



Johnian News

Issue 2

Michaelmas Term 1997

From the Master

The first edition of *Johnian News* seems to have been very well received amongst all members of College. The Johnian spirit evidently continues as strong as ever and you are all interested to hear about College life.

The College remains in excellent health and the commitment and diversity of achievement passes on from one generation of students to the next. One point of transition, Graduation Day, was exceptionally wet this year, but the challenge of adversity almost enhanced the celebration.

Perhaps the biggest challenge facing the College at the moment has emerged from the publication of the Dearing Report. It is still unclear exactly to what extent the proposed changes will affect this College and the University, but it is certain that an extremely testing time lies ahead. More detail is given inside the newsletter.

It has been a great pleasure to welcome back many of you over the last few months and we hope you will continue both to use your dining privileges and to attend the various dinners and other events held in College. In particular we look forward to seeing sportsmen and women in College again as part of our fund-raising campaign for the Field Clubs and LMBC, and we will welcome members of the Purchas Society next year at the Fiftieth Anniversary Dinner. ☼

Peter Goddard

Johnian Day

On Sunday 29 June we welcomed more than 700 Johnians and their guests to College for the first Johnian Day for specific matriculation years.

The idea for the Johnian Day came from the very successful open weekend held to celebrate the opening of the Library in 1995. The day began with a Chapel Service at which the Choir and members of the Choir Association joined to sing Haydn's *Nelson Mass*.

A series of lectures took place in the Palmerston Room. The speakers were the Master, the Senior Tutor and the Domestic Bursar, who between them spoke about the College and admissions, Professor Crook whose lecture was entitled 'Classics - that played out subject?', and Professor Conway Morris who spoke about Greenland and its connection with St John's.

There were a number of exhibitions and students' rooms were open for viewing. Those present had a wonderful time being back in College.

The highlight of the day for many was a champagne reception in the Master's Lodge followed by dinner in the Hall. The Gentlemen of St John's provided musical entertainment, singing grace and a selection of madrigals. ☼



Johnians and their guests enjoying tea in the Master's Garden



College news

This year's **Larmor Awards** for 'undergraduate members who are most worthy either for intellectual qualifications or alternatively in moral conduct and practical activities' were presented on Graduation Day. Parents and the undergraduates were invited to join the Master, College Officers and Tutors in the Master's Lodge.

The award winners were Matthew Juniper, Helen Garnons-Williams, Nick Studer, James Samworth, Peter Davis and Nigel Edwards. ☼

The Master has been awarded the 1997 Dirac Medal and Prize jointly with another Johnian, **Professor David Olive** (BA 1960, PhD 1964). The International Centre for Theoretical Physics in Trieste awards the Dirac Medal and Prize annually on P A M Dirac's birthday for contributions to the field of theoretical physics. Dirac was a Nobel laureate and a Fellow of St John's College.

The Master and Professor Olive were selected for the Medal and Prize 'in recognition of their far-sighted and highly influential contributions to theoretical physics, over an extended period'.

The Medal and Prize will be presented in Trieste and the Master and Professor Olive will be asked to give the Dirac Lecture when they go to receive them. ☼

The Fellows have presented the **President, Andrew Macintosh**, with a silver-topped walking stick to express their appreciation of his fortitude in carrying out his duties in spite of his accident last year. As reported briefly in *The Eagle*, the President suffered a fall in the summer of 1996 while walking in Mount Sinai. He spent some time in hospital last year but Johnians will be pleased to know that he has made an extremely good recovery and has been seen cycling around Cambridge again. ☼

Dr Jane Heal and **Dr Malcolm Schofield** have been elected Fellows of the British Academy. Dr Heal published *Fact and Meaning: Quine and Wittgenstein on Philosophy of Language*, Blackwells, 1989 and has subsequently written further articles on philosophy of mind and language. Dr Schofield works on ancient Greek philosophy. His best known book is *The*

Presocratic Philosophers (Cambridge 1983), co-authored with GS Kirk and JE Raven, his latest is *The Stoic Idea of the City* (Cambridge 1991). ☼

