



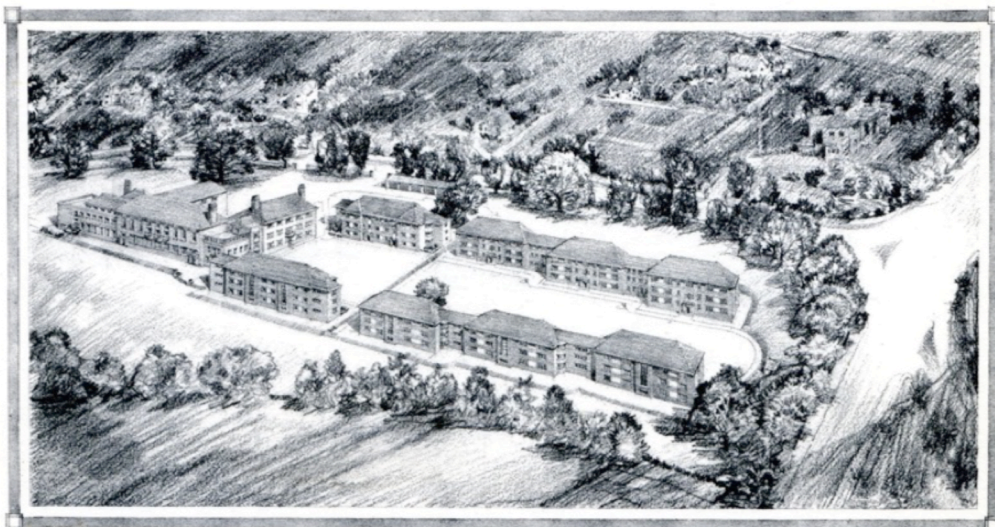
The Churchillian

The Newsletter of the Churchill Hall Association

2014-15



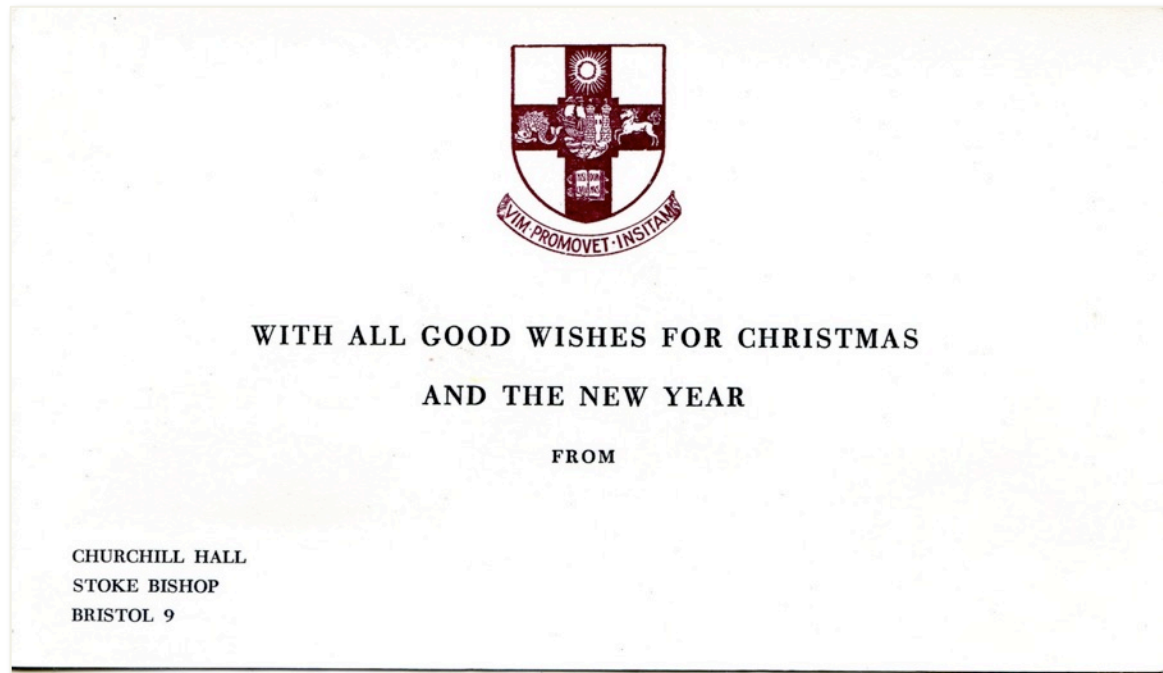
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HALL



