



What is First Class and why are we sending it to you?

Past student, alumnus, graduate, diplomate..... however you describe yourself, if you are a former student of Birmingham College of Food, Tourism & Creative Studies, then you are a member of the Alumni Society, and First Class is the Society's annual newsletter.

We have set up the Society because we want to keep in touch with you, and to help you to keep in touch with your friends from College days. We want to tell you about the opportunities for further training and development available at the College, and about the different services and offers that we shall be providing for alumni, such as professional events and social get-togethers in the UK and overseas.

If you have not visited the College recently, you would be amazed at the changes that have taken place since you were last here. First Class will keep you up to date with all the College news. Perhaps it will tempt you to come and see for yourself. We hope that you will enjoy it, and will help us to keep in touch with you by filling in and returning the enclosed response form to us (UK only; a separate form will be sent to alumni overseas soon).

Whatever you may be doing, wherever you may be, we wish you every success. Keep in touch!

Eddie McIntyre
Principal

Nigel Moss
Chairman of the Corporation

Thirty Years of Progress



The Principal, Eddie McIntyre collects the Queen's Anniversary Prize from HM The Queen

On 21 November 1967 the Birmingham Post newspaper carried a four-page 'Training in Catering' supplement commemorating the completion of the new £1.5 million premises for Birmingham's College of Food. The new building brought together under one roof, nine places of learning described by the city's Chief Educational Officer as "a number of limbs without a body".



The new College entrance

At that time the College was divided into five departments - hotel & catering, bakery, domestic arts, residential child care and nursery nursing - the subject areas which have remained the backbone of the College's provision up to the present day. The Hairdressing department opened in the 1970s, with Beauty being added in 1986, and the Hair and Beauty department now trains nearly 400 full-time and part-time students. More recently the College has added new subject areas to its repertoire, such as Tourism, Adventure Tourism and Leisure Management.

One of the most significant developments at the College in the

last decade has been the growth in the number of H.E. programmes offered at undergraduate and postgraduate level. You will find details of the different programmes elsewhere in this newsletter. In 1989 one of these programmes, the BSocSc (now BSc) Tourism Management, became the first programme to receive official accreditation from The University of Birmingham. In 1995 the University's accreditation was extended to cover all the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes at the College.

In 1967 the College's Principal of the day, Mr. R.W. Long, wrote: "Although the College can rightly claim to draw students from all over the British Isles and, indeed, from many foreign countries, in the main the students are from the Midlands area." Mr. Long's description of the composition of the student body remains accurate today. There are around 4,600 students enrolled on full-time courses and 3,000 on part-time courses at the College, of whom some 538 are from overseas, while the College's Alumni Society has approximately 11,800 members on its database. Of these, some 1,150 members live outside the UK, with the greatest number of alumni overseas being in the Republic of Ireland, where 500 alumni live. Next comes Hong Kong with 237 alumni, then a gap to Israel with 40.

As student numbers have risen, so the need for student accommodation has grown. In 1996 a new hall of residence, The Maltings, was opened on the former site of the Davenport Brewery, by the canal on Granville Street (off Broad Street). It now offers self-catering accommodation for nearly 500 students.

In 1998 the College purchased a building on Newhall Street previously occupied by the Bradford & Bingley Building Society for use as an international cuisine training restaurant. Inside the main building, meanwhile, a state-of-the-art bakery, patisserie and confectionery suite, installed at a cost of £450,000, was opened by the Rt. Hon. Margaret Beckett, MP in October 1998, and a new IT suite for use by child care students was opened in March 1999.





In January 1996, almost thirty years after the 'Training in Catering' supplement described some American visitors as saying that the College was the finest educational centre for the food industries they had seen anywhere in the world, the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) in its Inspection Report gave the College the highest set of grades ever awarded to a college, before or since. In 1998 royal recognition followed, with the award to the College of the prestigious Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education 1998. The citation for the award, which was given for 'education and training for the hospitality and tourism industries', ran: "The College is a centre of excellence and its advice and assistance is widely sought by educational institutions and industry in this country and overseas. It is an exemplar of what can be achieved through close working between industry and education to maintain the highest standards in a key international industry."

