



I have good news that the timing of the publication of this Newsletter has now been established on a much more reliable footing. Through the good offices of Brittany Wellner James, the Director of Development, in the future it will be sent with the *Jesus News* in late August and with the *Jesus Record* in late January. The summer version will be A4 size as it always has been, but the winter version will be A5 to match the *Record*. It will mean the publication date will be fixed and not a highly moveable feast, as it has been up until now.

I am always pleased to have articles from members who have not written for the Newsletter before. So, if you have an interesting take on any of our occasional series, please get in touch with me. These series include ones about the way in which a particular industry in which you worked changed or transformed through your working life, or a take on your life in retirement, or any article you may have published elsewhere that may interest our readers.

One of the articles here in this edition by Clive Jenkins (who was a pupil at Cowbridge Grammar) has a clear link with the College through Cowbridge, which was at the centre of one of our recent trips.

Our next trip for members is on 23-24th October with a journey on the Settle to Carlisle railway, followed by a visit to The Armouries in Leeds the next day. In November we hope

to have a guided tour of the Foundling Museum in Bloomsbury. Further information will be available on the website jomg.org/. We would welcome any ideas for Old Members' Day next year so, if you have thoughts, get in touch. There are a couple more trips in the planning for 2020.

Peter May (1968)

Postscript to the All Alumni Dinner

Many of you will have attended the All Alumni Dinner in April. After breakfast on the Saturday some of us stayed for two very interesting talks. One was given by Vanessa Picker about her DPhil research in international development and she also gave us an inkling of her cricketing talent. So, you will be interested to know this was fully realised in a brilliant season for the Varsity team which she captained. Oxford overwhelmed Cambridge by 200 runs in the One Day Varsity Match where she top scored with 135 not out. She was top scorer for the season with 608 runs at 86.85 average and captained the university to victory over the MCC at Lord's. Well done Vanessa!



The 'Yorkshire Gaudy'!

Earlier this year there was an excellent weekend in York, organised by the legendary Tim Slater (1966, Greats). Whilst not an official XL Network occasion, all the attendees were in fact Old Members. They were mainly from the matriculation years 1966-71 with the common bond of rugby from a golden era for Jesus teams. It was one of those brilliant occasions when one met old friends from university days whom one had not met for many years (in some cases as much as 50 years!)

and realised so little had changed as the years rolled away. The guided tours of the Minster and Railway Museums were wonderful ways to experience those very different but interesting places and the social interludes and evening meals fully established that the drinking capacity of many was not one whit less than five decades earlier. A brilliant occasion celebrated in verse below!

'GAUDY' MOSS (THO' HE WASN'T THERE...)

For some of us who came to Jes
Round '66 to '9,
What may seem just like yesterday
Has been a fair old time

The World Cup won by England,
Neil Armstrong on the moon
Ah! We were barely infants
Now we're slippered pantaloons

But once a decade (thereabouts)
We summoned are – Oh Lordy!
To join, carouse and share the love
At Slater's Yorkshire Gaudy

So April saw us gathering
(Though without Gordon Moss!)
Two tables full to take the train
With Chris Hicks from King's Cross

To get us there was task enough
And no 3rd class manoeuvre
From Brighton; Wales; and Jerry Haile –
Who'd flown in from Vancouver!

One of our number jumped the gun –
He'd boarded, causing ructions
Yes, Graham Pimlott CBE
Had not read Hicks' instructions!

The journey north went flashing by
With memories by the mile
Not hard with Norman Wright and
John Clem's puns to raise a smile

The Judges' Lodgings was HQ
For several of the crew
But the York Tap at the Station
Served a special Pie and Brew

Duncan Hunter – has he changed?
A little? Perhaps a lot?
He hasn't changed at all
(If that's a good thing – or if not!!)

Our hair has thinned, our stomachs
not,
The pictures they are yellowed
And in Pete Burley's absence
It seemed Gareth Rees had mellowed!
And Slater – centre of affairs
With wife and suit and brood:
Ensuring we had good chat
Great drinks and much fine food

Acme Security's former head
At many an Oxford Ball
Would now admit he'd find it hard
To scale the Jesus wall

But he'd laid on some experts
At two great York attractions
Godfrey Bloom for Church affairs:
Bill Parker, Railway faction!

