

Clifton Club News



The Clifton Club
— 1818–2018 —

ISSUE 21 - TURNING 200



Chairman's Welcome

I am delighted to be welcoming you to this issue of the newsletter. I hope you had a great Christmas and I wish you a very happy New Year.

This year, 2018, is very significant for The Clifton Club as we celebrate our 200th anniversary. Personally I struggle to appreciate The Club's longevity. To put it into context, the Battle of Waterloo was in 1815, just three years earlier than The Club's establishment which is quite a remarkable fact!

In this special newsletter you will see the full list of events that we have planned for the coming year. Please note them in your diary and I urge you to book early to avoid disappointment. We have tried to cater for the wide range of Members' interests. Hopefully you will find something that appeals to you. I would love to see The Club buzzing throughout the year!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Simon Fuller, his Events Committee and Sarah Davidson for all their hard

work, planning and organising these events over the past year. We can show our appreciation by ensuring they are fully attended.

I am delighted to associate our year of celebration with our nominated anniversary charity, Brandon Trust. We have set ourselves a challenging fundraising target. I will be doing all I can to help support this cause and I hope you will too. Please see how to get involved at the back of this issue.

Lastly, I hope you will be able to use the new Auriol Room very soon and enjoy this fantastic edition to The Club's facilities, in all its restored glory. To be able to re-open this room, the last area of derelict space, in our bicentennial year is a great sign of The Club's success and its readiness for another 200 years.

Jerry Barnes, Chairman

The Auriol Room - Opening for Business in February

The Auriol Room has been recently refurbished and will become The Clifton Club's business centre. It's a unique facility for Members-only to work remotely, using their own laptops and mobile telephones. The room will provide private desks and complimentary wi-fi, you won't need

to book, refreshments will be available and the dress code will be relaxed.

The room will open for use on Thursday 1st February 2018. As this is a new venture The Club will monitor and assess its use. Members will be asked to sign in and any comments or suggestions will be welcomed.



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Opening Times

Office
Monday - Friday: 9.30am - 5.00pm

Members Club
Monday - Friday: 9.30am - 10.00pm
Saturday: 4.00pm - 10.00pm
Sunday: 4.00pm - 8.30pm

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#thecriftonclub200



Bicentenary Gift and Book

Throughout the year we would like to invite every member to The Club to present them with a keepsake commemorating our bicentenary year. We will start distributing them after our launch party on Thursday 8th March. Upon collection we will ask all Members to contribute to a special bicentenary comment book which we hope will reflect the Membership of 2018. It will be situated in the foyer so please report to the office to make your written contribution.

Film Production



The Club has commissioned Bristol-based, Floating Harbour Films, to produce a short mini documentary. It will look at the organisation's early history and hear from some of our longest-standing Members. The film will also follow The Club's journey from the Clifton Library to today's refurbished building in the heart of the village. It will be screened at the launch party and will be available throughout the year. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this film over the past year.

Member Profile

Simon is our longest standing Club Member with 69 years under his belt!

Q: When did you join The Club?

A: I joined The Club on 1st October 1949. I was 18 and I still have the original letter confirming my election. My subscription was 2 guineas which is £2.10 in today's money.

Q: Why did you join The Club?

A: I joined The Club because I wanted to meet other young people in Bristol. I had played squash occasionally at school and my father, who used to be a Member, knew there were other keen players at The Club and suggested that as I need more exercise I should join. Back then there was a large number of Senior Members who enjoyed more than one drink at the bar. They were very kind and would always offer to buy you a whiskey. The problem was as a younger Member I couldn't afford to return the favour. The Club then opened a squash bar on the ground floor (which is now the ladies' lavatory). They only served beer as that was all we could afford.

Q: What have been the biggest changes to The Club?

A: One of the biggest changes I've seen is the Election of Lady Members in 2006. I had explored this progression during my Chairmanship in 1987. I had felt there was a definite shift towards accepting women for Membership. I wrote to all Members and asked them to vote on the matter. The outcome was 50/50. I discussed the result with my Committee and we decided we needed a larger majority to make such a huge change. I suggested that we should consider this

again which we did and I am pleased to say it was passed.

The major refurbishment in 2008 was also a key development in The Club's recent history. The rooms had begun to look very tired. I think the Committee's decision to make The Club a more desirable place has paid off. The hope was that it would help to attract more Members which in turn would raise finances to keep The Club going and it seems to be working.

Q: What are the most memorable moments during your Membership?

A: One of my most memorable moments was the day Concorde made its final flight and performed a 'lap of honour' over the city in November 2003. Members went to see Concorde fly over The Clifton Suspension Bridge. We then retired to The Club for a wonderful lunch. The menu was based on the meal served on Concorde's maiden flight. A truly memorable occasion.

