

# CHURCHILL HALL ASSOCIATION

## NEWSLETTER 1987 "30 YEARS ON"

Tom Lehrer was 59 this year. The 'Laird' is a fatherly figure

### FROM THE EDITOR .....

Thirty years on, but does that mean on and on? There was an Association in the staid fifties, the swinging sixties, the exciting seventies and the uncertain eighties. What about the unknown nineties, will there, should there be a CHA then? It is up to you to show it.

When Mozart was my age he'd been dead for years.

On the agenda for the A.G.M. are 4 items (we like short meetings!)

1. Finances (several thousand in the black, so no worries).
2. Elections (come and vote in some new blood - it is not an MCP bastion, so how about some of you proving to be "Ex guinea pigs" - see article). Who is leaving Hall this year?
3. The timing of reunions (what do you think?).
4. If attendance is poor at this years reunion then the future of the Association will be "Discussed". This is a euphemism for saying that the middle aged Committee members (editor, typical) may feel that if you don't want a good evening out for three pounds, then why have an Association?

Nostalgia isn't what it used to be.

We know some of the difficulties - people only 1 year in Hall, etc. However if I were a student again I'd take very good care of the associations' money by voting my friends on the Committee and making sure we all kept in touch!

News of members - is NOT IN THIS ISSUE (i) - it will be posted on a board at the reunion - see you then! (By the way you don't have to stay in Hall to attend the reunion come and see someone claim his wine). Alan Morrell

(i) But we will send it out later - could you have dropped any of the enclosed articles? (-if answer yes - then we have a new editor- whoopee!)

UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL



THE BOOKING FORM FOR THE REUNION IS ON THE BACK SHEET - I THINK. on a different page.

The Warden knows Best (most of us are too young).

Does Amanda keep guinea pigs?

you are holding it upside down.

Mike stubbs - please comp A.M.

! you know how much you've got to pay

Dear Churchillian,

As last year's Newsletter advertised, the Thirtieth Anniversary Reunion on July 18th, is offered at a specially "subsidised" price of just £3 (three!) It will begin with sherry and the Annual General Meeting at 7.00 p.m. in the library, where there will be an exhibition of memorabilia; after that there be a splendid buffet with copious wine in the Senior Common Room. If you have enjoyed the reminiscences of various periods of the Hall's history in the enclosed Newsletter, why not come and meet a broad spectsrum of generations of the Hall's students? If the Newsletter has revived memories of old friends (or enemies!?), why not come and find out how the years have ravaged them?

Even if you cannot come, do please send us news and memories for 1988's Newsletter, as well as any updating of addresses for yourself and other members with whom you are in touch.

Yours sincerely,

Alan [Signature]

don't watch this space.

\* Can't find the £ sign on the machine!

I can use joined up writing sumtymes.



As a JCR President of nearly 30 years ago, it gives the editor very great pleasure to include the following report from Guy Miles - whom I hope to have the pleasure of meeting in July.

**THE PRESIDENTS TALE - 1987**

After a year as President of Churchill Hall I now feel ready to relinquish my post and fade into obscurity.

The example of Sir Winston Churchill as leader and diplomat was the incentive humbly to set about my similar tasks, though on a drastically condensed scale.

The village green layout and excellent communal block at Churchill, and also the historic beauty of the Holmes, were able to create a hall unity without any help from me. However, the job of Hall President, demanding of both time and energy, results in the Hall's interests coming first and academic work being squeezed in, or out, somewhere else. It is no wonder that my "Filofax" personal organiser has been my closest friend.

The Presidency started with the calm before the storm as the deathly quiet of revision time and exams was punctuated only by the music of the "Beach Boys" occasionally in the gardens. After the exams, partymania breaks out and I spent the last week running about like a headless chicken as we had one event every day for the last 8 days of term. Everyone was on a high (before the results came out) and events such as our Summer Swing Evening, "It's a Knockout", "Garage Aid" (60's concert for "Band Aid") and grevues and discos, etc. went like a bomb.