Some went to both and learned a lot
And used their photo-cams
To capture 'Mallard's graceful lines
Or send some 'Minster-grams'

Sir David Lewis was with us:
Came Sunday, all too fast
When many of us looked as though
The Lord Mayor's Show had passed!

So thank you, Tim and family
For having us again
We're looking forward to the next
If we are spared for ten

We'll listen to our leader, Hicks
And meet him near the exit
And laugh 'bout 2020
And oh, what d'you call it? Brexit!

We'll board the ancient rolling stock
(No HS2 or 3!)
And rattle up to Tim's for
Yorkshire Pudding, Beer and Tea

Once more we'll thrill to Peter May's
Best memories to please us
And we'll be back aged 20
With our books and sport at Jesus!

Phil Atkinson (1969, History & Rugby)

A restless Fellow of the mid-19th century: Frederick John Holt Beever (1830–1863)



Frederick Holt Beever perished in 1863 in an ambush by the Sioux in Dakota; a gory cameo in many a Western but, as an end for an Oxbridge don, probably unique. Celebrated in America, he was forgotten in his native Britain: hence the shadowy figure Alida Young evokes (TLS, 5 July 2019) when fielding him, implausibly, as the putative father of the American writer Edith Wharton.

Frederick's schooldays, hardly shadowy, were crowned by well-publicised success. In 1841 he was boarding close to home with his older brother William at Ruthin, Denbighshire. By 1847 he was at Cowbridge as Hugo Harper's star pupil during that dynamo's vigorous, if brief, attempt to turn Cowbridge into a new-wave public school. As prize orator at Harper's two elaborate, publicity-conscious Commemorations in 1848 and 1849, Frederick blended – athletically, ecstatically, long-windedly – the glorious new era enshrined in the total school rebuilding that Harper had forced on Jesus College with the glorious past of loyal service to Church and Crown. In 1849 he also won the prize for English poetry; but this effusion has not survived.

By then he had a Cowbridge closed scholarship to Jesus. This North Walian had transferred to Wales's most southerly school with such a prize in mind, probably at the suggestion of his Ruthin Headmaster, Charles Williams, himself at Cowbridge under his own father. Frederick's brother had secured a North Wales Scholarship from Ruthin. Its award to two brothers in quick succession could have appeared unseemly even in those days when *The Past is a Foreign Country* might strike us as a keynote of Frederick's brief career.

He also followed William at Jesus as a Fellow, despite his Fourth in Classics in 1852. Whether down to the College or himself, something went wrong with the undergraduate

career of this bright schoolboy. His restlessness as a Fellow suggests that, once liberated from Harper's clutches, he was not that studiously inclined. But his scholarship was a complete Cowbridge monopoly, and his fellowship a virtual one: competition was not ferocious.

In contrast to William, Headmaster of Cowbridge from 1850, Frederick, though ordained deacon, never settled to the academic-cum-clerical trajectory. He seems a "natural" for the active, indeed wandering, careers of overseas adventurism which the era was opening up. But, needing an income, he took the line of least resistance. The Long Vac of 1855, however, he spent at the front in the Crimea, donating to the Bodleian a Russian translation of *The Pickwick Papers* on return. The following spring, he lectured in the Glamorgan Valleys – acclaimed at Dowlais for "an interesting account of his "expedition" to the seat of the late war ... illustrated by diagrams; music was introduced in the intervals and a collection of Russian muskets, swords and other relics ... were ... exhibited to the admiring spectators".

Oxford – then largely stagnant and inward looking – seemed designed to provoke wanderlust. The University was in its last years as a blend of Anglican seminary and finishing school, with Jesus no exception, still dominated by Welsh Anglicans whose minority status back home had become a serious issue, driving imminent reform. To adventurous Frederick, the monopolising of the College by his own kind may have rendered it a tedious home-from-home.

Whether Frederick tutored is unclear, but Fellowships then imposed ordination and celibacy, not necessarily the academic duties of today, so they were often fillers-in, with college livings or school teaching the usual escape routes.

Frederick – literally – followed other trails. For his most conventional and plum absenteeism as chaplain to the British Embassy in Paris 1858, his clerical status was essential. How long was he there? At best only five full years (1856-7; 1859-61) of eight (1855-63) were spent in Oxford. Well, full more or less: he spent a chunk of summer term 1856 lecturing in Dowlais and townships around. His three years' leave from 1862 to make "an extended tour in California, China and other distant countries" would have increased his absence to four years out of ten. But in July 1863, on the "Upper Missouri" having a temporary commission with the American army, he "volunteered to carry a message" to a detached unit. Hence the fatal ambush.

