



# St Anne's College: 1952 – 2012

*Dr David Smith, Librarian*

10. There shall be an audit of all the accounts of the College made every year by a professional Auditor to be appointed by the Council.

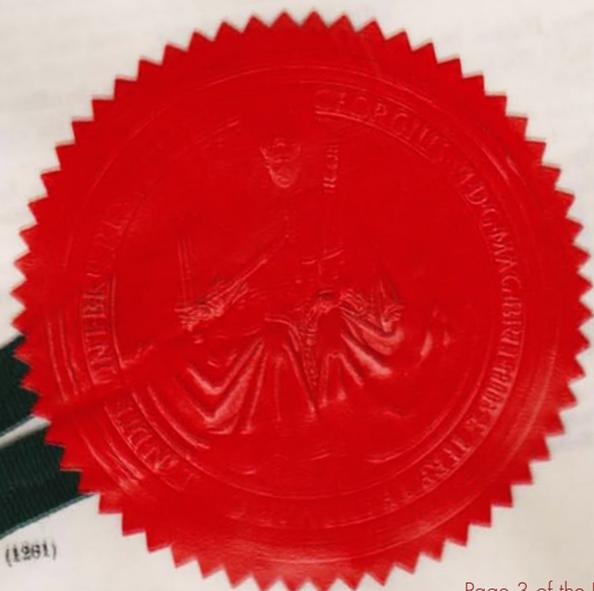
11. The income and property of the College, whencesoever derived, shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the objects of the College as set forth in these Presents, and no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend or bonus or otherwise howsoever by way of profit to the persons who are members of the Council of the College. Provided that this Article shall not prevent the payment in good faith of remuneration to the Principal, Fellows, Tutors, Lecturers or any other officers of the College in return for services actually rendered or to be rendered to the College or to other persons in return for academic work for the College nor shall anything herein prevent any person holding any emolument, established, or paid out of the funds of the College, from being a Member of the Council of the College.

12. And lastly, We do by these Presents for Us, Our Heirs and Successors grant and declare that these Our Letters shall be in all things valid and effectual in law according to the true intent and meaning thereof and shall be taken construed and adjudged in the most favourable and beneficial sense for the best advantage of the College as well in Our Courts of Record as elsewhere by all Judges, Justices, Officers, Ministers and other subjects whatsoever of Us, Our Heirs and Successors any non-recital, mis-recital or other omission defect or thing to the contrary notwithstanding.

In Witness whereof We have caused these Our Letters to be made Patent  
Witness Ourself at Westminster the *nineteenth* day of *May* in  
the first year of Our Reign.

By Warrant under the Queen's Sign Manual.

*Napier*



(1261)

# St Anne's College: 1952 – 2012

## 1952–1959: Council of St Anne's College

"The academic year 1951–52 must ever be a landmark in the history of St Anne's College". The generally terse and professional tone of Miss Plumer's letters in *The Ship* gives way to something like excitement in 1952, the "Annus Mirabilis" which brought not only the Royal Charter by which on 19th May we became St Anne's College, but also the move of College administration out of Musgrave House in South Parks Road and into the newly completed second phase of Hartland House, and an exceptional set of exam results including four firsts in English. As Chairman (*sic*) of the Delegation for Women Students, Miss Plumer was a member of the University's Hebdomadal Council and had been party to the discussions as to whether St Anne's Society should be allowed to be incorporated as a college despite its continued lack of residential buildings. The Home-Student system, held in affection by some for the freedom and "special" character it gave to the Society, had been losing support through the 1930s and became untenable in wartime and afterwards because lodgings were no longer easily available. Miss Mary Leys, one of the first Fellows of St Anne's (the Society's academic staff were Tutors), was not alone in hoping that St Anne's would always maintain "a distinct character of its own", but collegiate status within the University of Oxford was undoubtedly a huge step forward and something to be celebrated.

The main celebratory event was the opening on 28th May of the new part of Hartland House, with the Chancellor (Lord Halifax) and the Vice-Chancellor (Sir Maurice Bowra) robed and in attendance. The Chancellor spoke of the "sense of corporate unity" symbolised by both the building and the title of College. The Association of Senior Members meanwhile was determined that unity should not mean uniformity; its financial help had enabled Miss Elaine Griffiths (another founding Fellow) to exercise her refined if slightly eccentric taste in furnishing the common rooms, and the President Elizabeth Neame states firmly that "uniformity is avoidable and so is timid porridge colour; ... no one need be frightened of a splash". Splashes of colour and a new sense of corporate unity sound attractive, but



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life for St Anne's students of the 1950s was still pretty austere. The excellent series of Portraits of a Year, initiated by Michèle Brown when editor of *The Ship*, brings us 1990s memories of this era from Shirley Sherwood, Judith Vidal-Hall, Anne Everest-Phillips, Ann Louise Luthi, and Wendy Perriam. Houses were cold, food was terrible, and as all students were still living in hostels or in digs, "College was more a state of mind than a physical entity". Students dressed neatly and conventionally and in most respects were indistinguishable from their mothers, and careers advice for female undergraduates had nothing to offer beyond secretarial work and teaching. Visiting rules and gate hours were severe, and Wendy Perriam never found out what happened at the end of *East of Eden* because she had to be back in College before it was over.

There was a feeling especially among those from the early part of the decade that St Anne's as a college was an experience for which they had arrived too early. Individual Fellows, though, are remembered with affection and respect, and here perhaps is where the splashes of colour are to be found: Annie Barnes, Marjorie Reeves, Iris Murdoch teaching German Aesthetics while lying on the floor.

The new College was governed by a Council composed of the Principal, the Treasurer, all Official and Professorial Fellows, and five external members. Only in 1959 did the five women's colleges acquire full collegiate status so that their councils became governing bodies and they were, like the men's colleges, fully self-governing. External advisors have consistently played a part in the governance of St Anne's, on Finance Committee in the 1960s, on Investment Committee for several decades, and more recently on the Advisory and Development Boards, and it appears the five advisors of the 1950s, all from within the University, were both supportive and tactful. One of Council's first actions was to select a new Principal, as Miss Plumer retired in 1953, making a gift to College of the right to use her family's coat of arms. The new Principal was Lady Ogilvie, widow of Sir Frederick Ogilvie who had been Vice-Chancellor of Queen's University Belfast, Director-General of the BBC, and Principal of Jesus College Oxford.

After his death Mary Ogilvie was Dean of Women Students at Leeds University until St Anne's lured her back to Oxford, much to Leeds's annoyance. If circumstances, and generous helpers of St Anne's, appeared to conspire with Lady Ogilvie to enable the College during her thirteen-year Principalship to progress with astonishing speed to a position where it had everything, apart from a large endowment, that the residential colleges had, it was probably only because Lady Ogilvie herself had a genius for seizing opportunities and then immediately looking for the next step but one.

She was also well connected to say the least; the many committees and boards on which she sat included Hebdomadal Council and the University Grants Committee's (UGC) sub-committee on student residence, and it was the positive disposition of the University and the UGC, alongside crucially that of the great landlord of Oxford, St John's College, that enabled St Anne's to become what it became so rapidly.

Mrs Amy Hartland, the non-graduate supporter of women's higher education who remains the outstanding benefactor of St Anne's, had died in 1945, leaving the residuum of her estate to the College, and in 1955 the Hartland Trustees decided to wind up the trust and hand all the property to St Anne's, so that the College was able progressively to buy the freehold (on generous terms from St John's) of all the houses that surrounded Hartland House on Bevington, Banbury, and Woodstock Roads, and then to wait patiently for the remaining sitting tenants to move away or die.



The Dining Hall and Kitchen designed by Gerald Banks.

By the time Council turned into Governing Body in 1959, the first of a series of major building projects was completed: the Dining Hall and Kitchen designed by Gerald Banks. Lady Ogilvie had charmed a grant out of the UGC for this project, seen as essential for building that “sense of corporate unity”, though its bold modernist design stretched to the limit the criteria for making such grants. Judith Vidal-Hall’s year group (1957) recalled how strange it felt to be transported into a formal dining hall while still being fed the “nursery food” which had characterised the hostels, including jelly for pudding to aid the young ladies’ digestion.