In 1967 Mr. Long went on to write: "The College has always lacked communal facilities for both staff and students, and these are now provided". These words seem ironic today, as the College's top priority is to provide more communal facilities for students. Perhaps the earlier facilities went the same way as the herb garden on the roof described in the same article. As the College continues to grow, the year 2000 will be an exciting one for the College - we'll report back with news of all developments in twelve months' time.



The Maltings

in this issue

-  International alumni branches
-  Alumni online
-  Discounts for alumni
-  Further study opportunities for you

Where are they now ?

Ever wonder what your old friends are up to? We caught up with three of our former students

Alumnus

Joey Banks



OND 1989-91
HND HCIM 1991-92
President of the Student Guild 1993-1995

A 'legend in his own lunchtime' and one of the most unforgettable

names of the '90s, Joey's stint as student President had a large impact on the social and sporting life of the college. His initiatives led to the formation of over twenty clubs and societies from just two for football and rugby. His own recollections, he claims, are dimmed by too many good nights in 'the bar' hosted by Bob, Guild barman for over fifteen years.

Joey did time on placement in even more notorious bars - The Ship and Blue Ball of Bethnal Green, where the Great Train Robbers plotted the crime, and The Blind Beggar, where gangster Reggie Kray shot Jack 'The Hat' McVitie. His escape to rural Gloucestershire coincided with an invasion of Irish over for the Gold Cup.

Since August 1995, Joey has been Catering and Hospitality Manager for Walsall and Dudley campuses of the University of Wolverhampton. He remains determinedly young, single and free and a fan of the Villa. He keeps in touch with fellow students including Jeremy Sykes, now managing the flagship Prêt à Manger in Piccadilly, and would welcome news of more of you.

Alumnus

Siobhan McMahon



BSocSc (Hons.)
Tourism Management
1991 - 1994

Since graduation Siobhan has lived and worked as a tourism consultant in her home city of

Dublin. From there she has kept close tabs on her classmates - the small, cohesive and very cosmopolitan intake of 1991 - and in a lively style that Tara Palmer-Tomkinson would envy informs us all what they are up to. Siobhan is our own 'it' girl and social columnist. How else would we learn that Thomas Laugel has changed from leading exclusive expeditions to tracking down war criminals for the United Nations!

Her own job with CHL Consulting Group, Dublin, specialists in tourism, marketing and economic sectors, entails researching and producing first drafts of feasibility studies, product marketing plans and research analysis for Bord Fáilte and government agencies. This experience of the domestic market should lead to private and public sector projects internationally in the future.

In the meantime, Siobhan is an independent traveller. She has done India, and Australia is on her itinerary this year, as well as shorter visits to BSocSc friends in Europe. Keep up the alumni newsgathering, Siobhan - your annual newsletter is much enjoyed and quoted!

Alumnus

Tony Potter



Tony graduated from the College's first Hotel, Catering and Institutional Management programme in 1972. He has worked in the hospitality and leisure industry throughout his

career, and has undertaken senior management and executive roles throughout the world. He was appointed chief executive of Choice Hotels UK and Ireland and Friendly Hotels plc in 1996 and, following a master franchise agreement between Friendly Hotels plc and Choice Hotels International, is now chief executive for Choice Hotels Europe.

Friendly Hotels has over 280 properties across Europe, as well as the New Connaught Rooms in London. Its objective is to become the most successful branded operator of mid-market hotels in Europe. In the last few months Friendly has acquired 10 properties from Oak Hotels and Lyric Hotels, and has just entered Brussels with a new Comfort Hotel. In 1999 the company will be launching the Sleep Inn brand into Europe.

