

WORCESTER
COLLEGE
RECORD



1996

Significant achievements in the last year have included the promise of an OLIS (university library network) terminal in the Upper Library, the price of meals being brought down for those in vacation residence, the installation of more showers and telephones and a promise from the County Council to look into the provision of a pedestrian crossing outside college. This, apparently, is a major breakthrough! Perhaps one day it will be possible to visit the college without risking life and limb. A bike rep was appointed in Michaelmas to clear out the bike shed and investigate possibilities such as more racks. Following his good work the shed felt decidedly airy! The previously under-used dark room has been rediscovered and cleaned.

The Buttery has been redesigned this year, with a no-smoking area. Members of the JCR had input into the design which has proved incredibly popular. The larger Buttery is now open all day, and possibly also in the evenings in the near future. The temptation of coffee, chocolate, company and games does not, however, appear to have had a detrimental effect on Finals results. Indeed, last year saw some of the best results ever, Worcester boasting the top economics mark in the university.

JCR/SCR relations continue to be extremely good. A Security Committee has been set up representing a cross section of the college. It is valuable in raising awareness of security issues and has led to the installation of further surveillance cameras. Library security has also been tightened, the library now being permanently locked and only accessible with an EMOS key. It is sad that this is necessary but is not resented by students. Battels negotiations remained calm, with an agreement that the necessary increase of 35% be implemented over three years. The rise has been accepted by the JCR, but the blow will certainly be felt by some. The much-needed extension of JCR computing facilities has also been discussed. As an increasing number of students have become computer literate, pressure on space and equipment has grown. The SCR have been very sympathetic to our needs. We hope it will be possible to purchase further equipment in the not too distant future.

This year saw the first ever event combining the JCR, MCR, SCR and staff. Fifty tickets were given away, the occasion being a tutored whisky tasting evening with a master blender from United Distillers. A personal disaster for some of the more prominent members of past and present committees, but fun nevertheless! Worcester Entz is as vibrant as ever. Some excellent bops, superhalls and even a 'blind date' event have been storming successes. A particularly memorable evening was the Christmas dinner followed by mulled wine and mince pies in the JCR. Plans are underway for the presentation of JCR prizes at the end of Hilary term. The idea is to reward people whose achievement might otherwise go unrecognised! The major event of the year is yet to come - the Summer Ball. The hugely enjoyable Ball of 1993 has set high standards but Alex Roberts-Miller, the President, is doing a great job and expectations are sure to be fulfilled.

On a more cultural note, the University Poetry competition held under the auspices of Worcester, was a great success. There were many entries for this event which received much support from local businesses. The College Drama Society, Buskins, staged an entertaining if rather wet version of 'Much Ado

About Nothing' in Trinity 1995. The play, produced by Jo Pallett and directed by Ben Showell starred Claire Gordon, Ed Gascoigne-Pees and Anna Foster-Kemp. Worcester has been well represented at Drama Cuppers during the last two years, with entries reaching the final round and budding Worcester thespians receiving commendation. The Worcester-Somerville Music Society has finally been resurrected and is now in the capable hands of Aya Yuasa. Hilary term will see the performances of two symphonies and a concerto to be performed by a member of college yet to be decided!

Sport at Worcester is as popular as ever. It has been a particularly good year for football and women's hockey. Women's rugby and football teams have both been resurrected, and there are plans to bring lacrosse back to College, for both men and women. As always, we are proud of our rugby team, having had five players representing the University in the Varsity rugby matches.

Thanks, as ever, go to the Provost, the Dean, the Bursar and other members of the SCR who have helped us so much during the year and ensured the maintenance of good relations between the JCR and SCR. Matt Shoults and Elikem Kuenyehia, respectively Secretary and Vice-President have also been a tremendous help, bringing a sense of realism to the Presidents who so often forgot about such things when carried away by their latest brain-wave! Last, but by no means least, thanks must go to the College Secretary, the Provost's Secretary and all those other members of staff who are always so willing to help.

Worcester continues to be a friendly college, containing students of academic excellence and Byronic in their wasted talents. Applications to the College increased by 14% this year, a clear reflection of the extent to which this knowledge has spread. Despite the enthusiasm so clear within the JCR, old members concerned for the College's notorious apathy need not fear - a College banner commissioned at a JCR meeting eighteen months ago has still not been made!

SARAH HARVEY AND JOHN CIESLIK-BRIDGEN



MCR REPORT

The opening of the new Middle Common Room, adjacent to the Sainsbury building in the old furniture repository, in Trinity 1995 marked one of the most important occasions in recent MCR history. The new building centralises all MCR services for the first time and reflects the growing stature of graduate students within the College. The renovation was made possible by the generosity of Richard Faulkner (1964) who officially opened the building at a combined ceremony and garden party hosted jointly by the SCR and MCR.

The new MCR is composed of the television, bar, and function area on the ground floor, and the reading and computing rooms on the first floor. Centralising the computing was particularly welcomed by graduates; in previous years, the MCR maintained two separate sites, one in the old common room and the other in the Graduate Building (from where a printer was

unfortunately stolen). Furthermore, the College continued its commitment to enhancing computing facilities and to improving the general quality of life for graduates. The new common room is supported by its own ethernet hub, soon to connect all eight MCR computers to the Internet. The introduction of three new, powerful computers quickly provided graduates with the ability to run state-of-the-art software and to "surf" the World Wide Web. In addition, the College extended the charitable scheme for installing private telephone lines to include rooms in the Graduate Building.

