

Brazen Notes

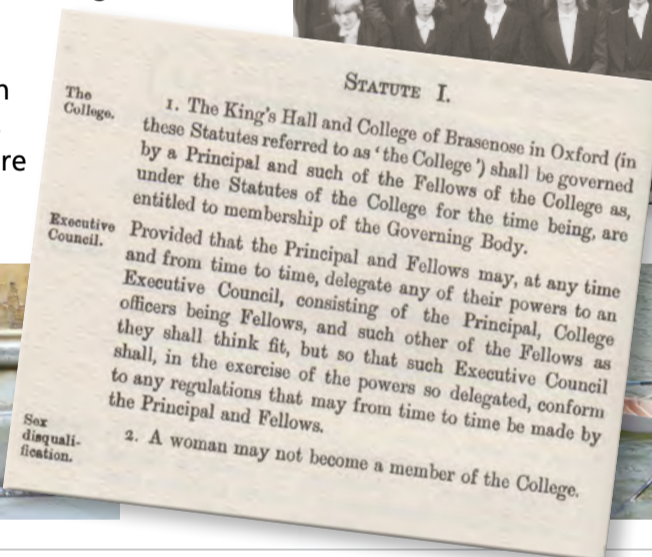
Forty years on...

Looking back to the beginnings of co-education

October 2014; around 50 women join the Brasenose community as Freshers, side by side with their male counterparts. For those women, their gender played no part in their journey through the selection process to Brasenose; they got here through hard work and brilliance. But forty years ago, Oxford University was a different place and 28 women pioneered their way through nearly 500 years of tradition to become the very first female undergraduates in the College. In this issue of the *Brazen Notes*, we celebrate 40 years of women at Brasenose with memories from some of those who were there at the beginning.



Left: The College Statutes from 1929. Above: Matriculation 1974 – the first BNC female undergrads.



A message from the Principal

In October 2014 I began the last of my five years as Principal of Brasenose College and I am quite sure that Jacqueline and I will continue to think that it has been both a joy and a great privilege to be part of this great community. This year we have celebrated the fortieth anniversary of the admission of women to the College in various ways, including the election of three distinguished alumnae to Honorary Fellowships in recognition of achievements in public service, scientific research and higher education.

Brasenose was one of the first all-male colleges to make this change, more momentous in 1970s Oxford than it seemed at the time to someone who came from one of the great civic universities where co-education was the norm, as it now is here. In the University context, Brasenose remains strong and confident, with a consistently good record in access and gender balance. The undergraduate entrants in 2014 were successful in a field of candidates 25 per cent bigger than for any other college and well over 100 of those who were not accepted at Brasenose were offered places at other colleges. Ninety-four per cent of our finalists achieved an upper-second class degree or better in the Schools in 2014 and the rather blunt instruments which calculate 'student satisfaction' with the college experience remain very positive and encouraging.

These raw statistics and metrics cannot capture the full flavour of what it means to be a Brasenose student in, for example, Eights Week, the Arts Festival, Ale Verses or a concert in the ante-chapel, all of which contribute so much to the quality of

life for senior and junior Members alike. If it were possible to summarise how that flavour can be conveyed, we could probably not do better than to quote one of our sixth-form visitors to an Open Day who said that after an hour in College with a group of the current students, she was quite certain that this was the college at which she wanted to study.



The priority of intellectual and academic fulfilment remains clear at Brasenose and there is no clearer symbol of that than the fact that the current project to renovate and refurbish our Library, for which we are delighted to announce that we have secured pledges of over £3.5million from our alumni, was originally proposed by our students. We continue to strive to offer them the best of student experiences, in all respects.

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Some reflections of early days

Ros Foskett née Arnold (Geography, 1974)



Arriving at Brasenose for the first time was exciting and thrilling. In my home town (Cambridge – the other place), many of my family were employed by the University and the Colleges, but none in academic roles. They were carpenters, printers, estates managers and college servants – all on the ‘town’ side, none on the ‘gown’ side. I was the first in my family to go to University, so it was a big deal too for my mum and dad who were both proud and very anxious.

The nerves were calmed a bit as I was coming to Brasenose with someone from my class at school, Katy Child (now Katy Luke) and we were to be the two geographers in the first year. At school, our headmistress was rather alarmed that two of her

‘gals’ were going to a ‘man’s college’ described in the alternative prospectus as a place for ‘rugby and beer’ rather than St Hugh’s (‘nice girls and tea parties’) – but I was delighted that fate had played a hand and I was to spend my next four years at Brasenose.

We arrived at the Porters’ Lodge and were handed keys and information. The women were on two staircases – and I was in the room at the bottom of staircase 16 – one of the new blocks. After unpacking, and seeing my parents off – somewhat tearfully, it was time to explore. I can remember there being welcome drinks in the JCR (it may have been the first evening – or later that week). It was helpful in the early days to know that any female students at the College events were also

new, like me. I felt a little overwhelmed – everyone was cleverer than me and far more confident. Being part of such a small group of women – about 28, I think – produced a strong bond, and in retrospect I feel very privileged being part of this first cohort. At the welcome drinks, we were asked by one of the staff – I thought he was the Bursar – whether the rooms were OK and whether we had all we needed. Amanda, I think it was, said that they were fine except there were no full length mirrors or towel rails in them. These were installed almost immediately, as the ‘Bursar’ was actually the Principal, Herbert Hart. There was a sense of being pioneers and I gained a lot of confidence by a feeling of breaking new ground. For example, I was a member of the College Badminton club which played in the men’s league. The fact that the Colleges were becoming mixed meant that the set

The college staff continued to call us ‘Sir’ for most of the first year.

Rosalind Foskett née Arnold (Geography, 1974)

up had to change at University level and there were more opportunities to play in mixed leagues. Later in my time at Oxford, Nick (my husband now) and I were invited to a High Table dinner at his College (Keble) because the Warden (Dennis Nineham) wanted to talk to me about my experiences of being at a mixed College, as they were considering the change. I can’t have said anything to put him off as Keble admitted women from 1979.