Q: How do you use The Club Today?

A: I used to play a lot of Bridge but my eyesight is poor these days so I no longer play. I miss it terribly but I am thrilled the game is still popular within The Club. I now visit once a week for lunch and enjoy the camaraderie of Members that I have known for years as well as newer Members that I have met along the way.

Q: You were Chairman of The Club from 1987-89. How did you become Chairman and what was it like?

A: I became Chairman because they



SIMON BROOKS

couldn't find anyone else! It was unfortunate that under my Chairmanship we had a lot of staff problems. At one point there was only the Secretary and me to do the washing-up, not that there was a lot of washing-up back then. I was determined The Club would not collapse under my watch. My job was to keep the ship afloat. It was tough and go at times but we survived.

Q: Where do you see The Club in 10 years' time?

A: In 10 years' time I hope that The Club will be very much as it is today. We need to continue encouraging and attracting younger people to join. However, I don't believe we should increase the number of Members. I feel it is important that we do not lose the exclusivity and intimacy of The Club.

Q: Can you describe The Club in three words?

A: Three words to describe The Club? That's difficult but if forced, I would say 'Food and Fellowship'.



1818

The Clifton Club established

1835

Clifton becomes part of Bristol



1855

The Clifton Club purchase The Clifton Hotel and Assembly Rooms (our current building)

1862

Clifton College established



1864

Clifton Suspension Bridge opens to the public

Introduction to Brandon Trust



Who are Brandon Trust?

Brandon Trust exists to enable adults and children with learning disabilities and autism to live the lives they choose.

We do that by providing high-quality, individualised support that is genuinely life-enhancing. It ranges from a few hours of enabling support a week, through to life-long residential care for people with complex needs. Much of our work sits within the 'supported living' model; a highly person-centred approach which sees people live in their own homes.

Our innovative community projects offer people a chance to learn new skills, be creative and productive and importantly, to have the opportunity to undertake paid work or volunteering.

Brandon was established in 1994 and we currently support around 1,600 people across southern England, the Midlands and London. Over 600 of these people are in the Bristol area, where our head office is also based.

Our support is often intensive and means we employ around 2,000 staff across all of our services. We also benefit from the valuable input of individual and corporate volunteer partners who offer their time and enthusiasm at many of our community-based projects.



Enabling people to 'live free'

Brandon's mission is to increase people's ability to 'Live Free' and to support them to achieve their own ambitions with the right support and encouragement.

This commitment sits at the heart of our strategic direction and operational practice, both of which are actively shaped and influenced by the voices and experiences of the people we support.

Our fundraising work further reinforces this by allowing us to develop projects and activities that are focussed on enabling people to truly achieve their dreams.

Bonnie Dean OBE – Chair of the Board of Trustees

Brandon's Chair of the Board of Trustees is Bonnie Dean. Bonnie joined the organisation in 2010, taking up her current role the following year. She is passionate about ensuring Brandon continues to be at the forefront of high quality, transformative service provision for people with learning disabilities. Alongside this, Bonnie is committed to supporting the ongoing development of innovative funding models that will

enable the organisation to have a thriving future in a challenging sector.

As Chief Executive of Bristol & Bath Science Park, Bonnie led the first phase of the development of the park which included creating an eco-system to enable entrepreneurs to accelerate the growth of their businesses. She is Deputy Chair of Catalyst, Inc, the Northern Ireland Science Park and on the Council of the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council.

In 2012 she was awarded an OBE for services to design, technology and innovation. Prior to this, Bonnie worked predominantly in the engineering industry. She was also a trustee of the Design Council for seven years.

A keen champion of innovation, Bonnie is also excited by the potential of technology to help people with learning disabilities overcome some of the challenges that they face in their daily lives.

Bonnie said: "One of the things that impresses me each time I visit Brandon Trust is how innovative our staff are in helping the people we support live more independently day by day. Our willingness to be innovative is combined with a passion for providing a high quality of care centred on each individual and their specific ambitions."

www.brandontrust.org



BONNIE DEAN OBE -
CHAIR OF BOARD TRUSTEES

1899

Mayor of Bristol made
Lord Mayor



1909

Bristol University is
established

1914 - 18

First World War



1918

Club relocates
clubhouse to house
the RAF (6 months)

1931

Erection of squash courts
and opening of the
American Bar

Fundraising – How Can I Get Involved?



What could be one of the legacies of The Clifton Club bicentenary year? We will, no doubt, have fond memories of the celebrations, along with a hangover or two? But this will fade. Would it not be truly remarkable to make an impact that lasts longer than the next twelve months, something that makes a real difference to somebody in need.

