

WORCESTER
COLLEGE
RECORD



1981

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| | J. A. Matheson* (Clinical Medicine) |
| | K. J. Williams (Clinical Medicine) |
| M.Phil.: | K. Aramaki* (Economics) |
| B.Phil.: | J. Sibson (Philosophy) |
| B.C.L.: | G. Triantafyllides* |
| Diploma in Law: | R. S. Campbell* |

University Prizes have been awarded to:

- S. H. Aitchison (Eldon Law Scholarship)
- M. G. Backhouse (Edgell Sheppee Prize for Engineering Science)
- S. J. L. Croft (Canon Hall Junior Greek Testament)
- F. M. Engleheart (Arnold Ancient Historical Essay)
- A. P. Sims (Burdett-Coutts)

THE MIDDLE COMMON ROOM

The Middle Common Room continues to grow: its total membership is now in excess of 120. While this growth in population has had its effect on the ethos of the M.C.R. and on the contribution made by its members to College life, a more important but less easily calculated indication of its size is to be found in the increased use of its facilities and the extended participation in activities arranged for its members. Over half the members use the M.C.R. regularly — a high proportion when it is remembered that very few live in College, that fewer than two in every five graduates live in College accommodation nearby, and that research students are not noted for their conviviality. The high degree of participation in M.C.R. activities and the resulting changes in its character can largely be attributed to two groups: those reading for the Postgraduate Certificate in Education, for whom the M.C.R. is the main point of contact with the College and who therefore involve themselves enthusiastically in much that it has to offer; and married graduates who, especially since the completion of Gloucester House, have been among the most regular attenders of M.C.R. functions and guest-night dinners.

Active participation has been encouraged by certain improvements to the M.C.R.'s facilities and has, in turn, required a more efficient use of the available space. The improvements include a filter coffee machine, magazine racks, prints of Worcester and of Oxford from the College collection, and the purchase of kitchen utensils. The Provost has been particularly helpful, in lending storage space and sharing in the subscription to *Le Monde*. The smaller room has ceased to do duty as a warehouse: it has been refurbished, from College stocks, and provided with hooks so that the floor no longer resembles the last resting place of discarded academic gowns. It is now an attractive writing room which can double as a meeting room for the Committee, for M.C.R. sports teams,

play-reading groups or small discussion groups. However, despite the additional space now available, it is apparent that M.C.R. accommodation and facilities are often overburdened. Sherry parties are crowded; nor is there any room within the College for an M.C.R. television set — something greatly desired by graduates, whose programme preferences frequently do not coincide with those of undergraduates, with whom at present we share a set.

The great variation in interests, age and backgrounds of its members makes it necessary that the M.C.R. should act as host to or sponsor a wide range of activities. These include sherry parties, port parties, wine tastings, cheap drinks evenings (cf. the American 'happy hour'), dancing parties — indeed, an M.C.R. calendar is calculated to raise hope in the breast of the most despondent vintner. The most popular of these continues to be the strawberry-and-wine party after Eights Week, when even the threat of bad weather does not deter members, guests and old members turning out for an afternoon of music and summery fare. (The presence of old members contributes greatly to the pleasure of the occasion.) Guest-nights are held every week during term — far more frequently than in other colleges — and are usually very well attended. So popular have they become that at the 1980 M.C.R. Christmas dinner almost a hundred places had to be found.

The M.C.R. also attempts to cater for those whose interests are not dominated by their palates and appetites. The Provost has been host at a number of evenings at which our members have produced musical and dramatic entertainments. On these occasions, it is always pleasant to discover how much talent there is to be tapped. Academic interests, too, are given their place in the M.C.R.: during Hilary Term, members and outside speakers were invited to address graduates after dinner on guest-nights. Worcester arranges certain activities in conjunction with the M.C.R.s of other colleges. We have joined with Exeter in theatre visits and parties, and have played friendly football matches with them, with University College and with St. Antony's.

In 1980 there were certain changes in the structure of the M.C.R., affecting its relationship with other College and University bodies. In Hilary Term, the M.C.R. reached agreement with the J.C.R. over the question of the distribution of funds. As a result, the M.C.R. is now financially independent of the J.C.R., and pays for its members' subscriptions to the National Union of Students and the Oxford University Student Union, as well as for its share of the expenses of those facilities that it shares with the J.C.R. In Michaelmas Term 1980, the M.C.R. disaffiliated from O.U.S.U., having determined that that body had little understanding of graduates' needs and little ability to act effectively on behalf of graduates' interests. Our withdrawal has been accompanied by our taking a more active part in the Graduate Representatives' Conference, a body which, despite its miniscule budget, makes a good attempt at looking after graduates' welfare.

