



Jesus Old Members' Group 1959-64

Newsletter



Michaelmas
2002

Editor:
Chris Butterfield
2 Towersey Drive
Thame, Oxon OX9 3NP
01844 213969
crb@hmg-law.co.uk

Desk Top Publishing:
Peter Silverman

Editorial

It is a pleasure once again to start the editorial with a welcome to two new members. Derec Morgan (1964, postgraduate student in Celtic Studies) joined after the Association dinner, at which he delivered one of the finest speeches I have ever heard in the College hall. And after the Old Members' Day, Terry Wood (1965, Chemistry) joined as an associate member.

It is expected that the new directory will be issued early in the new year, but so far only half the membership have returned the update forms. If you have not yet sent yours to George Reah, please do so as soon as possible.

As announced in the Trinity newsletter, I include the report on my enquiries into what the College is doing to attract students from all social backgrounds. And there is the Principal's letter telling us of this year's Old Members' Scholar, from a very different discipline than most - or perhaps all - of her predecessors. The social programme this year has been so full that there is room for only one report, being Chris Linford's account of the visit to Caerleon. Reports on the Old Members' Day and the visit to the V & A have to be held over to next year. There are two dates for your diary, and of course the solutions to the brain teasers in the last issue, with something new to challenge your mind on a winter's evening.

Dates for your diary:

Association dinner 2003
AGM 2003

4 April
5 April

Old Members' Graduate Scholarship Award

Sir Peter North writes:

*I ought to let you know that at its meeting today the Governing Body awarded this year's Old Members' Graduate Scholarship to **Jennifer Goodman**. She is a graduate of the University of Bath who got a very good First in Aerospace Engineering last summer. She has just arrived here to do a D Phil in the Engineering Department, working generally in the field of turbo machinery and aerodynamics. She was very highly recommended to the University and already has a degree of practical experience at Rolls Royce. Indeed she was described as one of the best engineers that the Engineering Department at Bath has had for the last twenty-five years. So I believe she will be a very good holder of the Graduate Scholarship which you so generously fund.*

In This Issue

- **Graduate Scholarship Award** - Sir Peter North
- **Caerleon visit** - Chris Linford
- **The Jesus College Schools Programme** - Chris Butterfield
- **Brainteasers** - Peter Silverman

Caerleon - Our visit on 11 May 2002

We had to look Caerleon up on the map to find out its precise location. We had been tempted by the advertising in the Newsletter to join members on this discovery of historical Caerleon. We knew nothing about Caerleon, and therefore we had little inkling of the treat that was in store for us on the day.

Max Perkins had suggested that for members who would like to stay overnight the Priory Hotel would be a good base and we along with one or two other members chose to do this. The omens were good as we left on Friday evening and both the M25 and the M4 were running smoothly even in the rush hour and we had a record run to South Wales. As promised, the Priory served a very good meal, and we went to bed looking forward to Saturday.

We woke to a bright and sunny morning and after a walk round the town we found ourselves sitting outside having coffee as the first members arrived at the Hotel. At lunch I found myself sitting next to Howard Pell who was to be our guide for the afternoon. A more fascinating character would be hard to meet. Formerly from London, he had decided to leave the city for South Wales and he had fallen on his feet [in my opinion] as he was now leading it appeared the educational side of historical Caerleon, and it was obvious from his enthusiasm that he was enjoying every minute of it.

So, what were we going to see at Caerleon? Basically Howard took us back to the Romans and explained that Caerleon, founded as a Roman fort in 75AD and called by them Isca Silurium, became the centre of Roman occupation for the whole of South Wales, and developed into one of the biggest military cities in the Roman Empire. There was the huge barracks which could house many thousands of soldiers, there was the huge baths complex built very soon after the Romans arrived, and an amphitheatre. In fact it appears to have been a rest centre for the troops and certainly soldiers from the Second Legion Augusta were responsible for building sections of Hadrian's Wall.

The locals had used the stone lying around for years, and as early as 1850 there was opened a museum for the display of the many artefacts that had been discovered. The magnificent and relatively well-preserved Amphitheatre was only uncovered in 1926 when the Daily Mail sponsored the removal of 30,000 tons of earth. The baths, all of which are within the towns fortifications were not discovered until 1964, and their exploration was not completed until 1981.

Howard's approach was to take you back to the reality the Romans would have lived in at the time. Why build the Baths and Amphitheatre so early on in the occupation? To keep the soldiers fit and healthy on one hand and entertain them on the other. What happened to the sewage and the health of the soldiers? Design your fort carefully with this in mind.

There is no doubt that we had a first class guide in Howard Pell. He really brought to life the camp and city and the Romans who lived there, and at the same time imparted his knowledge so that we all left feeling we knew a little more about historical Caerleon.

The day did not end there but we were taken to the Ffwrwm Arts and Crafts Centre for a tour of the centre by the owner Dr Russell Rhys, an amazing character with a naughty sense of humour who reminded us that Caerleon had more history than that provided by the Romans. His Centre was brimming with statues/statuettes of the various characters who had impacted on Caerleon's history. King Arthur was there. An Arthur was crowned in Caerleon in the 5th Century AD. Was this the real Arthur? Who knows? But it makes a good story, and Russell Rhys was not one to miss a good story, especially if it had a little spice attached.

The day sped by and in no time at all we found ourselves at Max's house for drinks before wending our way home to our various destinations. A marvellous setting looking



over the river and an appropriate conclusion to a well organised and fascinating day in a town which surely deserves to go higher up the ladder of sites that really should be visited if we want to understand better the contribution the Romans made to our history.

