

St Catharine's College MCR Committee Meeting

Monday, August 13th 2007

Minutes

Present: Richard Jones (President), Rosie Fera (Welfare Officer), Dan Friess (Social Secretary), Martina Diep (External Officer), Cameron Rye (Green Officer), Mark Hopkin (Computer Officer), Dai Morgan (Sports and Societies Officer)

Apologies: Tiffany Bogich (Treasurer), Amy Digout (Secretary), John Keightley (Formal Hall Officer)

1. Previous Minutes

Aside from some corrections already made, there were no further changes proposed to the minutes of the previous meeting.

Many of the meeting's action points would be covered later in this meeting; however one to cover here would be to give an update on the dates for fellows'-graduates' (F-G) events and MCR event formals.

In the case of the former, the dates are now known to be:

F-G Dinners: Friday 16th November; Monday 17th March

Supervisors' Dinner: Monday 19th May

F-G Garden Party: Friday 20th June

Also the May Ball is timetabled for Wednesday 18th June

With this in mind, the Hallowe'en formal is expected to be on Thursday 1st November, the Christmas formal on Thursday 6th December, and the Burns' Night formal on Thursday 24th January. Easter formal might have been expected to be around Saturday 15th March, however this is felt by everyone including the graduate tutors to be too close to the F-G dinner on 17th March. Moving the F-G dinner isn't an option, not least because it has been arranged to coincide with the end of the art competition and the Master has agreed to present the prizes at the dinner. Moving the Easter dinner later isn't an option either, because Friday March 21st is Good Friday, so there isn't any space after the end of term but before Easter. The graduate tutors have suggested we move our Easter Dinner back to around March 8th and have offered to support this proposal in the event that there might be any objection from elsewhere in College (e.g. the Dean, as we are moving the dinner into term time). Because we are moving the Burns' Night and Easter formals closer together, it is now less likely that we will aim to have a third bop in the Lent Term. All these dates are still subject to permissions for room bookings, bar use etc.

Richard has been told that the preferred date of Saturday 28th June cannot be done by catering for the Midsummer Dinner. Catering suggested 21st June as an alternative. This would mean the May Ball (18th-19th), F-G Garden Party (20th) and

Midsummer dinner (21st) would run almost consecutively. (with the Grads' Graduation Dinner being on the 24th)

Although this may prove to be quite intense, it is good to get the dinner in before MPhil students start to depart and in the available timeframe it is hard to spot better days, since there will be other things going on in the hall (such as undergrads' grad dinner) or elsewhere in Cambridge (like other colleges' May Balls) on most days.

Therefore the 21st is a serious possibility, although other days could be considered, **[Action: Richard to liaise further with catering on a date for the midsummer dinner, and with relevant authorities over various permissions for all dates.]**

2. Sports and Societies Officer: Welcome and Role Discussion

As it was his first meeting, Dai was formally welcomed by everyone, having been co-opted since the previous meeting.

Dai revealed that his motivation to take the role was the awesome college experience he has enjoyed in his 6 years at Catz, in which college clubs and societies have played a large part. He wants to make sure other MCR members get the information they need to be able to take advantage of college sports clubs and societies too. He also wants people to know how it is possible to found new societies for things which aren't catered for (the yoga society is a recent example), as well as join University societies.

Update of the information on the MCR website was discussed. Information about the majority of clubs and societies is on the JCR website, so a link straight there would be an option. However this might make people feel they are joining things intended for undergrads, whereas these clubs are truly college things which are aimed at all. Having an up-to-date page on the MCR website would provide the most personalised feel for graduates, but requires that two similar pages are maintained on the JCR and MCR websites, perhaps needlessly. Arguably, should there be a central page for sports clubs and societies which is separate to both the JCR and MCR sites and linked from both, to reflect that these are not intended for one or the other? This would require a larger shift from the present *status quo*, and in the meantime updating the MCR site seems to be more straightforward. **[Action: Dai to work on the information side of these issues, and Mark the technical side]**

Dan asked if liaising with the May Ball Committee and making sure the MCR were given all the information on the May Ball would also be part of the role. Dai agreed he could do this if people wanted him to. Hopefully with some grads on the current May Ball Committee this should work out anyway. **[Action: Dai if need be]**

Mark asked if there would be plans to reintroduce squash and badminton ladders among the MCR. Dai suggested he could judge interest and help get these running (e.g. by circulating a sign-up sheet or email during Freshers' Week), but someone in each ladder might then be better placed to do the ongoing management. **[Action: Dai]**

