

# The OUSFG Newsletter

## Hilary Term 1996 (early)

### Free Gift!

Yes, to celebrate the last year of the Old World Order your newsletter comes with an entirely FREE bookmark! One of four extra-special bookmarks is yours to keep and cherish, for hours of amusement and use, at no cost to you or your society! All these gifts have been donated by NOW! as an expression of thanks for your group's sterling contribution to the community. May you have many happy hours of not losing your place!

### Your Committee

*Peter Sidwell*, still president and purveyor of drivel-ridden newsletters to you all. And at Queen's, to boot.

*Matt Hunt* in a very real sense the secretary, and in a yet more real sense at Magdalen.

*Sarah Blake*, the treasurer-type personage, at an alarmingly Wadham-like college.

The Five, of whom it is wiser not to speak. Fnord

### The OUSFG Banquet

Ah, the banquet! Yes, well, probably going to be Saturday of 7th Week, haven't a clue really. I am organising it, however, so I'll probably have things well in hand and smoothly running by the end of civilisation as you know it. Anyway, all the details will be given in full when the second instalment of this newsletter is distributed, roundabout 4th week. The banquet is a simple endeavour to eat so much you can't get drunk, and then drink so much that you do (in the words of the immortal Charsley). Come and join us. Share and Enjoy.

### Meetings, Library

The Encyclopaedia Galactica describes OUSFG Library meetings as "occasions when the society gather in the library, for purposes of borrowing and returning books." The Hitch-Hiker's Guide To The Galaxy, however, says this:

Library meetings attract two basic types of people: those who come solely to get books, and those who visit purely to say "let's go the pub" every ten minutes until obeyed. They occur wherever there is a large enough collection of boxes full of books, and run mainly on faith. One person will say, I would like a book by x, and if it is in the catalogue it is assumed to be in the library. This is, of course, highly improbable. There will then be an attempt to locate the box with that alphabetical section in it - which is an act of faith only surpassed by the Fraddled Gimpwicks of Usurius Minor, whose civilisation was devastated by a creature called the National Lottery. The Gimpwicks believed fervently that if they paid this creature enough, it would shower blessings upon them, but it merely absorbed their entire economy and was last seen in the western spiral arm of the galaxy looking for a new home. So great was the faith of the Gimpwicks, however, that to this day they still believe in the advent of a saviour, Jack Pott, who will restore to them eternal credit.

The updated version may include that minority who turn up purely to read through my comic collection, as well. The meetings happen in **QLQ 23** (iron gates just up Queen's Lane) and the door code is **24176**; turn up from **8:30ish** on **Sunday evenings**, and we'll head for the Turf at about half nine.

### Video Meetings

Come along on Wednesdays, 8 o'clock, Magdalen Lodge, and thence to the JCR, where we have the video meeting phenomenon. Unless you have any better ideas, we're going to try our level best to show these:

1st Week: **X-Files!** *Anasazi*, the story bridging from series 2 to 3, which features much excitement.

3rd Week: **Groundhog Day**, because it is, which is Bill Murray at his best and darn good fun on top!

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## Discussion Meetings

Yay! Turn up and argue viciously with our speaker; a chance to exercise your sarcasm, satire, bathos, litotes, meiosis, irony, and to hone your abusive skills. Also a forum for the reasonable and intellectual exchange of views on various aspects of sf and fantasy over a nice civilised cup of tea or coffee, often with a few biscuits, or the absorption of new and fascinating information about fields about which previously you'd been ill-informed. It all depends on the ebb and flow of the psychic tides, y'know. Oh, it does, yes indeedy.

So, whom do we have for your delight and delectation, I hear you cry pathetically. And that's a very good question too.

2nd Week: **What is Mary Gentle On? or, Hermeticism** by Mr Gideon Nisbet.

4th Week: **Warfare in SF**, by the first fresher to volunteer a talk, Mr Alex Campbell.

I think that's how it'll go, anyway, but whatever happens we'll end up drinking in the Turf, so it can't be a complete disaster. I'm sure something will go wrong, you see, but I can't be arsed to stop it so we'll just have to improvise. (Aren't you glad you got a president like me?)