Cambridge has topped *The Times* University League Table for the fifth successive year. The League Table is published as part of *The Times* Good University Guide and rates the performance of 96 British universities. Categories used include graduate destinations, entry grades, staff-student ratios, teaching assessment and research. *The Times* commented: 'Cambridge is again by far the most successful university'. ☼

Professor David Crighton, who has been a Fellow of the College since 1986, is leaving to take up his post as Master of Jesus in October 1997. He follows **Professor Lord Renfrew of Kaimsthorn**, another Johnian, in the post. Lord Renfrew is director of the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research. ☼

The College has elected two new Honorary Fellows: **Professor Mervyn King**, Chief Economist at the Bank of England, and **Mr John Browne**, Chief Executive of British Petroleum.

Mervyn King, a former Fellow, has particularly strong associations with the College, even though he took his BA from King's College, and is currently serving as Johnian Society President. John Browne took his BA from St John's in 1969 and joined BP straight after graduation. ☼

The **Purchas Society** celebrates its fiftieth birthday in 1998 and is holding a dinner to mark the occasion on Saturday 2 May. All geographers are welcome and invitations will be sent out nearer the time. ☼

Johnian News aims to keep Johnians in touch with the College and with each other. It is published twice a year by St John's College, Cambridge.

Articles, letters and photographs to be considered for inclusion in *Johnian News* should be sent to The Johnian Office, St John's College, Cambridge, CB2 1TP. Fax: 01223 338727



College news

This year's Title A Research Fellows have been elected and took up their appointment on 1 October 1997. They are Philip Connell, Russell Cowburn, Sophia Elliott, Yong Mao, Barbara Ravelhofer and Timothy Whitmarsh. ☼

The St John's Innovation Centre has been praised for its success in 'nurturing' high technology firms in a study funded by the Economic & Social Research Council Innovation Programme and carried out by the Judge Institute of Management Studies.

The Innovation Centre is situated in the St John's Innovation Park which is a site covering 20 acres of land and which employs a total of over 1,000 staff. ☼

The College Choir has recorded two new Compact Discs. One is entitled "Mendelssohn Church Music" (NI 5529) and is available from early November on the Nimbus label and the other is "Popular Choral Classics" (provisional title) available from late November on the Joan Records (Holland) label. For further details please contact the Johnian Office. ☼

Bill Gates, founder of Microsoft, dropped into St John's on 7 October, landing by helicopter on the playing field. Following announcements of the establishment of a new joint Cambridge University/Microsoft Research Laboratory and the gift of £12 million towards the construction of new University Computer Science buildings, Gates gave a lecture to an invited audience. Afterwards, he was presented with a College rugby shirt by Lorraine Dunbar, President of the SBR, and toured the College accompanied by the Master and the Vice-Chancellor before taking off again by helicopter. ☼



Bill Gates with the Master

Members of the College staff have been raising money for charity in recent months. **Rowena Steadman**, Properties Administrator, **Jon Warbrick**, Computer

Systems Manager, **Kathy Hammond**, Domestic Bursar's Assistant Secretary and **Ray Taylor**, a member of the Maintenance Department, carried out a sponsored walk in aid of Oxfam in May. Between them they raised around £220.

Tony Starace, a member of the Maintenance Department, had his head shaved for charity. He was brave enough to let one of his colleagues carry it out in the middle of Cripps car park. He raised around £250 for the premature baby unit at the Rosie Maternity Hospital, Cambridge.

A relay race around the Colleges and the Backs was run on Sunday 28 September. Called "Chariots of Fire", the College entered two teams, one graduate and the other a staff team. Each team was comprised of 6 runners, all running 1.7 miles. 160 teams entered the race and the graduate team finished 56th and the staff team 60th. All entry fees and sponsorship money went to Children in Need. ☼

The **Whipple Museum of the History of Science** is holding a special exhibition entitled 'A "University Within Ourselves"'. Dr Liba Taub, Curator of the Whipple Museum writes:

