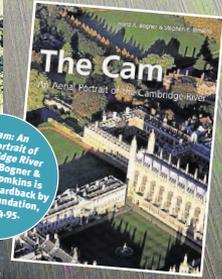


Bird's eye view of 'Cam country'

THE BACKS: Looking down on St John's and Trinity colleges

OARSOME: A rowing eight on the Cam

The Cam: An Aerial Portrait of the Cambridge River by Franz X Bogner & Stephen P Tomkins published in hardback by the Labor Foundation, priced £34.95.



WATCHERS OF THE SKIES: The Mullard radio telescopes at Lord's Bridge, Barton



TEAMWORK: Franz Bogner, left, and John James get ready for another photographic mission in the skies over Cambridge

Do you envy those high-flying birds that have such an amazing view of the ground below? Would you like to soar above Cambridge and see all those places that you know so well on the ground? If so, you may imagine following the roads or rivers below you. This was just what the German photographer Franz Bogner has done in his new book *The Cam: An Aerial Portrait of the Cambridge River*. Prof Bogner's home is in Bavaria; there he has authored many aerial photography books about southern Germany – its great rivers, like the Danube, and its high peaks in the Alps. Why did he come to photograph our flat Fens? Some years ago he came to Cambridge University to pursue his research; his daughters, Xenia and Christina, went to school in Chesterton. While here, his family developed a binding fascination for Cambridge, its city, its colleges, the countryside surrounding it and for the River Cam. In Germany there is something more central and almost mystical about a river's valley. Franz wanted to portray Cambridge as the place defined by its long association with its river. This passion of his gave birth to this book.

A new book of aerial photography reveals unexpected – and unexpectedly beautiful – views of our city and its surrounding countryside. Here, Stephen P Tomkins, who wrote the text for the book, explains how it came about.



This was the beginning of a professional partnership with me here in Cambridge. I have lived in Cambridge most of my life, and have been a teacher and teacher-trainer, as is Franz. Both of us have a passion for environmental education, and we both know well that without people caring for their environment we may end in destroying what we most value. The first problem was to find a pilot who had a small ultralight plane and who knew the area like the back of his hand. We were so lucky to find Lindsay Brown at Bourn Airfield, and John James, who flies his little twin-seater plane from a private airstrip near Newmarket. John's plane is a CT SW made in Germany. It has a range of hundreds of miles and cruises at 140mph, but importantly it can slow to about

60mph for Franz to take his photographs from a large open window. On a clear frosty morning in November, that can be pretty chilly. Lindsay and John have been flying in Cambridgeshire for many years and importantly both know everyone that you need to call up on the radio for permission to enter a flight zone. To secure really sharp images, Franz Bogner once used a hefty Hasselblad camera but, more recently, he has used a large long-lens Canon for this high-speed digital photography. He has gathered the images in this book, from spring to autumn, over some eight years on his occasional visits to Cambridge. In this book, Franz's highly detailed aerial photographs are taken when the shadows are

longest, ideally in the first and last light of an absolutely clear day. The shadows impart depth to his pictures and clear light can give you both amazing colour and detail. The focus of each picture is on those landscape features seen from the air that might catch your eye, as indeed they caught the photographer's. The 138 aerial photos speak for themselves. I worked with Franz to plan the flights so as to include all the striking features from the Cam's tributary streams south of Cambridge, through the city and north to the Fens. It features views from Linton to Wimpole and from Saffron Walden to Ely. Many of the pictures are from Cambridge itself, with a focus on the historic views of the Cambridge Backs, which are really stunning. I have also written the text of the book, and I hope that it will help readers to look more carefully at our natural and built heritage and learn more of the special places we all live in. Cambridge was built around our little river. The Cam is now a hugely busy river, with more boats on it than any other comparable stretch of water in the whole of Britain. We hold a treasure; Cambridge and the Cam together are indeed iconic – truly revered throughout the world.



RING ANY BELLS? Wandlebury



NEW ANGLE: King's and Clare colleges

SHIP OF THE FENS: Ely Cathedral



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