

Issue 401

PostScript

An Oxford University Scout and Guide Group Publication



90th Annual Dinner



Photo Challenge

**MISSING IN
ACTION**

PostScript 400?



Dratting

PostScript

Issue 401 - 2 of 3, TT09

Editor:

James Baker, New

Chair:

James Baker, New

Chair-Elect:

Currently Vacant

Treasurer:

Tim Driscoll, Oriel

Secretary:

Elizabeth Horne, Teddy Hall

SSAGO Rep:

Sarah Harvey, St Catz

Membership Secretary:

James Baker, New

Internet Officer:

Michael Howe, Ex-Worcester

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James Baker, New

N'n'N:

Michael Bedington, St Peter's

Annual Dinner Organisers:

Sarah Harvey, St Catz

Elizabeth Horne, Teddy Hall

Old Members Rep:

Chris Seward, Ex-Jesus

Senior Member:

Gavin Williams, St Peter's

Any correspondence or articles for submission should be e-mailed to postscript@ousgg.org.uk, or may be sent to:

James Baker,
New College,
Holywell Street
Oxford,
OX1 3BN

All items received will be presumed for publication unless otherwise notified. The editor reserves the right to modify contributions.

Contributions should be received by the Friday preceding the date of publication. Articles received after this time will be included at the editor's discretion, or may be retained for use in future issues.

Views expressed in PostScript are those of their authors, and may not correspond to those of OUSGG and associated bodies.

Editorial

Welcome to the 401st issue of PostScript - the first, and perhaps only, issue of PostScript ever to be published before it's predecessor! It seems a shame to start the fifth centenary of PostScript with an apology though, so I'll save that for later in the issue.

There one particularly unfortunate side effect of the delay though, which I ought to mention here rather than later, and that's that we've had to delay the next instalment of Erik's Adventures. Be prepared for a Erik Spectacular (my words, not the author's) next issue though!

It was nice to have received an article from an ex-member for this issue, although not so nice to have to end up writing most the other articles myself. I expect better for the next issue, which will be my final issue as editor.

Next issue is a whole three weeks away though, so until then you'll have to put up with this issue (and the 400th somewhere between the 401st and 402nd).

I can't think of much else to say here, so I'll shut up and let you all get on with reading the rest of the issue. See you on pages 3, 4, 8 and 10...



Chair's Report

We're almost half way through the term now, and so far it hasn't gone too badly (in this Chair's humble opinion anyway).

It was unfortunate that we had to cancel the African Drumming, but we spent the evening Geocaching instead which was also enjoyable. And we were able to permanently leave OUSGG's mark on Oxford by signing the lists hidden at each of the Geocaches (all the ones we could find, anyway).

The Photo Challenge was also pretty successful, the results of which can be found later in this issue.

At the time of printing, we haven't yet done the Aerial Trek, but by the time you're reading this we will have done. I'm going to assume that everyone who came had a good time, and go on the record as saying it was an outstanding meeting. And the great thing about being chair and editor is that no one can print anything to contradict me on that!



In This Issue

The Saga of PostScript 400 (pg 4)

Find out exactly why the 400th issue of PostScript is missing in action. And who to send your angry e-mails to.

A Brief Guide to Drats (pg 6)

Learn the origins and basics of Dratting, from someone who was there when the O.U. Drats Team was formed completely of OUSGGers.

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The results from our 3rd week wide game.

Letters to the Editor (pg 10)

You write 'em, and we'll print 'em. It's as simple as that.

The 90th Annual Dinner (pg 10)

Some memories from the weekend celebrating 90 years of OUSGG.

What's Happening?

Monday, Week 1: Wide Game (Carfax Tower, 1900)

Monday, Week 2: Geocaching (Carfax Tower, 1900)

Monday, Week 3: Photo Challenge (Carfax Tower, 1900)

Sunday, Week 4: Aerial Trek (Youlbury Scout Activity Centre, 1415)

Monday, Week 4: Evening Pub Walk (To Be Confirmed, 1900)

Monday, Week 5: Oxford Imps (The Wheatsheaf, 1930)

Monday, Week 6: Pub Quiz (Cricketer's Arms, 2000)

Monday, Week 7: Punting (Magdalen Bridge, 1800)

Monday, Week 8: TGM and Meal (To Be Confirmed)

The Saga of PostScript 400

not the fault of **James Baker**

I want to start off by apologising that you're probably reading this 401st issue of PostScript before the 400th issue has been published. Believe me, no-one is more annoyed about this than me, and I've been sending e-mails left, right and centre to try and get it sorted and into your hands as soon as possible.