The new academic year started with personally welcoming the freshers and helping them with their luggage (which will double by the time they leave) and finding their rooms. The first evening they were bombarded with information from the Warden, Union President, Rag and my first speech to them aiming to make them smile and referring them to the Churchill Hall booklet for information, which saved me much breath. The turnout of more than 50% of the Hall was never to be seen again as politics from then on became too much for all but the most dedicated "Hacks" (and some reading the subject) who spent rather more time on the third floor of the Union (sabbaticals) than I had time to do. This was followed by the Organisational nightmare of the Hall photograph, which puts the photographer further behind his schedule and shows up the Hall's rebellious members who appear in it more than once.

Over the next two terms my time was filled with staging events in Hall, such as local bands with P;A; and lights when the negotiable price can never be low enough. The ideal Junior Common Room with purpose built stow-away storage attracted people, many from other Halls in Stoke Bishop, to see our "Ents" as our reputation grew.

Slowly the Hall's members get the message that participation is the name of the game and Hall activities diversified through sport, Hall bands, Christian Fellowship ans societies such as the photographic society. The purchase of dazzling red and black strips for the Rugby and Soccer teams has unfortunately not been reflected in their performance, though some of the Hall teams will be collecting a cup at the Annual Athletic Union dinner. One of the most successful "Ents" was the Bonfire Night which included a +450 lavish display, set to musical greats such as the 1812 Overture and the "Thunderbirds" theme: it even succeeded in dragging people up from the Clifton Halls. The Hall Pantomime - "Cinderella" - was best remembered by the awful hangover the next morning for audience and "Cast"! The second term was altogether quieter as the Hall's members discovered a city beyond the Downs and support became harder to find. Thus it came as a relief when the Hall's St. Valentine's Ball came and went, organised solely by first years to whom its great success, and devastating aftermath, could be

July.  
The Holmes gardens will be fantastic in  
will be rampant?  
still  
Lions  
see the

How much is a filofax?  
I know whose won the wine!  
were the beach boys playing croquet?  
im expensive, filo fax.  
Are there any other jobs with obscurity?  
what is a filofax?



attributed and blamed. RAG week, for which Churchill is always a favourite venue for many events, I remember as time spent seemingly sponsoring every individual in Hall, and with long cold nights building our Rag Float in one of the garages. Our efforts were rewarded by winning the "Best decorated float" in the procession. Term ended with election of a new committee of bright, young, enthusiastic members. Finally time to sit back and rest on my laurels.

Looking back on the year for this article has given me much pleasure and sense of pride in the Hall and the part I have played in its history.

GUY MILES

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Editorial note: Some chords of memory were plucked by Guy's report, many things seem very familiar, but some things certainly have changed over 30 years - "LADIES" in Hall - (officially) - let us hear from Amanda Bath about the transition, which is welcomed by all:

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#### CHURCHILL HALL "GIRLS" - AMANDA BATH

The last to be informed that Churchill Hall was to become a "Mixed" Hall of Residence was the interested party itself: Churchill Hall's first intake of girls.

According to the accommodation prospectus made available to those coming up in 1978, Churchill Hall was mixed, and was made our first or second choice accordingly. Never did we realise that we were guinea pigs in a huge experiment, monitored by the anxious and curious across the entire University community. How would Churchill adapt in the face of this onslaught?

The first we learned of this was during the course of the first evening's speeches of welcome when Alan Rump, as he appraised us with a glint in his eye, made known to us the true significance of our presence there.

Of course, by virtue of being the first girls at Churchill, it was impossible to compare the Hall as we came to know it with the rough-house (rumour had it) that had existed there before. There seemed to be universal agreement that we girls had "Done wonders for the place". Our cleaning-ladies would regale us with tales of the old days when Churchill was strictly for the lads, and the tougher ones at that, with beer festivals and feats of strength, punch-ups in the J.C.R. and potato-throwing contests at formal meals. All this was evidently over now that we ladies had arrived to endow the Hall with our civilizing influence. Certainly, it was said, the boys seemed to dress better, drink less, and demonstrate the refined manners everyone had always hoped lurked somewhere under that macho exterior.

"Please, after you with the chocolate sauce".

"May I help you to a piece of toast?"

Not content merely to polish up Churchill Hall's exterior experience, we girls rapidly infiltrated its very organisation: at the first J.C.R. elections in which we participated, the entire J.C.R. Committee, with the exception of the President, turned out to be female, including the Bar Chairman.