"The eighteenth century was a lively period for astronomical activity at Cambridge Colleges. Several Colleges built their own observatories, including Trinity and St John's. In 1765, the Observatory at St John's was planned and funded by Richard Dunthorne. Dunthorne had been hired in the early 1750s by Roger Long, Master of Pembroke and the first Lowndean Professor of Astronomy, to serve as College Butler and astronomical observer. Once the St John's Observatory was built, Dunthorne himself donated the astronomical instruments, carried out observations of the transits of Venus, and prepared new lunar tables. The Whipple Museum is currently working on a special exhibition to display the instruments and associated materials illustrating College work in astronomy and natural philosophy during the eighteenth century; the exhibition is planned to open in November. The Whipple is especially grateful to St John's, for generous help with images for the display and conservation work on the College instruments. The Whipple Museum looks forward to welcoming members of St John's."

The Whipple Museum is open on weekdays between 2 - 4 pm, and on Saturdays during the special exhibitions. It is located in Free School Lane, Cambridge. ☼



The Dearing Report and College Fees

The Master writes:

Following the publication of the Report of the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education, known as the Dearing Committee, on 23 July this year, reports have been appearing in the press about threats that may be posed to the Colleges of Oxford and Cambridge Universities by the changes in the funding arrangements for students which are likely to be introduced by the Government in the wake of the Dearing Report.

The Dearing Committee was established in May 1996 to make recommendations on how the purposes, shape, structure, size and funding of higher education in the United Kingdom should develop over the next twenty years. The Committee's Report, *Higher Education in the learning society*, available in full on the World Wide Web at <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/educol/ncihe>, contains 93 principal recommendations dealing with a diverse range of issues from the provision of access to networked computer workstations to the structure of the Governing Bodies of Higher Education Institutions. However, both in Cambridge and nationally, attention has focused on the parts of the Dearing Report which relate to the funding of university students and what the Government plans to do to implement Dearing's recommendations.

In a paper entitled *Higher Education for the 21st Century*, published simultaneously with the Dearing Report, the Government set out its plans for the way in which students in higher education will be funded in future. These include the introduction of an annual tuition fee of £1,000. Tuition will remain free for students from families whose income is sufficiently low, whilst others will have to pay up to £1,000 per year depending on parental income. The total parental contribution to fees and maintenance taken together is expected to be no more than at present however, the contributions required towards fees being compensated for by increased loans for maintenance. Repayments of loans will be made according to income once the graduate is in work.

The system of mandatory awards for undergraduates was introduced in 1962 and from then until 1977 the reimbursement of University and College fees was subject to a parental means test. From 1977 up to the present these fees have been paid in full by local education authorities. Shortly thereafter, in response

to a perceived need to control the commitment of public expenditure, the Government initiated negotiations with the Oxford and Cambridge Colleges about the level of College fees. Up to that time, Colleges had charged a number of different fees to meet the cost of the provision of tuition, sporting facilities, kitchen establishment, etc., but, as a result of the negotiations, each College has since charged a single consolidated fee at two levels, one for undergraduates and another for graduate students. The levels of the annual increases in these fees have effectively been controlled by the Government since 1979.

The Dearing Report commented on College fees as follows "The college fees in Oxford and Cambridge represent a substantial addition to the standard funding for institutions of higher education". It goes on to propose that the Government reviews them against the two principles which the Committee had proposed should be used more generally to determine when variations in the level of public funding should be permitted, namely that there is an approved difference in the provision and that society (through the Secretary of State for Education) concludes that an exceptionally high level of funding represents a good use of resources in relation to other funding needs in higher education.

The Government has already indicated to the Colleges that it is seeking advice from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) on how the proposal by HEFCE, that funding in higher education should in future be based on a standard price for each of four broad subject groups, might be applied to the Universities and Colleges of Oxford and Cambridge. It has undertaken to seek the views of the Colleges about the future of College fees.