3. Leaving present for Dr Marina Frasca-Spada

At the last meeting a budget of up to ~£100 was discussed (based on what the last-but-one Committee spent on the Master's leaving present). There were no new ideas to add to the earlier idea suggested by Patrick, which Rosie had requested to take charge of investigating. So far, Rosie has visited one bookstore, where she saw a variety of first and early additions both in the field of HPS and more quirky titles such as Alice in Wonderland. A second bookstore in Cambridge may be more promising but Rosie hasn't been able to get there yet. It's important we choose a book Marina will like. Rosie has some ideas of people to speak to, in order to identify the right book. It was suggested that rather than pay a calligrapher to write in the book we might print something to put in the cover, to leave more money for the book itself. We might also get a card, and possibly some flowers. These extras would hopefully also come within the total £100 limit. All gifts should be ready to give to Marina at the MCR dinner in the SCR on Sept 6th, which Marina has now been invited to and agreed to attend. Rosie will resume her booksearch when she is next back in Cambridge on August 25th. **[Action: Rosie]**

4. MCR Redecoration

The major parts of the MCR redecoration are complete, with mostly aesthetic work remaining, and the rooms are usable again. Everyone got out of their chairs and wandered around the MCR looking at what had been done. It was noted that we were expecting a dark carpet in the lower MCR, but have a light one. This is likely to get spoiled much more quickly than a dark one would have been. The downstairs looks nice now though and interestingly people seem to have adopted it as the main sitting room, instead of using the upper MCR as before. The white lighting, bare floor and walls make the upper MCR feel cold and a bit like a national trust house. A rug will be purchased for upstairs, which will be paid for by the MCR. The rug can be rolled up and put to one side for events.

Currently there are no noticeboards in the MCR. This looks neater but is less informative. It has been suggested to use a noticeboard in the corridor by the door. These boards are currently used rarely if at all. We will do this for now and see how it goes. It may still be necessary to have a noticeboard in the MCR somewhere.

The fish tank might move back upstairs, to add more features up there. We had discussed getting a new fish tank, and Cameron may have a spare one he can donate. We might also get some new plants. We need a new table for serving drinks, which should be at a better height than the previous table we had for this purpose.

The TV table is being used as a coffee table. This looks nice but the TV is now a bit low for people at the back of the room to see. We could put the table back and get a new coffee table, or get a new TV table.

There is a lip on the stairs – is this a hazard?

Also aren't we meant to be getting blinds for the downstairs windows - when will they arrive?

We also need to look into possible new furnishings from the college's store. All this should be done with maintenance. **[Action: Richard to speak to Phil Dean]**

We need to set up the speakers and computers downstairs and check everything is working okay. **[Action: Mark for computers, Dai for speakers?]**

Manolo has asked for committee input on how to arrange photos, paintings, *etc* in the MCR. Manolo's idea seems to be to put most of the student photos downstairs and put some paintings upstairs. What are these paintings? Are they just the prints we had downstairs?

It was widely felt that the student photos look good upstairs, and give a good feel of history and community to the room. The walls downstairs are smaller and might be too busy with student pictures covering them. The conclusion was to present an opinion of the students to keep the upstairs room with student photos, unless Manolo can provide a very convincing vision on the contrary. **[Action: Richard to liaise with Manolo]**

There are some new pictures we haven't got yet and might want to obtain, including the photos from the last midsummer dinner and the 2006 May Ball.

We might get some window seat cushions for downstairs.

This is plenty to worry about for now, so any kitchen considerations can wait until more of these things are sorted in the main two rooms.

5. Russell Street Barbeque

This is scheduled for this Saturday, but the long range weather forecast hints at a chance of rain. In the event has to move inside it will be the worse for it and less people will come. Even if it is just cloudy that will be disappointing for some, as barbeques should be sunny occasions.

There were no better ideas, and we wanted to have a social this month so there would not be too big a gap between the last barbeque and the September dinner. It was decided to continue with the plan for now, but leave buying the food until the last minute in case the weather was definitely bad. In that case cancelling might be sensible.

A Hawaiian beach theme and 4pm start time were chosen.

[Action: Dan to continue publicising and organising the barbeque, and to decide nearer the day whether the weather permits it to take place]

6. Any Other Business (part one)

This item was brought forward on the agenda as Rosie was shortly to depart from the meeting.

6.1 Graduation ceremony arrangements in College

Rosie has liaised with the graduate tutors about the reception graduates receive after their graduation ceremony, who have in turn discussed the matter with the praelector. The current offering is a bit underwhelming. The problem seems to be that there are a large number of graduations days offered and small numbers graduating on each day. An idea has been agreed to have two ceremonies a year where an improved spread will be laid on for graduands (equivalent to what is given at the graduate research seminars), and encourage people to choose these dates to graduate if they can. People will still have the option of all the other days if they prefer, since college can't dictate when people graduate, but the catering on those days will remain as it is presently. The two days have not yet been chosen, and are likely to be those which are traditionally the most popular.

7. Freshers' Week

Rosie will not be in Cambridge for the first part of Freshers' Week, and won't be able to attend any events before the Parents' and Childrens' Formal.

At this point Rosie Fera (Welfare Officer) left the meeting.