Perhaps one of the most important aspects of the new common room is the provision of a focal point for graduate social activities. The MCR now plays host to all our bops and bashes, various tastings of the finer things in life, movie nights, Franks Society talks, to name but a few. We can, of course, attribute much of the vibrant atmosphere of the Middle Common Room to the enthusiasm of this year's graduate freshers. The production of the most comprehensive graduate freshers' handbook to date provided everything a fresher needed to know before coming up to Oxford and a considerable amount more! For example, the handbook catalogued the extensive freshers' schedule which quickly involved the freshers in the life of the MCR.

This year's unusually large MCR Committee capitalised on the endeavours of previous committees and contributed greatly to the seamless operation of the MCR. Graduate safety and women's issues, overseen by the new Welfare Officer, Alison Falby, played an important role, with security measures being increased in both the Canal Building and the Worcester Place houses. Sheri Bélanger and Asim Siddiqui, the Social Secretaries, prepared an excellent social calendar whilst the Treasurer, Matt Crockett, conjured up money enough to finance the extensive improvements to MCR services. The Computing Officer, Ray Eason, deserves credit for ensuring that the computers and printer were continuously ready for use. The enormous task of making the new MCR feel like home was helped greatly by the enthusiasm of MCR members; special thanks must go to Lindsey Flower, Steve Pethick, and Craig Taylor who undertook the interior decoration with style and flare.

The MCR continues to represent the College successfully not only at an academic but also at a sporting level. The undefeated Worcester 2nd XI, with Rick McPhee as captain, appear set to conquer the league, whilst Adrian Nankivell and Geoff Pegler helped the College Korfball team to victory in Cuppers last year. Many female members of the MCR regularly play football for the recently formed College Women's team and the ubiquitous Steve Pethick skipped the MCR football team to the final of Cuppers, only to be narrowly defeated by Corpus/Linacre 3-1.

All that remains to round off a fabulous year for graduates at Worcester is to thank Dr. Dexter, the Tutor for Graduates, for his tireless efforts on behalf of the MCR (and for engulfing the residents of the Graduate Building with excitement when an aged tree from his garden toppled onto the building's roof, causing flooding in a few rooms!) and, as always, the Provost for fostering the unique identity of the Middle Common Room.

RICK MCPHEE
MCR PRESIDENT

Those who follow this report from year to year will observe the development of certain trends. Season 1994-1995 saw some warnings from last year's report go unheeded, promising trends continue, but the general picture was one of unfulfilled potential. A paradigm example was Athletics Cuppers. Unshackled from its coupling with Nuffield, Worcester fell from victors in 1994 to fifth in 1995. Yet this was a credible position given the skeletal appearance of the team. The absence of many who had agreed to run, jump and throw was caused by the date of the meeting. The day after Summer Eights Dinner was never going to be particularly conducive to athletic excellence, but the fact that Worcester were reduced to a gang of four to compete in most events was still disappointing.

Dave Kirk, the captain, as well as showing his class in his normal disciplines of 800m, 1500m, and 3000m, managed to find time and energy for the long jump and 400m relay. Andy Jennings high jumped, pole vaulted and sprinted in the 100m and 400m individual and relay events. Finally, David Grant threw the hammer and discus, put the shot, and followed Jennings's lead by hauling his not inconsiderable bulk through the individual and relay sprints. Others worthy of mention are Harry MacMillan, Nick Baron and Ed Mann who added to this jack-of-all-trades approach. At University level, Dave Kirk, David Grant, Andy Jennings and Simon Morrish all competed manfully for the Oxford Centipedes to register a win over their Cambridge second-team counterparts. Not to be outdone, Rachael Currie played her part for the Millipedes and was awarded colours for cross-country for coming second in the second team varsity match. Perhaps for some the greatest disappointment was the non-occurrence of a dinner in honour of the 1994 victory. Enough of that team are still here to make the occasion worthwhile...

RUGBY

If the disappointment over athletics was caused by one day the performances of the rugby team perplexed over the span of two terms. In first week, the Second XV beat Christ Church 96-0 in flowing style causing the writer of the *Oxford Student* to wonder if he had the wrong 'W' in his column on the "Wasps factor" that week. This result set a challenge for the First XV that they never really rose to. Possessing the most talented back line in the University, Worcester came unstuck because of a lack of bulk and an almost religious refusal to train. They were not without their triumphs though. For the second year in succession, Worcester miraculously conspired to beat St Edmund Hall against all the odds.

The match against Univ showed Worcester in their worst and best lights. Let down by the props with under half an hour to go, hooker Mark Case moved aside to loose head to let the speedy wing Sam Whittaker hook. Captain Smart moved in from stand-off to complete this radically-reshaped front row. The last of the three may have the portly build for the number three shirt, but he has yet to amass the experience. A powerful Univ scrum pushed their opposition back over ten metres on some occasions. Collapses were not intentional but the result of sheer fatigue and lack of technique. One enraged supporter yelled at