Social events and discos now took on a new life and meaning for Churchill Hall residents. Gone were the days of eagerly seeking out lost females down at the Union and bussing them up to the Hall. Gone were the days of bemoaning the Hall so far of the well-trodden social circuit.



In-house girls were certainly a hit with the in-house boys: romances bloomed (at least one of which, I know from personal experience, still survives today).

Without reservation, I think most would agree that the 1978 experience proved to be a great success and has made Churchill Hall into one of the most popular, friendly and enjoyable places in which to spend one's formative first year at University. It was especial fun being one of the Guinea pigs, whose daring exploits and unprincipled behaviour undoubtedly gave Alan Rump a few grey hairs, and engraved our names and faces forever on the Hall's collective memory.

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Warden's Note: Amanda enjoyed her experience as a "Guinea pig" enough to become J.C.R. Vice-President and later a Hall tutor while writing a Ph.D. thesis on a Catalan author - a distinguished piece of work currently high in the Spanish non-fiction best-seller charts - she now works for Amnesty International in London.

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Well, yes some things certainly have changed - one of which is the length of time spent in Hall - many students spending only a single year in Hall for example. I can't help but compare this with my, almost, 5 years. Even this is a short period of involvement with the Hall when compared to the longer term plans of people whose task is to preserve the environment for future generations of students. As well as looking back, we take pleasure in the following article for the glimpses it gives us of the future. We do wish to take the opportunity to say a very big "Thank you" to all those who take care of the Hall in the long term.

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## GARDEN CHANGES AT THE HOLMES AND CHURCHILL HALL OVER THE LAST TEN YEARS

### THE HOLMES

A number of changes have taken place in this garden during the past decade, most being in the nature of natural evolution as planting becomes over-mature and require changing, also in some cases a re-design has become necessary to suit current needs.

The clearance of two enormous holly trees from the front of the house and the restriction in size of a bay tree has meant that more light was available to encourage the growth of interesting climbing plants on this south facing wall. Resident students can also see out of windows and need less artificial light! The existing magnolias, wisteria and an evergreen clematis have all responded well and we have also been able to plant Fremontodendron Californicum, which has yellow flowers like Rose of Sharon from April to October, and Abutilon Megapotamicum with pretty pendulous red and yellow flowers all summer.

The pergola walk was re-erected and planted about seven years ago using timber salvaged from the larchwood nearby. Wisteria and Laburnum have been trained on wires over the pergola and in May it is very pleasant to walk under the floral tunnel of pale blue and yellow flowers.

Along the boundary with Claverton, far less obvious to the casual observer, a number of changes have taken place. The Domesday Oak has been freed of its chains, and a double set of cables installed to ensure that the tree remains in one piece. The old path and borders have all gradually disappeared under a lawn to give a larger clear vista on this side of the garden. The brick boundary wall is at present too dominant but it is being



clothed with climbers including cotoneasters, pyracanthas and honeysuckles. At the Hollybush Lane end of that boundary the small rock garden and pond has all disappeared with the reconstruction of the wall. A number of silver birch species have now been planted to help maintain the wide range of trees to be found in the Holmes garden. The birch planted include *Betula Pendula Youngii*, the weeping form of silver birch, *B. Utilis*, a very white stemmed form of silver birch from the Himalayas, *B. Jacquemontii* also with white stems and *B. Albo-Sinensis Septentrionalis* with orange brown bark from China.

Above the Domesday Oak, an old stony bank covered in large holly seedlings has been cleared and a group of four or five extra young maples have been added to the planting of three existing maples. This should develop into a good area for autumn leaf tints.

Finally, a start has been made on replanting the rock garden. This will be done in three stages, the opportunity being taken to remove perennial weeds, replace and improve soil, reconstruct some rock work, repair ponds and restock the planting beds.