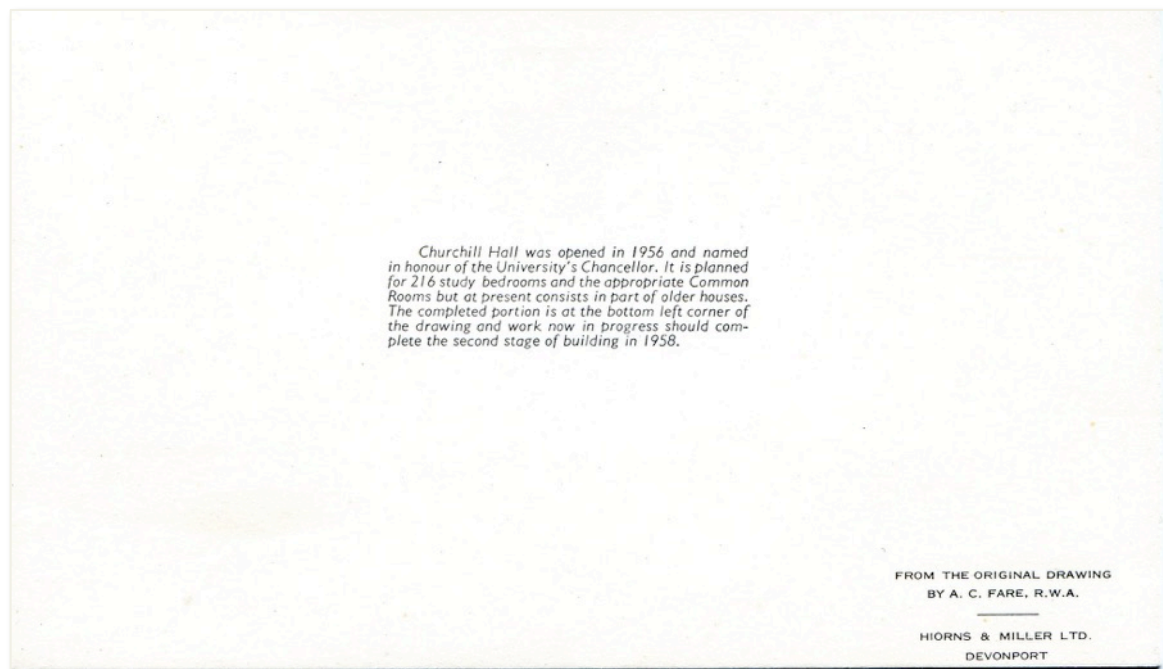
UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL — CHURCHILL HALL

Frontispiece: A 1950's Churchill Hall Christmas card

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Message from the Chairman

Fellow Churchillians

Welcome to our third newsletter, now being produced by the Churchill Hall Association Committee (CHA). The present Warden, Professor Robert Mayhew kindly edited the first two newsletters and we are very grateful for all of his efforts. We trust you will find something of interest to you in this newsletter but if not why not email us and put us right. To date the revived CHA has concentrated upon getting the Annual Dinner up and running at the Alumni weekend in July although in the last year we also organised, in conjunction with the London Branch, an interesting day out at Churchill's home - Chartwell - but please read the separate article. This year's alumni dinner is on 11th July in The Holmes. We are very pleased to have, as our pre-dinner speaker, the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir Eric Thomas. – details at the end of the newsletter.

Ideas for future events are welcome. May I thank all my fellow Committee members for their efforts and note we are always looking for additional (preferably younger, preferably technically competent, definitely enthusiastic) members. At present the Committee is all male and we would like this to change, but we realise that, for Churchill Hall's first years of accommodating the Best of Bristol (until after the Swinging 60's), these were only men.

David Clarke

Chairman

Churchill Hall 1963 to 1965.

Reflections of a 1970's Resident: David Ewart

The 1970s is not only the decade that fashion forgot, but also the decade Churchill Hall may rather forget, but this was not what I found when I came up to Bristol to read economics in October of 1974. I moved into a shared study bedroom in the then Waltham House, with a gas fire and ring, no central heating but lots of space.

Churchill Hall was very different, from what I have read about, in the early 1960s or today. It was still all male, had the three outhouses, Holmes, Waltham and Claverton, with no M-R Houses, which were not added till the 1980s; and the Botanic Gardens were not in the Holmes grounds, but there was a very enjoyable croquet lawn. Mr Caine, the Hall's legendary steward and ex butler of the Holmes was still around, but I think only a shadow of his former self. Formal meals had been reduced to lunch on Sundays, which was not taken very seriously.

The autumn of 1974 was a strange time, although the power cuts, as a result of the miner's strike, were over, (part of my A Level revision, particularly for my mocks, had been by candle-light) but random shortages remained, there were strikes leading to such things as there being no bread at breakfast for several days. As I arrived the second general election of that year was coming to a conclusion, the last time we were looking at a minority government. Bristol was also changing, having lost its City and County status, and with the closure of the City Docks.