As yet the implications of these developments are far from clear and members of the College will be concerned about what they might entail. Both the University and the Colleges of Cambridge are convinced that the collegiate nature of the University plays an essential part in maintaining its position as one of the world's leading universities. St John's is determined that this position should be preserved and the College is committed both to maintaining the quality of the education it provides and to ensuring that admission to the College remains available to the ablest students whatever their financial background. ☺



Buildings, Bells and Black Robes

Karen Fullard matriculated as a graduate student in 1996 and is reading for a PhD degree in Molecular Ecology. She came to St John's from Stellenbosch University as a Bradlow and Benefactor's Scholar. Karen has become actively involved in College life, including becoming the SBR Committee Secretary. Karen writes:

In many places in the world, Cambridge University has achieved almost mythical status. Before I arrived here, I had a confused, awed impression of ancient buildings, time honoured traditions, intelligence and academic excellence. To my intense surprise, the reality of St John's far exceeded my expectations.

A person fresh to Cambridge walks around in a very distinctive manner. The head is uptilted, the jaw slightly slackened, and the feet stumble their own unguided way over the irregular paving. I certainly fell into this category for at least the first two weeks of my life here.

Cartoon-like faces and monstrous gargoyles leered down at me from the tops of immensely old and ornate buildings. Bells seemed to announce every changing facet of the day. Chimes greeted the new hour (twice in the case of our respected rivals, Trinity), invited people in to church, and within John's, rang at apparently arbitrary times for unfathomable reasons.

"Random bell-ringing", I reasoned to myself, "probably has something to do with tradition". In St John's, more so than in most places in the world, this could be considered a fair deduction. To my delight, I found the College really was riddled with tradition and ceremony. Not having expected it, small acts like wearing a black robe to formal hall, or attending a reception in the candle-lit Senior Combination Room tickled me disproportionately by their very uniqueness. They still do so.



Karen Fullard

Fortunately, I am not alone in my appreciation of College life. It took approximately a week to identify the Samuel Butler Room as the focus of within-College graduate life. Very little further time was needed before I became completely enchanted by its regular denizens. Seldom before had I held conversations of such wit and utter lack of content. Only rarely had I felt such a sense of easy familiarity with as large a group of peers. Never before had I encountered people who, concealed beneath their ability to enjoy themselves, possessed such razor-sharp intelligence, and ferocious drive to succeed.

Flippant remarks designed to conceal the intensity of work are common. Though many people in the graduate community know that I am a Molecular Ecologist, a standard quip is that I spend my working hours chopping up whale meat with a cleaver. This has its basis in the many hours in the first three months of my PhD spent subsampling a huge collection of Pilot whale tissue samples.

Though I did, admittedly, use a meat cleaver to perform this rather monotonous task, it's not the whole story. By examining the DNA of whale individuals, I should be able to deduce aspects of Pilot whale behaviour and population structure. This is a rare opportunity to investigate a small, toothed cetacean that does not remain within a particular oceanic area. After a year of laboratory work, I have collected a sizeable block of data. Though data collection is far from complete, I plan to carry out preliminary statistical analyses in order to publish an article.

At present, the smooth flow of my PhD has been temporarily redirected by a new Freshers' week. As a SBR Committee member, I find myself watching in amused comprehension as the new freshers go through many of the same experiences as I did. With any luck they will become conditioned (in a manner reminiscent of Pavlov's dogs) to look around them and appreciate their fortune whenever they hear a Cambridge bell toll. I certainly have. ☺



The Gents Go East 1997

The Gentlemen of St John's comprises the alto, tenor and bass choral students of the College Choir. They appear regularly in concerts and festivals all over Britain and tour overseas. They have recently visited Sweden, Dublin, Naples, USA and Australia, and they have just returned from their first ever tour to Japan. The Musical Director, Dan Jordan, matriculated in 1994 and gained his BA in Music in June this year. Extracts from Dan's tour diary follow:

13-15 Sept - Training camp in the idyllic surroundings of Rendcomb College, deep in the heart of the Gloucestershire countryside. Good warm-up gig for a small yet appreciative audience. Having a few misgivings over sheer volume of music to be performed, yet 11 team-members limbering up confidently.

16-17 Sept - Arrive Heathrow in good time with all passports and tickets present and correct. 13 hr flight very painless and comfortable. Arrive Narita Airport, drive through Tokyo to hotel and stay up for as long as jet-lag permits.