It has been lovely to meet up with so many of my friends at the regular Gaudy events and it was particularly special to be at the celebrations for the 40th Anniversary of the College admitting women – I think overall we have worn well and have had interesting lives. I owe a lot to my time at Brasenose: my career started there, I met my husband while I was there, I gained confidence there, and I grew up there. Here’s to the next forty years and I hope to be invited to contribute to the 80th anniversary edition of the *Brazen Notes* celebrating women at the College.

Memories of 1974

Rosalyn Wilkinson née Merfield (English, 1974)

After five years in a school for missionary daughters, it was the two years I spent in a brand new, chaotically idealistic tertiary college that first served to expose me to the shock of co-education. Suddenly chronically self-conscious of everything about my physical self, I spent the A level years hiding in a duffle coat, and deciding that boys of my own age were on the whole to be relegated to background noise and ignored. So it may seem strange to have gone out of my way to choose a newly co-ed college for university. Various reasons jostled in the muddle of my 17 year old mind: a vaguely feminist sense of entitlement to barge in wherever women had been excluded, a horror of returning to an all-female institution, and an awareness that the men’s colleges had the best buildings and locations. Brasenose College was as centrally located as it is possible to be, and the Admissions Tutor, Peter Birks (blessed be his name) was on a mission to, as they say now, ‘reach out to’ the wilder parts of the comprehensive education sector.

But from my set of rooms in the all-female staircase where the College had corralled us I gazed down

on the boys (for that is what they were) with a disdainful eye. It wasn’t their fault (although shrunken purple flares flapping like small sails half way up the legs of their owners showed an unfamiliarity with washing machines that I couldn’t help putting down to over protective mothers) but rather that I had discovered my own cure for a total lack of self confidence: older men. Much older men, in fact, and this preference served to protect me from gauche affairs like body armour throughout my three years at BNC. It also meant that I gradually learned to enjoy the company and friendship of my contemporaries, many of whom I now guess were also feeling their way to dealing with the opposite sex as friends rather than aliens. So this was the first big dividend from joining a mixed college: we lived alongside each other, studied and partied together almost without needing to look further than the College walls for friendship and entertainment. And some, of course, without my peculiar hang-ups, fell in love, even married.

The debates and objections that preceded the decision to accept women were often mentioned in those first years, and almost without exception seemed to have concerned non-issues. Practical

problems were trivial matters of bathrooms, mirrors, and moral tutors who didn’t really know what girls were for. More serious was the cultural change that would take years to effect: the acceptance that co-education needed to manifest in the whole community of College, dons as well as students. We should still consider as unfinished business the fact that fewer than a quarter of the academic staff working in BNC today are women, whereas in the former women’s colleges, men have moved into the majority.

Going mixed was a strong move in the direction of modern life. In the late 1970s many of us would move on into a working life where women were jostling into previously male spaces. In its new co-educational culture,

we must have been one of the first couples in the College.

Klaus Hulek (Mathematics, 1974)

the Brasenose boys were being prepared for this as effectively as the girls: we all learned something about negotiating a way to live and work together, respecting ability and avoiding diminishing stereotypes, lessons which I would really like to think made a difference to the places we have worked in since. Of course, one could be mealy mouthed and wonder why it took nearly 500 years to get here, but it would be fairer to salute the brave decision that led to 28 freshettes matriculating on 12 October 1974!

Escaping suspicion: women in Brasenose before 1974

Elizabeth Boardman, College Archivist

In 1924 a correspondent to *The Brazen Nose* wrote 'Of recent years we have all of us met the gloomy pessimist who has told us that we shall soon have women in Brasenose'. Such sentiments conjure up an image of an exclusively male community, as envisaged in the 1522 Statutes which governed the College until the nineteenth century. These even included the proviso that all the College servants for ever were to be male, except the laundress, who was to collect and return the linen at the College gates only and was to be of such an age and condition as to escape suspicion. However, there is ample evidence that women were a part of the daily life of the College, and indeed within its walls, long before the twentieth century.

One of the many advantages of becoming Principal of the College, certainly by the seventeenth century, was that he, alone of the dons, was permitted to marry. The Principal's Lodgings frequently housed a wife, children and domestic household, with occasional visits from female relatives. Indeed some of these are still within the walls; at least seven women are buried in the College, all of them relatives of Principals.

When Ralph Cawley became Principal in 1770 he had almost certainly already married Ann Cooper. At first Ralph and Ann Cawley would have lived in the Principal's Lodgings in the Old Quadrangle, but in Michaelmas 1771 they moved to a new purpose built house on the High Street, which stood in the area bounded by the present JCR and Law Library.

When Ralph Cawley died in 1777 his widow would have had to vacate the Lodgings. Under the terms of her husband's will she received his 'chariot', three horses and all his household furniture and goods, excepting his books, bookcases and manuscripts.

Ann Cawley's main claim to fame is that for some months she taught Jane Austen. Her brother was married to one of Jane's aunts and in the spring of 1783, seven year old Jane came to Oxford with her cousin Jane Cooper and her sister Cassandra Austen to be taught by Mrs Cawley.

Ann Cawley taught a famous novelist, but the wife of Principal Edward Cradock, who married late in life, was a successful novelist herself. Born the Honourable Harriet Lister, her most famous book was *Anne Grey*, published in 1834. In his reminiscences of the College 1864-1872 Thomas Humphry Ward brings Harriet Cradock vividly to life, describing 'a bright elf-like figure' who had been a Maid of Honour to Queen Victoria: 'The charming little courtier and aristocrat could not but regard Oxford as a sort of honourable exile, but she faced her lot with an amusing courage... Elf-like I have called her; and she saw elves, and drew pictures of them, which she published in a queer little book,

□ *the poor scout on staircase 12 □
thought it unseemly to see the sheets a
woman had slept in!*

Peter Massey (Physics, 1974)

while for the rest she loved her flowers and the great world...' The little book in question, *Views in Elf Land*, was published in 1878. The book consists of eighteen drawings of various imps with descriptions of the characteristics of each.

It is tempting to wonder what Mrs Cradock made of *Alice in Wonderland*, for it is likely that she met the original Alice and two of her sisters some four years after the famous expedition to Godstow which inspired that book. On 4 December 1866 the Visitors' book of the Principal's Lodgings has the signatures of 'Lorina C. Liddell, Edith Mary Liddell, Alice Pleasance Liddell and Schnee' (possibly a dog), together with that of Pleasance Susan Fellowes, Alice's great aunt.

