

DECEMBER 08 | N° 25

NEW COLLEGE NEWS





WELCOME...



THE WARDEN'S REPORT

HAVING HOPED THAT MY FINAL YEAR AS WARDEN WOULD BE MARKED BY NO GREAT EXCITEMENTS AND ANXIETIES, I WRITE WITH SOME REGRET TO SAY THAT THESE HOPES HAVE BEEN DASHED...

The departure of **Barbara Vardag**, College Secretary for almost three decades, has revealed how far we all depended on her formidable memory. The old joke that 'behind every successful College there stands a powerful woman' has been revealed as no joke at all. We are busily restructuring and rethinking, and I have every expectation that we shall hand **Curtis Price** a happy and well-run College next September.

The other excitement, of course, has been the chaos swirling around the world's financial markets, and now the prospect of a sharp and perhaps prolonged recession as a result. So, it is time for me to tell you how we



are, what we have done with the resources you have given us, and how we expect to fare in the next several years. Fortuitously, the last year has been a particularly good year for the Development Fund. **Sir John Smith's** legacy was matched by a gift from **Bill Eason**, the income from half of which is to be used to provide generous bursaries to two pupils from Lord Williams's School at Thame, an institution with which we have been associated since its foundation four centuries ago. The first holders of 'Rycote Bursaries' will arrive in Oxford, perhaps even at New College, next October.

Like the endowments of all institutions from Harvard downwards that Trustees manage for the long haul, the Development Fund has suffered a substantial loss of value, but thus far not much deterioration of income. The future is not entirely clear, but the College can weather a ten percent loss of income by deferring some of the things that are highly desirable but not essential in any particular year. Much beyond that, and we shall begin to worry about – for example – sustaining the number of Junior Research Fellowships that we currently do; our twelve stipendiary and eight non-stipendiary posts place us well towards the top of college provision, matched only by Merton, Christ Church, and St John's. It would be painful to reduce that number even in the short term, and a real threat to the academic life of the College in the long term.

We are still a very long way from the world imagined in the 1877 Statutes on which the College ran until 2006; large parts of those Statutes were concerned with the procedures for eliminating Fellowships out of financial necessity, and the margins of Warden Sewell's copy of the Statutes were filled with anxious questions to the Visitor about their interpretation. So, I turn to the happier topic of what we have actually done with what you have given us. I highlight two things. The first is graduate scholarships, the other the small fund for undergraduate projects other than academic travel and support.

Academic careers really are like ladders: an excellent first degree, an even better graduate degree or degrees, a post-doctoral fellowship or JRF, then finally a position in teaching and research. The days when clever young men – around ninety percent of us were indeed men – were set to work as tutors at the age of twenty-two are long gone. The sciences are sustained reasonably well by government and industry; the social sciences somewhat less well; the humanities are poor relations. Almost every science graduate comes with external funding, around three-quarters of the social scientists, and forty percent of the humanities graduates. Absent funding, the would-be academic cannot get onto the first rung of that ladder. Students are willing to invest in themselves in the way encouraged by such things as career development loans,



Degree Celebration, New College Chapel

but the £10,000 they produce barely pays living costs for a year and leaves nothing for college and university fees. College help can make all the difference.

Thanks to your generosity, we were able this October, for the first time ever, to give substantial help to new graduates, one of them in the sciences, four of them in the social sciences, and eleven in the humanities. The College's £125,000 was as much as the Humanities Division could contribute across the entirety of its departments. Put otherwise, almost a quarter of our incoming graduates were helped, more or less substantially, by the College. Somewhat over half of those we helped with your assistance were New College undergraduates. From the resources liberated by the sale of the land at Aylesbury, the College has additionally created another half a dozen scholarships, and with the help of the American Friends of New College has created two Marshall Scholarships a year, sharing

the cost with the Marshall Commission. Such initiatives cost a great deal of money. Not all initiatives do so. Nor does the pleasure they give bear a very close relationship to their cost. For instance, our newly created 'Sporting and Cultural Awards Fund'— which is an addition to the existing Blues Fund that helps students playing for University teams – gave £5,000 to some 31 students. Their awards went to activities as diverse as kite-surfing at one end of the spectrum to underwriting a piano quintet at the other. We hope to increase the £5,000 to at least £7,500. And once again, £7,500 is as much as the Oxford Society has to spend on its awards to students from the entire span of the colleges. I am pleased to say that **Sir David Davies** got many happy letters from the recipients.

