celebrations, we hosted our annual Garden Party at Rhodes House, this year for the entire global cohort of Scholars, and we made final inspections of the new flat being constructed by Balliol for Eastman Professors, the trust for which AARS has administered since the 1920s. On top of that, we have initiated a Rhodes Speakers Bureau and have made a financial commitment to the Rhodes Trust to support the fledgling Scholars Fund, each of which is discussed further below. Without you and your support, we could do none of this. Thank you!

Recent Events

Spring AARS Board Meeting and Welcome Home Weekend



AARS Board Dinner at Elliot and Jessica's home, April 2019

We held our Spring AARS Board Meeting April 13 in Washington in conjunction with Oxford University's North American mini-reunion. The Warden joined us for our meeting. She outlined her Strategic Plan (which was approved by the Trustees in June) and expressed gratitude for the support that AARS has given to Oxford and the Rhodes Scholarships over the years. As a show of support for her and the Scholarships, AARS approved a three-year grant to help support the newly created Scholars Fund to respond to emergencies and to promote Scholar well-being.

The Warden also joined the Board at a dinner generously hosted by American Secretary Elliot Gerson (Connecticut and Magdalen 1974) at his and Jessica's home. That same weekend, AARS again co-hosted the Welcome Home Weekend for Rhodes Scholars recently returned from Oxford to pursue jobs or further education in the USA.

Rhodes Trustees Meeting, End-of-Term Celebrations, and Garden Party

As you know, the Warden and Sir John Hood kindly invited me to attend the Summer meeting of the Rhodes Trustees (much as Warden Conn and Sir John had done a few years earlier). As a result, we decided to hold our traditional AARS Garden Party later in the term in conjunction with the Farewell Garden Party for the entire global Rhodes community. The party was a big success, with close to 170 Scholars and guests in attendance. It gave me an opportunity to welcome to our AARS membership any Scholar who resides in the USA, regardless of their constituency of selection. (We have already added several new international members who are either taking jobs or continuing education in our country.)



Sir John Hood at Rhodes House, June 2019



Scholars in the Rhodes House Garden, June 2019

It was a pleasure to attend the Rhodes Trustees meeting, particularly since it was the last to be chaired by Sir John Hood before his retirement. Sir John has been a terrific supporter of AARS during his tenure as Vice-Chancellor of Oxford and Chairman of the Rhodes Trust. He helped lead the incredible financial turnaround at the Trust and significant expansion of the Scholarships and activity at Rhodes House in recent years, for which the entire Rhodes community is grateful. As a sign of respect and appreciation, the AARS Board unanimously adopted a Resolution of Commendation which I presented to Sir John at the Trustees Meeting. The rest of the end-of-term events, from the dinners to the Garden Party, were lively and festive. It was nice to see so many old friends, particularly Sir Rick Trainor (Rhodes Island and Merton 1970), Rector of Exeter, and former Warden Charles Conn (Massachusetts and Balliol 1983) who is back in Oxford as CEO of Oxford Sciences Innovation Plc.

For a complete set of pictures of these recent events, take a look at the three latest photo gallery folders on our AARS website. <https://www.americanrhodes.org/news-photos-95.html>

Upcoming Events, Initiatives and Transitions

Bon Voyage Weekend

The BVW will be held September 28-29 in New York City (before moving to Seattle in 2020), with **Warden Elizabeth Kiss as the keynote speaker**. It will be a terrific opportunity for all Rhodes Scholars to meet our new Warden as well as the class of new American Scholars about to leave for Oxford. An invitation to the BVW is enclosed with this mailing. If you wish to attend, please mail in your response card as space may be limited. You can also register to attend and pay online by visiting:

<https://www.americanrhodes.org/2019BVW>



Warden Elizabeth Kiss



2017 Military Reunion dinner with Ashton Carter



Military Reunion

All Scholars who have served in the armed forces or as civilians in the Department of Defense are invited to attend the biennial Rhodes Military Dinner in Washington, DC, on Friday, December 13. Please mark your calendars and look for the formal invitation.

Speakers Bureau

As you know from our recent email and survey, AARS is starting a Speakers Bureau. The idea is to tap into the deep expertise of our community to share ideas at gatherings of Rhodes Scholars, groups at Oxford colleges, and organizations in the community at large. Our hope is that this new initiative will be both informative and an enjoyable way to build community. We are grateful to our AARS Board member Ron Katz (Missouri and Balliol 1967) not only for conceiving this idea but also for his willingness to help administer the Bureau, along with our Reunion and Events Committee.

The American Oxonian

I trust that by the time this letter arrives you will have received several issues of TAO, including the Summer Address issue. After five years as editor of *The American Oxonian*, Kathrin Lassila will step down in September. I know you join me in thanking Kathrin for her service. The recent reader survey confirms that TAO is among our most admired and valued activities, and we owe Kathrin a debt of gratitude for helping us to maintain its high standards. I am pleased to report that the AARS Executive Committee unanimously approved a recommendation from Gordon Crovitz (Illinois and Wadham 1980), Chairman of our Publications Committee, that Todd Breyfogle resume the editorship, beginning in September. Todd (Colorado and Corpus Christi 1988) is Managing Director of Executive Leadership Seminars for the Aspen Institute and a longstanding member of our AARS Board. Key priorities will be the maintenance of editorial quality and timeliness of publication.



Kathrin Lassila (Iowa and Trinity '82)



Todd Breyfogle (Colorado and Corpus Christi '88)

Supporting AARS

On behalf of our Board, I thank you for your continued support of AARS, without which we could not undertake any of the activities outlined above, nor be effective in our efforts to strengthen community among American Rhodes Scholars and support for Oxford University and the Rhodes Scholarships. We are entirely self-supporting, relying on your dues and additional contributions to fund our annual budget. Although we are about \$40,000 behind where we were last year, I am confident that with your help we can make up that deficit and finish strong. You can make a dues payment or contribution either by mailing a check with the enclosed envelope or online at: <https://www.americanrhodes.org/dues-payment.html> if you have not already done so this year.



High Street, Brasenose College and the entrance to the University Church of St. Mary the Virgin

Having just returned from Oxford, I am reminded again of the transformative experience we share as Rhodes Scholars and the many opportunities we have to give back—so that the experience will remain strong for years to come. Thank you again for the incredible work you do and example you set--on stages great and small, near and far--to help make our world a better place.

Sincerely,

Ralph H. Smith II (Alabama and Corpus Christi 1973)
President