



New College



news

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Number 19

The Warden's Report

Last year, I began by observing that there is an uncanny coincidence between one piece of bad news and another, and that it was not to be wondered at that the roof fell in on the stock market just as we needed to make sure that the roof didn't fall in on Hall. As you do not need me to tell you, the stock market has gone down by another twenty percent since I wrote that - the good news is that the repairs and restoration of Hall came in on time and on budget and are a great success. A fuller report is inside.

The antepenultimate piece of rehabilitation of the residential stock was also completed very successfully. This was the much needed work on 64 and 65 Holywell, where our architects not only squeezed en-suite facilities into the cottages without losing any bedrooms, but did it without reducing the size of the rooms. All we have before us now is the modernisation of Savile House, and the (rather more drastic) modernisation of 12 New Buildings - this last is felt by everyone other than the occupants to be not terribly urgent, since most of the rooms are used as tutors' teaching rooms...

We are sometimes asked whether we absolutely had to do all the work we have done on the residential buildings. Part of the answer is that most of the cost we have incurred in rehabilitating these rooms would have been forced on us by the stringent fire and safety regulations that we, like hotels and boarding schools, have been subjected to over the past decade. The other part is that the undergraduates of 2002 have grown up in centrally heated homes with the comforts that their parents take for granted. The proportion who have gone to boarding school is lower than it once was, and the modern boarding school is itself a far cry from what it was fifty years ago. Good accommodation is today one

of the things that applicants think about when choosing colleges. It must be said that when our alumni come back for *Gaudeo* and other occasions, they too, are appreciative of the new standards. A taste for hiking three hundred yards to the showers doesn't last into middle age.

I won't repeat what I said last year about the general constraints under which the college operates, other than to say that things are worse rather than better. We are still working under the government imposed ceiling on what Oxford can charge for tuition; and like all employers, we shall be hit by the Chancellor's increases in National Insurance payments in 2003. Some time in the future, the government will surely give ground on tuition fees, and when they do, colleges may or may not get an adequate share of whatever the university takes in by way of increased income. Until then, we shall be working hard to make ends meet; and when it does happen, our need for funds for scholarship assistance will be all the greater.

The good news is that your generosity continues unabated. One Old Member who wishes to remain anonymous gave us a third of the cost of the work on Hall, and donors to the telethon gave a further £300,000, for the work on Hall, student aid and the general fund. Even those of you who regard telethons as pretty much on a par with cold calling by double-glazing salesmen have said how much you liked the students you encountered; they are, reassuringly if not surprisingly, wonderful advocates for the college, and I have been touched by the rapport between the telethon volunteers and the Old Members. A real friendship is growing between the generations.

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Our American alumni have been very generous, too. Brandon Fradd has paid for the restoration of an Ante-chapel light, and Win Churchill has given us the first instalment of a scholarship for graduate students. We were in addition the beneficiaries of a particularly generous legacy from Professor Lee Bradley, which will in due course enable us to finish our work on 12 NB and Savile House.

The situation of the Development Fund in general is good. Although we have drawn on the fund for some two-thirds of the cost of the repairs to Hall, and it has suffered from the general weakening of the stock market, it still stands at some £7 million. As an addition to general endowment, that means it provides something like a seventh of our total investment capital, and provides an indispensable supplement to the college's income; it is equally valuable as a fund on which the college can draw for sudden expenses which would present problems for the college's cash-flow or require expensive borrowing in its absence.

Much of the income provided by the fund is pre-empted, in the sense that it comes from dedicated trust funds that exist to support particular, named research fellowships, and whose income must go to those fellowships. The trustees have taken a policy decision that the greater part of the remaining income ought to be spent in connected ways: on the under-endowed research fellowships, and on the costs of the most recently elected tutorial fellows. It is there that, especially in arts subjects, the University is most reluctant to fill posts and most eager to push teaching costs onto the colleges.

We live, as always, in hopes that public policy will become more rational, and that the government's incessant demands for new courses, more research, and instant responses to its endless initiatives will slacken a bit as ministers grow up and learn their jobs. Or in the alternative that they learn that if they wish to call the tune, they had better get used to the idea of paying the piper. We shall see.

The Hall



The restoration and repair of Hall owes a great deal to three people. The first is Dr Michael Burden, who somehow added to his jobs as music tutor, chattels fellow, and impresario, the role of an associate clerk of the works in liaison with Colin Fergusson and Ray Broadhead from Austin Newport Ltd our contractors. The Hall was last tackled on this scale when Sir Gilbert Scott put in the new roof in 1858, though a good deal of restoration was done by Champneys in the early 1900s and more again in the 1920s.