As Members of our special Club we are very privileged and can reach out, while celebrating our anniversary, to those less fortunate.

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." - Winston Churchill

Therefore we have decided to support and fundraise for the charity, Brandon Trust. Formed in Bristol in 1994 it now works across Southern England, including London, to support approximately 1,600 children and adults with learning disabilities and autism. Please do look at their website for more detail on the work they do at brandontrust.org

We have set ourselves the ambitious challenge of raising £30,000 to pay for two summer camps in 2019. Each summer camp gives 20 children and young people the opportunity to have a week away from home, make new friends, try exciting new sports and physical activities and have fun! Each camp costs £15,000.

And why do we want to sponsor a camp especially? Because children and young people with learning disabilities and autism rarely get the chance to experience an independent break from their families with their friends and peers. Parents and carers don't get a break from their demanding caring role and the opportunity to focus on the siblings who often have to take a back seat.

Delphine Barnes is heading up a committee to plan the fundraising events and welcomes anyone who would like to assist. In order to incorporate members with different skills and interests we have come up with a few ideas already. For example, a Petrolhead's car rally, a Club cycling challenge, a FFC golf pub crawl, games contests in backgammon, bridge and snooker, a reelathon, a Club hike and teams for the Bristol 10k race and Bristol Half Marathon (to name but a few!).

We do hope you will accept the challenge we have set ourselves and support us by helping, taking part and of course donating!

Please contact the office if you are able to join the committee, have any ideas or are able to help in any other way.

#TCCcharity200

Anything you would like to post in relation to an event or activity you are taking part in, we are encouraging you to use the hashtag [#thecliftonclub200](https://twitter.com/thecliftonclub200)

If you are participating in any charitable activity or are posting in relation to Brandon Trust please further your support by using the hashtag [#TCCcharity200](https://twitter.com/TCCcharity200)

To make donation to Brandon Trust please do so by visiting our Just Giving Page:
www.justgiving.com/fundraising/thecliftonclub200



1939 - 45

Second World War



1970

SS Great Britain brought back to Bristol



1995

Incorporation of The Clifton Club Company



2008

Major refurbishment of The Club and the introduction of women Members



2018

Club celebrates its 200th year anniversary

Ten Eras in the History of The Clifton Club

The First Clifton Club: In 1818 as Britain moved beyond the uncertainties of the Napoleonic wars, a group of gentlemen joined together to form an association to establish club rooms for the convenience of reading, cards and billiards. The Club in Princess Victoria Street survived 32 years by which time the founding fathers had aged considerably and the venture no longer enjoyed their patronage. In 1850 they voted to close the doors and sell the premises to the Reverend James Marshall, vicar of Christchurch, who intended them as a school for the children of Clifton's working classes. When in 1968 Bristol Council provided an alternative site for Clifton Primary School, our first clubhouse became the Clifton Library.

Clifton Subscription Rooms Association: Meanwhile, following the bankruptcy of Mrs Mary Long, proprietor of the Clifton Hotel, the opportunity to establish a new association arose. In 1855 the Clifton Subscription Rooms came into being. The subscribers initially included lady members but within two years the association became an exclusive gentlemen's Club.



THE CLIFTON CLUB 1866

Development of the Dining Room: Refreshments were provided by the Hotel Tap on Waterloo Street. This convenient arrangement ended abruptly in 1875 when the Bristol Constabulary paid an unexpected call. The election of the first Wine Committee resolved some of the issue but for the next decade the rooms were without a dining facility. In 1889, the Club's first dining room was located in the present-day Club Room, with the cooking undertaken in the head waiter's residence. The Club's kitchen was not moved to its present location until the 1980s.

Clifton Club and The Clifton Club Company: The Subscription Rooms operated for a quarter of a century. However, there was continual sparring between those shareholders who expected an annual dividend and those who wished to improve the facilities. Towards the end of the 1870s a crisis point was reached when a motion to open the Rooms on Sundays was blocked by a small minority. Legal counsel was sought and in 1882 the Association was closed and its assets were placed into a new company, while the Club became a leasee.

World War One: World War One was a difficult period for the Club. Membership fell below 200 and many members served away from Bristol. A voluntary 'Sustention' Fund was established and together with sympathetic dealings from the company, the Club limped towards its Centenary Year. Any planned celebrations were halted following the requisition of the clubhouse by the Royal Flying Corps. With only two weeks' notice the Club moved to Victoria Square.