On which note, I should end by saying that I have been blessed by many things in my tenure as Warden: lively and intelligent students, cooperative colleagues, college staff

ready to go the extra mile – and not least by generous former members of the College whose generosity on whatever scale has always sprung from the affection we all share for the astonishing institution it has been my privilege to serve.

ALAN RYAN

THE DEGREE CEREMONY

For the past decade, New College has had a graduation ceremony in the Sheldonian at which almost everyone who took Schools the previous June has received their degree. This year, the Sheldonian was unavailable, and we decided to hold a degree celebration in our own Chapel. It was a great success, and we expect to repeat the experiment for the next several years; we had drums and fanfares, standing ovations from the proud parents, and – in a miserable summer – perfect weather.

GIVING AND GETTING

NEW COLLEGE HAS MANY PEOPLE TO THANK IN 2008 AS WE CONTINUE TO RAISE OUR GAME IN FUNDRAISING AND TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIFE OF THE COLLEGE.

1300 Old Members and an additional 60 friends, fellows, parents and others made gifts in FY 2008 (ending 31 July 2008). Growing annual giving remains our priority, and as the financial pressures of the current environment increase on the College's resources and on the resources of our students' families, we must stay focused on delivering new funds to meet all needs.

We have improved the way in which we thank generous donors to the College. In the Monk's Passage under the Hall, we have placed permanent recognition of all donors to the College who have given the College the equivalent of the DPhil scholarship endowment of £600,000 currently. This will go back to 1945 and will be added to over the years. A temporary annual recognition plaque has just been installed recognizing all donors to the College who give annually £500 or more. This is the new level of membership for the Warden's Club. It is the first time we have raised the Warden's Club membership level since it was established in 1993. We hope you like it.

Last year, our biggest success was a substantial increase in scholarships for graduate students. At the moment, this is perhaps the College's greatest need as the demand for graduate education grows, but the public funding to support students has declined. This has impacted British students particularly hard and for whom there are not as many alternatives available such as the Rhodes scholarships for foreign students.

The College offered nineteen substantial (£5,000 to £25,000 per year) new scholarships for entering graduate students in 2008. Sixteen of these were funded by our British alumni largely for the benefit of British students, half of whom were undergraduates at New College. The Americans have supported a new matching scheme with the Marshall Fund programme for two additional Marshall Scholars at New College. Japanese Old Member Yutaka Aso set up a graduate scholarship for Japanese students to do a DPhil at Oxford.

On-going projects like the library boxes continue. Work on the Chapel windows began over the summer which is the beginning of a

twenty-year project. The American Friends funded the first phase of a master plan for the College, and work began over last summer to identify where new and improved teaching, meeting and music practice space can be created. Options for a modernized and enlarged JCR are also being considered. Given our many grade I listed buildings, making changes to meet contemporary needs is a long slow process. The Development and Alumni Relations Team grew this year. This is all part of our effort to offer more and better service to Old Members, to add to our events schedule and to get more people involved in the life of the College. Of particular note were seven Old Member seminars to which we had mostly full houses for the seminars and dinners that followed. For 2008/09, there will be another three in Hilary and Trinity terms. They are announced in the Forthcoming Events section on the Newsletter.

We have also tried to do more for current students by asking the Development Fund to support a new Cultural and Sporting Award scheme. The objective of this fund is to support students in their extracurricular activities for which they incur personal expense. The second round of grants was decided in 6th week of Michaelmas term. Almost seventy students will have received small amounts of funding for costs related to blues sports, initiatives for the Edinburgh Festival, and a wide range of other things. We thank Mark Pobjoy, Michael Lewellyn-Smith and Andy Fiennes Trotman for being on the adjudicating committee along with the current presidents of the MCR and JCR.