Over eighty years later another well-known woman signed her name in the Principal's Visitors' Book. The single word 'Elizabeth' records the fact that the present Queen lunched in Hall

on 25 May 1948 as the guest of the then Vice Chancellor W.T.S. Stallybrass. Her namesake and predecessor Elizabeth I is also supposed to have visited Brasenose, during her visit to Oxford in September 1592.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century women began to appear as permitted guests within the College walls, particularly during Eights Week. Ladies began to be admitted to lectures in men's colleges, although they sat apart from the men and a chaperone was required to placate both unhappy lecturers and parents anxious to preserve their daughters' marriage prospects. One undergraduate who was at St Hilda's between 1902 and 1905 later recalled that the Principal of her college, Mrs Burrows, 'came to a whole law course at BNC with me'. Some twenty years later when an undergraduate at Brasenose invited a St. Hugh's student to tea, she brought her tutor as chaperone.

The Ale Verses are always a guide to current concerns. In the years before the admission of women the prospect was considered by several poets and songwriters including, in 1973:

*Will rugby club dinners now echo
With voices as shrill as a bell?
Will verses like this one we're singing
Be sung by sopranos as well?*

A true prophet. Two years later an Ale Verse was set for 'sopranos only'.

□*And did high heels in ancient times,
Walk upon Brasenose quadrangs green;
And was unsightly female flesh
Around the breakfast tables seen;
And did the waft of Mary Quant
Disguise the smell of clouded bars,
And did the Nosemen, listening here
O'er hear the talk of tights and bras!*□

An extract from one of the Ale Verses of 1975 to be sung to the tune of *Jerusalem*.

The way things were...

Anna Avebury née Piantiwskyj (English, 1974)

'More girls were taking A levels.' A modest fact, detected in the mid 60s, by those charged with monitoring such trends, resulted in 28 of us arriving at Brasenose in October 1974, before Britain had had a female Prime Minister, or a woman managing a football team, running a PLC, or officiating at the altar of an Anglican church.

I'm not sure whether I realised the significance of my good fortune at the time, heralded by the arrival of a telegram on the doorstep late one winter afternoon in December 1973, although I relished the chance to read English at Oxford. No one in my family had ever been to university. My parents were Ukrainian refugees, displaced persons after the war, whose education had been very limited, especially in my mother's case. I had inherited a love of reading from somewhere and could have asked for no more lavish an opportunity to indulge this than the hushed

□ *it seemed they [the women] were
cherished by the college staff.*

Dominik Wujastyk (Oriental Studies, 1974)

corrals in the Upper Reading Room or Radcliffe Camera on those first bright Autumn days.

It wasn't always easy; essay deadlines seemed always to be on the horizon. I remember the late nights, the early mornings, composing the final paragraphs on the topic in question: the dark side of Dickens, the nature of epic in *Beowulf*. Local Authorities were much more generous in those days, and I valued the grants enabling me to stay beyond the end of term to read in preparation for the next. I encountered the poetry of Dylan Thomas

in one such week, 'singing in my chains' at the desk in the Bodleian.

The first prose class on an extract from the works of Thomas Carlyle, lunch in the Buttery, singing Durufle's *Requiem* with the College choir, going to hear Ted Hughes and Seamus Heaney at the Newman Rooms... these are the 'firsts', the memories I still treasure.



From male to mixed – reminiscences

Robert Kyprianou (PPE, 1973)



I matriculated in PPE in 1973. As such I experienced the last year of the College's life as a red-blooded, sports-driven, hard drinking bastion of masculine values; a time when the College bar was a real cellar that smelt like a brewery and where barrels were stacked high in a dark corner. It was into this environment that I witnessed the first years of the new-age, sexual revolution that was co-education come to Brasenose College.

To be clear, although there were strict rules as to the times the College was open to 'guests' and certainly no women

were allowed to stay overnight, Brasenose was no Mount Athos where even the domesticated livestock could only

be male. Nor was this an age of male innocence with respect to women – far from it. The early 70s marked the end of the swinging 60s, of flower power, and the hippy generation, one feature of which was a great leap forward in sexual liberation. Nor were women a rare sight in the quads and bar of the College – in Trinity term in particular the new quad would have a fair balance of genders sprawled on the lawn enjoying the sun or knocking coloured wooden balls through metal hoops.

However, the core spirit of life and traditions of the College in that, my first year, did very much echo 450-plus years as a male monopoly. There were sanctuaries – the library, the dining hall, the changing and wash rooms, the student bar and JCR – where demeanour and behaviour reverberated with manly predilections. And of course the societies and clubs were by definition all-male fraternities which reflected masculine spirits and codes of conduct. In 1974 this 'hard place' of routines and sanctuaries, deeply scarred by centuries of

masculinity, were about to come up against a 'rock' in the form of 28 first year undergraduate members of the gentler sex. The boys – armed with their defences of age-old tradition – stood no chance.

In those days undergraduates were only housed in the College for their first year before being thrown into the hands of the landladies and property barons of greater Oxford. Reflecting my status as the newly elected JCR Secretary-in-waiting, I was an exception to this exodus. Housed in large double-roomed accommodation at the base of Staircase X, I was in the perfect location to witness the arrival of the

femme fatales. My first recollection of the impending co-education revolution was being huddled in my large room, crammed to the beams with 2nd and

3rd year fellow undergrads who had also identified this site as the best location from which to spy on the arriving queens. From here a covert assessment could be made of these sirens as they made their way round the new quad on their way to staircase XII, their designated quarters, presumably chosen by the College generals as the best bastion of defence against the feared blitzkrieg of male hormones. It was as if we had never seen women before – faces pressed up against the window, elbows employed in leveraging a better vantage, long periods of frustrated expectancy broken by the occasional cheer and high-fiving as each representative of the revolution appeared from behind the Deer Park.