Academic staff changed rapidly during the 1950s, and only six tutorial Fellows feature among both the nine on Council in 1952 and the thirteen on Governing Body in 1959: Peter Ady, Annie Barnes, Elaine Griffiths, Kirstie Morrison, Iris Murdoch, and Marjorie Reeves. The new appointments included Dorothy Bednarowska in English, Elizabeth Ely in Law, Jenifer Hart in History, Margaret Hubbard in Classics, and Mary Kearsley in Mathematics. The balance of subjects, with only one scientist on Council and two on Governing Body, was probably at the extreme end of what was typical for the women’s colleges in the 1950s. Students’ performance in Finals, eagerly watched by the Principal who was clear that while “bricks and mortar” were important, the “academic standing of the College in the University” was what really mattered, was strong in most years. The measure referred to by Principals year after year was firsts and seconds added together as a percentage of the whole, and on that measure, scoring upwards of

85 per cent, St Anne's was often in the top group of colleges. The Norrington Table of the 1960s and onwards, with its premium for firsts, was generally less favourable to women's colleges, but good numbers of firsts (which were much more sparsely awarded across the University then than they are now) were a recurring feature for St Anne's at this time. The firsts of 1953 included Elizabeth Ely, the brilliant academic lawyer who died tragically young in 1961, Sister Michael (Sister Wendy Beckett), and Ursula Fanthorpe, who was soon, along with her older contemporary Elizabeth Jennings, winning national prizes for her poetry. Laying the foundation stone of the Dining Hall on 17th June 1958, Sir Douglas Veale, former Registrar of the University, saluted the achievements of St Anne's, an outcome of "the major discovery of the nineteenth century, that women have brains".

## 1959–1966: buildings and innovations

St Anne's prides itself on having been the first Oxford college to try various new ideas which have later caught on elsewhere. In Trinity Term 1959 Miss Dannatt, the Senior Mistress of Bicester Grammar School, became Oxford's first "schoolteacher fellow", a sign of the College's consistent interest in building links with secondary schools, shown later in our large intake of PGCE students (under the care, from the late 1980s onwards, of Fellow in Education Graham Corney and his successors Roger Trend and Roger Firth), and in numerous "outreach" activities. In 1963 the arrival of six new SCR babies prompted the establishment of a day nursery in a wartime Nissen hut near 48 Woodstock Road, a facility still thriving in 2012 in more welcoming conditions. In 1965 the College was delighted to be approached by Balliol as partners in a new joint residential graduate centre at Holywell Manor. The centre, which operated successfully from 1967 to 1984, was an experiment on three fronts: in inter-collegiate co-operation (it may be a cause for regret that initiatives of that kind have rather faded out in recent years), in co-residence of male and female students, and in the identification of graduate students as a distinct group who needed facilities of their own which encouraged intellectual and social interaction amongst them. By 1984 co-residence was the norm, so that one part of the point of Holywell Manor as a joint enterprise had ceased to apply; St Anne's established its own graduate centre in Talbot Lodge in Linton Road, to be succeeded by Robert Saunders House in South Parade.

Another important “first” for St Anne’s was Lady Ogilvie’s successful wooing of Sir Isaac and Lady Wolfson. Wolfson buildings followed at numerous Oxford and Cambridge colleges, plus a Wolfson College at each, but St Anne’s was the first, aided by Lady Ogilvie’s and Sir Isaac’s shared Glaswegian heritage. Once the grant of £80,000 from the Wolfson Foundation had been secured in 1960, Governing Body commissioned Howell Killick Partridge and Amis, a leading firm of architects in new university building at this time of rapid expansion in higher education, to design a plan for the whole site. The plan involved five residential blocks, an extension to the Library, and a moat with a music practice room on an island.

By the time (1964) a further grant of £100,000 had been won from the Rayne Foundation to build a twin residential block to the Wolfson Building, it was already becoming clear that the whole plan would be out of College’s reach, both because money was becoming more difficult and because local conservation groups were winning Council support for the preservation of Victorian North Oxford villas. 33 (the former Springfield St Mary hostel run by the Anglican Wantage Sisters) and 31 Banbury Road were demolished to make way for Wolfson (1964) and Rayne (1968) buildings respectively, but in order for St Anne’s to achieve the sort of modernist architectural unity that was later achieved by St Catherine’s and



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Wolfson Colleges, most of the villas around the perimeter of the site would have had to go, something that would almost certainly not have been allowed in the 1970s. It was an unspoken realisation of these difficulties, plus an urgent need for yet more student accommodation and another time-limited opportunity to win a grant, this time from the UGC, that led to the plan for the Founders' Gatehouse; on the original plan, the Gatehouse and Lodge would have been where 48 Woodstock Road stands on the South-West corner of the site. The Gatehouse was completed in 1966 with the help of an appeal to senior members which financed its ground floor. A debate rumbled through these years as to whether St Anne's should build a chapel, with founding Tutor Ruth Butler and senior member Victoria Kingsley vigorously in support. Reservations centred around the desire to be fair to non-Anglicans and non-Christians, and there was more general support for a "place for prayer and meditation", which was established in the Springfield Room in 35 Banbury Road. An anonymous offer of £1,000 to help build "a place of Christian prayer and worship within the College precincts" was, after discussion, turned down by Governing Body in 1964.



Mary Ogilvie, Principal 1953–1966, at the topping out ceremony for the Gatehouse.

Wolfson, Rayne, and the Gatehouse furnished 111 student rooms, and with the steadily growing occupation of the older houses, 220 undergraduates were already accommodated on the site by Michaelmas Term 1964. College growth throughout this period was steady if not spectacular: in 1953 there were 10 Fellows, 30 graduate students, and 252 undergraduates, and by 1966 those numbers had risen to 18, 47, and 295. Pressure for further growth was to be expected, partly because the deliberations of the Franks Commission, which published its report in 1966, were suggesting that Oxford needed to increase its proportion of female to male undergraduates, standing at around one to six in 1966. The speck on the horizon in the early 1960s was mixed colleges, and already in 1964 New College was considering admitting women, a move vigorously opposed by the

women's colleges who did not fancy losing their privileged pick of bright girls at entrance. Meanwhile the academic performance of St Anne's undergraduates continued to be very strong. Lady Ogilvie spoke darkly of "lack of ambition" in 1962 when there was only one first, but in the next year there were seven, and the percentage of firsts and seconds was the highest of any Oxford college. Lady Ogilvie herself took a strong interest in students, and had an active role in undergraduate admissions; she had a liking for candidates who looked out of the ordinary and might represent a risk, and the "Principal's funnies" were generally found to turn out very well. The Fellows also were achieving distinction of various kinds. Annie Barnes was appointed to a Readership in 1966 and became the first Professorial Fellow of St Anne's. Margaret Hubbard was University Assessor in 1964–5, and later edited the *Oxford Magazine*. Iris Murdoch resigned her Fellowship in 1962 to concentrate on her writing, but had already become the

most famous Fellow of St Anne's.

In a wonderfully barbed review of *The Severed Head* in *The Ship* of 1961, Elisabeth Koutaissoff writes of the unexpected popularity of Iris Murdoch's early novels with the youth of Soviet Russia, who cannot "resist the seduction of this enchanting world of genteel idleness and refined sophistication".



Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, one of whose first actions as monarch had been to give assent to the Royal Charter of St Anne's, visited the College on a wet day

in November 1960 to declare the Dining Hall open; the Hall had actually been in operation for more than a year, but the visit was delayed by the birth of Prince Andrew. The republican Jenifer Hart tells with glee in her autobiography *Ask me no more* how the young Queen asked questions which showed some ignorance of what the College was about, but it was a day of celebration and St Anne's was not a hotbed of revolution in the 1960s. College notes in *The Ship* of 1966 remark that Oxford undergraduate life is "uneventful" in a year of student unrest and

direct political action elsewhere, and regrets that television still loves portraying a life of “undiluted frivolity” among Oxford students. Student unrest did arrive a few years later in Oxford as we shall see, but Frances Cairncross’s 1997 survey of her 1962 generation paints a mainly positive picture, quite unlike those from the 1950s, of “frantic social life and intellectual excitement”, where the College, often breached by both visitors and residents by the route over the Banbury Road wall to which Lady Ogilvie seemed to turn a benignly blind eye, was a pleasant haven to return to after the excitements of life outside. Memories of meetings with Tutors are agreeably sprinkled with alcohol: neat gin with Margaret Hubbard, Madeira with Marjorie Reeves, gin or sherry with Elaine Griffiths. An earlier account of a College dance in 1963 presents an intriguing image of student festivities: “The College dance was held as usual on the fourth Friday of Hilary Term, and the decorations were on an oriental theme, with a walled garden in the Hall and a harem in the JCR where a buffet supper was served”.