Myths have long accreted about the Hall. No matter how often the story is denied, newspapers and radio journalists still insist on believing that Scott used oak beams from trees that had been planted for the purpose almost five hundred years before. Since most structural oak was cut from trees of about a hundred and fifty years old, it would have been unlikely that anyone would plant it for use in five hundred years. Happily, on this occasion we have not needed to re-roof on such a scale, although there were some initial fears that the lantern was unsound and insecure as well as porous.

The greatest changes have been unobtrusive. One is to the gallery, where a partly glazed floor has been restored, with great benefit to the lighting, and a safer and more elegant railing installed, we hope with great benefit to the security of the trebles. Its predecessor always looked as though it was too high to catch a falling treble and too fragile to hold a tumbling bass.

News of the News

We received enough favourable responses to last year's edition in the new style to have decided to stick with this mode for a while. This edition has been a transatlantic operation, involving the Warden in California, and Susan Ashcroft-Jones in New College, with the help of her new assistant Paula Squires. Paula comes to us from Brasenose (and before that the Williams Formula One team) and will divide her efforts between Development and Conferences.

Honours

Although we always put this news in the *Record*, it is worth mentioning here, too, that we have two new Honorary Fellows, elected at the June SGM: Sir Christopher Llewellyn-Smith and Sir Gerald Elliot. Sir Christopher was knighted in the New Year's Honours List, joining his brother Michael, formerly ambassador to Greece. It was one of our bumper years for Fellows securing titles of distinction from the University; seven readerships and professorships will be reported in the *Record*. And Miles Hewstone, arrived only last October as fellow and tutor in psychology, has made his mark at once; he was elected to the British Academy at its annual meeting in July.



The project was completed with (relatively) few moments of pure panic. We lost a steel supplier early in the proceedings, had some anxious moments during high winds, and wasted a certain amount of paint when the first coat on the newly plastered wall turned out not to be what had been expected.

The result is exactly what we wanted. The hall is lighter but not garishly bright; the lighting is brighter but not glaring; the paintings are clean; the electrical system is safe; and now that we are to have winter *Gaudes*, we can all rejoice that the place will be warm and windproof. If global warming accelerates, the college may be looking for help with air-conditioning in fifty years time - but we can all leave that to our grandchildren and great-grandchildren to think about. For now, it is enough to mention that we reopened Hall for the annual lunch for freshers and their parents, then celebrated an out of season St Thomas's and *Gaude* immediately afterwards.

Telethon

The annual **Telethon** will be in November again. We will write separately to everyone to tell them that student volunteers will be calling to ask for their help with the college's projects. This year we shall be asking for help with student financial aid above all else, but there are many other projects for which we need help. These include funding for the Cox and Salvesen Fellows and the last dozen lights of the Ante-chapel stained glass.

We know that one or two percent of you dislike being telephoned in this fashion; if you are among that one or two percent please let us know, if you haven't already done so, and we shall take your name off the list. Just as important, whether or not you can help us financially, do take advantage of the chance to talk to the students - they can tell you more about the college than this *News* can do, and they are an interesting and talented group of young people. And they very much like hearing from you!

NC Society Family Day



We had thought about a day for alumni/ae and their families once or twice before, but had been thwarted for various reasons. Finally, we launched a day of clowns, races, bouncy castles, and quantities of barbecue; numerically, it was a great success, and socially even more so. Meteorologically, it was decidedly a curate's egg; happily there were enough sunny intervals to allow 120 children to exhaust their parents. Honours of the day were evenly shared: the College's Head and Second Chefs, Abdel Galmi and Gregg Lewis braved wind and rain to feed an immensely appreciative clientele, and did it with unstinting good humour, while Nigel the Clown organised the races and a great deal else while keeping the parents as amused as their children. And the jazz duo played as stylishly as if it had been Cannes in the sunshine rather than Oxford in a blustery early summer. Now we know it can be done with so little help from the weather, we shall certainly do it again and soon.



Forthcoming Events

Please contact the Development Office,
New College, Oxford OX1 3BN (unless
otherwise stated):

Tel: 01865 279509

EMail: develop@new.ox.ac.uk

New College Society Regional Weekend in Winchester

Saturday 9 and Sunday 10 November

Bookings can still be taken. The varied programme includes tours of the Cathedral, Library and Triforium with a black tie dinner in Winchester College Hall and on Sunday general tours of Winchester with lunch at the Wykeham Arms.

Old Members' Carol Service Saturday, 14 December

All those who matriculated before 1969 are invited to

APPLY FOR TICKETS.