My first exposure to the inevitable doom of our gentlemen's club came one morning in the Hall. Back then this was the only place in the College where students could get something to eat, although breakfast was rarely attended; for us guys it was held far too early in the morning to get out of bed for, especially after a night of celebrating

a heroic rugby win over Teddy Hall, or attending some amazing party at St Catz, or simply because there was no need to get up that early anyway. Occasionally a severe work crisis or a 9am tutorial arranged by a member of a satanic ring of Fellows would force you to crawl into Hall for breakfast. The three or four boys would do the decent thing and disperse themselves widely around the Hall, dressed often in whatever they had slept in, having not wasted any precious time on morning ablutions and certainly exchanging nothing more than a grunt of recognition or sympathy.

And then the women arrived. I had heard the rumours but put them down to malicious gossiping by the few die-hard anti-co-educationalists. But one morning my own personal work crisis and growling

Full length mirrors were installed only in the women's room, when many male students looked as if they could have done with one.

Anna Avebury (English, 1974)



Being a small cohort, it did draw us together and there were some very good parties in the first year! It was a good idea of the College to locate the women on two staircases which made it feel more mixed than it was.

Rosalind Foskett nee Arnold, (Geography, 1974)

stomach led me to a rare early morning visit to the Hall. I was shocked – it seemed that the whole female student body had turned out. There they were, all huddled up together, tightly packed at the front of Hall, immaculately presented and – most shocking of all – deeply engaged in animated conversation! I looked at the sole male figure sitting at the far end of the Hall, felt his pain in the look he gave me and quickly fled to the more sympathetic environment of Brown's in the market, never to have breakfast in the Hall again.

I again felt the winds of change in my function as JCR Secretary. In those days the JCR was not a popular place to hang out except when the TV room overflowed on Saturday nights to watch *Match of the Day*, or when the BBC broadcast live an England rugby match – no Sky or internet back then! The formal JCR meetings, where the undergraduate body could come together and exercise their freedom of speech on the affairs of the College and student life, were not a very popular event in the men-only days until one of my predecessors had the bright idea of encouraging participation with the offer of free beer. This attracted more interest in student politics – while the beer lasted. Even then the agenda was dominated by masculine self-interest, for example urging the Governing Body to remove the ban on women staying overnight or railing against the high cost of a pint of beer in the College bar. I owe much of the success of my own election campaign to this latter issue having promised that under my watch students could still get drunk on £1 in the student bar. With the price set at 14p a pint only the hardest members of the rugby team could challenge this pledge and they were my friends anyway.

With women's liberation movements at their height, the opening of the College's doors to women announced the arrival of a more politicised sex. Issues of consequence and substance started to appear on the JCR agenda, from condemning the apartheid regime of South African Prime Minister Vorster and showing solidarity with the ANC, to urgently upgrading the washing machines in the wash room and demanding cleaner bathrooms and loos. The men still came because of the free beer, but it was the women, there for other reasons, that often dominated the floor. There was one issue that always ensured a lively debate in JCR meetings and which divided opinion firmly along gender lines – that of the relative merits of soft or hard toilet paper in the communal toilets. As the world outside the walls of Brasenose College struggled with a deep recession following the first oil price shock; as hospitals and factories closed and rubbish mounted on Britain's streets as public sector workers and coal miners went on mass strikes; with the Middle East engulfed in flames whose heat matched the temperature of cold war rhetoric at that time; as the Watergate scandal was bringing down an American president and the world speculated what would follow Chairman Mao and the Cultural Revolution, the JCR passionately debated the merits of different toilet paper textures. Although only a small minority at that time, the ladies better record of engagement and greater organisational skills eventually left the men disappointed.

the feeling of being pioneers, pushing through artificial barriers in the pursuit of learning.

Anna Avebury (English, 1974)

These and many other culture shocks awaited our male brotherhood. By the time I left the College a couple of years later, this confident and bright vanguard of a brave new world had established the quiet revolution to such an extent that it seemed wholly natural. It seems strange today that this should have been such a controversial process at the time but deep traditions do not surrender easily. I feel very proud that my College was one of the few that had the courage to take the lead, and proud of those pioneering ladies for turning an experiment into a bandwagon.

1974 and beyond

Liz Padmore née Woolley (PPE, 1974)



Like many of us in the early 1970s, I was a bit of a rebel. Those from my convent boarding school who went to Oxbridge, generally went to Cambridge as we had another school there, but I wanted to be different. I had no brothers and my father died when I was just 13, I chose a mixed college because I wanted some men in my intellectual world. I loved the multi-disciplinary nature of my PPE course and I think any of us who were at Brasenose in the 1970s owe our success to being there. We had access to some wonderful teaching with Vernon Bogdanor, Tony Courakis, Peter Sinclair, Michael Woods, John Davies and Peter Birks. They really helped us articulate ideas, unpick issues and question research, which at the time we took for granted but was in fact key to our later success. Looking back, it was such a privilege to discuss a point with Herbert Hart over a cup of tea, and I marvel at the courtesy he gave to our far from well-reasoned thoughts.

My school had encouraged clear thinking and debate and some confidence in one's intellectual abilities, and we had often debated against boys' schools, but actually learning to live in a male world was very good preparation for future life. When I was made partner at Andersen Consulting, for example, fewer than 10 percent of partners worldwide were women.

When we started at Brasenose, the men in the year above us continued the tradition of the second year taking the first years under their wings – a job they undertook with relish. On one memorable evening, we were taken into the men-only bar the Kings Head because we were 'BNC new men'... and then we were thrown out! What is special is that those friendships have lasted.

In many ways the world has changed considerably since then, there are probably more women than men going to colleges now! However, the world of work is slow to change. I find it interesting that many young(ish) women I come across look at how we had to balance running a home, looking after children, working twice as hard to show that we were committed, and trying to keep a relationship going with a husband or partner and say, 'why would I want to do that?' Maybe that's fine, maybe they don't need to, maybe now we live much longer we could encourage women to have children young, enjoy it, and then build a successful career later! Just a thought...



Women rowing – some recollections

Susan Bewley (Physiology, 1976)



We had such problems being 'allowed' to use a boat. The male members of BNCBC were so hostile and discouraging of our efforts suggesting that we'd have no sense of direction and would crash the boat.

At one stage Dr Fink (Physiology) banned me from rowing as I'd failed some 2nd MB exams. He threatened me that I was heading for a mere Pass degree in my BA. I couldn't let my teammates

down, so you can imagine my mortification when he bumped into me jogging down to the river!