At the last meeting we came up with:

Sat 29th	Informal Pub Trip
Sun 30th	Welcome Drinks
Mon 1st	TBC
Tue 2nd	Parents' and Children's Formal
Wed 3rd	TBC
Thu 4th	TBC
Fri 5th	TBC
Sat 6th	Whichcote BBQ
Sun 7th	Brunch and bus tour
Mon 8th	Matric ceremony, college tours, GU tour and talk, Uni Centre tour, pub, Matric Dinner

where options for TBC were:

- punting with a twist (possible twists: cheese and wine; ghost tour)
- bowling
- Russell Street Games Night
- pub crawl

Since then we have confirmed a GU tour and talk from the GU President for Monday 8th at 5pm. University Freshers' Fair at Kelsey Kerridge will take place in the

daytime on Tue 2nd (2pm-6:30pm) and Wed 3rd (10am-4pm) and we discussed having some group trips to these. There is early admittance on Tue (from 1pm) for students with disabilities and student parents. College sports squash is Wed 3rd at 7pm in the hall. The JCR Freshers' Reps have also confirmed they don't have an event in the bar on Tuesday evening (so we shouldn't have any problems going there after formal).

The aims of the present meeting were to allocate the TBC events to days, and allocate Committee members to be responsible for organising each event.

The trickiest day was seen to be Wednesday, as any event had to follow on from the Sports Squash in hall, which will probably end about 8pm. One idea would be to go bowling, since this is vaguely sporty. Cabs might be needed to get everyone down there from college. Since many would hopefully cycle, hopefully not too many cabs would be needed. It would be too late to go punting or have the RS games night so the pub crawl is the other real option. Having the pub crawl the day after the formal might not be ideal, and Thursday is a more traditional day for a pub crawl. Then again, that latter fact would make the pubs less crowded on Wednesday!

After further debate, the provisional programme became:

Sat 29th		(eve)	Informal Pub Trip
Sun 30th		(eve)	Welcome Drinks
Mon 1st		(eve)	Russell Street Games Night
Tue 2nd	(day)	Freshers' Fair	(eve) Parents' and Children's Formal
Wed 3rd	(day)	Freshers' Fair	(eve) 7pm Sports Squash; 8pm Pub Crawl
Thu 4th		(eve)	Bowling
Fri 5th		(eve)	Punting
Sat 6th	(day)	Whichcote BBQ	
Sun 7th	(day)	Brunch and bus tour	
Mon 8th		Matric ceremony, college tours, GU tour and talk, Uni Centre tour, pub, Matric Dinner	

Allocation of responsibility to organise events was as follows. Those not present are encouraged to request any changes if there are problems:

- Informal Pub Trip: **Dai** (SGL), **Mark** (Whichcote), **Dan** (Russell Street)
- Welcome Drinks: **Martina** and **Amy** (decorations), **Richard** (speeches), **Tiffany** (MCR Keys), **John** (glasses), **Dai** (supplies)
- RS Games Night: **Dan**, **Richard** and **Amy**
- Parents' and Children's Formal: **John** (bookings, sherry and port, glasses), **Amy** (seating plan)
- Freshers' Fair trips and College Sports Squash: **Dai**
- Pub crawl: **Mark** and **Dan**
- Bowling: **Tiffany** and **Cameron**
- Punting: **Martina** and **Rosie**
- Whichcote Barbeque: **Mark**, **Rosie**, **John** and **Cameron**
- Bus Tour: **Martina** and **Tiffany**
- Various tours on Matric day: **Richard**

[Action: Richard and Tiffany to look at the budget for week as a whole and for each event]

[Action: Everyone to organise their events as allocated above, with committee-wide liaison as required.]

[Action: Everyone to help out on other events too where required]

The Parenting scheme will need setting up in terms of finding parents and allocating children to parents, last year this process was completed by early September and this year's timescale will be similar. **[Action: Richard]**

8. Any Other Business (part two)

8.1 GU/Intercollegiate Social Event

A GU social event is being planned for Saturday October 13th. They are keen to get all colleges involved in organising and promoting the event, and are aiming for a large scale (about 500 attendees). The event is still in planning and a venue has not yet been chosen.

8.2 Rugby World Cup

The Rugby World Cup kicks off on September 7th, with the final on October 20th. We will probably do something in the MCR for the final and possible some of the earlier matches. **[Action: Dai to look into what is required]**

8.3 Intercollegiate pub crawl

Emmanuelle MCR are organising a pub crawl for August 23rd and are keen for other colleges to join them. Dan is keen to lead a Catz contingent there **[Action: Dan]**

9. Next Meeting

A start time of 7pm rather than 7.30pm was proposed. The next meeting will take place in the MCR, with the proposed date and time of

Tuesday 4th September, 7pm.

(The next-but-one meeting will be expected in mid-September)