

Venues

Madingley Hall

Madingley Hall is an elegant country house built in the 16th century, set in seven acres of spectacular gardens and magnificent grounds.

In 1756, Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, who had also worked on Blenheim Palace, Warwick Castle, and Kew Gardens, created the gardens. His style of smooth undulating grass and scattered trees was the height of fashion, and swept away almost all traces of the existing garden's formality.

Queen Victoria rented the Hall as a residence for Edward, Prince of Wales whilst he studied at the University; his stay was brief, due to his father Prince Albert's unexpected death. Madingley Hall was bought by the University of Cambridge in 1948, and is home to the University's Institute of Continuing Education, which provides residential and non-residential courses, conferences and summer schools for professional groups and the general public from around the world. This year a Tercentenary Walk was created in the garden, to mark 300 years since the birth of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown.



Queens' College



Queens' is one of the oldest and largest colleges of the University, founded in 1448 by Margaret of Anjou (the Queen of King Henry VI, who founded King's College), and features some of the most recognisable buildings in Cambridge. The site sits astride the River Cam, each side colloquially referred to as the 'light side' and the 'dark side', with the world famous Mathematical Bridge connecting the two—more correctly called, 'The Wooden Bridge.' Stepping across the bridge can give visitors the impression of stepping from the twentieth century to the fifteenth (or vice versa). The erection of the bridge occurred at the same time as the building of brick walls along the river banks and alterations in the layout of the Grove. It can therefore be difficult in reading the college records to distinguish one project from another.

The earliest discovered use of the term Mathematical Bridge in relation to the bridge at Queens' was in A Guide through the University of Cambridge, of 1803, as a footnote to a description of the bridge on page 68: Usually known by the name of the *Mathematical Bridge*. A different publication, Cantabrigia Depicta, by Harraden & Sons, made a similar comment in 1809. might have been confused with the other. Some care is required in interpretation, as the phrase Mathematical Bridge was also being used in the same period to describe the similar bridge at Garret Hostel Lane (see below), and either bridge might have been confused with the other.

The Mathematical Bridge) at Queens' College was designed in 1748 by William Etheridge (1709–76), and was built in 1749 by James Essex the Younger (1722–84). It has subsequently been repaired in 1866 and rebuilt to the same design in 1905. The red-brick building seen on the right of the photograph is the riverside building (ca. 1460), the oldest building on the river at Cambridge, containing part of the President's Lodge. The bridge is 50 feet 8 inches (15.44 m) long. The angle between two adjacent radials (except the ones on the abutments) is one 32nd of a revolution. The arch is composed of tangents to a circle of radius 32 feet.



The Eagle

It all began normally enough for the pub back in its early years during the 16th and 17th century as it established itself as a busy coaching inn for travellers coming to and from London. When the railway arrived in Cambridge in 1850, The Eagle transitioned from coaching inn to regular tavern. With the influx of coach travellers gone, the pub's regular guests were quickly replaced by students, staff and researchers from the colleges of the esteemed Cambridge University. The Eagle proved particularly popular among the staff at the Cavendish Laboratory, which opened in 1874 on Free School Lane near the pub, and was devoted to experimental physics.



It was two researchers from this very laboratory that gave the pub its biggest claim to fame. On February 28, 1953, pub regular Francis Crick came to The Eagle to announce to the pub's guests, some of whom were fellow scientists and researchers, that he, together with James Watson, had discovered the double helix structure of DNA – one of, if not the greatest scientific discoveries of the 20th century. Guests of The Eagle today can find a blue plaque outside the door commemorating Crick's 1953 announcement. Watson and Crick would later go on to win the 1962 Nobel Prize for their scientific advancements.

The pub is also famous for its graffiti-covered ceiling, which is found at the back of the building in the so-called RAF bar. During World War II, The Eagle was frequented by RAF and American airmen who, during their downtime in between air strikes, drank and socialised here. At some point during the war, the military guests began using candles and petrol lighters to burn their names, squadron numbers and other miscellaneous doodles onto the ceiling. Tourists still come here to inspect the vast range of markings, which cover almost every inch of the now-crowded ceiling. After the war, the military graffiti gradually disappeared from view, the markings becoming quickly obscured by a build-up of smoke and dirt stains. Later, when the ceiling was cleaned, the graffiti was rediscovered and preserved for all guests to read and ponder while enjoying a pint and some pub fare. Though the pub is managed by Greene King, the site of the Grade II-listed pub is still owned by Cambridge's Corpus Christi College. The Eagle still attracts many academics and researchers from nearby colleges, as well as tourists who want to soak up the traditional, old-world atmosphere; to see the site of the Watson-Crick DNA discovery announcement; and to survey the graffiti-covered ceiling of the RAF bar. The Eagle is just one in a sea of historic buildings in town. In fact, just across the road from the pub sits St. Bene't's Church, whose tower, which dates back to the 11th century, is said to be the oldest standing structure in Cambridge.