On one occasion we only had 7 rowers available so we had to borrow a young man from Wadham who wore a blonde wig. Not that it helped – all I recall of Eights week was glorious failure.

Honorary Female Fellows

In 2013-14, the College awarded three Honorary Fellowships to members of the College.

Professor Andrea Brand FRS (Biochemistry, 1977) is the Herchel Smith Professor of Molecular Biology at the Wellcome Trust/Cancer Research UK Gurdon Institute at the University of Cambridge and Fellow of Jesus College. **Professor Catherine Hill** (PPE, 1976) became the 10th President of Vassar College in 2006. **Lieutenant General Michelle Johnson** (Rhodes Scholar, PPE, 1981) is the 19th Superintendent of the United States Air Force Academy.

Join the celebration

40 years of co-education at Brasenose
A day of discussions and workshops for all alumni

2 May 2015

Contact the Alumni Relations & Development Office for more details

Peerless Women's Network



Women in College today



Almost forty years after the College admitted women, two BNC third-year undergraduates, Rebecca Ajulu-Bushell (Fine Art, 2012) and Francesca Olivieri (English, 2012), launched the Peerless Women's Network (PWN) in Trinity term 2014. The project, with generous sponsorship from alumnus Richard Hughes as well as support from Brasenose College, organises talks by influential women who lead in their field, in business, arts, charity and academia, and workshops, which focus on personal development and increasing personal aptitude for dealing with a multiplicity of challenging situations. 'We realised quickly in our first year that Oxford, and specifically Brasenose, could still be a very male dominated environment... As a result, we identified the need for an informal and consistently interesting women's group for all members of the University.'

Free and open to women across the University, PWN limits the numbers attending each event, which means that the meetings have resulted in some very productive discussions. "We like to stress that talks are not lectures, and guests value a connection with the speaker that is only possible in a small, intimate environment."

Amongst other events, in May, the PWN invited Professor Linda McDowell, human geographer and Professorial Fellow of St John's College, to discuss gender in the workplace where she shared her own experiences of changing attitudes towards gender identity and sexuality. Later in the term, BNC's Dr Yasmine Shamma recounted her experiences as a woman in academia with great humour and candour, making for another successful evening. Michaelmas 2014 sees PWN host Ciara Moloney, Curator of Exhibitions and Projects at Modern Art Oxford, as well as Jo Larbie, a Legal Consultant and author of 'How to Make Partner and Still Have a Life' among many others.

By providing networking opportunities, PWN hope to create a space for women and students in which they can learn about industry and their prospective place in it, resulting in informed and committed career decisions. At the heart of the project is an emphasis on progression, both personal and collective.

For more, see www.peerlesswomensnetwork.co.uk

Soccer success for the HCR



△ The HCR Soccer Team – MCR Division 1 & Cuppers Champions 2013-2014

The HCR football team, captained by Jack Nicholas, has had a record breaking year in which they won the top MCR Division (Division 1) with a game to spare and were crowned Cuppers Champions. On top of that, the team has won the league three years in a row without losing a game.

Head Porter Recognised

The talents of Brasenose Head Porter, Andy Talbot, were recognised earlier this year at a ceremony in Rhodes House when he was nominated for and then won an Oxford University Student Union Teaching Award for 'Best Support Staff'.



△ Andy in action outside the Lodge

Around sixty students nominated Andy. Typical of the comments which persuaded the judges was this: 'A man outstandingly dedicated to his job and utterly selfless in placing the needs and concerns of students first. A pleasure to see, a cool head in a crisis and far and away the greatest asset which Brasenose has.' Another nomination noted that, 'He is forever welcoming, willing to go out of his way to help you and performs a myriad of small acts of kindness every day'.

Reflecting on his award, Andy commented, 'I'd like to thank all those students that took the time to nominate me, and their very kind comments. I am delighted and honoured to receive such a prestigious award and proud to be part of the Brasenose community.'

At the same ceremony, Professor Elspeth Garman (Professor of Biochemistry and Supernumerary Fellow, and Tutor for Graduates) was awarded a 'Most Acclaimed Lecturer' prize for delivering engaging, informative, well prepared, coherent and enthusiastic lectures. Congratulations!

Find out more at: <http://teachingawards.ousu.org/>

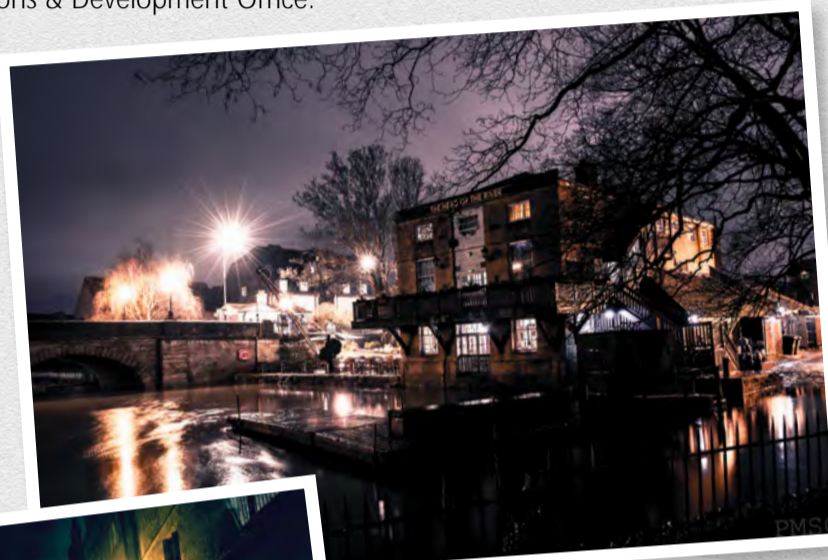
PHOTOGRAPHY

This year saw the first Brasenose College Photography Competition organised by the Development Office. The competition was open to anyone with access to a camera and invited images of any subject or style with an emphasis on some aspect of College life. Most entries came from undergraduates and included a number of atmospheric long-exposure night time images in and around College and plenty of the boathouse and river. It was a difficult choice for the judges but in the end, it was agreed unanimously that Pawel Czerniawski (Mathematics, 2010) had submitted the best overall portfolio of images. 'This is fantastic news and a great motivation to continue improving my photography skills,' exclaimed Pawel when we contacted him. He wins an iPhone and his pictures are below.