2003 Gaude

Friday, 10 January

Those who matriculated between 1945 and 1953 will receive an invitation from the College Secretary, Ms Barbara Vardag,

Tel: 01865 279548

EMail: barbara.vardag@new.ox.ac.uk

The Choir of New College Tuesday, 8 April

The choir will perform Bach's *St John Passion* in the Sheldonian Theatre with distinguished alumni including James Bowman and James Gilchrist. A booking form is enclosed.

Inter-College Golf Tournament Friday, 11 April

This annual tournament will again be held at Frilford Heath Golf Club. Further information will be sent to New College golfers nearer the time.

New College Society Supper Party Wednesday, 25 June

Please make a note in your diary to bring friends and family to this most enjoyable and popular evening.

Dinner in New College for Rhodes Scholars

Thursday, 3 July

visiting Oxford. Invitations will be sent to you via Rhodes House later in the year.

New Chamber Opera

Friday, 11 July and Friday, 18 July

will perform the British premier of Alessandro Stradella's *Il Trespolo Tutore*. Please book early to avoid disappointment; form enclosed.

Degree Day

We promised to show you the first degree lunch in the newly refurbished Hall; sadly, those photographs weren't up to scratch - but here, at least, are this year's graduands receiving their instructions from the Deans of Arts and on their way to the conferment of their degrees at the Sheldonian before lunch. They had much to be pleased about: up another place in the Norrington Table to Third, and only just out of the top place in the number of Firsts.



US Dinners



Andrew Quicke, Brandon Fradd, Derek Benham

dinners and parties in Philadelphia, Boston and Washington - and to thank you all for coming along. We are also grateful to Tom Bell who shouldered Derek's burden this year by arranging the activities in New York. Some of the after-dinner conversation on issues in higher education could usefully have been sent to governments on both sides of the Atlantic: it was certainly more acute and better informed than much that comes from them.

Last spring, we held a very successful dinner at the University Club in New York, coinciding with the biennial Oxford Reunion. The photograph allows us to pass on the news that Brandon Fradd and Derek Benham have become Trustees of the American Friends - joining Win Churchill, Jeff Rudman, Russ Carpenter and Wiley Vaughan. It also allows us to thank Win, Jeff and Russ for organising

Parents' Day



Parents' Day has rapidly established itself in the college calendar. This year, the 'fresher parents' got the first lunch in the rehabilitated Hall on May 11th; they greatly enjoyed it, and the college staff were rightly pleased to have put on such an elegant occasion mere hours after the last of the builders' rubble was swept out of the door. As the photograph suggests, it is also the chance for younger siblings to see what their elders have been talking about for the previous six months.

The Sadie Jane



Naming opportunities are a feature of American fund-raising; so when the chance came to name the new women's boat, the Warden took it. So did the Women's First Eight - they got their blades and are once again within striking distance of going head of the river.

The New College Golf Society met again on 10 September and followed a good day's golf with dinner and a bed for the night in New College. If you would like to join the Society, please contact the captain Mike Leigh (1971) mike.leigh@btopenworld.com

University Challenge

Nigel McKenzie (1964) (n.mckenzie@ucl.ac.uk) has a copy of the recent **University Challenge** featuring the victorious team of 1964. Sadly they did not win this time but he is happy to lend Old Members the tape to view or copy.

We still have a few copies of the **New College Register** at the reduced price of £15 for UK and Europe; £19 beyond (inclusive of postage). If you would like a copy, contact the Development Office. Credit card payments now accepted.

The Website



Our new website was launched last month, a monument to the hard work and technical ingenuity of Alastair White, the College Accountant, and Paul Keir of Selutions. Its elegance speaks for itself - though it does disguise the extraordinary amount of labour that such things require.

We could continue to boast but we will let David Churchill Thomas (1954) speak for us and add our gratitude to him for spotting this year's deliberate mistakes before going to press:

'Congratulations to all concerned in producing it. It is elegant, comprehensive and easy to navigate - a model of its kind. And I like the pictures illustrating each page - also the full colour *New College News*...'

Prints and Christmas Cards for sale:

Responding to demand we have produced a college card this year which is suitable for Christmas and other occasions as a greetings card. The enclosed order form is a paper reproduction of the card which, I am sure you will agree, is a stunning view of New Buildings, home to many of you during your time here. This image, and more, are available as signed, limited edition prints with ten percent of the proceeds donated to the college. Order forms are enclosed.

Swan Hellenic Cruises are again available to Old Members. This year we are offering two trips during February and March which will appeal to those of you who want to escape the winter mists. The first cruise starts in Thailand and finishes in Sri Lanka, taking in Singapore, Malaysia and India. The second starts in Sri Lanka and leaves you in Kenya with the option of a post-cruise safari. Brochure enclosed.



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New College Development Fund, registered charity no. 900202, exists to support New College, Oxford