When I arrived, the Warden was Roy Parker, but in my three years there would be three Wardens, Arthur Graves, the Warden of Wills covering the 1975-76 year and Alan Rump arriving in the autumn of 1976. Although he looked young then, even to a student, little did I realise that over 30 years later he would still be Warden, even though by then he was also Director of Student Services.

To many people Churchill was at a low point in the early/mid 1970s. Single sex halls were not very popular, the Hall had moved into a rather informal period, compared with the previous style, the one formal meal not being taken very seriously, and very few hall events - the Hall balls and the like coming later. Social life seemed to centre on the bar, or television room in the JCR, without much else happening. However, I found Churchill a marvelous place to be, making lifelong friends. I deeply enjoyed the hall experience and found Churchill the perfect base for my time at Bristol. I moved into a single room in The Holmes, complete with a large walk-in safe, for my second year, although returning a few years ago I found that my room was now part of the conference kitchen area.

During my time at Churchill the Monica Will's Chapel was at its most active, with the chaplains, Rev Don Warner and later Rev Stephen Abbott, living in The Holmes, and a very active body of students in Churchill and other Halls. Later, after my time, this body became The Fellowship of the King, in Redland, which is still going.

Looking back over what seems an unbelievable 40 years, I still find a longing for those years in what I consider to be the best hall in Bristol.

Visit to Chartwell

September 2014

Sir Winston Churchill served the University of Bristol as Chancellor from 1929 to 1965, when he died. The year 2015 therefore marks the fiftieth anniversary of his death, and it seemed fitting for the Churchill Hall Association to commemorate this event by organising a visit to Churchill's home, Chartwell, in Kent. We decided to do this a little in advance of the anniversary on the advice of Adrian Mezzetti, past-President of Wills Hall Association, who coincidentally volunteers as a room steward at Chartwell and who organised our programme for us

A good group of 20+ gathered, having braved a rather alarming weather forecast and having come from as far as Cornwall (and from just down the road in Surrey). Over coffee, Adrian showed us the Churchill Lectern, whose silver inscription describes its use by the Chancellor at Degree Congregations in the '40s and '50s. It was subsequently donated to Chartwell and is used by participants in the annual Sir Winston Churchill Public Speaking Competitions. We then heard a very interesting introduction to the life and times of Winston Churchill – army officer, writer, politician, war leader, artist - from our guide for the day, Alan Berridge. Interesting also that Churchill became Chancellor of University of Bristol just at the beginning of what, in political terms, were called his 'wilderness years'



We then had a tour of the house itself, which had been the family home since 1924 and is maintained much as it was when the family lived there. Extraordinary to think about the mixture of domestic and dramatic political life that the house saw in those years. We then enjoyed the gardens and the Studio. The former demonstrated Churchill's love of the countryside – and, indeed, his hands-on approach, both to the construction of various water features and the building of a brick wall. The Marycot is a playhouse, designed for his youngest daughter – who, in fact, died earlier last year. The Studio contains the biggest collection of Churchill's paintings. What a remarkable range of talents!

Just time for a group photo before we headed off in our various directions thinking, perhaps, that we should aim to do something similar in the future; suggestions will be happily received.



Alastair Scott

CHA Alumni Dinner, 2014

The Churchill Hall Association alumni dinner for 2014 was attended by 25 guests. The guest of honour was the Bishop of Monmouth, the Rt Revd Richard Pain BA BD, a former resident of Churchill Hall. The Chancellor, Baroness Hale of Richmond, also attended. The meal was hosted in The Holmes with good weather allowing pre-dinner drinks outside.



Churchill Dinner 2015

11th July at 19:00 at The Holmes

This year marks the 6th annual dinner and the 4th held in the beautiful setting of The Holmes. We are very pleased to have, as our pre-dinner speaker, the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir Eric Thomas. This may well be the VC's last public speech as our VC so it should be very interesting - as are all his speeches, but with the added spice of being 'slightly' provocative. In addition we will have as our special guest for the evening the Chancellor, Baroness Hale of Richmond.

We are expecting a full house so please book early - you don't necessarily have to attend other events at the Alumni weekend although you are most welcome to do so, especially if you have travelled far. For booking for the dinner see <http://www.churchillhalldinner2015.eventbrite.co.uk>

For those who prefer not to drive afterwards, simple accommodation, with breakfast, is available in The Holmes and at Wills Hall. For accommodation, please contact the University of Bristol Conference Office +44 (0)117 954 5501 or email conference-office@bristol.ac.uk

See the following link for details:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/alumni/events/alumni-weekend-2015/accommodation/>

Alumni Weekend link:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/alumni/events/alumni-weekend-2015/>