The retirement in 1965 of the Domestic Bursar Miss Rosalie Smith brings to light another aspect of College life which became important once there were rooms and a dining hall and has been important ever since. Along with her care for individual students, her “elegant and extremely inexpensive parties”, and her excellent flower arrangements, Miss Smith is commended for her attention to the “far more transient hordes of conference people who flood into St Anne’s during the vacations”, and without whom College finances would be in difficulties and student maintenance fees would be higher.

## 1966–1979: protest and co-residence

In 1966 Lady Ogilvie retired and Miss Nancy Fisher, who became Mrs Nancy Trenaman before taking office, was elected in her place. Nancy Trenaman had a distinguished career in the British civil service, where she became Under-Secretary at the Board of Trade. She brought administrative skill of a high order and a forthright Yorkshire personality, and devoted great energy to College affairs over eighteen years at what was at various points a difficult time in the College’s history. Like her predecessors she was a member of the University’s Hebdomadal Council, and she became the third chairman of Conference of Colleges, a body set up at the recommendation of the Franks Commission to represent the common interests of colleges (the next Principal of St Anne’s to hold this office was Tim Gardam in



Nancy Trenaman, Principal 1966–1983

2011–13). After the relative largesse of the early 1960s, when UGC grants to universities were guaranteed for five years ahead, the 1970s were hard and uncertain times in higher education, with government funding pulling back and high inflation eroding assets. In 1971 the third and final phase of Hartland House was built, giving much-needed administrative space to the Treasury and College Office and some additional teaching rooms, but this was the only building project in Nancy Trenaman's time.

Already in 1968 the JCR was discussing the possibility that St Anne's might become co-educational, and with hindsight it seems there was a steady movement in that direction right through this period. In 1967 Bernard Halstead, formerly Permanent Secretary in the colonial government of Nigeria, became the first male Treasurer of a women's college; in 1973 he became the first male member of Governing Body, and in 1977, when the decision had been taken to go mixed at both senior and junior levels, the first male Fellow. By 1971 nine men's colleges were considering admitting women to help increase numbers of women undergraduates across the University, and the *Ship* of that year carries articles for and against St Anne's admitting men by Jenifer Hart and Elaine Griffiths respectively. Both present moderate positions, Jenifer Hart arguing that women students need better access to Oxford and that the College needs a "natural and well balanced community", and Elaine Griffiths that women's colleges preserve job opportunities for women academics who are otherwise strongly disadvantaged. In the event Congregation decided that from 1974 a limited number of women would be admitted to five men's colleges (Brasenose, Hertford, Jesus, Wadham, and St Catherine's). As Lady

Bullock (a St Anne's senior member married to the Master of St Catherine's) wittily put it, "in effect it is 'ladies limited' not 'women ad lib'". The JCR Committee's position was consistently in favour of co-residence for St Anne's. Governing Body, after debates which seem to have been remarkably calm though there were opinions on both sides, decided in 1977 to go fully mixed at senior and junior levels, the first male undergraduates to matriculate in 1979. Mrs Trenaman clearly guided the discussion with great skill and diplomacy, and her explanation of the decision to senior members in the *Ship* of 1977 is open and fair-minded. In her opinion, though there were arguments of principle on both sides of the question, the final determining factor at least on the timing of the change (Lady Margaret Hall was the only other women's college to go mixed at this point, the others following at various intervals later) had been the Sex Discrimination Act of 1975, which threatened difficulties under certain conditions for employers who advertised posts available only to women. Another factor had been the decision of nearly all the remaining men's colleges to start admitting women students from 1979. The first male Tutorial Fellows of St Anne's, Dr Martin Speight in Zoology and Dr David Sinclair in Physics, were elected with effect from October 1978, and Mr John Kingman (later Sir John Kingman, Chair of the Science and Engineering Research Council) became a Professorial Fellow of St Anne's in the same year.

By the end of the 1960s student unrest had arrived in Oxford, and St Anne's was not immune. In 1970 the JCR President reports new levels of political involvement among junior members, but regrets that "the majority of JCR members have shown a disappointing lack of interest in running their own affairs" (a common lament of JCR Presidents across the University, then and now). The Hart report of 1969, the work of a group headed by H.L.A. Hart, Jenifer Hart's husband, had made various recommendations on relations between senior and junior members of the University, including limited representation of junior members in University governance, and in College also there were discussions about junior representation on Governing Body and Finance Committee. The JCR withdrew its account from Barclays Bank because of the Bank's South African affiliations, and responded to the recent sit-in at the Clarendon Building by holding a special meeting at which it deplored the rumoured keeping of secret political files on students which had led to this action. The JCR was concerned about psychological stresses on its members, and employed a trained Counsellor (probably another "first" for St Anne's) with permission from Governing Body, but the Committee was appalled that College offered no financial

support for this. By 1974 the JCR President had become the Convenor of the JCR, and the incumbent Elaine Ginsburg was writing (even in *The Ship!*) in the tones of hard left activism, of the JCR's disaffiliation from the ineffective Oxford University Student Union, and of her participation with colleagues in the campaign for a Central Student Union, which had culminated in the occupation of the Examination Schools, "an exhilarating practical exercise in self-education and continuous democracy".

In the same *Ship* Mrs Trenaman picks up the word: "Exhilarating"? Perhaps for some. For all of us, collectively, grievous." Clearly the level of general student interest in wider political matters did rise during these turbulent years from (approximately) 1969 to 1975, but officers continued to complain of the "apathy" of the majority, except on one issue which did unite them all: visiting hours. The JCR continued to campaign for a total abolition of restrictions on visiting, but Governing Body was initially not inclined to budge, and Melanie Phillips as JCR President in 1972 describes the peaceful demonstrations that followed this impasse, including an illegal mass exodus of visitors at 1.00 a.m. (the JCR Committee was fined).



Into this strained atmosphere came a painful episode which resulted in the Freshers of 1972 meeting a picket line and the Gatehouse sprayed with messages reading NO VICTIMIZATION and THIS COLLEGE IS BLACKED. Discussions in Trinity Term of the need to make economies in order to keep maintenance charges down had ended in agreement with junior members that some trimming should take place in domestic services.

In order to save money through these trimmings, College made a handyman, Mr Keen, redundant. Mr Keen's union, NUPE, demanded his re-instatement, and when College appeared to be refusing to negotiate with them, called a strike which drew other NUPE members to St Anne's in solidarity. The first ever strike by domestic staff at an Oxford college was a "first" not to be proud of. Some undergraduates, who had not anticipated that economies would lead to a forced redundancy, supported the strike and joined the picket line, though support was not universal among students. The strike, which