Tony has maintained his links with the College for over 25 years, giving invaluable advice and supporting our Industrial Placement programme, and he was made an honorary fellow of the College in 1996.

Alumni On-line

You will soon be able to keep up with Alumni Society news through the College's site on the World-wide Web. As well as a noticeboard displaying news of reunions, international branches, and offers and discounts for former students, you will be able to access the following services:

- Alumni On-line Directory: keep in touch with your College friends by displaying your e-mail address and, if you have one, your internet home page here.
- Alumni in Touch - want to contact a College friend you've not seen for years? We'll help you get back in touch.
- Transcript of Marks / Replacement Certificates - Need a transcript of your marks? Lost your certificate? Details are here.
- Alumni gifts: the range is growing - look before you buy.

There will also be an alumni details form you can use to keep the College informed of any change in your personal details, so that we will be able to keep in touch with you.

All these services are 'under construction' right now, but they will all be up and running in the next six months - honest - so keep checking the Alumni page on www.bcftcs.ac.uk.

Discounts for Alumni

In the year ahead we will be lining up an attractive range of offers and discounts for our former students, which we will publicise on the alumni web pages and in the next First Class. For the time being, though, here are a couple of offers which you can take advantage of if you still live in the Birmingham area:

Health & Fitness Centre - 1/2-price membership

With the gym and cardio-vascular facilities expanding all the time, a full range of regular classes, sauna, steam-room and sunbed facilities, we think it's the best value in the area. And now, the best's just got better: the normal price of a year's membership has been cut by half for our alumni - from £10 to £5. Just say that you're a former student of the College, and that you saw the advertisement in First Class. But hurry - this is a limited offer, available on a first-come, first-served basis only.

Hair & Beauty Salons - 25% off

The range of treatments available in the College's Hair & Beauty salons keeps growing - hairdressing, facial treatments, massages, manicures, pedicures, epilation, aromatherapy... And as if they weren't good enough value already, there's now a further 25% off all prices until 30 June 1999 - just say that you're a former student of the College, and that you saw the ad in First Class.

Where are you now? Please use the enclosed form to tell us, and bring your friends up to date.

Staff Profile

Val Barker



In 1960 Val Barker entered college on a one year course in Hotel Book Keeping and Reception - in 1996 she emerged with an MSocSc Hospitality Management. A

resume of her career and studies in the intervening decades closely parallels the phenomenal development of the college. Val's experience spans two locations, two principals, three heads of department, scores of lecturers and thousands of students. Her knowledge of college in the post-60s era is so prolific only serialisation could do justice to her memoirs, but it is her personal achievement as an alumnus that is highlighted in this inaugural issue.

Many will feel that Val needs no introduction but few can be aware of the multiplicity of roles she has fulfilled simultaneously. Currently, she combines dual roles of Director of the Industrial Placement Centre, managing two dedicated staff teams responsible

for H.E. and F.E. placements, with an overall responsibility for H.E. administration. These demanding jobs draw on her long experience of working in and with industry, as well as years of lecturing and course management.

In 1969, following eight years with the Grosvenor House Group's three hotels in Birmingham, during which she rose from Receptionist to Manager, Val returned to teach housekeeping and calculations to receptionists, butchers and caterers. Between 1971 and 1978 she was course director for the City and Guilds 709 Hotel Reception course, which in 1978 had an all-time record intake of 48 students. In 1978 she was promoted to Senior Lecturer with responsibility for placing 60 HND HCIM students in industry. As new degree programmes were introduced, the demand for placements increased and currently 400 long term placements are organized annually by the team throughout the UK, Eire, North America, France and Hong Kong. Many students will have received visits from Val as their placement supervisor in locations around the globe.

When she can fit it into a busy schedule Val still enjoys nothing more than 'clubbing it' - on the golf course, that is!