I've included a timeline of what's happened so far so you can all get an idea of what's been going on and what the current state of play is.

Mid-Late March

Started collecting quotes from companies to print the cover of the 400th issue of PostScript.

23rd March

Received quote from the company we would eventually go with - Printing Oxford.

16th April

E-mailed the company again asking them to confirm the quote and give me a rough estimate of the delivery time.

17th April

Received a reply from the company saying it would take between 5-7 days to print and deliver the covers.

21st April

Received final numbers attending the 90th Annual Dinner so I could work out how many copies we'd need and place the order.

Placed order asking for 100 double sided, colour, A3 sheets to be printed, and to be delivered to me at New College. Specifically stated that I needed them by 1st May - 10 days after the order date and therefore well within the delivery estimate.

22nd April

Received an e-mail from the company saying they'd received the order and would begin printing as soon as they'd received payment. They said they'd send a link across to the 3rd party website on which I could pay.

23rd April

Having not received the payment link, I contacted the company asking for it to be sent, and restating that I needed the printing by May 1st.

24th April

Finally received the payment link, and paid for the printing.

29th April

Sent main body of the issue to OUCS to get printed in black and white.

30th April

OUCS inform me that the printing I sent to them has been done, and that there are 600 sheets of A3 for me to collect and painstakingly carry back to my room.

1st May

The date I said I needed the printing for comes and goes without the printing arriving.

2nd-3rd May

The 90th Annual Dinner and the Punt and Picnic take place, and are distinctly tainted due to the lack of PostScript *cough*.

6th May

E-mailed the person I'd been in contact with to complain about the lack of contact from the company, and (more importantly) about the lack of printing.

7th May

Having received no response from the person I'd e-mailed, I sent another e-mail complaining to the general e-mail address listed on their website.

11th May

Having not heard back from either of my complaints, I contact the 3rd party who dealt with the transaction and complain that I haven't received my order.

The 3rd party get back to me and say they have now contacted the company too, and that if I don't hear back from the company in the next 7 days to get in touch with them again.

12th May

Got bored and wrote a PostScript article complaining that PostScript 400 is still AWOL.

To be continued?

So then, the moral of this story is clearly never use www.printingoxford.co.uk for any printing you want done. A better use of society funds would be to employ someone to draw the cover 100 times by hand.

[Ed: Any views about the inability of Printing Oxford to do their job aren't necessarily endorsed by OUSGG. However, they are shared by the Editor, Chair, Quartermaster and Membership Secretary.]

A Brief Guide To Drats

as written by **Martin Idale**

At the recent OUSGG 90th anniversary dinner, mention was made of the 1967 Oxford University Drats Team, all of whom, remarkably, were members of OUSGG. A number of members at the dinner asked about drats, so I thought I would pen a brief synopsis of the history and development of the game for those unfamiliar with it.

How the game started is lost in the mists of time, but it clearly goes back many centuries. There are a number of entries in The Domesday Book of villages having “drating fylde”.

Oxford in the mid-sixties, was particularly fortunate in having Chris Lockley, a descendant of the most famous family of dratters ever to have played the game. Chris could trace his ancestry back to Hugh Fitzlockley of Wolverhampton in the eleventh century, one of the earliest recorded players. It is claimed that he made over one thousand consecutive dratting runs without nurdling. Another famous family member was a certain Robin of Lockley, a fine and bold player, who eschewed the traditional dratting hat for a hood. He became known as “Robin of the hood”. He struck fear into all opponents. Legend has it that, when going to an away match, he was ambushed by a thug who had been hired by the opposing team to intercept him at a river en route and break his dratting pole, thus causing the match to be forfeit. But Robin, a deft wielder of the pole, emerged victorious, and the rest is history.

The game gained in popularity and in the early sixteenth century the first international drats match took place at Oxford between England and Wales. The fixture became an annual event. After fifty years Wales had yet to win. After the fiftieth successive defeat, the Welsh captain was heard to exclaim, “Oh Jesus, what can we do?” They decided to give up the game and found a college instead, and that is how Jesus College got its name.