## Later meetings this term

Yes, at long last we're going to achieve the OUSFG PUB CRAWL!. Currently planned for the Wednesday of 5th week, unless that's massively inconvenient for people - in which case, say so as soon as you can and we'll try to reschedule. The principle is very simple - drinking in pubs - and a route will be established as and when I get round to it. It'd be nice to have as many as possible there, because it's the ideal opportunity - and indeed, the final opportunity - to propose candidates and motions for our AGM.

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## The AGM

This is quite important, so pay attention. In order for the society to survive, it is ABSOLUTELY VITAL that there is a committee, and if it is going to actually flourish it needs one that will function as a committee. (Allegedly.)

The AGM will be on Wednesday of 7th week and generally takes the form of not having quite enough members present to be quorate, then not actually having contested elections (sometimes not even having much in the way of candidates), and finally saying, to hell with it, let's go to a pub and sort it out there. In many ways, then, it resembles most other meetings. The main difference is that this is your chance to

- i. Elect your Committee
- ii. Amend the Constitution.

## Elections

Technically there are five or six posts on the committee. Firstly there's **the President**, who always used to be elected from the old committee but that might be tricky this time; it is customary to tell prospective presidents that no, they don't have to do anything much, just sort of preside and delegate. Then there's **the Secretary**, who has the jobs of liaising with proctors, writing to prospective speakers, phoning Daily Information twice a term and organising the punt party in Trinity (it's easy really, you tell them, go for it). Let's not forget **the Treasurer**, who guards jealously the coffers of the group and stubbornly says, no, we can't afford it. This worthy must balance the books and take money off people, even those who can't afford it. Then there's **the Newsletter Editor**, one of the jobs which, in the absence of volunteers, is done by the President - and editor, by the way, is a euphemism for writer. **The Video rep** is responsible for getting a room and the videos to show in it, and organising the videos for the term. The first three posts (President, Secretary and Treasurer) *must all be undergraduate members of the university*.

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Also elected - slightly less vital to the day-to-day running of the society, but arguably pillars of the

community - are **the Beard of OUSFG**, whose task is grow the society a beard (there is some reason behind this one, but I've forgotten it), and of course **the Genital Piercing Officer**, whose job is to revive the conversation (should it flag) by beginning to speak on this unwholesome topic, thus panicking the society into intelligent intercourse. I think that's it, but if you can think of other posts entirely necessary to the well-being of a group like ours, why not propose a constitutional amendment to incorporate it? (*my god, can it be... a link?*)

## Amendments

Yes, the ancient game of Amendments is about to undergo its annual performance. The rules are simple: examine the constitution, a copy of which is of course on display in the library at all times. If you find something which seems outdated or unnecessary, or fail to find provision for some pressing and dangerous problem of modern life which the society should have an official line on, then propose an amendment to deal with it, which must then be seconded by someone else. If it's sufficiently absurd, the members at the AGM will probably vote it in to the constitution and you will be remembered forever as, for instance, "the pillock who put in the quantum membership clause". Can you ask for greater riches?\*

## The Catch

Because all proposals must be submitted a fortnight before the AGM, they must be given to a present committee member by the end of the pub crawl, if not earlier. Do it, dudes.

\*Yes, you can.

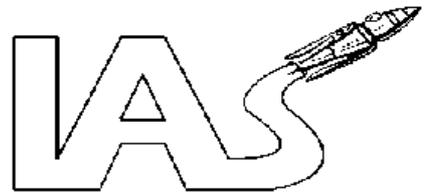
## The Fall Of The Empire

Most of you are well aware, of course, that the Empire never ended. It is, however, time to accept that the Empire isn't going to last much longer, and our contacts up in the Justified Ancients have been quite rightly, if a trifle heretically, predicting its fall, and perhaps more importantly the death of Little Mu. Putting this in print is of course inviting the attentions of all sorts of extremist underground groups, but if we don't act soon we will die with Mu and the Empire, and that doesn't have to happen. The Five suggest that if we can open sufficient third eyes, there is the chance of survival. But "There is no us, there is only I," - and perhaps we ought to start thinking of ourselves. Amongst others, the Christian factions will be working for the Eschaton this year, arguing that since the Christ was actually born round 4 BC this year is the real second millennium. The Five won't allow them to carry it, but it's going to be difficult for us all. It's only coincidence, but with them now backing the Project, we'll be fighting rearguard for a while. Remember - mind games are murder. They're well armed, and They will be well defended. We still have to hit them hard. We have to remain Invisible, friends, but let's make ourselves felt.