The M.C.R. Committee has the same structure as in previous years — three elected officers managing the M.C.R. with the assistance of co-opted

members. It may be necessary in the future to appoint a treasurer and elect a delegate to the G.R.C. The officers for the year ending with Hilary Term 1980 were:— President: Craig Eaglesom; Secretary: Keith Johnson; Steward: Brian Pendleton; Co-opted: Robin Taylor. The officers for 1980–81 are:— President: Allan Botica; Secretary: Charlotte Wright; Steward: Ben Hudson; Co-opted: Andrew Bennett.

The M.C.R. is grateful to all those officers, and to the Fellows of the College who have displayed an interest in its activities and have helped to continue and improve its services.

A.B.

THE BOAT CLUB

Members of the Worcester Boat Club have been fortunate in that they have always been supported by the generosity and enthusiasm of their predecessors. Largely through the efforts of an old member, F. G. Fisher (1970–72), a new organisation has been established, Friends of Worcester Rowing: it is a matter of great satisfaction that Lady Briggs has accepted the office of Patron. Its membership is open to all past oarsmen; Mr Fisher writes that its objective 'is to serve as a focal point for senior members wishing to follow and support the College boats. There are some who believe that an oarsman's interest in rowing fades at the instant when he picks up his degree. We know this is not so. Years of active competitions in the company of fellow Worcester oarsmen do not dissipate so easily. It is the intention of this club that the senior oarsmen of the College should be brought together in their common desire to see victorious Worcester crews.'

The 1979–80 season was an exciting one: the Worcester Boat Club had two members of a winning Isis crew, produced its first ever Women's VIII, and had a new boat presented to it. Worcester re-entered University rowing after a hiatus of six years. Seven members of the First VIII were selected for the University squad. Two of them — Fergus Murison and Nick Harding — were in the first Isis crew to beat Goldie for several years. Ray Porfilio, who began his rowing career at Worcester, was elected Captain of the University Lightweight, and Chris Morcom and Ron Zeghibe (then Worcester Captain of Boats) joined him in the boat. The race was rowed in poor conditions, and Oxford lost a hard-fought contest.

With women in Worcester for the first time, Ron Zeghibe was determined to form a victorious crew. Eight women freshmen were enticed down to the river and, under the fraternal guidance of Lance Knobel (an English-Speaking Union scholar from Princeton, reading English), won the Christ Church Regatta, narrowly missed four bumps in Torpids, and won their blades at Eights Week — a marvellous first year for Worcester women's rowing.

The First VIII trained at Radley College during Hilary Term under the guidance of Andrew Trottman, a master at the school, and benefited both from his experienced coaching and from the long, uncrowded Radley

reach. With two men in the Isis crew, Worcester started Torpids third on the river, chasing Balliol and followed by a strong Keble VIII.

The Times said of Worcester's row on Wednesday, the opening day: 'Worcester's cox gave Keble a run for their money by skilfully eluding Keble until 200 metres from home, when Worcester drew on hidden reserves of stamina to hold them at bay in the finishing straight.' On Thursday, Keble bumped Worcester and then bumped Balliol on Friday, leaving Worcester a chance of regaining third place on Saturday; unfortunately, a bump on Balliol was missed by a matter of feet. The Second VIII, however, won their blades and are currently in the Fifth Division.

At the beginning of Trinity Term the new boat arrived, a wooden Empacher, donated to the Club by Fred Fisher, formerly Worcester, Isis and Harvard oarsman. It was christened *The Frederick G. Fisher III*, along with the previous first boat, a Carbocraft now named *The Lady Briggs*. The christening ceremony was attended by the Provost and several Fellows.

With the new boat and the triumphant return of the Isis men, morale was high. Down at Radley, progress was not as fast as had been hoped, but when the VIII arrived on the Isis it was as fast and experienced a crew as Worcester has had for a number of years.

On Wednesday of Eights Week, Worcester started second in Division Two, knowing that they needed to bump Wadham and row sandwich boat. Corpus, with two Blues and an Isis man, were two places behind. Corpus bumped The Queen's, and Worcester came within half a length of bumping Wadham. The VIII watched sadly as Wadham rowed sandwich boat, and got an overbump on a strong Pembroke crew rowing with seven men. On Thursday, Worcester, between two fast crews, rowed over, and Pembroke bumped Merton. On Friday, Worcester bumped Merton at the bottom of the Green Bank, and on Saturday rowed over, finishing top in Division Two.

The Club is strong, with much interest in rowing throughout the College. Ten VIIIs were entered in Eights Week — representing almost a third of the College — and the standard of the Second VIII and the Women's VIII is high.

PAUL ZISMAN
Captain of Boats, 1980–81

THE STAFF

Mr Sydney Taylor died on 2 January 1981. He started in the service of the College in January 1949, and was a scout, with his wife, in the New Building when it opened. He was for many years in charge of Hall, until he retired in 1975.

'Syd' (as he was known to many generations of undergraduates) was a friendly and helpful man, in the real tradition of the Worcester staff. He