Chris Linford

The Jesus College schools programme

Our 1959-64 Group was established to renew undergraduate acquaintances and to assist the College through the Old Members' Scholarship. But this secondary financial object has been a stumbling block for many, who have declined to join the Group in consequence. This is particularly true of a number of contemporaries following an academic career at less well-endowed universities.

Others are now asking whether graduate funding is the correct way for us to offer assistance – a question prompted by the funding – or lack of it – available to today's undergraduates. The Michaelmas 2001 newsletter raised this topic and it is mentioned on page 12 of this year's *Record*. But a further question follows. If undergraduates are to be helped, how are we to be sure that the College attracts the most deserving candidates? With this in mind, I was despatched to find out the answer. My request for help was answered promptly by a meeting convened with the Acting Principal Peter Clarke, the Tutor for Admissions Patricia Daley and the Schools Liaison Officer Sue Morris. I am most grateful to them all for their help.

If the press is to be believed, Oxford is still elitist, with positive discrimination in favour of the private school sector. In 2000 the University had 46% of its applicants and 49.8% of the successful ones from the state sector. The College's figures were higher at 61% and 57% respectively, but this still does not reflect the state/private ratio. I was assured that there is no element of positive discrimination either for or against any sector, but that the College wants the best undergraduates and will go out to get them, and to encourage schools to put their best pupils forward.

The University has its own Access to Oxford programme with a full-time Schools Liaison Officer. There are school visits and week-long summer schools to complement sixth form studies. You will find details on the www.admissions.ox.ac.uk website. The College is involved in this, but also joins with other colleges e.g. Somerville and Worcester for an Open Day in March.

The Government has its 3-year Excellence in Cities programme to improve the education of city children. Each LEA has to find a higher education partner to afford their students, particularly younger pupils studying for GCSEs, an insight into higher education. The College is an 'Excellence Challenge' partner to Camden.

On its own the College does a lot. Some of the work of the Schools Liaison Officer is described by Sue Morris in this year's *Record* at page 38. Pupils receive a leaflet '*Want to join us?*' inviting them to apply for the official prospectus, the alternative prospectus, subject notes and Open Day information.

The official prospectus is in A5 format with numerous colour photos, and accounts of the College history, its organisation and accommodation and the admissions process.

The alternative prospectus is entirely student produced except for the small-type warning at the end that '*This publication reflects the views of Jesus College students and not of the college.*' To those of our vintage it can be startling. The photo on page 2 shows the lawn littered with students. Page 15 contains an account of Trashing after exams are over: *Your Trashing (a great Jesus tradition) involves large amounts of water and champagne.* But it does not all read like an old-style rag magazine. There are some reassuring (to school candidates) words on accommodation and parenting (pairs of second-year students are allocated 2 freshers each). There is even a page on what to expect if called for interview. When the glossary includes *Niceness (personified): certainly applies to our Chaplain Lis Goddard*, I was left with



the impression that this prospectus was written with the best of motives. The JCR also has, on its own initiative, an admissions representative, and undergraduates are actively involved in the student-run Target Schools campaign.

Undergraduates are closely involved in the open days and are notified of each one in advance with an invitation to join in. The one in March already referred to as a joint event with Somerville and Worcester is targeted at areas perceived to be under-represented like London and the West Midlands. Then there is a day for all-comers in May followed by 2 days in June with overnight accommodation on offer. Old members are very welcome to help – see the *Record* at page 39. Anecdotal evidence suggests that a major obstacle to state school recruitment is teacher prejudice and old members may be able to break this down. The college hosts an annual conference and dinner for schoolteachers to foster contacts made during the year – suggestions for the invitation list are always welcome.

As for funding, all UK students pay the same tuition fee (currently £1,100 p.a.) regardless of the institution attended. Fees remission is purely mathematical – the LEA has no discretion (which might be open to prejudice or other abuse). Those with full fee remission taking up places in Oxford from October 2002 onwards will receive extra help in the form of an ‘Oxford Bursary’ of £1000 in the first year and £500 a year thereafter, funded equally by College and University. The College also has its own hardship fund, which is administered on the recommendation of a committee of Junior and Senior Members.

It is for us to decide how to apply our funds in the future. The newly formed 1991-95 group is aiming to fund an undergraduate bursary; log on to its website www.oldmembers.com and select Fundraising for details. We could, as hitherto, fund a graduate scholarship. Or help to fund the College’s share of the joint University bursary. Or contribute to the hardship fund. The decision must be ours. *Please let me have your views.*

Chris Butterfield

Brainteasers

Last terms teaser was:

1. Imagine a windowless room in which 3 light bulbs A, B and C hang down from the ceiling. They are each individually wired to 3 switches X, Y and Z on a wall outside the room. You have to work out which switch operates which bulb, however you can only enter the room once. You cannot see into the room from outside or glean any information about what is happening in the room from the outside. To start with all of the switches are in the up position and all of the lights are off.
2. What is unique about the number “4”

The answers are: 1. You switch X on, Y on and then off, and leave Z off. One bulb will be off and cold, one will be off and warm and one will be on. 2. “4” / “four” is the only number with a value equal to the number of letters in its spelling. Congratulations to **Richard Coates** and **Dick Crease** who answered both parts correctly and to Nicole Paice (Roger’s other half), **David Milne** and **Michael Ferguson** for answering part 1.

This term you need to think laterally once again:

You are driving along in your car on a wild, stormy night. You pass by a bus stop, and you see three people waiting for the bus: 1. An old lady who looks as if she is about to die. 2. An old friend who once saved your life. 3. The man (or woman) of your dreams. Your car only has room for only one passenger and you can't return to the bus stop once you have left it (I don't know why, that's the way it is). You are wondering who to give a lift to. What would you do?

Answers to jesusbrainteasers@petersilverman.com