We are always delighted to see your images of College whether from years gone by or current pictures; contact the Alumni Relations & Development Office.

Head of the River



Brasenose Lane at night



Christ Church meadows at night



Oxford Panorama



View of Christ Church



Rowing in November



The Brasenose Women at the Christ Church Regatta

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Recent BNC graduate at the Edinburgh Fringe

Recent alumna, *Ellie Keel*, who graduated in German and Italian from BNC this summer, showcased her latest directorial challenge (shared with *Isabel Marr* of *Somerville*) – *NSFW* by *Lucy Kirkwood* – at *Brasenose* before successfully taking the show to the *Edinburgh Fringe*. *Dr Carole Bourne-Taylor* reviews the production.

NSFW by Lucy Kirkwood

Directed by *Ellie Keel* (BNC) and *Isabel Marr* (Somerville)

Ellie Keel and Isabel Marr took us on a nostalgia fest last summer with *Look Back in Anger*. Fast forward fifty years and we find ourselves at this year's pre-Fringe production of *NSFW*, written a couple of years ago by *Lucy Kirkwood*.

This play gives us two for the price of one. In the first part, set in the seedy offices of the lads' mag, *Doghouse*, the cynically devious Aidan, played by *Christian Bevan*, bullies his staff: demure gofer, *Charlotte* (played by *Lara Mclvor*), sycophantic *Rupert* (*Lara's* brother, *Rory*), and our non-hero, the hapless *Sam* (*Hamish Forbes*), who steadfastly refuses to write about more intimate moments with his girlfriend and is finally sacked for the publication of pictures of the celebrated winner of latest *Local Lovely* competition, *Miss Carrie Bradshaw*, who turns out to be only 14! Not Safe For Work indeed! In this vignette none emerges with credit: even *Carrie's* reptilian *Dad* (*Christopher Evans*), in a mirror of present day hypocrisy, settles eventually for a cash pay-off.

Kirkwood's satire of the media's treatment of sexuality has punchy exchanges peppered with the kind of slang that, while tolerable in the newspapers, is still not appropriate for a College publication; the gutter language left both players and audience just a little ill at ease, even though leavened by literary reference (almost unexpectedly from *Dickens* and *Mitford*). *Mr Bradshaw* naively reminisces about his daughter's lovely teeth and her French and ballet lessons: the same daughter who already longs for breast enhancement and has made it into *Doghouse* before her time...

The second part, some nine months later, segues into the offices of *Electra*, a woman's magazine, presided over by its ruthless editrix, *Miranda*, (*Lara Mclvor's* second role), whose customers are, 'leaders, thinkers, dreamers, shoppers' – well, us... As *Miranda* interviews poor *Sam* for a job, his denunciation of *Doghouse* goes up in smoke as she obliges him to identify 'anything unsightly' in the bodies of famous women and even his girlfriend. As always, *Lara's* performance was spot-on – she can play any role from *Alan Bennett's* Mum to the *London* vamp.

I have to say this was a slightly unconvincing plot (there is an ineptitude that would never stand up, even in the worst glossies), but a good script, if over-larded with those asterisked words with which even good actors sometimes find it difficult to be fluent. There is merit in its topicality and its cynicism, though its feminism is rather low-key. The media are the villains yet we are reminded that in our hypocrisy we are all complicit.

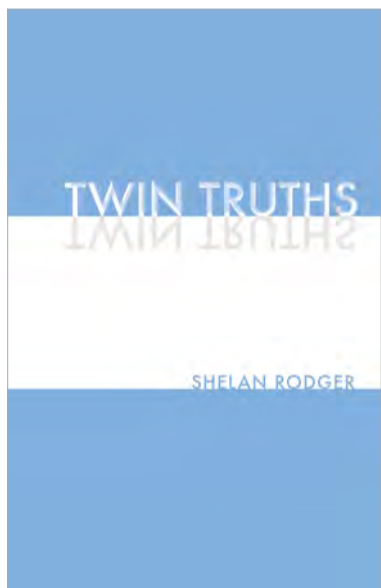
Ellie and Isabel are honing their directorial skills; we should look out for them. Their professionalism is fed by an eclectic repertoire. Their team did a very good job and took its small audience with them.

The cast

Aidan	<i>Christian Bevan</i>
Charlotte	<i>Lara Mclvor</i>
Rupert	<i>Rory Mclvor</i>
Mr Bradshaw	<i>Christopher Evans</i>
Sam	<i>Hamish Forbes</i>
Miranda	<i>Lara Mclvor</i>

Written words...

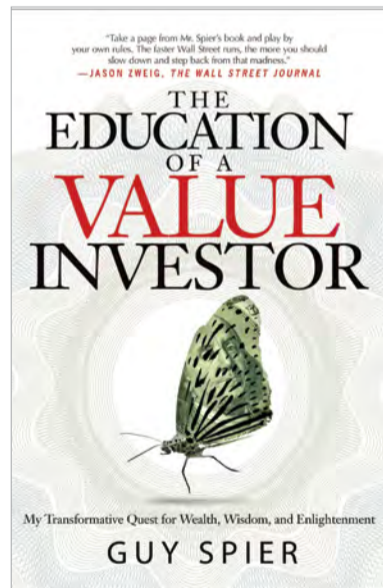
Three recent publications by BNC alumni



Twin Truths
by *Shelan Rodger* (*Modern Languages*, 1981), published by *Cutting Edge Press*



A highly acclaimed first novel about a young woman whose life begins to fall apart after her twin disappears in *Argentina*.



The Education of a Value Investor: My Transformative Quest for Wealth, Wisdom, and Enlightenment
by *Guy Spier* (*PPE*, 1984), published by *Palgrave Macmillan*

A personal and powerful account that takes the reader into some of the darkest corners of *Wall Street*, *Guy Spier* provides those who want to take a different path with the insight, guidance and inspiration they need to succeed on their own terms.