The University launched its Oxford Thinking Campaign earlier in the year. All contributions made to New College will count toward the totals raised by the Collegiate University. Our objective is to do a better job of coordinating all College fundraising with the University's efforts over the next few years. This has not been easy, and we hope you will remain patient with us as new systems are put into place.

Thank you for all your support.

WILLIAM J. CONNER

JOURNAL ENTRY FROM
PROFESSOR GAINES POST (1961)
WHO TRAVELLED FROM
CALIFORNIA FOR THE 2008 GAUDE

The New College Gaude was well worth the cost and effort of the trip, in spite of lingering back and leg pains. Surrounded by 14th-century buildings, I had good conversations with many of my 20th-century Oxford contemporaries (most of them younger than I in 1961-63 because Britain's national service had ended in 1959 and I had four university years and two army years behind me): over tea in the cloisters; before and after evensong in the chapel (the NC choir is now probably the best boys/mens choir in the UK); during champagne in the front quad before dinner, dinner in hall, port in the senior common room, and breakfast in hall the next morning. Every one of them, from right-wing Tory to left-wing Labourite, expressed regret at the damage done to America's reputation by Bush & co. And every one of them made me feel welcome, 'one of us'. The deepest of several pangs of nostalgia occurred as I walked past the chapel after tea and heard the choir rehearsing for evensong. I froze. I saw myself as the undergraduate who heard the clear descant virtually every evening as he hustled through the main gate and front quad, and I regretted I had not attended that unique service of music and readings more often. Half an hour later, dressed in black tie, I sat near the altar next to one of my former teammates on the 1st Eight, looked across the narrow chapel to the El Greco portrait of a saint, listened to Bach, and admired rows of alumni who, all in all, have fulfilled the Founder's desire to educate a portion of England's elite for public service broadly defined and morally grounded.

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NCDF REPORT

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The Development Fund exists to support the activities of New College, Oxford, and beyond that such wider activities in the sphere of higher education and research as the Trustees may decide. The Development Fund is connected to, but independent of, the College and under all conditions has a majority of Trustees who are not employees of the College.

New College is an educational charity established in 1379 for the promotion of religion and learning, and with the intention that most of its graduates would enter the service of church and state. Today, its objects are the promotion of education and research, the cultural and spiritual development of its students, and the care and maintenance of buildings dating from 1379 to 2001; the buildings and their stained glass are widely recognised as part of the national heritage. New College is also a choral foundation; its role in caring for the less tangible aspects of the national heritage by supporting one of Oxford's three world-class choirs should not be overlooked; the Chapel and Choir cost the College some £200,000 a year that is not underpinned by public funding.

The Trustees agreed two years ago to underwrite the expenditure of some £3 million on the Nave stained glass over the next twenty years; it is expected that most of the cost will be met from grants from charitable trusts and from the College's fund-raising activities. The first tranche of the work has begun, and the Fund will be supporting this first stage of the work. The Fund also contributed to the refurbishment of Savile House, a 1930s residential building that has been very successfully updated thanks to a legacy from an American alumnus. As a result, the Fund contributed something over £1 million to the College's refurbishment and maintenance programme, compared with £30,502 in 2006-07.

The cost of general undergraduate student support fell by £30,000. As expected, the new arrangements for Oxford student bursaries consequent on the 'top-up fees' regime introduced in 2006, has meant that the College has been able to spend less on bursaries while keeping up a high level of expenditure on hardship relief. The Trustees have always expected that whatever may be saved on the provision of basic assistance to undergraduates will have to be expended on other forms of support and for other students. Graduate education will become an increasingly prominent aspect of the Charity's activities, particularly in the humanities, where students find it extremely difficult to secure support from funding councils. Indeed, in the present financial year, over £125,000 has been distributed to students who were unsuccessful in securing help from the funding councils.