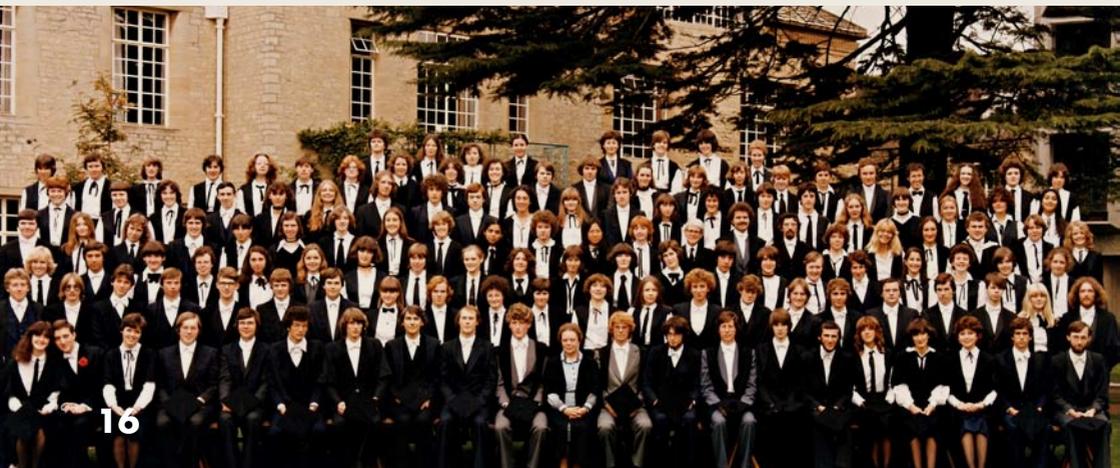
continued through Michaelmas Term until College finally went to arbitration and was required to re-instate Mr Keen, brought much unwelcome attention, the more so because ulterior motives were suspected on both sides. The College suspected that NUPE's real aim was to be recognised as a negotiating body by the College, recognition which College had originally refused on the grounds that most College staff were not members. NUPE suspected that the real reason for giving Mr Keen notice was not to make savings but that Mr Keen was the NUPE shop steward for St Anne's. Perhaps the truest word about the episode, by the JCR President Alison Lowton, was that it showed "a disturbingly high level of ignorance of trade unionism at all levels in the college".

Given these circumstances, it is not surprising that Eleanor Naughtie's "portrait" of the 1972 matriculation year elicited some strongly negative memories. Those who arrived to find the way into College blocked by pickets, often later felt that they were "under attack from two fronts", as College authorities under strain became more repressive and negative, and sections of the JCR more authoritarian, threatening to withdraw JCR facilities from students who failed to attend meetings. Discouraged from joining University societies, and with little to occupy them socially in College, this generation spent a lot of time in the Library, now available 24 hours a day after the appointment of a night porter. Some may not have been happy, but they did exceptionally well in Finals even for a decade when results were nearly always strong, with six firsts and eighty-one seconds, the second highest percentage in the University, and a number of University prizes. Armed with their good degrees, and helped by the new Equal Opportunities Act of 1975, they often had a choice of job offers across a wide range. Eleanor Naughtie herself won one of the twelve BBC traineeships on offer that year. Fellows and senior members also were winning honours of various kinds. Marjorie Reeves was awarded the D.Litt. and was the first woman to preach the University sermon (she later preached the Latin sermon also). Hazel Rossotti served as Assessor. Kirstie Morrison retired and became College's first Emeritus Fellow. Baroness Young became our first Life Peer, and Ann Spokes our first Lord Mayor. By the time the Centenary celebrations of 1979 were approaching, College seemed again to be in good heart. By 1975 the JCR Convenor had turned back into the President; in 1977 after a joint working party of Governing Body and junior members, all visiting restrictions were abolished; in 1978 the JCR President Julie Hadwin spoke of her "strong conviction that we are beyond a doubt the liveliest women's college".

## 1979–1991: The Centenary, Men, and the Sciences

1979 was the centenary of the founding of the Society of Oxford Home-Students, and the celebrations were home-spun and economical but splendid nonetheless, with a celebration dinner in Trinity Term for current members, and a Gaudy weekend in June at which in total one thousand people were entertained. The Gaudy dinner was so popular that many senior members had to be turned away. An appeal was launched with a target of £250,000, but applications to trust funds (Rolls Royce, Rhodes, Cephalosporin) were so successful, along with the £140,000 that came from senior members' donations, that the target was doubled to £500,000. The purposes of the appeal were "essentially academic and for the benefit of individuals", and the only bricks and mortar in the plan were the new Nursery, designed by senior member Joanna van Heyningen and completed in 1978, and the music practice rooms in an old coachhouse. Mrs Trenaman was able to announce that forty male undergraduates would start in Michaelmas 1979, exactly one third of the new first year, and she was pleased both that this large number meant the College would be genuinely mixed rather than a women's college with a few men, and that there appeared not to be polarisation by subject: there was one female Engineer out of three, and three men coming to read English. In a brief period of opportunity when University positions were being filled, several new Fellows were elected, mostly in the sciences but also in Music, Politics, and Economics. In the one year between 1978 and 1979, the number of Fellowships in experimental sciences at St Anne's went from two to seven. The Fellowship became mixed very quickly, as all the new appointees were men.

*Mrs Trenaman was able to announce that forty male undergraduates would start in Michaelmas 1979.*



It was inevitable that when famous historic colleges were open to women, as nearly all were in 1979, the pool of first-choice applicants, female and male, available to the former and continuing women's colleges became less enticing than it had been. All worked hard, as they always had, to "add value" to their undergraduate intake by thorough and conscientious teaching, but the general level of performance in Finals by students from these colleges did suffer. In the case of St Anne's, this effect was less monochrome than it was sometimes felt to be. In 1982 (the first year of "mixed" Finals results), Nancy Trenaman lamented the worst set of results in all her sixteen years at St Anne's, though she was quick to point out that the male intake of 1979 was not responsible, as the men had performed no worse than the women. In fact though, the proportion of firsts and seconds to the whole, that measure so beloved of Principals of St Anne's to this point, was almost the same in 1982 (84 per cent) as it had been in 1978 (85 per cent), one of the wonder years of the 1970s when there were 15 firsts. The numbers of thirds and passes for these two years were also almost identical. Dr Claire Palley later observed that there was a tendency to "nostalgic overgeneralisation" about the brilliant and hard-working St Anne's undergraduates of the sixties and seventies and their less committed and/or gifted successors in the eighties.

In 1982 Nancy Trenaman spoke of the "tensions and disturbances" to do with the arrival of men, which, though not particularly felt as such at the time, had perhaps had an adverse effect on academic "and other" (spoken with a hint of menace perhaps) standards among St Anne's undergraduates. Jenifer Hart in retrospect slightly regretted the speed with which co-residence had arrived, and spoke with distaste of the "drunken and yobbish behaviour" of some male undergraduates. The JCR President of 1979–80, Judith Capel, noted that all the new Fellows were men and the next JCR Committee would contain eight men and two women. A St Anne's women's group was planned. Her successor Nick Martin saw "the cohesion of a truly mixed college" as something to be hoped for after time had passed. In the short term, the JCR had become more a social than a political institution, with "the departure of the vociferous feminist contingent" (*sic*). In a tongue-in-cheek reminiscence of his first week at St Anne's in 1979, Jon Bibby spoke in 1987 of the new male undergraduates as cowboys in wagons surrounded by hostile Indians, and of a JCR full of back copies of *Spare Rib* and earnest second and third years discussing feminist solidarity.

He mentioned a laddish prank where benches were placed in the lower branches of a tree in the garden, an incident also remembered with amusement by Ann Pasternak Slater. Ian Round's portrait of the year 1979 (assembled in 1990) presents a more balanced and positive picture, with the majority of female undergraduates welcoming the male intake as a "challenge" rather than a threat. His contemporaries speak of tiny rooms ("some rooms are like converted broom cupboards, the rest have not yet been converted") but of a warm and welcoming atmosphere and of exacting but "long suffering" tutors such as Gabriele Taylor, Ruth Harvey, Hazel Rossotti, and Jean Dunbabin. There is a general feeling that the arrival of men made College a more "introverted society" at undergraduate level, with many internal social events. In the survey of careers followed after Oxford, there is a new element of financial services and advertising.

College size had risen steadily through the 1970s, but remained mostly steady through the 1980s until the end of that decade, with the spate of new Fellowship appointments balanced by some resignations and retirements. In 1978–9 St Anne's had 27 Fellows, 398 undergraduates, and 93 graduate students; in 1988–9, 31 Fellows, 407 undergraduates, and 74 graduate students. For graduates, their academic lives focused on departments and faculties, College was more a place for social gathering than anything else, and successive MCR Presidents clearly saw their committees' main function as to draw members together socially. For those living in Holywell Manor or, from 1984, in Talbot Lodge, as for the hostel dwellers of the 1950s, "College" may have been a remote entity in comparison with the communities in which they lived. Co-residence, of course, was hardly a novelty as they had had it since 1967. Another aspect of the College's population was mentioned by Nancy Trenaman in 1981. Since its earliest beginnings, because it was a non-residential Society, the Home-Students had had a distinctively international intake, a characteristic happily still observable in today's residential College at both graduate and undergraduate level. The concern in 1981 was that a hike in overseas student fees had depressed international applications to Oxford including to St Anne's; Mrs Trenaman saw the "international dimension" as a proud tradition of St Anne's, and hoped that student bursary funds from the Centenary appeal could be used to encourage international applications.