The Miniaturist – A Novel
by *Jessie Burton* (*English and Modern Languages*, 2000), published by *Picador*

BBC Radio 4's Book At Bedtime which was broadcast in July, *The Miniaturist* is set in seventeenth century *Amsterdam* and has been described as a masterful debut steeped in atmosphere and shimmering with mystery.



The results of all our students who sat their *Final Honour Schools* examinations this year have now been received and I can pass on the excellent news that of our 107 candidates in the 2014 cohort 30 obtained first-class honours, 71 upper-second class and 6 lower-second class.

Of these, several have so far been reported as having been awarded *University prizes* for performance in some part of the examination. By any measure or standard, this is a fantastic all-round achievement.

Alan Bowman, Principal

Appointments & awards

Professor Alastair Fowler (English Literature, 1952) was awarded a CBE in the 2014 New Year's Honours List for services to Literature and Education.

Professor Juliet Gerrard (Chemistry, 1985) has been made a Fellow of the Royal Society of New Zealand. University of Canterbury, New Zealand Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Ian Town said, 'By any measure she is an outstanding scientist and leader in her field.'

Simon Henderson (Modern History, 1995) has been appointed Headmaster of Eton College from September 2015. Mr Henderson is currently Headmaster of Bradfield College.

Professor Alan Hibbert FIMA FlinstP FAPS MRIA (Mathematics, 1961) was awarded the MBE in the 2014 Queen's Birthday Honour's list for services to Astronomy.

Professor Douglas Higgs, Senior Kurti Research Fellow and head of the MRC Weatherall Institute of Molecular Medicine, has won the 2013 Buchanan Medal for his outstanding work on the regulation of the human alpha-globin gene cluster and the role of the ATRX protein in genetic disease. The medal is awarded for distinguished contributions to the medical sciences.

Simon Lewis (PPE, 1978) was awarded an OBE in the 2014 New Year's Honours List for public service and services to International Education through the Fulbright Commission. Simon was Chairman of the Commission until June of this year and won a Fulbright from Brasenose to Berkeley in 1981.

Nicolas Kennedy (Jurisprudence, 1962) was awarded the MBE in the 2014 New Year's Honours List for services to the community in Blackburn, Lancashire.

Charlotte May (Biochemistry, 1989) and **Patrick Goodall** (Jurisprudence, 1994) were both appointed Queen's Counsel in February 2014.

Maria João Ramos (1989), Professor at the University of Porto, Portugal, has been made a Doctor Honoris Causa by the University of Stockholm in Sweden. Her prominent scientific research is well known in the field of computational enzymatic catalysis, computational mutagenesis, molecular docking and drug discovery, all aiming at a better understanding of the functions and applications of enzymes.

Captain Edward Maslen-Jones MC DFC (Agriculture, 1945) of the Burma Star Association has been awarded the Order of Mercy, for his voluntary service in the community.

The Reverend John Norman Wates OBE JP (Modern History, 1961) was awarded an OBE, as part of the Queen's birthday Honours List, 2014, for his work for charitable services to the Arts, Criminal Justice and to the community in Chipstead, Surrey.

Scholarships

Thank you for your generosity; bringing graduate students to Brasenose

A very warm welcome to two new graduate students: Georgia O'Connor from Australia and Nathan Hin Che Ma from Hong Kong, who have joined Brasenose this term, and a huge thank you to the Brasenose alumni who made it possible with their generous support of both the Brasenose College Australia Scholarship and the Brasenose Hong Kong Scholarship.



Georgia graduated from Monash University with Bachelor of Arts, First Class Honours in History. Her thesis focused on the seventeenth-century English East India

Company factory in Japan. At Oxford, Georgia plans to further explore this historical episode within the broader context of the first age of globalisation and the origins of the English empire.

She will do so through a Master of Studies in Global and Imperial History.

Nathan earned his Bachelor of Law degree from City University of Hong Kong and also graduated with First Class Honours. He has a strong record of winning major Hong Kong scholarships. During his undergraduate studies, Nathan worked many summers as an intern at a number of chambers and international law firms in Hong Kong. In 2012, he was awarded the Best Overall Speaker and Best Counsel for Prosecution in the 5th International Criminal Court Trial Competition which took place in the Netherlands. He was recognised as the youngest winner and the first Asian champion in the international competition's history.

Given his academic excellence, his scholarship history and work experiences, the Awards Panel was impressed by his dedication, work ethos and his commitment to return to Hong Kong to specialise in human rights litigation. He hopes that his work in this area can increase greater awareness in human rights law in Greater China.

Your generosity gets students like Georgia and Nathan to Brasenose

Supporting student bursaries ensures that Brasenose can continue to attract the finest minds from all corners the world through our gates. You can donate at any level – from regular gifts to the Annual Fund to fully endowing a bursary – every donor plays their part in ensuring the best students have the greatest opportunities at BNC.

Thanks to you, this was an incredible year for fundraising at Brasenose and a record year for the Annual Fund. You gave more generously than ever and this will help ensure that Brasenose remains one of the most attractive colleges for applications in Oxford.

If you have never given to Brasenose before, there has never been a better time to start. From £20 per month to a £100,000 donation; your gift could play a crucial role in the experiences of students at College. Please donate today.

Thank you so much for giving back to BNC.

Giving is easy!

If you would like to donate to Brasenose, please visit www.giving.ox.ac.uk/colleges/brasenose or contact the Development Office on development.office@bnc.ox.ac.uk or +44 (0) 1865 287277.

Music at Brasenose

This year's Platnauer concerts are on Fridays from 6pm-7pm in Chapel, followed by drinks in the Medieval Kitchen. Alumni of the College are very welcome to attend.

Friday 6 February 2015, 6pm

The Baroque Ensemble

The Baroque Ensemble is a newly formed group of players, all of whom are studying at the Royal Academy of Music as postgraduates. Sam Moffitt, a Brasenose alumnus, is the driving force behind this initiative. This concert will be an entirely Baroque programme, including some concerto repertoire, including Torelli's *Trumpet Concerto in D* and Purcell's *Sonata in D*, both played at Baroque pitch on period instruments, with trumpet, two violins, bassoon, 'cello and continuo.