Nowadays, the Native Americans' short way with intruders attracts sympathy; then this "wealthy English nobleman" was a hero, even a martyr, commemorated with a tomb, plaque and printed accounts perpetuating such inflated social status to this day. Dr Darwall-Smith – consulted by Dr Young – terms Frederick upper middle-class: about right, but with a period twist. He grew up 1830-50 in an extremely rural shire of a still predominantly rural realm. His family typically tried to get into the country gentry – with some success. The scholarships do not indicate that money was tight. Financially valuable,

they were much sought after; undergraduates whose family incomes were reasonable rather than infinite would not find them supererogatory. The Embassy chaplaincy suggests social pull; and there Frederick acquired further useful connections, solemnising for example the marriage of Arthur H. Rodney, Esq, son of the late Hon Mortimer Rodney. In any case he could justifiably claim to be a "gentleman". And his cultivated acculturation rendered him unique in the Dakota of 1863; the Americans were right to be impressed. Dr Young's attempt to father Edith Wharton on him rather founders on the dates she advances: Edith was born in January 1862; Frederick wrote for leave of absence in March; unless he was in America already: possible.

His vacant Fellowship was re-assigned to the "open moiety", and Frederick (part unreformed eighteenth century, part sui generis) was replaced by the redoubtable J. R. Thursfield, who would easily fit the donnish bill today which Frederick's eventful but idiosyncratic career at first glance does not. The College's proviso, however, that he reports back on his itinerary and experiences recognised where his talents and interests lay. Ironically, a niche might be found for such a one in a trendy outpost of the vast and diverse academia of today.

Clive Jenkins (1967, History)

JESUS COLLEGE OLD MEMBERS' DAY, 29 JUNE 2019

An advantage of being an older graduate of Jesus is that you get to meet others of similar vintage, along with a few younger male (and some female) senior graduates, on a fairly regular basis. I refer, of course, to the Jesus College Old Members' Group (XL Network). The name doesn't mean we have all excelled (though many have) but that we all matriculated in or before 1979. So, we have at least age and experience in common, if not wisdom.

In fact, most of us were at Jesus in the 1960s and it is always a pleasure to meet colleagues from several decades ago, some of whom are retired and living in luxury, others still working (as in my case as a law drafting consultant.) It is particularly pleasant to meet up at the college and to be taken to some feature of the city or university we didn't know about. This is what happened on 29 June 2019, when we had a visit to the new Mathematical Institute on the site of the old Radcliffe Infirmary on Woodstock Road.

After coffee in the old JCR (now the Harold Wilson room) we walked (!) along St Giles, past Somerville College (happy memories for some...) to the Institute, which now forms part of a Humanities campus for the University. Our hosts were Dyrol Lombard, manager of external relations at the Institute, and Dr David Acheson, a law tutor at Jesus and author of *1089 and all that* – a popular book on the mysteries of maths.

To those of us not familiar with the wonderful world of maths, the visit was a brainteaser as well as an eye-opener. The approach to the building is a pattern of non-repeating shapes, designed by Sir Roger Penrose, and the interior has a number features significant for mathematicians, including an internal glass dome based on a crystal, basement lighting apparently from nowhere and a staircase that returns to where it started. More prosaically, we learnt that one of the main requests made by maths dons was for individual rooms rather than open plan sharing, and we were impressed that this had been achieved.



Photo with thanks to George Reah

After a tour of the building, including the view from the roof, we had an entertaining presentation by David Acheson, who showed a video of his experiments with vibrating pendulums (pendula?) and played the guitar to prove a point about Pythagorean intervals. Finally, he asked two maths graduates to write down a 3-figure number, with its first and last digits differing by two or more; they then reversed the number, and subtracted the smaller of the resulting two numbers from the larger; they then reversed the new three-digit number, and added the two sums. The result was predicted in the title of David's book (see supra.) Amazed applause all round...

A walk back to College gave us a good appetite for the very nice lunch and after a final coffee everyone went their separate ways, after what we all agreed was a worthwhile learning experience and an enjoyable social occasion. QED.

John F Wilson (1962, Jurisprudence)