ALNUS RUBRA  
ACER CAMPESTRE  
CORYLUS COLURNA  
CRATAEGUS MONOGYNA "BIFLORA"  
POPULUS CANDICANS AURORA  
PRUNUS SARGENTII

PRUNUS AVIUM  
PTEROCARYA FRAXINIFOLIA  
SORBUS X BRISTOLIENSIS

CHAMAECYPARIS NOOTKATENSIS GLAUCA  
and  
THUYA PLICATA

an alder.  
the Field Maple with yellow autumn leaves.  
the Turkish Hazel.  
The Glastonbury Thorn which flowers in May and at New Year whilst still bearing fruit.  
a white variegated poplar.  
a flowering cherry with leaves turning orange and crimson in late September—probably the finest flowering cherry.  
the common cherry.  
a Wing Nut of the walnut family.  
a form of Whitebeam peculiar to the Avon Gorge, a seedling donated by Brackenhill Botanic Garden.  
a Nootka Cypress.

the Western Red Cedar.

**AUSTEN PERKINS**  
(University Gardens Superintendent)



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GERRY Bone

if you and Colin T. don't come this year - the Laird will stop being a fatherly figure!

[Same for you Mike Pascoe - actually I'd prefer the intelligent one - your wife! - cheers Mike!]

medecine and hoped to end his days in Skye. I wonder if he attained his ambition?

In room 5 lived a product of Eton: despite that, he made me laugh. He went through a phase of liking the 1920's period and, money being no object, he went shopping. Next morning his door was wide open so everyone could see. There was Sandy resplendent in a velvet smoking jacket, sitting in bed with a long cigarette-holder (shades of Noel Coward), Chinese rug on floor and large jar with Pampas grass and Peacock feathers. Mr. Cainey looked in and said "Has he been pinching my Pampas grass?" Sandy often became bored and to relieve the tedium he would fly off to Spain for a few days. His friend Paul an old Harrovian (among other things) lived in room 4. One morning as I was on my way to wake up Willie, I smelt smoke coming from Paul's room. On opening the door, I saw little grey patches of underwear hanging on the mantelpiece - his socks and shirt had melted on the fire. After turning off the fire, I roused Paul from the bath. While I was cleaning up the mess, Paul was frantically shaking out dirty clothes for something to wear - he had put out his underwear etc. to warm while he had a bath and they burned; unfortunately Paul never did his washing until everything was dirty (usually once a month).

Room 2 was the abode of Willie, he had such a long name I called him Willie for short. He was an absent-minded eccentric. I woke him up about 8.15 a.m. and put his kettle on low. A bit later I used to return to make him a cup of coffee to make sure he was awake. Before he went off, I had to check him to make sure his tie and shoe laces were tied and he had his books, money, car keys etc. One summer the Bailiff called, as Willie had a load of parking offences which he had forgotten about. Needless to say, the officer soon hopped it when I told him that Willie was no longer with us and had gone overseas. Little did he know he was overseas in Ireland! He had a friend who was an Irish baronet who walked around bare-foot. He preferred coming in the windows rather than the door. His footprints were on the seat by the window in the hall and across the white hearth into room 2. He used to be amazed when I put my head around Room 2's door and said that I knew he was there! In room 11 there was a promising tennis player. On Wednesdays, when I was blackleading the hall grate, Paul would run downstairs with his racquet, laughing and full of youthful vitality. He would tap me with his racquet and say "One for luck, I'm off to a match". Sadly he was killed on his motorbike and I can still hear jis "One for luck Chesh".

A diplomat's son from Sierra Leone lived in room 14, I called him the Great Gatsby as he wore fabulous clothes; his shirts were frilled and hand-sewn. One of his outfits was a large-brimmed white hat, frilled shirt and white flared suit. Every time I hear the tune "Winchester Cathedral" I see him in my mind - he loved playing it on his gramophone.

I could rabbit on for ever about my lads and the Holmes. Looking back, I think the lads have to work much harder now, but they also have more freedom now: I don't know whether it is a good thing, as in the past they abided by the rules (in the main). If they did something wrong (like playing billiards late at night) it was a nerve-racking experience to face Mr. Robertson next morning for a dressing down. I sincerely hope both past, present and future students find happiness in this uncertain world and my thoughts and good wishes go with them.

"Chesh"

(Mrs. Cheshire is now retiring after nearly a quarter of a century in the Holmes. I am sure everyone who has passed through there and had the benefit of her "Mothering" will wish her a long and healthy retirement).