Student Wins Millennium Award

Tourism student Sangeetha Veerasingam recently won a Millennium Award of £3,000 to fund a spectacular dance performance to celebrate the year 2000.

Sangeetha is a volunteer with the London Oriental Academy. She was invited by the Academy to come up with an original idea that would bring together the many different cultures of her hometown of Newham, East London, in a toast to the new millennium. Her idea is to stage a colourful show incorporating folk dances from Malaysia, the Philippines, South India, Indonesia and China.



Birmingham - *in case you've been away*

If it's a while since you were last in Birmingham, the chances are that your memories of the place will include driving round in circles after getting hopelessly lost at Spaghetti Junction, the chaos caused by a series of new developments, and getting to grips with the Brummie accent. Well, not all of those things may have changed, but we reckon that if you take another look at the

millions visitors each year. These include the Crufts Dog Show, the Clothes Show Live, and the British International Motor Show.

Following the success of the NEC, the city decided to build an International Convention Centre in Broad Street at a cost of £200 million. It was an instant hit, and never more so than when it played host to the G8 summit last year when the leaders of eight economic

probably best known as the battleground for Wolf, Hunter and the other popular characters of the cult TV show Gladiators. Last year the NIA fought off competition from 26 other UK cities to host the 1998 Eurovision Song Contest. Executive producer of the show, Kevin Bishop, said: "We marked everything out of ten - venues, hotels, surrounding countryside, international airport - and Birmingham was by far top of the list." *

Throughout the 1990s Birmingham has continued to promote its regeneration. Millennium Point is just one of many projects that the city is currently working on. Its aim is to celebrate the many technological achievements of Birmingham in a new science centre which will help to revitalise the Digbeth quarter of the City.

And if that isn't imaginative enough for you, how about the introduction of a mini holiday resort alongside the canal right under Spaghetti Junction? We'll keep you posted.

* March magazine issue 3, 1998



city now, you'll agree that it's been transformed into a trendy, cosmopolitan place to be, which plays host to some of the world's most important conventions, exhibitions and concerts. Unconvinced? Allow us to try to persuade you....

It was in the late 1960s that the city vigorously pursued the idea of establishing the UK's first National Exhibition Centre on its doorstep to help promote Birmingham as an international business city. Today the NEC has 20 halls and holds more than 180 exhibitions attracting around four

superpowers - including Tony Blair, Bill Clinton and Helmut Kohl - gathered to discuss world politics. Located within the ICC, Symphony Hall is one of the finest concert halls in Europe and is home to the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. The acoustics here are second to none, and this is where the College now holds its annual Awards Congregations.

Birmingham's facelift didn't stop here. Immediately adjoining the ICC is Brindley Place - a 26-acre development - including the National Indoor Arena. The NIA was built at a cost of around £50 million, and is

With its canalside location Brindley Place is one of the places to be in the evening. It has a fine selection of continental style bars, restaurants, cafes, pubs and clubs and is also home to the National Sea Life Centre.

Nostalgia: not what it used to be?

So what are your memories of Birmingham and, in particular, of college days? It's competition time, and we're looking for the best piece of writing on the following subject: memories of College days. You could write about your first day at the College, about a memorable course outing, the social life, the bittersweet days after your final exams, about all of these things, about none of these things. Maybe you're a recent alumnus, or maybe you were here when we were known as Birmingham

College of Food and Domestic Arts. The best articles we receive will be printed in next year's First Class. You should write a minimum of 300 words, a maximum of 500. Please send your entries to the Alumni Office at the address shown on the back page. A prize? You want a prize? OK, each person who enters gets a College Parker pen, and each article printed next year will win for the writer a stonking BCFTCS sweatshirt. The closing date for entries is 30 September 1999. Remember to state your shirt size!