In 1982 Violet and Ruth Butler, former Home-Students and early Home-Student Tutors whose connection with the Society and the College spanned the whole

of the twentieth century to this point, died in May and July, aged 98 and 100 respectively. In the same year Dorothy Bednarowska retired, another former Home-Student and a legendary English Fellow for 28 years, whose former students included three of the four English tutors at Girton in Cambridge. Change was in the air, and in 1983 Nancy Trenaman's retirement was announced and Dr Claire Palley was elected to replace her as Principal. Claire Palley is a distinguished academic lawyer and legal historian whose career began in her native South Africa and continued through Rhodesia and Northern Ireland to the University of Kent at Canterbury where she was Master of Darwin College. She had many ideas for change and sometimes found the processes of College governance frustrating, but she poured her energy and acumen into moving the College from a period of necessary stringency and caution to an atmosphere of expansion and confidence.

One of her early changes has had a lasting positive effect on College's relationship with its senior members, and showed a characteristic ability to see a radical and simple solution to a long-standing problem. With the era of professional "alumnae relations management" still some way off, at least in the UK, there was concern at low levels of recruitment to the Association of Senior Members. Claire Palley proposed that membership of the ASM, and receipt of *The Ship*, should be free and automatic to all graduates of St Anne's unless they chose to opt out. The ASM agreed to the change, the extra costs of which were borne by College, and its membership was hugely expanded beyond the minority who had previously chosen to pay the subscription. Penelope Lively's speech at the Gaudy of 1985, placed at the beginning of that year's *Ship*, speaks of the large numbers of St Anne's graduates in the arts and journalism, testament to the College's historic tendency to choose "eccentric, provocative, unpredictable" students; but she also seems to have picked up a new cheerfulness and optimism in the College's atmosphere, contrasting its "architectural panache" and ability to embrace "graceful and appropriate change" with the "glum thirties obstinacy" of the College site in the 1950s.



Claire Palley, Principal 1983–1991

Building was again something that could be contemplated. The College Library, once the only shared possession of the Home-Students and still the College's greatest treasure, was spreading into more and more parts of Hartland House and was in need of re-design as well as additional space. In 1959 the Library had acquired 10,000 books on a wide range of subjects from the surprise benefaction of the bibliophile Canon Claude Jenkins of Christ Church, and in the early 1960s its stack in the North Room had been adapted and it had swallowed up three large teaching rooms on the first floor. Since 1979, with Librarians Katherine Swift and, from 1987, David Smith, the collection grew at great speed particularly in those subjects where College was growing, in the sciences and social sciences.

Under an ingenious and somewhat controversial scheme devised initially by Gwynneth Matthews and energetically promoted by Library Fellow Vincent Gillespie, the Library took space on the ground floor previously occupied by a long corridor, two lecture rooms, and an area for pigeon holes. The scheme, which was designed by local architect Susan Ganter of Ganter and Kershaw, was carried out in 1988 and switched the access to Hartland House through 90 degrees to the North and South doors, establishing the Library under the control of one entrance and exit under the eye of a staff desk. Long opening hours continued, but with a staff presence at all times; worrying levels of book losses discovered in 1983 had caused a major convulsion in College and un-supervised 24-hour access was stopped, to be resumed only in 2009. The 1988 Library project was part-funded by a grant from E.P. Abraham's Cephalosporin Fund, and a grant from the Rhodes Trust made possible the conversion of the ground floor of 48 Woodstock Road into a suite of seminar rooms which offered both new teaching rooms and improved conference facilities.

Claire Palley later said that she had "Lady Ogilvie constantly in my mind as the model of a great building Principal", and her aspirations did not stop at internal conversions. The building which fittingly yokes their two names, the Claire Palley Building and Mary Ogilvie Lecture Theatre, was started just as she was leaving in 1991, and finished in 1992. Its architects, Alec French Partnership, supported by Building Fellow Alan Allport, were successful in persuading College and the City Council that a building in the centre of the site, between Rayne and the Dining Hall, would work better than one on the Southern perimeter as had been envisaged at first.



The building provides 45 student rooms, the first in St Anne's to have en suite facilities so that they are fully suitable for conference use outside term, and a lecture theatre with capacity for 148 which, thanks to the persistence of Music Fellow Harry Johnstone on the Building Committee, provides a good venue for chamber music as well as for the spoken word. Ruth Deech commented in *The Ship* in 1988 that St Anne's had a history of building "often at times when only a mad optimist would contemplate it", and this project was certainly a "leap of faith" with (despite strenuous efforts in various directions by the Principal) no major donor behind it, but made possible by generous donations from many College members.

Claire Palley had no expectation that government funding for universities would improve, so new sources of income had to be found to support her expansive philosophy for St Anne's, with the Treasurer Robert Saunders simultaneously working hard to pull the College out of deficit. Associated students from a number of North American programmes were given access to the Library and other College facilities though their teaching was independently managed. These groups, along with the Summer school groups from Virginia and Wheaton whose relationship with St Anne's went back to the 1960s and to connections made by Marjorie Reeves, were a feature of College life for nearly twenty years before associated students (but not Summer schools) were replaced in the late 2000s by enhanced numbers of Visiting Students who are members of the University and are taught by College

Tutors. Governing Body agreed to allow undergraduate numbers to rise to the maximum permitted, with the worthy aim of making more Oxford places available to applicants alongside the pragmatic aim of maximising fee income. From 407 in 1988–9, undergraduate numbers rose to a peak of 456 in 1990–91, making St Anne's the biggest Oxford college for undergraduates. Graduate numbers also rose significantly, from 74 in 1988–9 to 118 in 1991–2. Some of the growth in graduate (and to a lesser extent undergraduate) recruitment was brought by an initiative which came with a degree of controversy and even, briefly, notoriety. Oxford sport at its highest level was increasingly practised by near-professional athletes typically, but not always, from overseas, often taking Masters courses which were believed, not always justly, not to be at the top of the sportspeople's personal priorities. For a period of three or four years, muscular figures from Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and elsewhere strode around St Anne's in large numbers, and in the 1989 Varsity rugby union match, not un-noticed by the press, nine members of St Anne's took the field for Oxford.



Top row from left to right J.R. Elliot (St Anne's), A.M. Jones (St Anne's), R.J. Horrocks-Taylor (St Peter's), J.C. Fewtrell (St Anne's), W.M. van der Merwe (St Anne's), K.A. Bray (Mansfield), S.C. Taylor (University), D.M. Curtis (St Anne's); Bottom row from left to right G.M. Hein (St Anne's), E.R. Norwitz (University), D.J. Cook (Christ Church), B.A. Smith (St Anne's), T. Coker (Lady Margaret Hall), M.S. Egan (St Anne's), D.W. James (St Anne's)/ Courtesy OURFC

The respondents to John Adebisi's 1996 survey of the matriculation year 1986 present a "cosmopolitan, understated, unpretentious and down-to-earth" College which they remember with enthusiasm. Principals and Tutors have come to regard "down-to-earth", an epithet often used of St Anne's by its students, as a mixed blessing: it implies a welcome accessibility and lack of rarefied pretension, but can also suggest a lack of intellectual ambition and curiosity. The 1986 year on the basis of this survey do seem to have appreciated success on the river and the rugby field, and conviviality in the College bar (now in the basement of 39/41 Banbury Road thanks to some imaginative re-shuffling suggested by the Domestic Bursar

Jacquie Wiltshear), but the observation that it was “somewhat uncool to be seen to be trying too hard” at academic work is balanced by the admission that most students were probably working harder than they were willing to let on. In fact, this year performed quite well in Finals in both 1989 and 1990. The equal gender ratio among students is believed to have had a good effect in quickly banishing male notions of superiority, but again there is the suspicion that St Anne’s students, with so much to enjoy in College, had become a little insular. Careers for this sample are typically in law, industry, finance, advertising, and accountancy, though we do also have Alix Hartley with an artistic agency in Beverly Hills, and Denise Mahoney presenting on television’s *Watchdog*.