The problem was that the Welsh, being naturally stunted in growth, could not cope with the dratting pole (v.i.). Trying to find something they might beat the English at, they invented a new game. They cut their dratting poles into shorter lengths, stuck three of them into the ground, and one side tried to knock them down by throwing the opencast coal handles (v.i.) at them, whilst the other defended them with curiously carved willow sticks. The first game was played at Criccieth, which gave the game its name. The Welsh also found they were no good at Criccieth either, so finally invented a game they would be good at, where they tried to jump on the backs of sheep. They called it “ruggar”, though the spelling is uncertain. But I digress.

For those not acquainted with the niceties of dratting (or drats, as it is more commonly known) I had better explain the rules.

Drats is played between two teams of four players:

1. The Polemaster, whose role is to ensure the dratter’s equipment is properly furnished and polished.
2. The Urpen Caller, who gives the calls to start the dratting run. Calls varied from county to county and from century to century. The calls conveyed secret messages from the Urpen caller to the dratter that would not be understood by opponents. (More later.)
3. The Glen-denning [1], who called the run as it took place, and had an invaluable role in keeping fans updated, when the dratter was out of sight.

4. Finally, but most important of all, the dratter himself (sorry girls, it was always a man).

Dratting had a strict dress code. The dratter wore a cloth smock and a floppy cap, not unlike the academic caps worn by some Doctors at Oxford. (Could this have been the origin of academic dress? Was the title “doctor” a dyslexic corruption of “dratter”?) Boots were made from smoked moleskin, laced and tied in the traditional crossover fashion, left boot to right ankle and right boot to left knee. [2]

The pole was twenty six Kentish feet long [3], made of willow with handles made of opencast coal. The pole was fitted with a foresight and a backsight, and, of course, the all-important buttock shield, the purpose of which is obvious.

To simplify play, I shall use the urpen calls used by the 1967 Oxford University team.

The dratter would come up to the start line, with the pole laid on the ground beside him; when the urpen caller gave the call “King William the Fourth’s elbow”, the dratter picked up the pole and held it vertical; at the cry “Queen Anne’s knees” the pole was lowered to the horizontal position; at the cry “Bessie Braddock’s braces” [4], the dratter would lift the left foot (or right foot if a left handed player) and waggle the foot to advise the urpen caller that he was ready. The tension could be unbearable at this point.

In a loud voice the urpen caller gave the final cry: “My aunt Fanny!” and the run would begin.

The etiquette of the game precludes my giving away the technicalities and finer points, for that might benefit future opponents. Suffice it to say that a good run is a thing of beauty. Excitement would grow as the Glen-denning called the mounting score, and everyone would have their heart in their mouth, dreading the sudden cry of “He nurdled”, every dratter’s worst nightmare.

At the finish, the dratter would rush to the tape and jump both feet together into a tray of bat’s milk, which marked the formal end of the run. The crowd would go wild.

I do hope this very simplified explanation may help others understand the game. How good it would be to see a new OUSGG dratting team.

Just one final point; if you have read, understood and believed this, how the hell did you get in to Oxford?

Martin Idale
OUSGG 1964-1967

1. For younger readers, your grandfathers should be able to explain the origin of this term.
2. Sadly, Health and Safety has now banned this practice, which has taken much of the excitement from the game, which may account for its decline in popularity these days.
3. For a definition of the Kentish foot, see the conversion table of weights and measures at the back of any 13th century edition of Collins Middle English-Kentish dictionary.
4. See footnote 1.

The OUSGG Photo Challenge

as conceived by **James Baker**

Our meeting in 3rd week gave would be OUSGG paparazzi a chance to hone their photographic skills. Their mission for the evening was to recreate a selection of photos from around Oxford as closely as possible.

If there was someone walking past a lamp post, then they had to make sure there was someone walking past that lamp post in their recreation. If there was a bus in the background, they had to make sure there was a bus in the background in their recreation. If it was at an obscure angle, then their recreation also had to be at an obscure angle...





Of course, it's not the taking part that counts, it's the winning. So, without further ado, the winners were...

Andrew, Lizzy, Pilly and Shell with 48 points (out of 65).

And the valiant runners up were...

Jack, James and Nigel with 45 points.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

I'm disappointed that recent issues of your esteemed journal have been lacking letters pages. The letters page is a vital component of the regional newspaper or esoteric journal, whose regular dose of pointless vitriol keeps the readers hooked as well as any soap opera. I implore everyone concerned to fix this oversight.