For further information, please contact: Jonathan Newell, Director of College Music jonathan.newell@bnc.ox.ac.uk

Friday 15 May 2015, 6pm

James Gilchrist – voice with Anna Tilbrook – pianoforte

James Gilchrist's musical interests were fired at a young age, singing first as a chorister in the choir of New College, Oxford, and later as a choral scholar in King's College Choir, Cambridge. James' extensive concert repertoire has seen him perform in major concert halls throughout the world with conductors including Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Sir Roger Norrington, Bernard Labadie, Harry Christophers, Harry Bicket and the late Sir Richard Hickox.

OTHER CONCERTS

There are a range of other concerts held in College, usually once a week during term time, involving BNC students and others. These can be found on the college website in the Term Card, under 'Music'.

Alumni Events 2014

See our [flickr](#) site for the full Alumni Events Photo Gallery
www.flickr.com/photos/bnc_members



Late summer sun shone for **matriculands from 1996 and 1997** who returned for a very lively gaudy on **Friday 12 September** this year.



This year's **BNC Society Annual Dinner** was a particularly jolly evening where alumni from 1945 mingled happily with those from 2010 and every decade in between, **Saturday 20 September**.

There was an excellent turn out for the first **gaudy for the 2006 and 2007 matriculands** on **Friday 26 September**. Members of the former choir reformed for one night only to bolster the voices at Evensong.





2013-14 Brasenose Society President, Tim Hammond (Mathematics, 1979), hosted a well-attended and thoroughly enjoyable **Summer Party** in the Old Library at the iconic Lloyds Building, London on **Thursday 5 June**.



March saw our first **Charity Wine Dinner**, which raised over £500,000 in related donations all of which goes to student bursaries. Some were lucky enough to have a rare tour around the Brasenose Wine Cellar too, **Friday 21 March**.



With every seat in Hall taken, old friends were reunited for a very jolly **Jubilee Lunch** held for Members who matriculated in 1964 or before with their guests, **Friday 4 April**.



In the year when Brasenose celebrates the 40th anniversary of the admission of female undergraduates, many of the first female students returned for a lively **Gaudy (1974-76)** on **Friday 28 March**.



Matriculands from 1980-82 gathered on Deer Park for drinks before dinner on a summer's day for their **Gaudy Friday 27 June**.

Torrential rain showers failed to dampen the spirits at the annual **Family Fun Day** where the children were well-entertained and the adults got to enjoy the jazz band and a glass of Pimm's or two. Even the sun came out, **Saturday 2 August**.



Brasenose Christmas Cards

Our 2014 Christmas card is available in packs of 10 from the Oxford University Shop



Visit www.oushop.com/Oxford-Colleges/Brasenose-College to purchase yours

Next year's Strollers' Tour

Will take place in Devon.
Contact Peter Aylott at aylottpeter@aol.com for more information.

Monday 10th to Friday 14th August 2015

The Runcie Sermon

Dr Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury and Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge will deliver the sermon at College Prayers. All alumni are welcome.

6pm, 8 February 2015

Contact Us

The Alumni Relations & Development Office
Brasenose College, Oxford OX1 4AJ

Tel: +44 (0)1865 287 250
Email: development.office@bnc.ox.ac.uk
Web: www.bnc.ox.ac.uk

Join our online BNC Communities:

 www.facebook.com/pages/Brasenose-College

 www.twitter.com/bnc_members

 www.linkedin.com

Events Diary

GAUDIES

Gaudy for those who matriculated in 1970, 1971, 1972 & 1973

Friday 20 March 2015

Gaudy for those who matriculated in 1983, 1984 & 1985

Friday 27 March 2015

Gaudy for those who matriculated in 1998 & 1999

Friday 26 June 2015

ALUMNI & GUEST EVENTS

Jubilee Lunch

For Matriculation Years 1957-1965

Friday 17 April 2015

New York Reception

Friday 17 April 2015

Into the mix

Join us for a day of celebrations of the 40th anniversary of co-education at Brasenose

Saturday 2 May 2015

BNCBC 200th Anniversary and Alumni Family Day

Join us by the river to celebrate 200 years of bumps racing at Brasenose. Guests welcome, especially children.

Saturday 30 May 2015

Brasenose Society President's Summer Drinks

Institute of Practitioners in Advertising, London

Thursday 4 June 2015

Brasenose Society Annual Alumni Dinner & AGM

Guests welcome

Saturday 19 September 2015

Reunion Lunch

For those who matriculated in 1956 or before

Friday 20 November 2015

ALUMNI SUBJECT EVENTS

Physics Reunion Dinner

Saturday 21 February 2015

Music & Choir Reunion Dinner

Saturday 23 May 2015

Classics Reunion Lunch

Saturday 27 June 2015

Ellesmere Society Dinner

Saturday 14 November 2015

All events will be held in College unless stated otherwise. Invitations will be sent out in advance by post or email where appropriate.

For more information, contact us on +44 (0)1865 287250 or development.office@bnc.ox.ac.uk

Visiting College

Brasenose warmly welcomes our alumni back to College.

Main visiting times are 10am to 5pm during the summer months and 10am to 4.30pm during the winter but do contact us if you want to visit at other times. Very occasionally access may not be allowed if there is a College event in progress, and sometimes certain areas are closed to visitors. Visits to the College Library are by appointment only, please.

BNC Midsummer Night's Dream Ball 2015

Say, what abridgement have you for this evening? What masque? what music? How shall we beguile. The lazy time, if not with some delight? ~ Act V, Scene I.

On the 9 May 2015, Brasenose will continue its long and rich tradition of biennial summer balls as we transform our College into the fantastical setting of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. All Brasenose alumni are warmly invited to join us for this special occasion, which is planned to be the largest event ever held within the College grounds. Dining tickets are on sale at £135 per person, while non-dining tickets are available for £95.

For more information, please visit our website at www.brasenoseball2015.co.uk or email enquiries@brasenoseball2015.co.uk. We would also be pleased to consider sponsorship proposals from alumni looking to promote their companies; these should be sent directly to the Ball President at the address below.



Our Midsummer Night's Dream Ball promises to be an unforgettable evening of mystery and magic, and we look forward to seeing you there. Harry Ager, 2015 Ball President harry.ager@bnc.ox.ac.uk