Each year in this Report, the Trustees try to pick out some interesting aspect of what they have helped to achieve – often in helping an individual, and sometimes in helping a 'bite-size' project. This year, two things stand out; the first is an instance of the Trustees being able to help an alumnus to achieve his long-standing wish to encourage more students from his old school to attend Oxford and perhaps New College in particular. Lord Williams's School, Thame, is a comprehensive school of almost 2,000 pupils, founded some 400 years ago by Lord Williams, an adviser to Queen Elizabeth I, to whom he owed his ennoblement. New College was a trustee of his gift to the town of Thame, and the Warden of New College is ex officio a Foundation Governor of the school, and Chair of the Foundation Governors. A gift of £500,000 to the Fund has established two bursaries of

£2,500 a year apiece for the benefit of pupils of Lord Williams's School who study at Oxford, with a preference to those who study at New College. The second relates to a much smaller sum of money and a larger number of beneficiaries. New College gives substantial assistance to students who wish to travel for academic reasons, and to students who play sports of all kinds at University level. The Trustees have long assisted the latter category; last year, they were able to provide some £5,000 to provide grants for cultural and non-academic activities. Although grants of £250 to £500 do not go very far, most students are very adept at stitching together small grants from several sources to enable them to – for instance – take books to rural schools in Kenya, or work in the rain forest in Guyana, to sustain quintets and engage in unusual sports such as kite-surfing.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The Charity keeps its activities under constant review, but is conscious of the difficulties of quantifying its success. The public benefit provided by the intelligent and energetic young people who gain Junior Research Fellowships comes over a life-time of activity. Student financial support encourages students from non-traditional backgrounds to apply to New College. The Charity's activities also forge bonds of friendship and gratitude between present and former members of the College and sustain a climate in which philanthropy can flourish. Indirect benefits such as these are impossible to quantify but fatal to ignore.

The fund-raising activities of the Charity are kept under constant review. The annual Telethon has become well-liked by Old Members who enjoy talking to the students who make the calls. There will be another in January 2009. The Legacy Campaign that was launched in 2004 is also beginning to bear fruit; it is impossible to put firm numbers on what may eventually be received, but it will certainly be more than £10 million over a period of years. It is too early to know how large a difference the expansion of the College's fund-raising activities will make to the funds available to the Charity, but first signs are encouraging.

The Trustees continue to believe that by putting £500,000-£600,000 a year into the promotion of research and teaching, student aid, and the preservation and enhancement of "heritage assets", the Charity provides a substantial public benefit. In the absence of such support, less good work would be done and it would be done in a deteriorating environment by less happy people, or public funding would have to fill the gap in ways it has never been able to do.



EVENTS

GAUDE, 27 JUNE

FOR MATRICULATION YEARS 1958-64

On the steps the Choir, led by Edward Higginbottom, invites fellows and guests to dinner by singing (as has been sung ever since Noah): 'Tempus est vocandi à manger, O Seigneurs', which means in the vernacular: 'grub's up, blokes'. These days we add 'et Mesdames', to overcome the rampant sexism of the original text.



NEW YORK DINNER

5 APRIL

(a) Win Churchill (1962) with James Thresher (1950); (b) The Warden catches up with his former pupil, Nancy Gibbs (1982); (c) Kate Ryan with Joan Benham who worked hard to make the dinner such a success; (d) Will Straw (JCR President 02/03) with Bill Conner.



THE WYKEHAM SOCIETY AND WARDEN'S CLUB CONCERT 2 NOVEMBER

(a) Patrick Bartrum (1947) with his daughter and Chaplain, Jane Shaw; (b) The Warden hosted the reception in the Lodgings; (c) Michael Burden (Chattels Fellow) and Jennifer Thorp (Archivist) opened the Treasury for the afternoon.



NEW COLLEGE SOCIETY FAMILY DAY 24 MAY

RIGHT: The Warden with Brian Burdett and his family



OPERA

4 | 11 JULY

New Chamber Opera performed Thomas Arne's 'Artaxerxes' in the Warden's Garden



OPEN DAY 31 MAY

For Family and Friends of First Year Students



ARCHIVES BACK FROM THE BRINK...