18 Sept - First gig at Yamanashi Eiwa College. Lunch with students and staff includes a number of kind speeches and presentations. 300 attend the gig, rather more than came to see the King's Gentlemen in 1996. Told by tour manager that "Japanese audiences, to this type of thing, are quite conservative". Three encores and eleven roses later things had obviously gone well.

19 Sept - Tsukuba concert hall for second gig. More roses and numerous encores to an audience of 800. A 'drink beer' party after gig very enjoyable, much autograph signing and many photographs taken. Sign a wall decorated with signatures from other groups including The Tallis Scholars and The English Consort.

20 Sept - 10 am, Memorial Service for the Princess of Wales in St Andrew's Cathedral. We join the Embassy Choir to sing the Fauré Requiem. Congregation 150, largely made up of Westerners, Embassy Officials and the British Ambassador, Sir David Wright. A solemn occasion. Casals Hall concert sold out - 525 attend. Sir David Wright appears back-stage afterwards and is very complimentary. Especially pleased with our rendition of 'How deep is your love?'. He is a big Bee Gees fan.

21 Sept - Little or no sleep and Japanese beer means fragile Gents. Bullet train (Skinkansen) very speedy to Niigata, approx 1½ hrs outside Tokyo. Japanese TV crew meet us off train - plenty of hand in front of the camera shielding bemused Gents. Evening with homestays - supper attempted kneeling down proves too painful!



The Gents in Japan (Dan Jordan, middle, in shorts!)

22 Sept - Concert at Mitsuke-shi Bunka Hall Arcadia. Japanese TV still following us around, filming everything from the rehearsal to Gents changing. 700 people at gig.

23 Sept - A National Holiday. Return to Tokyo after lengthy farewells - Gents shown around more parts of the city. Visit the Electrical City - gadgets galore. Return to hosts in the evening.

24 Sept - City of Tokyo Club Dinner and another successful gig.

25 Sept - Kanto Gakuin University, more TV coverage and more awkward/stilted conversations with students. All staff very welcoming and keen to further a Cambridge-Kanto Gakuin link with another visit from us next year.

26 Sept - Reinanzaka Church concert with the smallest audience of the tour - around 180.

27 Sept - Rikkyo University Chapel - the long awaited 'Evensong' programme. An all English concert of music pre 17th Century requested.

28 Sept - Tokyo Opera City Recital Hall, sell out. Concert goes well, a good way to finish. Very happy, Gents all relieved.

29 Sept - To the airport very early. Emotional farewells and then on the plane back home. Content that the chosen team had gone in and done the business. Keen for a return visit in 1998. ☸



Maintenance Department

Mr Stan Moorhouse, Superintendent of Buildings, is head of the College's Maintenance Department. Mr Moorhouse has been working for the College for 7 years. He supervises the work of 22 employees, which include 4 painters, 2 bricklayers, 2 electricians, 5 joiners, and 3 plumbers. Mr Moorhouse writes:

The College is committed to a refurbishment programme which to date has seen all the junior member accommodation in First Court completed. The intention is - subject to available finance - to continue over the next six years or so through Third Court and into New Court. The caravan has come to rest in Third Court where currently E and F staircases are being refurbished. This will produce twelve junior member sets completely ensuited with a further nine in C and D to be done during 1998/9.

The works entail the physical reshaping of most sets to allow the installation of shower rooms and toilets (we do occasionally find some original walls with fine oak beams which, of course, remain untouched). In most cases it is possible to reduce the size of the gyp rooms and bedrooms to produce the space required. It is also necessary to meet the demands of the Building Regulations which often gives a headache or two. The new gyps and ensuite rooms need to be ventilated which sometimes requires ingenuity to find a route for the duct work. Striking a balance between the demands of modern technological requirements and being discrete with old buildings is a formidable but interesting challenge. All the sets and the staircases, the latter also known as escape routes, are brought up to current Fire Regulation standards. Again this is not always easy to achieve whilst maintaining the integrity of the buildings.