International Alumni

If you are a former student of the College living outside the UK, you may like to know about alumni activities taking place in your part of the world. A number of former students in different countries have offered themselves to act as 'international secretaries', and will help to co-ordinate activities for their region. The secretaries are:

France	Fabienne Guy
Greece	Theo Constantinou
Ireland	Siobhan McMahon & Trish Morris
Hong Kong	Ronald Ho
Kenya	Jacqueline Wangutusi
Malaysia	Kenny Goh
Norway	Ragnhild Ueland Lium
Taiwan	Chia Yu Huang
Thailand	Sakchai Pinpetch

If you live in one of the countries on the left and would like to find out about goings-on in your area, or would like to help organise a re-union event or get-together, please contact your local secretary through the College's Alumni Office. We shall be writing to all alumni in these countries in the next couple of months, giving you the chance to say what kind of activities you might like to take part in.

Wanted! More International Secretaries

If you live in a country not on the list on the left, you may be interested in acting as the Alumni Society's secretary for your region. You would act as the central point for alumni activity in your country. You would keep records of

the alumni in your regions (address, e-mail information, etc.), and would notify us here at the College of any changes so that we can update the main Alumni database. If you think that you might be interested in helping to establish the Alumni Society in your region by taking on the role of secretary, please contact Carol Gaffney, the International Student Officer, at the usual College address or by e-mail on alumni@bcftcs.ac.uk. We are particularly keen to recruit secretaries in Cyprus, Denmark, Israel and Singapore, as these countries contain a large number of former students, but would be delighted to hear from you wherever you may be.



Jean Warner



Better known by former students as 'Mrs. H.' Jean first entered College as a model in a hairdressing competition, with pink hair and in full evening dress. She won!

A salon owner, she combined part-time study of advanced hairdressing with part-time teaching. In 1985 she became full-time, taught YTS and day release trainees, introduced work placements and, with Rob Ashford, took students by minibus to hairdressing competitions around the UK. An era of change lay ahead.

Hairdressing became the first sector to introduce NVQs. A beauty salon was

opened enabling students to combine studies, and Jean, after an intensive staff secondment, switched from hair to beauty specialist. Recently short courses in Aromatherapy, Indian Head Massage, Reflexology and Advanced Epilation have been added. Further courses in HND Leisure Management (Health Therapies) and HNC Business Salon Management are proposed in the coming year.

What else is new? Salons are now open to clients from 9am to 9pm; students can go on placement to Cannes in the south of France, and on March 1st in Brighton beauty therapists won the British Beauty award in competition with seventy other colleges.

Jean's contribution to top-to-toe treatments has certainly helped the 'College of Cakes, Holidays and Haircuts' go 'holistic'.

Further study at the College - could be the perfect boost to your career

Can you spare just 3 weeks a year?

- MSc/Diploma Hospitality Management
- MA/Diploma Hospitality Management
- MA/Diploma Tourism Business Administration
- MA/Diploma Adventure Tourism

Full-time, part-time and block learning available.

Would you like to develop your existing qualifications and get ahead in your career?

That's all it takes to start studying for an MA in Hospitality Management or Tourism Business Administration on a Block Learning basis at College - and all of our postgraduate qualifications are awarded by the University of Birmingham.

Block Learning is a flexible way of studying and an ideal way to achieve your ambition without sacrificing your career. Over two years you will study six modules (three per year) and each module takes just a week.

This intensive week of study includes a variety of teaching and learning methods including lectures, seminars, discussions, tutorials and study support.

Alternatively you could study on a part-time basis - up to two days a week.

Vocational programmes - a rewarding career could be yours

As you know the College offers a wide range of vocational courses - so if you are looking to change direction or update your skills we offer the following on a part-time basis:

- Hospitality and Catering
- Food Service
- Bakery
- Leisure and Tourism
- Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy
- Health and Social Care
- Early Years Child Care and Education
- Care

Higher Education - make a difference to your future

Our range of Higher Education programmes continues to grow. Those marked with an asterisk (*) on the following list can be studied on a part-time basis. Don't forget that the University of Birmingham now awards all of our degree and postgraduate programmes.