WARDEN SEWELL STILL MOVES IN MYSTERIOUS WAYS, AND AN ALBUM FROM HIS DAYS HAS RECENTLY COME IN TO THE COLLEGE ARCHIVES IN A FAIRLY UNUSUAL MANNER.

At the very end of a recent foray to Sanders in the High Street, to attend a private view and sale of late-nineteenth century photographs and postcards of Oxford colleges, the Archivist was surprised to be given a massive cardboard envelope bearing her name. It contained a large album of New College Rowing Club photographs, much troubled by damp and mould (indeed her rather ungrateful first comment on seeing it was "It looks as if it has been dropped in the river"), and which she gradually remembered had been the subject of a phone conversation several months earlier in which she had expressed reluctance to acquire what would probably be very fragile duplicates of images already held in the college archives. Sanders was now very kindly offering it as a free gift, perhaps because no buyer would part with real money for it, and on those terms it was accepted.

On closer inspection however, the album turned out to be quite a catch. Although the covers are beyond repair, all the contents apart from the

first couple of pages are not in too bad a physical shape. Better still, every photograph is labelled (legibly!) with the event, date, and names of participants; even better again only a couple of the photographs duplicate existing ones in the college archives and some of them provide rare evidence of the ubiquity of New College oarsmen in Oxford life 120 years ago. For example, there are photographs taken in 1889 and 1890 of fifteen members of the Chatham Club (a university club for those of Liberal-Conservative political views, founded in 1864), in which an important qualification for inclusion seems to have been the ability to pose in a dignified manner with walking cane and either a boater or bowler hat. Seven of the fifteen members so recorded were New College men (and according to the Chatham's membership lists, accounted for one third of the Club membership that year), and included W.G. Hayter, future father of a future Warden here, Lord Amphill who was to become Viceroy of India and then go on to a distinguished war record in France in the 1914-18 war, the future barrister Viscount Duneraile who was Vice-Secretary of the Club, future Fellow John Fischer Williams and the Hon. William Goschen who were to take over as Secretaries in the following two years. 1890 was an important year in the Club's history: it had just hauled itself out of debt (£19 in the red at its previous annual meeting) and was successfully tackling what the minutes describe as "the apathy of its members", who perhaps preferred to be out on the river instead of discussing politics at that time.

There is also a photograph of about fifty members of Vincent's Club (which still exists), founded in 1863 as a select club for the "picked one hundred of the university, selected for all-round qualities,



social, physical and intelligent qualities being considered". By 1890 it was well represented by New College men (a quarter of those named in the photograph), two of whom – William Smith and Charles St John Hornby – were keen oarsmen, indeed Hornby rowed in the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race that year, in which Oxford won by a length. Vincent's was the club which provided free beer, tea, coffee and postal services for its members, and according to the *Caterer's Gazette* in 1900 also managed to lay on a house dinner "consisting of soup, fish, two entrees, joint, two sweets, savoury and cheese, which is provided at 2s. 6d. a head. How it is done is a mystery".

The album also abounds in images of the New College Fours and Eights in action, although they clearly had mixed success in the years 1888-1890 as they seem rather frequently to have finished second. In the background to some of the photographs may be seen the New College Barge, and in one photograph the anonymous labeller has identified Dr Spooner, standing on the towpath at the back of the crowd of well wishers as the crew prepares to start under the watchful eye of boatman Round. Another image, recording the final heat of the Grand Challenge Cup in 1889 between Thames Rowing Club and New College, is an emotive scene of hot summer days at Henley (despite the doleful comment added further down the page that "Thames won by ½ length"), and another photograph records the New College men, and dog, in nonchalant attitudes.

As for Warden Sewell? A photograph of him, torn out of a much smaller album, was found inside the cardboard envelope. It captures him standing with one of the fellows, Dr Henry Bigg-Wither, in the west door of the Chapel, with caps doffed as they watched the great eagle lectern teetering on the top step as it began its journey into storage during Scott's renovations of the building.

