

FROM THE C.S. LEWIS FOUNDATION, REDLANDS, CALIFORNIA  
PRESS RELEASE  
22 JULY 2008  
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## BLUE PLAQUE FOR OXFORD HOME OF C.S. LEWIS HERALDS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

### BLUE PLAQUE FOR LEWIS

"We have very stringent rules and only award blue plaques for the highest level of achievement," says Eda Forbes, secretary to the Oxfordshire Blue Plaques Board ahead of the unveiling this week of a special plaque at The Kilns, the home of the scholar, author and Christian thinker C.S. Lewis, who died in 1963.

Today, Lewis's work continues to touch the lives of millions, not least through Disney's "The Chronicles of Narnia" films. "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" came first and now "Prince Caspian", the second movie in the series, is on general release in the UK. This month has also seen the publication of a new edition of C.S. Lewis's 1942 bestseller, "The Screwtape Letters", in which a senior devil writes words of advice to a junior devil. In all, Lewis wrote 40 books, most of which are still in print. His sales to date total around 100 million copies in 35 languages.

Lewis lived at The Kilns, now in Lewis Close, Headington, Oxford, from 1930 to 1963 and it was there that he wrote many of his works, including the Narnia series of books, based on four children who lived with Lewis and his family as evacuees during the Second World War. Today in The Kilns, now a Christian study centre owned and restored by the California-based C.S. Lewis Foundation, a period wardrobe stands in the hallway in the very place where one stood in Lewis's day. It was a wardrobe that gave the Oxford don the idea for a gateway through which his young characters could enter the magical world of Narnia.

Walter Hooper, Lewis's former secretary and literary advisor to his estate, will unveil the C.S. Lewis blue plaque on Saturday 26 July at 10.30 a.m. Sir Hugo Brunner, Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire and chairman of the Oxfordshire Blue Plaques Board, will explain why his board decided to designate The Kilns as an historic landmark to mark the contribution of C.S. Lewis to scholarship and literature. Stan Mattson, founder and president of the C.S. Lewis Foundation, will also speak on the importance of Lewis for today and introduce Oxbridge 2008, the Foundation's two-week conference that immediately follows Saturday's blue plaque event.

Others who have indicated they will attend the ceremony include the Lord Mayor of Oxford (Councillor Susanna Pressel), the chairman of Oxfordshire County Council (Councillor Tony Crabbe), the chairman of South Oxfordshire District Council (Councillor Colin Dawkes) and the chairman of the Oxford Civic Society (Mr Tony Joyce). Professor David Clary, president of Magdalen College, where Lewis taught, is also expected to be present.

## OXBRIDGE 2008

Oxbridge 2008 is the C.S. Lewis Foundation's seventh triennial summer institute event. Opening on Monday evening 28 July for the first week in Oxford, where Lewis taught for 25 years, the conference will move for its second week to Cambridge, where Lewis served as professor of medieval and renaissance literature for the last nine years of his life. The theme of this year's gathering is "Imago Dei? The Self and the Search for Meaning".

The Oxbridge 2008 programme is aimed at a general, thoughtful audience and offers a rich mix of academic addresses, seminars and workshops, plus a wide variety of artistic presentations including theatre, dance, choral and orchestral music, and the visual arts. All of this will be nested within Christian worship (four full services of worship, plus daily meditations and morning prayers). Plenary speakers include leading Christian thinkers in the areas of science, psychology, philosophy, theology, literature, history, business management and the arts. Afternoon seminars and workshops explore 25 different intellectual and artistic pursuits in addition to a science and theology symposium and a philosophy symposium.

Oxbridge 2008 will provide broad Christian reflections on such questions as, "Who are we?", "What meaning have we?", and "What are the reference points to guide a life of meaning?"

Francis Collins, director of the Human Genome Project that carried out groundbreaking research on human DNA, will take as his theme "The Language of God: A Scientist-Believer Looks at the Human Genome". This will be in St Aldate's Church, Oxford on Wednesday 30 July at 11.30 a.m.

The UK physicist and theologian, John Polkinghorne, recipient of the 2002 Templeton Prize for Science and Religion, and president-emeritus of Queen's College, Cambridge, will present the meditation at Great St Mary's Church on Wednesday 6 August at 9 a.m.

From the US, Colleen Carroll Campbell, author, columnist and former White House speechwriter, will have as her topic "The New Faithful: A New Generation Finds Meaning in Christian Orthodoxy", when she speaks in Cambridge on Monday 4 August at 11.30 a.m.

Internationally acclaimed poet Dana Gioia, who is also chairman of National Endowment for the Arts, the largest annual funder of the arts in the US, will speak on "Art and the Search for Meaning" on Friday 1 August at 11.30 a.m.

Inspired by the life and legacy of C.S. Lewis, the C.S. Lewis Foundation seeks to advance the renewal of Christian thought and creative expression throughout the world of learning and the culture at large. Foundation founder and president Dr Stan Mattson observes, "After an arid stretch of well over half a century, it is most encouraging to observe an emerging interest within the world of ideas and the arts, and particularly

within the university itself, to re-introduce serious consideration of transcendent and spiritual matters within the heart of intellectual discourse. Students today increasingly evidence a keen desire to explore these topics, and Oxbridge 2008, which will attract over 450 registrants, has been designed to offer serious food for thought in this exploration."

There remain several openings for interested registrants. For full information and to book, visit [www.cslewis.org](http://www.cslewis.org) or contact The Kilns in Oxford: tel. 01865 741865; email [donna@cslewis.org](mailto:donna@cslewis.org).

In contrast to the lectures and evening performances, all worship services are public events and no pre-booking is required. The C.S. Lewis Foundation invites local Christians and clergy to attend these services along with Oxbridge 2008 participants.

Media information:

The programme schedule is available at:

<http://www.cslewis.org/programs/oxbridge/2008/program.html>

Members of the media are invited to attend any of the Oxbridge 2008 events (except for the evening dinner/dance on 4 August). Media who plan to attend or have interview requests and other enquiries are asked to contact John Newbury, the C.S. Lewis Foundation's media representative in the UK, on 01686 440203; mobile 0798 246 4770; [newburys@pc-q.net](mailto:newburys@pc-q.net).

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