The first mention in *The Ship* of the dreaded Norrington Table was by Claire Palley in 1986, not surprisingly in the context of St Anne’s having improved its position from the previous year. In the same breath she stresses what an imperfect measure the table is. Its imperfections and invidious effects were felt so widely that the University tried to abolish it in the early 1990s, only to find that newspapers sent scouts to read the class lists and published their own inaccurate tables. In brief, St Anne’s did not score very gloriously in the 1980s or 1990s, though it did score better than most of the other former and continuing women’s colleges. It is perhaps interesting to observe that the worst “patch”, where the normal position around 18th to 22nd gave way to a plunge to 27th, 27th, and 28th, was in 1991, 1992, and 1994, years which fit roughly with the sharp increase in undergraduate intake in the late 1980s. Claire Palley spoke warmly of St Anne’s students and of the College’s atmosphere which she described as “humane, warm, natural, comfortable, concerned, civilised”. She welcomed the equal gender ratio among students and the proportion coming from state schools, better than the University’s average. An admirable initiative of St Anne’s undergraduates, again believed to be the first of its kind in Oxford, was the battels equalisation scheme developed in 1990 whereby students with rooms in College paid into a fund to subsidise the more expensive accommodation required by those living out. The scheme is still in existence in 2012 although very few undergraduates now live out.

From 1979 to 1991 the Fellowship grew from 27 to 36 and there was much turnover. New Tutorial Fellows were elected in Geology, Psychology, Materials (twice), Engineering (three times), English (twice), Music, Politics (twice), Economics (twice), History, German, Biochemistry, Physics (twice), Chinese, and Medicine, and Professorial Fellows in Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer Science. All

but one (Ann Pasternak Slater) of these new Fellows were male, and Ruth Deech observed that by 1989 women were in the minority on Governing Body, an “endangered species... threatened with gradual extinction by each retirement”.

## 1991–2004: The Oxford college of the future

Representative of an endangered species or not, when Claire Palley retired Ruth Deech was elected Principal without the post being advertised; she is the only Principal of St Anne's to have been elected from among the Fellowship. Mrs Deech (subsequently Dame Ruth Deech, and then Baroness Deech of Cumnor) studied Law at St Anne's from 1962 to 1965, and always remembered her gratitude to St Anne's for taking her as a student when other Cambridge and Oxford colleges had turned her down. If she was one of Lady Ogilvie's “funnies” then she was a typically successful one, taking a first and going on to graduate work in the USA and Canada before being called to the English Bar in 1967. She returned to St Anne's in 1970 as Fellow and Tutor in Law, and built up undergraduate numbers in Law, also serving as Senior Proctor and on Hebdomadal Council, and as Vice-Principal to Claire Palley. Her publications are mainly in family law and property law.

While Principal she was Chair of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority from 1994 to 2002, and after retiring she became the first ever Independent Adjudicator for UK higher education. She began as Principal with the

Ruth Deech, Principal 1991–2004

declared aims of building up the intellectual life of the College and raising academic standards, of developing the College site, and of stabilising College finances.

Fund-raising had always been recognised as essential for the survival of St Anne's, and of the Home-Students, but the early 1990s saw the beginnings of “development” as a discipline and a department of the College. The first Development Officer of St Anne's, Mrs Sheridan Gould, started in 1992 part-time while still working for the University's Campaign for Oxford; she was succeeded in 1996 by a full-time Development Director, Nick Fragel, with an assistant. In 2012, the St Anne's Development



Office has five full-time officers and a half-time assistant, and it is by no means the largest among Oxford colleges. Alongside this professional effort in its early days was a new burst of enthusiasm from a group of committed senior members, which in many ways set a newly ambitious pattern for St Anne's "events" and for College fund-raising in general. The spark was Kirstie Morrison's ninetieth birthday party at the Gaudy in July 1993, at which a fund was launched to support English teaching at St Anne's and to endow a Fellowship. Signatories to the original idea were Peggy Ayles, Margaret Davies, Joan Partridge, and Maureen Hadfield, and as momentum gathered others joined in including Gillian Reynolds, President of the ASM from 1994 to 1997. Key to the success of this campaign was the discovery described by Peggy Ayles that fund-raising, which she had previously thought a "pretty grim occupation", could actually be "fun". The group used its powerful connections, and glamorous events were held not just in College but in the House of Commons, the House of Lords, and Middle Temple. The series of Words and Music events in College featured an array of literary celebrities: Julian Barnes, James Fenton, Salman Rushdie, Craig Raine, Iris Murdoch, Ursula Fanthorpe. Consciousness was raised and so were funds, and a major gift from American senior member Kate Durr Elmore made the Fellowship endowment a reality. Later, a major legacy from Hazel Eardley-Wilmot (with whom Claire Palley had built a strong relationship) enabled the endowment of another of the English Fellowships. The potential of drawing together senior members by subject was shown also in the History 1960-80 reunion of 1992, organised by Gillian Lewis and her colleagues, an event so successful that the size of the gathering was almost too large.

During the English appeal Ruth Deech was able to announce that the publisher Lord Weidenfeld wished to establish an annual lecture series on comparative literature with eminent speakers, to be held at St Anne's. The first series was given by Professor George Steiner, and he has been followed by numerous literary eminences including Gabriel Josipovici, Umberto Eco, Bernhard Schlink, Mario Vargas Llosa, Martha Nussbaum, and (2012's lecturer) Ali Smith. The Principal's wish for a visible intellectual life in College which would draw both College members and others was promoted also by the gift from Mrs Jean Duffield to set up the Hoskins Lectures on local history in honour of the great landscape historian W.G. Hoskins. A third initiative, this time aimed specifically at members of St Anne's (initially only the Fellowship, but now all College members), was the termly Domus Seminar where Fellows of St Anne's, skilfully recruited for many years by

Politics Fellow Nigel Bowles, give a lecture about their research work designed for a non-expert audience of peers. Events of this kind within College, along with the frequent music recitals which have been organised by Harry Johnstone and his successors, only really became possible once the Mary Ogilvie Lecture Theatre had been built.

Shared intellectual life at St Anne's may have been flourishing, but the working lives of professional academics at Oxford were at this time (and are to this day) increasingly under a damaging set of contrary pressures. Both Ruth Deech and Nigel Bowles in the pages of *The Ship* through the 1990s referred to the tension, ratcheted up by successive waves of government policy and inspection regimes, between research productivity (the only route to promotion within the profession) and the time-intensive undergraduate teaching for which Oxford is world-famous. Ruth Deech also spoke of how difficult it was to establish College academic policy (three "size and shape" discussions in fifteen years had been undercut by external factors over which College had no control) under financial imperatives and at the mercy of increasingly invasive government policy initiatives. The worst fears about outcomes from the Dearing Report (1997) on higher education and its likely assault on the "Oxbridge premium", otherwise known as the "college fee", were not exactly realised in that the withdrawal of the premium was phased, but the downward slide of public funding for Oxford and all British universities has been and continues to be inexorable. Another change with which Oxford tutors were grappling at this time was the virtual disappearance of the Oxford entrance examination from 1997. Oxford's continuing attempts to broaden its accessibility to all sectors of society were likely to be supported by Fellows of St Anne's, but the new pattern of admissions presented new challenges in the way of selecting undergraduates who were best equipped to benefit from an Oxford education.



Frequent music recitals only really became possible once the Mary Ogilvie Lecture Theatre had been built.