JENNIFER THORP Archivist



GRAMOPHONE AWARD

The Choir CD which has won this year's Gramophone Award in the 'Early Music' category features the music of Nicholas Ludford. Not a household name, even among Wykehamists. Ludford worked at the Palace of Westminster in the 1530s, and has left us half a dozen festal masses and an equal number of large-scaled antiphons. In complexity and sophistication his music is rivalled by only John Taverner's, and yet, within its technical wizardry it has an elegance and fluency entirely beguiling to the modern ear. The New College recording is the first using boys voices. It was made in the glorious acoustic of a church just outside Sarrebourg (Alsace) in July 2007, whilst the Choir was on tour. The Gramophone award is a fair testimony to the wonderful singing on the CD, but it is the more remarkable for being given to a choir which is in no sense 'specialist'. New College sings repertory from A to Z. Recent recordings include 17th, 18th and 19th-century music, and the choir's regular service music often



celebrates the work of 20th-century and contemporary composers.

A BUMPER YEAR OF RECORDINGS

The choir's most recent recording is Haydn's *Creation*, made in collaboration with Oxford Philomusica, the city's only professional orchestra. Choir and orchestra joined together for a live performance in London's Cadogan Hall in May, which a number of Old Members attended. The *Creation* joins the three CDs



released in the spring: the gramophone award-winning Nicholas Ludford, *Missa benedicta*; The Art of the Chorister, which features music by Pergolesi, Bach, Mozart and Couperin, sung by the acclaimed New College treble line; and *The Victorian and Edwardian Anthem*, with a selection of works by Elgar, Parry, Stainer and their contemporaries.

All the choir's recordings are available from the choir website www.newcollegechoir.com

Cover Image: © Courtesy of the Warden and Scholars of New College, Oxford/ The Bridgeman Art Library

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

A SERIES OF SEMINARS

FEATURING RESEARCH AT NEW COLLEGE:

February-May 2009

You are invited to apply to Alex Talbot in the Development Office for tickets: alex.talbot@new.ox.ac.uk or 01865 279317

Wednesday, 18 February 2009

Where Am I? A Machine's Perspective, Dr Paul Newman

Magnetic Navigation, Dr Christianne Timmel

Biography and the Idea of Literature in France, Professor Ann Jefferson

Seminars begin at 6pm in the Conduit Room followed by a reception at 7pm in the Panelled Room and dinner in the Senior Common Room. There are only twelve places for dinner per seminar which will be offered on a first come first served basis.

NEW COLLEGE LAW SOCIETY DINNER

Thursday, 19 February 2009

Middle Temple Hall has been booked for this annual Law Society dinner.

OXFORD INTER-COLLEGE GOLF TOURNAMENT

Friday, 17 April 2009

Hosted by Oriel College, the tournament will be played at Frilford Health Golf Club.

GAUDE FOR MATRICULATION YEARS 1995-1999

(you will receive an invitation)

Friday, 3 July 2009

As previously reported, the Warden and Fellows have reserved the same Friday each year (Friday of 10th week) to hold a Summer Gaude in College. With the help of Dr Andrew Wathen, we have planned a schedule and list below the matriculation dates of those to be invited over the next five years.

1900-1950 **June 2010**

1984-1989 **June 2011**

2000-2005 **June 2012**

1951-1960 **June 2013**

1976-1984 **June 2014**

NEW COLLEGE SOCIETY SUMMER GARDEN PARTY

Saturday, 4 July 2009

Open to all Old Members and their family and friends.

Those attending the Gaude are encouraged to stay on and ask their family and friends to join them for lunch in the College Garden. Robin Lane Fox has kindly offered to talk.

OPERAS IN THE WARDEN'S GARDEN

Friday, 10 & 17 July 2009

The Opera to be performed by New Chamber Opera is to be announced.

If you have any queries, please contact the Development Office: **01865 279337** or **01865 279509**