Squash Courts and the American Bar: The Club's finances strengthened after the War but with the Depression membership numbers dropped again. Land was purchased in Waterloo Street while in 1932 two squash courts were erected and plans put in place to open an 'American Bar'. These additions together with a moratorium on entry fees, saw membership numbers soar. At this time, Jesse Barton was engaged to manage the American Bar and he continued as a club employee for 63 years.



GENERAL OMAR BRADLEY

Second World War: Initially the Second World War brought similar concerns - membership numbers fell and voluntary donations were again called. This time its fortunes changed as the many servicemen who came to serve in Bristol began to frequent the club. Our most notable honorary member was General Omar Bradley who was in charge of the D-Day landings.

Post-War Doldrums and the Sale of Assets: Ironically, the Club came out of the war in a strong financial position but vital restoration of the fabric of the building was thwarted by the national austerity measures. In the Sixties, John Collins was appointed the Club's architect and he presented many strategies for the Club's future, including the sale of the public rooms to a restaurant chain, the creation of a junior club and the relocation of the Club to new premises. He was authorised to attend an auction and bid on behalf of the Club to purchase Fanum House on the Promenade. The Club's financial concerns were otherwise largely kept in check through a number of initiatives; the leasing of the upper floor rooms as a Dance Studio, the installation of fruit machines in the Club bar, and the introduction of the 100 Club; which in 2018 will celebrate its 50th anniversary. In 1974, with major repairs to the roofing areas pressing, the simple expedient became the sale of the two southern houses facing Waterloo Street.

Incorporation of the Club: The Company structure had operated well since 1882 but when tax regulations were tightened in the 1980s, the Club and the Company merged into a new entity. In 1995 the Club incorporated in its own right and purchased the extant Company shares. The price paid for the shares, as agreed by the auditors, was £2,600 for every £75 share; a reflection of the increased value of the properties within the Club's portfolio.

The Millennium Strategy: As we entered the new millennium, the declining and ageing Membership became a major concern. A millennium ball was cancelled through lack of support and the Club found itself in need of some serious strategic planning. The most important initiative came when, after 150 years, the Club membership opened to ladies again. Membership soared and for the first time has exceeded 500.

What's Going On

Members Bicentenary Party Thursday 8th March 2018

Kick start our bicentenary celebrations by booking your ticket. Drinks and canapes will be served between 6.30pm and 8.30pm and tickets will cost £28.50 each. Members will have the opportunity to view our specially commissioned film along with a selection of artefacts and documents that detail The Club's history over the past two centuries. This event is for full Clifton Club Members only and you are advised to book as early as possible. A special prize draw will be held during the evening and all proceeds will go to our nominated anniversary charity, Brandon Trust.

Garden Party Friday 6th July 2018

The Mall gardens will be transformed to provide the perfect backdrop for our annual Garden Party. Food, drinks and entertainment will be on offer and this year there will be a bicentennial twist.

Founders Dinner Saturday 6th October 2018

This will be the ultimate bicentenary birthday party. This event will close the year's celebrations in style. There will be a cocktail reception, a multi-course banquet, live entertainment, dancing and drinks throughout our beautiful Club rooms. Dress Code: White Tie, Black Tie and Evening Gowns.



Calendar of Events

February

THURSDAY 2ND

Film Night – Erin Brockovitch

WEDNESDAY 14TH

Ladies Lunch

THURSDAY 15TH

Modern Medicine in 15 Minutes – “How to Mend a Broken Heart” – Dr A Scyme-Jones

THURSDAY 15TH

Film Night – The Constant Gardner

FRIDAY 16TH

Valentines Taster Dinner

TUESDAY 20TH

Clifton Club Reels

SUNDAY 25TH

Family Sunday Lunch

March

THURSDAY 1ST

Film Night – Billy Elliot

THURSDAY 8TH

Members Bicentenary Party

SUNDAY 11TH

Mother's Day Family Sunday Lunch

WEDNESDAY 14TH

Ladies Lunch

THURSDAY 15TH

Film Night – Moulin Rouge

April

THURSDAY 5TH

Film Night – Cider with Rosie

WEDNESDAY 11TH

Ladies Lunch

MONDAY 23RD

St George's Day Lunch

SUNDAY 29TH

Bicentenary Lecture – Dr Jenny Gaschke, The Bristol Museum

MONDAY 30TH

Company AGM

Newly Elected Members

We would like to extend a warm welcome to all new Members that have joined so far this year.

Social Media

During our bicentenary year, we encourage Members to share their experiences and interact with others via social media.

If you are on LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram or Twitter, we would encourage you to engage with us on these social media platforms. Links to the relevant social media sites can be found in the top left hand corner of The Club website.

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