On what I assure you is an unrelated note, I would like to inform readers that I am proposing a vote of no confidence in our mascot, Erik the Panda. This may seem like an extreme measure, but I no longer feel Erik is a suitable mascot to uphold the good name of OUSGG. More innocent members were shocked in recent years when details of his "love children" were printed in this very journal, but nothing more was done about it at the time. Rumours of his drinking problem have been an open secret for years, but it has been thought rude to comment on the cause of his constantly dishevelled appearance and unfocussed eyes.

Now his expenses claims have come out, and it appears that OUSGG members have been subsidising his cavorting to the tune of £10,000 per year.

I say, "No more".

Andrew Freer
Ex-Chair, Ex-Quartermaster, Ex-Crement stirrer

The 90th Annual Dinner

as recalled by **James Baker**

Annual Dinners are always - in my limited experience at least - an occasion worth remembering. Which is unfortunate in a way, as the sheer volume of alcohol that gets consumed over the course of the weekend leads me to believe that it's actually an occasion that many don't remember.

The dinner itself was a tasty affair. Indeed, even Erik couldn't resist the starter. Apparently it didn't strike the catering staff that "Erik the Panda" might not actually be a real person.

Then there was the cake after dinner, which tasted as good as it looked. Squeezing everyone into the group photo around the cake led to a rather intimate few minutes, but everyone did their best to put on a smile, and all were eventually rewarded with a slice.

The after party in the bar was surprisingly tame, though people were able to let their hair down slightly more at the after after party. It was at the after after party that Pilly's ill conceived attempt at stealing Erik happened. Fortunately for all involved, it failed spectacularly when Pilly was unable to fathom how to work out the front door. He was quickly tackled by a hoard of angry current members, and Erik's life was once again in safe hands.

The Punt and Picnic was this year's Flossy Awards venue, postponed from the Annual Dinner for the sake of the ex-members. Due to a certain amount of forward thinking, each punt was given it's own supplies which meant a lack of punt raiding this year - though there's still time to correct for that in 7th week...



Flossy Award Winners

The Best Male Actor Award - Nick Scroxton for his stunning performance of dirty dancing at winter walking.

The Regal Icing Winter Walking Injury of the Year - Maddy Bunce for Christmas Cake related injuries at Winter Walking.

The Heston Blumenthal Award for Creative Cooking - Andrew Freer and Mike Beddington for Burger-in the hole and producing gravy without any typical gravy ingredients.

The Chris Seward Award for Longevity - Caroline Berry for being in OUSGG 10 years.

The 400th Postscript Editorial Recognition Award - James Baker

The Moneypenny Secretarial Award - Lizzy Horne for bringing her secretary shoes along to all the meetings as promised.

Journalist of the Year Award - Luke Cartey for writing down all of the summer trip quotes and leaving his notebook in France.

Intrepid Fresher of the Year - Nigel Taylor for braving N'n'N in his first term.

The Tolkien Literary Award - Timothy Driscoll for his published adventures of Erik the Panda.

The Raymond Briggs Award for Colouring In - Sam Snelson

Erik the Panda Award for Bravery - Michelle Barton for surviving being fed banana in cheap chicken soup.

300 Issues Ago...

After Ian's parting fling - the centenary edition of PostScript, not the Annual Dinner - the editorship has passed to a non-scientist who flatters himself that he is literate (do I hear cries of disbelief?). Well, almost. On a more sober note, I think thanks is due to Ian for his efforts as P.S.E. and especially for a hundredth edition that is hard to follow.

What's this?! A non-scientist in OUSGG?! Thank goodness those days are long behind us, eh?

[Ed. We like non-scientists really. Honest, we do! They just seem to scare a lot easier than scientist freshers.]

QuoteScript



Three quotes for you this issue, all taken from the pub after Photo Challenge. If you are (un?)fortunate to be in the vicinity of something quote worthy, don't forget to write it down and send it to postscript@ousgg.org.uk

My dream last night had erotic squash in it. It was brilliant!

Michelle Barton

That's not the sort of thing you want to hear with a mouthful.

Andrew Freer

Get some chips from a kebab van, and kidnap someone's girlfriend on the way.

Lizzy Horne

Erik I do!



The next issue of PostScript will be published on **Monday 8th June**.

Please submit your articles by **Friday 5th June**.