A Special one-liner, er space filler, er message to any kleptomaniacs out there... you can always take something for it.

## The IAS

Just to note the formation over Christmas of the Interplanetary Archaeology Society, as featured on one of our FREE! bookmarks. (Obviously, as yet it has relatively little to do, but it's an impressive piece of forethought.)



## Sod it, we'll have an editorial

Hello, and a happy new year to you all. After all, it may be your last. And what a year it's been so far. Yes, well, here we are, one page less than the eight I was sort of aiming for, and it's probably something to do with the size of the font I'm using (odd how newsletters written at the beginning of terms are packed with text and gibberings, in 9pt writing, but the mid-term stuff is always wide-spaced, large print stuff. Hmm.)

So what shall I do? Scour the pages of SFX for interesting information that you might say "oh" about?

No, not this time, I'll save it for the second episode. I'm just filling space, that's all. Is there anything I should explain? No, it's all pretty clear until the last page, and all I can say about that is the Five wanted it that way - who am I to argue? (little do they know).

Oh yes, saw our friends the K Foundation's new contract, and by god, Bill Drummond's handwriting is crap. Bright spark from back home got them to sign a fifty quid note, that'll be worth something in years to come. About fifty quid, I'd've thought.

The blurb on the back, by the way, is (and I'd like to make this categorically clear, in a non-Kantian sense) nothing to do with me. I was sent it by an anonymous something and asked to distribute it via the newsletter, so I have. This so-called Hell Society, however much it may interest odd members of OUSFG, is definitely not connected to it in any other way. Sound like a bunch of nutters to me, anyway. Oh yes, write and submit stuff for Sfinx, you bastards, ideally to Vicki Seaman at Magdalen, or bring it to a meeting. If we don't have a decent amount by the end of this term Vicki'll be coming round to kneecap you, except for those of you who'd enjoy it.

Ah well, nearing the end of the page, newsletter, and job of writing the bastard. Congratulations go out, by the way, to Alex Williams, one of our new members who was weird enough at the Christmas Party to upgrade to eternal membership of his own free will and accord.

Drug news. Go out and buy "*Mat's Prozac*", by Mice, especially if you liked All About Eve. If you didn't, get it anyway, it's quite different from their other stuff. If you've never heard any, try some and then decide. And listen to Bowie's latest, *Outside*, because I want opinions as to whether he was on anything, and if so, what. Looks like good stuff. Oh, and don't miss the excellent "*happy pills, real people*", out soon.

# HELLSOC

**The Hell Society is an anarcho-nihilistic rejection syndrome, a symptom of the current malfeasance in quotidian lifestyle, belief system soundness, and basic reality perception differentials in the modern mind. Its beliefs are anarchistic to the extent of being self-contradictory, and the highest accolade it can offer is eternal damnation.**

**We are reactionary, progressive, neophilic conservatives, who aim to direct the querent's perceptions and mental processes to the question of their own validity as texts, following aspects, taken as we please, of gnosticism, Zoroastrianism, Nietzsche, Platonism, the tradition of the Ancient Illuminated Seers of Bavaria, post-modernism and the modern novel, formal logic and symbolisation, Jungian psychoanalysis, the less obscene practises of the Fortean Assistants, and a dose of good old-fashioned non-fundamentalism. All extremists are tolerated by the organisation, though none are permitted to join, since enforcement of beliefs on others is the very negation of our or any forward-facing philosophy. The basic tenet may be best summed up by the maxim, "Do it to yourself before they do it you". Disinformation is available also from your Hellsoc rep.**



**HELLSOC IS A NON-PROPHET MAKING ORGANISATION**



<http://users.ox.ac.uk/~ousfg/misc/newsletter-96ht1.html> by

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