- BA (Hons) Adventure Tourism Management *
- BSc (Hons) Food and Consumer Management *
- BA (Hons) Food and Retail Management *
- BA (Hons) Hospitality and Food

- Management *
- BA (Hons) Hospitality and Leisure Management *
- BA (Hons) Hospitality and Tourism Management *
- BA (Hons) Hospitality Business Management *
- BA (Hons) Leisure Management *
- BA (Hons) Tourism Business Management *
- BSc (Hons) Tourism Management
- BA (Hons) Licensed Retail Management *
- BA (Hons) Professional Studies in Childcare *

HND Programmes

- Business (Tourism) *
- Home Economics (Food and Consumer Management)
- Hotel, Catering and Institutional Management *
- Leisure Management
- Adventure Tourism *
- Licensed Retail Management
- Culinary Arts
- Early Childhood Studies *

(These programmes can provide direct access to the final year of the degree programmes at the College providing that students achieve high enough grades.)

Part-time Programmes

Many of our vocational and degree programmes are available on a part-time basis - please see relevant section. A National Examining Board for Supervisory Management is also available part-time.

Short Courses

Do you fancy trying something different and broadening your horizons? Just take a look at the wide range of short courses on offer here at the College - there's something for everyone.

Internet and Multimedia
Word Processing
Integrated Business Technology
Desktop Publishing
RSA CLAIT

Self Defence for Women
Community Sports Leader Award
Introduction to the job of an Airline Cabin Attendant
Galileo Reservations

Introduction to Childminding Certificate
Playwork Certificate
Introduction to Aromatherapy

International Cuisine
Vegetarian Cooking
Entertaining Without Stress
Cake Decoration
Wines & Spirit Education Trust courses

Coming soon:

IPD Certificate in Personnel Practice
CIM Certificate in Marketing

To find out more about any of these courses, please call the Marketing Unit on (0121) 693 5959.

College Steals Show at N.E.C.

The College fought off stiff competition from 14 different institutions from around the UK and abroad to scoop the British Open Cookery Championships College Award at the National Exhibition Centre in January.

Altogether the College came away with 29 individual awards including a gold award in the Junior Fish category and a runners-up prize in the Nestlé Master Chefs Grand Prix.



Peter Griffiths, director of Salon Culinaire, presents the College Award

College Gifts

The College now has a range of high quality gift items for sale to present and former students. The gifts may be purchased by post, or in person at the College from the Visitor Information Centre in the foyer. All items feature the College name and crest, and all are in the best possible taste. This is the line-up:

T-shirt

100% heavyweight cotton, with College crest and name stretched across front, available in M, L or XL, black, white, grey, navy or bottle green. Price £6.50.

Polo shirts

100% cotton, with crest and name discreetly embroidered in colour close to that of shirt itself. S, M, L or XL, black, white, grey, navy or burgundy (embroidery on white shirts is navy). £11.

Sweatshirt

Hooded Screenstars sweatshirt with full length zip, 70% cotton / 30% polyester, embroidery as for polo shirts. M, L or XL, black or navy. Remarkably fine, and only £17.

Parker Vector Rollerball Pen

Black, navy or burgundy, with College name and crest in silver, £4.50.

Mugs

Midnight blue, with College name and crest in diagonal display around mug. £2.50.

Disc Diary

A slim plastic wallet, very tough, which holds six computer diskettes in complete safety. Miscellaneous College propaganda displayed on front cover. Slips easily into your rather large pocket. Black or dark blue, £3.

For full details and a gift order form, e-mail the College on alumni@bcfctcs.ac.uk or call the Alumni Office on Birmingham (0121) 604 111, extension 358.



First Class

First Class is the newsletter of the Alumni Society of Birmingham College of Food, Tourism & Creative Studies.

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The next edition of First Class will hit your doormat round about this time next year. KEEP IN TOUCH!