In true Home-Student fashion, faced with all these pressures and difficulties St Anne's moved forward vigorously. The belt-tightening "consolidation" which had seemed the only option in the 1970s was no longer a serious option at all, because nearly all colleges were building or buying property in an attempt to improve the quality of their student facilities and to provide accommodation which was becoming increasingly unaffordable on the open market. In the case of St Anne's, the financial model under which the College remained solvent had for many years depended on a large income stream from conferences; conference guests too required improved facilities and accommodation, and there was competition for their business. Under the skilful management of the Treasurer Robert Saunders and Domestic Bursar Eric Bennett, two more new buildings were erected in quick succession. The Business Expansion Scheme, a fast-closing fiscal loophole which provided funds for much university building in the mid 1990s, more or less paid for the building that became Trenaman House, in a gap at the Eastern end of Bevington Road and cleverly designed by the architects Gray Baynes and Shew as a pastiche Victorian dwelling. Nick Caldwell of Oxford Architects designed the larger residence in Summertown, named Robert Saunders House in recognition of the Treasurer's efforts to see the project through (a rare example of a building being named after a current Fellow), which was constructed relatively cheaply (with a loan) through a "design and build" process. Trenaman House provides 26 en suite rooms, a student IT room, a College laundry, and various meeting rooms. Robert Saunders House provides 82 rooms in clusters with shared kitchens. Ruth Deech spoke frequently of the need to provide facilities for graduate students, and Trenaman House included an attractive new Middle Common Room. Robert Saunders House, after some student indecision and changes of direction during the planning process, in the end became College's graduate residence as it still is, the lease on Talbot Lodge having come to an end in 2005.

A frustrating sequence of events ensued to do with the "front of College problem". Both Fellows and students were strongly if not quite unanimously of the view that the Gatehouse, a clever idea in 1966 and a highly economical way of providing 21 student rooms and a porters' lodge, was no longer attractive either to look at or to live in. The kitchen on Woodstock Road was in need of expensive remedial work, and by 2000 was no longer big enough (ditto the porters' lodge) for the College as it had become, with its necessary conference trade.

These two buildings, with between them a somewhat marooned and much altered Victorian cottage, gave the College an unappealing entrance and outward face which did not do justice to the qualities which were usually warmly appreciated by those who made it inside. After much consultation, Governing Body in 2000 commissioned a very distinguished architect to design a new unified façade which would both give space for new facilities and transform the appearance of the Woodstock Road frontage. Despite strenuous efforts on both sides, the design never won the hearts of Governing Body, and it was in any case flatly rejected by the City Council as intruding too far towards the public pavement. The whole process was delayed by a campaign by pressure groups to make the Gatehouse a listed building which could not be demolished. After a long pause the government department in charge of these matters found the Gatehouse not worthy of listing, but by that time the scheme was dead. The Kitchen was pretty well dead also, and a temporary structure had to be built inside the College. Meanwhile the leases on some off-site houses, including Talbot Lodge, were about to fall in and unlikely to be renewed on affordable terms. The Bursar Eric Bennett left St Anne's for his native Scotland in 2001 and was succeeded by Martin Jackson, formerly Bursar of St Catherine's College, and with very recent building experience. Martin Jackson saw a new and radically different approach to the immediate problem of providing adequate accommodation for our students and sustaining our conference business, by then one of the biggest of any Oxford college; but I will come to that story in a while.

The Kitchen was pretty well dead also, and a temporary structure had to be built inside the College in 2001.



Undergraduate numbers, having peaked at 456 in 1990–91, then steadied for the rest of this period, partly because Governing Body felt the peak was too high and partly because a government directive in 1994 had required a slight reduction in intake at British universities. In 2003–4 the number was 433, with 124 graduate students (up from 87 in 1990–91). The Fellowship grew during this period from 34 to 46, happily with new female appointments in Psychology, Management, Modern Languages, Law, and Medicine. The growth was partly in Professorial Fellowships, with new appointments in Materials (twice), Mathematics, International Relations, English, Bibliography and Textual Criticism, and Medicine. Student welfare was a national concern, and St Anne's sought in various ways to build on the qualities it had developed as a women's college. A part-time College Counsellor was employed, this time paid for by the College; the "College parent" scheme for new undergraduates was strengthened; at the request of the JCR Committee Freshers' Week was extended to give new students a more gradual introduction to Oxford (with Governing Body doing what it could to try and prevent the week from becoming a procession of alcohol-fuelled events); and on the initiative of local branches of the ASM, social gatherings for new students before the start of their first term were arranged by geographical area.

The quality of College food at all levels improved, and loyal Chefs Raymond Killick and Andrew Castle (still with us in 2012) and their team were saluted in *The Ship* of 1998–99. Finals results, after a "steady" period in the later 1990s, took a gratifying upward turn towards the end of Ruth Deech's time as Principal, with a dramatic surge up the Norrington Table from 24th in 2000 to 16th in 2001 and 6th and 8th in 2002 and 2003. It is hard to give specific reasons for that improvement, but perhaps the College was now establishing itself as a modern mixed college with a clear identity, good facilities, and strong undergraduate teaching and academic infrastructure (Library, IT), rather than a college that had just changed from being something else. Certainly successive JCR Presidents in the later part of this era, alongside their concerns about the coming of tuition fees, increasingly expressed satisfaction and pride in the College. Jo Osborne (female JCR Presidents were still rare but fortunately not extinct) spoke in 2000 of the "diversity of background and culture" which she thought the "best feature" of St Anne's. Joel Walmsley, the President of 1998–99, echoed Development Director Nick Fragel in the bold claim that "St Anne's really is a blueprint for the Oxford college of the future". The Treasurer Robert Saunders wrote in 1997 an amusing

account of his delight when St Anne's ceased to be in the group of "poor colleges" that benefited from the College Contributions Scheme, delight that was tempered when he realised this meant we would cease to receive Contributions. When he retired in 2000, Ruth Deech reported that College's endowment had doubled in value since his arrival in 1980. When Ruth Deech herself retired as Principal in 2004, she was able to point to progress on all three parts of her aspiration for St Anne's, though she was still concerned about the "unfocused and untidy appearance" of the Woodstock Road frontage.

## 2004–12: Intellectual assets

Tim Gardam, the first male Principal of St Anne's, was elected from a distinguished short list and took office in Michaelmas term 2004. His career, as a former Editor of the BBC's *Panorama* and *Newsnight* and Head of BBC Television and Radio Current Affairs, led to executive positions at Channel 5 and Channel 4, where he was Director of Programmes and Director of Television. He has been a member of the Board of national communications regulator Ofcom since 2008, and since

Tim Gardam, the first male Principal of St Anne's.



2011 Chair of Oxford University's Conference of Colleges and a member of the University's Council. He has also been Chair of Oxford's Admissions Executive, as was Ruth Deech. He was attracted to St Anne's by its historical commitment to intellectual emancipation and by its modernity and connectedness to the outside world. He inherited the biggest building project the College had ever undertaken, but was clear that attention should now be turned to "intellectual assets", to endowing fellowships and funding scholarships, and in general to exploring the distinctive contributions that a college can make to the life of the University and its members. He has actively promoted a wide variety of College events, for current and senior members and both, which bring together speakers from all parts of the College community, in particular the "subject family" events which take place each term where graduate students (and occasionally undergraduates), research fellows, lecturers, and fellows, give short talks about their research work and invite discussion. The inter-disciplinary potential of the college system is developed wherever possible, and dialogue is also encouraged across the stages of academic life and with senior members in many different walks of life.

Tim Gardam has a strong interest in the early phase of academic careers, and with Senior Tutor Anne Mullen and Treasurer Christopher Wigg has worked on channelling funds available to support graduate work into graduate development scholarships where the teaching potential of doctoral researchers is explored, on shaping research fellowships so that groups of connected disciplines can work together, and on encouraging college connections (usually in the form of non-stipendiary post-doctoral research fellowships) for researchers employed by the University. He is keen that College initiatives should show awareness of developments in the University, and especially that "clusters" of academic expertise within St Anne's should connect helpfully with movements in the University's Divisions of Humanities, Social Sciences, Mathematical Physical and Life Sciences, and Medical Sciences.

