

YEAR REP REPORT

By Drusilla Gabbott (*English, 1982*) Year Rep Co-ordinator

The Brasenose Year Rep scheme has a purely social objective, that is, to encourage year groups to stay in touch regularly. This can be by encouraging groups of friends to get together at events arranged by BNC such as Summer Parties, the annual dinner or London's monthly Red Lion pub drinks, or at informal ones they have arranged themselves. It is definitely a friend-raising not fundraising function!

BNC intend that every year has a rep. More recent years have two: one HCR and one JCR. There are a few gaps on the list below which we'd love to fill: please do step forward if you see an opportunity or feel your current rep might like help or relief.

We usually ask reps to consider serving for up to 7 years, then try to find a successor if they need to move on. Each rep gets a BNC email address link for their year. This makes emailing their group very easy. We ask reps to try to contact their year a minimum of annually to flag up opportunities to get together or pass on news. Some reps also set up social media groups. Year groups are generally pleased to hear from their rep.

This year we say a big thank you to the rep for 1962, Richard Woods, and welcome John Morris, who he kindly arranged as his replacement. Jenny Pagliuca has also joined as HCR rep for 2019.

Events

In 2022-23 it was great for year groups to get back to meeting in person.

Duncan Greenland and Donald Rushton (1966) resumed their long-standing December 'at homes'. These are a highlight of the year for those who attend, and hugely appreciated. George Fisher (1972) continued his thoughtful informal gatherings and John Morris got off to a flying start by starting to arrange a year group lunch at BNC for early '24.

Alexandra Marks invited years 1976-78 to a party in her London garden on July 17th, 2023. She received many enthusiastic thank you notes: "*there were many whom I had not seen for so long, but used to see a lot of, even after Oxford*", "*I missed my year's gaudy in March... so it was doubly nice to catch up with a few familiar faces,*" and "*a wonderful party.*" A generous alumnus donated wine for this gathering.

Alexandra and other reps report that some who don't otherwise attend BNC events come to these informal gatherings. BNC feel this indicates the true value of the rep scheme.

One welcome innovation this year was that the BNC Alumni Society, following an enquiry from the 2015 rep, decided to make very small 'starter' grants available specifically to the most recent year groups of graduates. The objective is to help those years start getting together. Obviously, many recent year groups had their Oxford career disrupted by the Pandemic. This either meant they missed time out of BNC itself or went down and didn't meet their friends for some time. In addition, the years after graduation can become a reunion 'gap' because a first Gaudy is not held till 7 years later.

Reps Miles Overton (2015) and Rosie Duthie (2016) held London events which are covered in the BNC Alumni Society report above. Rosie said: "*this was the first substantial get together of my year group, that is, one which was not just 4-5 people at a time. Post-university gatherings were affected by Covid, which stopped us forming a habit of getting together.*" At subsequent social gatherings after her party

such as birthdays, Rosie observed there were now more BNC people together. Miles Overton wrote of his picnic: *“it has been almost 5 years since graduation for those of us who did 3-year courses, so it felt like a perfect time to get together.”*

Reps David Clark, James Drace-Francis and Drusilla Gabbott arranged a walk from Putney to Barnes on 17th April 23, finishing at the Bulls Head Pub, alumni from several different years attended. Frances Stobbs (1976) also reports she arranged an Oxford walk taking in the White House pub which BNC owns in Abingdon Rd. The routes and walker notes for these have been sent to reps and the development office so please feel free to use them.

If walks are not ‘your thing’, then please suggest other activities to your Rep! We’ve produced a guide to running a get-together, including inexpensive venue suggestions. Contact drusillagabbott@gmail.com if you’d like a copy of this.

The annual Year Rep meeting at BNC on the day of the 2023 Society dinner, which many reps attended in person and four reps joined on Zoom, was, as usual, a great opportunity to put forward ideas, share experiences, and ask questions about the college calendar.

At the meeting, we discussed the upcoming 50th anniversary of Womens’ admission. The Rep group, as cohort representatives, potentially have a valuable consultative role: we mentioned we might be in touch with reps to discuss how that might be celebrated and supported. We also intend to circulate a joint DO/BNC Alumni Society questionnaire to scope the general activities their year group are interested in. We may request reps to encourage alumni to respond to this.

We are particularly keen in 2024 to continue to gather views from the HCR Reps on how their role might ideally function. We believe HCR alumni locations and profiles are typically different to those of the JCR, so socialising should fit with that.

Reps receive the following benefits:

- A free ticket to any BNC event whenever more than five attend from their year.
- Best available room when staying at BNC for an event.
- Free accommodation at their gaudy.
- Dining with a guest once a year at High Table (term time only and subject to availability via the DO).

To enquire about becoming a rep please contact the Development Office.