We are concurrently in E and F Third Court carrying out a re-roofing programme - as will happen with C and D staircases next year. These works involve the complete stripping of existing slates, cleaning out the accumulated debris (an industrial vacuum cleaner is used!), treating the exposed timber work, to prevent insect attack and rot, then re-felting and slating. Obviously as the uncovering work is carried on, all necessary renewal and repairs to these exposed timbers are carried out. This can be sometimes quite extensive, requiring the formation of new gutter sections and the bolting of steel sections strengthening weakened timbers. Specialist contractors have been employed to

erect the scaffolding, carry out the slate works and the re-leading (all of the lead gutters, dormer windows, flashings etc. are removed and replaced). All other tasks are dealt with by maintenance department staff.

During the summer we have been helped over a four week period by three German itinerant craft workers. They are shown in the picture wearing their traditional costumes, and from left to right are: Sandra Peters, a stone mason, Hilde Hanke, a wood carver and Helle Holm, a carpenter. The three of them are working their way through various countries, following a tradition going back to the Middle Ages. They each have a *Wanderbuch* in order to record the experiences gained and to provide evidence of their travels. Part of this travelling tradition involves the wearing of the "uniform" as shown, a similar but necessarily shabbier set of clothes are worn when they are working. As can be seen in the picture, all of their belongings are carried with them. The three contributed with enthusiasm and skill to the department's work and improved our sartorial reputation enormously. ☸



Left to right: Sandra Peters, Hilde Hanke and Helle Holm



Sporting Reunions

The College has recently launched a sports appeal for £750,000 to protect the sporting facilities in the face of reductions in fee income. As part of this, there will be a series of dinners taking place in College, each preceded by an 'old' Johnians match in the afternoon.

Only those who we know participated in sport while they were at St John's will be invited so please contact us with details of the sports you played.

The football dinner has already taken place, and it is hoped to organise another in the future if there is sufficient interest. It is intended that the other dinners will take place as follows:

Hockey - 7 February 1998
Rugby - 7 March 1998
LMBC - 18 April 1998
Cricket - 9 May 1998

It is also intended to organise a dinner in London next year for all sportsmen and sportswomen living in the area. Details will be given nearer the time. ☼

Regional reunions

The first regional event took place at Balliol College, Oxford, our sister College, on 11 August 1997. Johnians living in the Oxford area were invited together with their guests. The event was organised by Elisabeth Albanis (MPhil 1992) who has kindly agreed to be the Johnian Society contact in the Oxford area.

The event was a great success and was attended by Johnians of all vintages. The guest of honour was Professor Peter Goddard, the Master, and Catherine Twilley, the Development Officer, also attended.

It is intended that other events should be organised in the future. Anyone who wishes to be involved who has not already returned their form is asked to contact Ms Albanis c/o St John's College, Oxford. ☼

We have also heard from Johnians in New York, Germany, Scotland and the Leamington Spa area who wish to organise regional groups but are still looking for other volunteers. ☼

The Johnian Society Midland Group, which has been in existence for some years, holds a dinner in Birmingham every other year. For further details, please contact Dr A J Waring, 55 Tillyard Croft, Birmingham, B29 5AH. ☼

The Johnian Society

The Johnian Society, which helps Johnians maintain a link with the College and with each other, is holding its annual dinner on Saturday 13 December 1997 in the Hall. The cost of the dinner, which includes a reception in the Combination Room, is £22 for those aged under 25 and £32 for others. Professor Mervyn King FBA, Chief Economist at the Bank of England, President of the Johnian Society and newly elected Honorary Fellow of the College, will be in the Chair.

Application forms were sent out with *The Eagle* earlier this year and the closing date for their return is Friday 14 November.

The cost of joining the Society is only £10 for life and there are now more than 6,000 members of the Society. For further details on events or to join the Society please contact The Johnian Office, St John's College, Cambridge, CB2 1TP. If you are unsure as to whether you are already a member of the Society, please contact the Johnian Office on (0)1223 338700. ☼

Contacting Friends

The Johnian Office can help Johnians contact friends with whom they have lost touch. In many cases, Johnians have given permission for their address to be released to their friends, or we are happy to forward mail on your behalf. ☼

General Contact Details

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