Two changes in College governance which had been considered under previous Principals have been carried out in Tim Gardam's time. Both relate to the concerns expressed during the 1990s about increasing pressures on professional academics. Three major College offices held by Fellows – Senior Tutor, Tutor for Admissions, and Tutor for Graduates – were becoming so demanding under external regulatory regimes that St Anne's in 2005 followed a few other colleges (now a larger number), in appointing a professional Senior Tutor, Dr Anne Mullen, who holds all

three positions and is a senior executive officer of the College. The amount of time spent by college fellows in nine Governing Body meetings per year which all were contractually required to attend, plus the difficulty of having meaningful discussions in a body which, if everyone did attend, would by the 2000s be more than fifty people strong, led to the creation in 2007 of a smaller College Council, with a balanced representation of subject groups plus administrative officers and student representatives, which took some of Governing Body's executive powers, and to a reduction of Governing Body meetings to four per year. Interestingly, Jenifer Hart in *Ask me no more* speaks of a similar reform that she proposed without success in the 1970s; and there was more than one subsequent attempt. Tim Gardam was also keen to harness the skills of senior members of St Anne's as advisors, and from 2008 we had both a Development Board (chaired by Maria Willetts) and an Advisory Board (chaired by Philippa Drew and then Rosemary Radcliffe), where senior members with a wide range of skills and experience have shown an impressive commitment to College's present-day concerns.

The "front of College problem" remained un-solved, but Martin Jackson had spotted, in 2002, an opportunity to place a large residential building between Hartland House and the Bevington Road houses to the North, in a part of College already designated by the City Council for student accommodation. The scheme, which was to be financed partly by the sale of off-site properties and partly by fund-raising and borrowing (the borrowing cost in turn to be offset by enhanced conference revenue to be generated by the building), was ambitious and caused much heart-searching in Ruth Deech's final year as Principal. An architectural competition was won by Kohn Pedersen Fox, who designed an ingenious modernist building with a Lodge, 113 student rooms above ground level, and a lecture theatre, seminar rooms, and "break-out space" at the level of the Bevington Road gardens. A large donation was received from Chancellor Tsuzuki (after whom the new lecture theatre was named) of the Daiichi group of universities in Japan, with whom Eric Bennett had established a relationship that was enthusiastically continued by Martin Jackson, one of whose benefits is a scheme whereby each year a number of new graduates of St Anne's spend a year in Japan. Many other contributions to the project were received, but one anticipated large gift did not materialise.

The building (named in honour of Ruth Deech) works well and has indeed enabled College's conference revenue to be doubled (helped by the skilful and sustained efforts of Conference and Events Manager Lisa Simmons with the support of the



whole Bursary team), but the extra borrowing put College finances under severe strain particularly in the first two years from the building's opening in 2005. Tim Gardam and Christopher Wigg saw the potential severity of the situation early and have addressed it through a series of measures to increase income (particularly the energetic recruitment by Anne Mullen of North American Visiting Students to a maximum of 30 per year) and to restrain costs. Fund-raising has also been put on a more systematic footing by Development Directors Stephen Tall and Gina Beloff and has been highly productive,

especially the annual telephone fund-raising exercises with current student callers, initially entered into with great trepidation but each year more successful in generating regular giving. In 2012 confidence has re-grown to the point where the new Kitchen is under construction and the ten-year-old temporary kitchen about to vanish, and planning permission has been received (despite a second attempt to get the Gatehouse listed) for a new front of College scheme whereby (if the plan becomes financially viable) Gatehouse and the cottage will be demolished, the handsome Western façade of Hartland House will be revealed to Woodstock Road, and to one side will be built a new Library building to extend the overcrowded Library in Hartland House and to provide other facilities for the College and its guests.

The most dramatic change in the composition of St Anne's in recent years has been the increase in numbers of graduate students. St Anne's has followed the University's declared policy of keeping undergraduate numbers steady but actively increasing graduate recruitment, to the point where in 2011–12 the College's fee-paying graduates number 281, as compared with 124 in 2001–2. Graduate freshers in 2011 actually outnumbered undergraduate freshers, something that would have been unimaginable at any other point in the College's history, and Tim Gardam wrote with justice in 2011 that "we have become as much a graduate as

an undergraduate community". Graduate recruitment is a complex and laborious business for a college that is not well known in the wider world, and long-serving College Secretary and Registrar Christine Foard has put huge efforts into achieving these numbers and increasing the proportion of doctoral to Masters students. It is something of a Home-Student and St Anne's tradition to "maken vertu of necessitee", and while all are aware that there are strong financial incentives, for the College as for the University, to encourage increasing graduate numbers, the result in St Anne's (with no offence meant to earlier generations of graduates) has been a newly vibrant and enthusiastic college graduate community with strong links to the rest of College, its own set of inter-disciplinary discussion groups which have attracted highly distinguished guest speakers, and its own online Academic Review journal. With the Ruth Deech Building providing many additional undergraduate rooms, it has been possible to convert 35 Banbury Road into a graduate centre on the College site, named Eleanor Plumer House, with a common room, IT-equipped work room, and thirteen graduate bedrooms. Providing an acceptable proportion of College accommodation to graduates is, however, problematical with the current very high number, and like the 456 undergraduates of 1990–91, the 281 graduates of 2011–12 are likely to represent an exceptional peak rather than a new norm. The former Middle Common Room in Trenaman House has become STACS, an innovative coffee bar for all College members, staff, and guests, where one can find undergraduates, graduates, fellows, scouts, and administrative staff sharing a common place to relax or to work in groups.

Sadly, but inevitably with the passage of time, nine of the founding Fellows of St Anne's died in the decade after 1996: Elaine Griffiths, Kirstie Morrison, Iris Murdoch, Annie Barnes, Marjorie Reeves, Peter Ady, Dorothy Bednarowska, Margery Booth, Jenifer Hart. Perhaps none of these would have been surprised or shocked at how utterly different in some ways the College of 2012 is from that which was born on 19th May 1952; as Kirstie Morrison wrote in 1930, "the Society is peculiarly a body which is constantly and consciously changing and moving onward". The nine Fellows of 1952 are now 55, with another welcome influx of new Professorial Fellows (of which St Anne's now has ten) in the last decade. The first male Tutorial Fellow, Dr Martin Speight, is now the Senior Fellow. At undergraduate level, despite a succession of "size and shape" exercises each of which has wondered if College would benefit from concentration on a smaller number of honour schools, any subject can be studied which the University

teaches, except for Archaeology, Theology, and Human Sciences. Graduate students at St Anne's are studying subjects several of which had not been heard of, at least at Oxford, even ten years ago. Even with the Society's long history of taking international students, the College, like British society at large, is now noticeably more international and multi-cultural than it was, and proud of it; Tim Gardam wrote in 2010 of the view from High Table as "an optimistic blueprint for an enlightened, racially and culturally diverse modern society". Students from disadvantaged backgrounds (a concern sharpened by the coming £9,000 per annum undergraduate fee) are supported by joint College/University Oxford Opportunity Bursaries for which more students at St Anne's qualify than at any other Oxford college. The Library is open 24 hours a day again, but its traditional services are surrounded by a shifting penumbra of information technologies expertly managed by Ian Burnell. College staff are cared for by a professional Human Resources Manager, Zoe Sparrowhawk. Even taking very considerable grade inflation into account, St Anne's undergraduates have performed well in Finals in the last decade; to revive the favoured yardstick of old, in 2011 94 per cent of St Anne's Finalists achieved a first or a 2:1 (clearly the "new second"). Vocabulary may have changed, but it is hard to imagine the first Fellows taking exception to the ringing statement by JCR President Miles Jackson in *The Ship* in 2005: "we are all committed to maintaining academic excellence and inclusiveness, achievement and tolerance".

Students at matriculation, October 2011.



“The Society is peculiarly a body which is constantly and consciously changing and moving onward”, wrote Kirstie Morrison in 1930. The Society became St Anne’s College on 19th May 1952. The story of the next 60 years continues the tradition of constant and conscious change. What remains unchanged is the commitment to academic excellence and the desire to make Oxford accessible to people and groups who might have thought it was not for them.

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## St Anne’s College

Woodstock Road, Oxford OX2 6HS

Tel: +44 (0)1865 274800

[www.st-annes.ox.ac.uk](http://www.st-annes.ox.ac.uk)