

Guild of Students: **Our History**

Contents

- 02 Introduction
- 03 A Brief History
- 07 University of Birmingham Special Collections
- 08 Democracy
- 11 Campaigns
- 14 Student Groups
- 17 Events
- 20 The Guild Building
- 23 Keep in Touch



Guild of Students Our History

The University of Birmingham Guild of Students (the Guild) represents students to the University and other organisations on the issues which matter most to Birmingham students. The Guild also helps students to develop skills outside of study, have fun, meet like-minded people and make sure they get the best experience from their time in Birmingham.

The Guild has an incredibly rich and diverse history (see timeline pages 3-6). As a founding member of the National Union of Students (NUS) in 1922, the Guild (which is over 130 years old) has accumulated numerous materials and artefacts including photographs, video footage, meeting minutes, reports, building plans, and publications. Today, the Guild of Students is a registered charity and the students' union for more than 28,000 studying at the University of Birmingham.

In 2009/10, a project was commissioned to organise the Guild's archive and map its history. The 'Guild of Students: Our History' is the culmination of that work. Whilst this work has now been

completed, the Guild is committed to continuing to record and document its future, and will ensure the archive is easily accessible for all.

The history of the Guild is plentiful and varied. For that reason this publication, a snapshot of the Guild's history, celebrates five key aspects of student life: democracy, campaigning, student groups, Guild events, and the Guild building.

The Guild plans to repeat this exercise in the future and therefore welcomes contributions in the form of memories, photographs and memorabilia (please see 'Keep in Touch' on page 23).



Introduction

"This publication provides a captivating account of the Guild's history since its establishment in 1880. Over 130 years old, the Guild of Students is steeped in history and has changed significantly over the years.

originally intended, to be the voice that represents Birmingham students to the University and beyond."

Andrew Vallance-Owen
President of the University of Birmingham Guild of Students (1974/5)

Chair of the University of Birmingham Guild of Students Trustee Board (2011 - present)



From my time as President in 1974/5, it has been fascinating to watch the Guild flourish and grow, and witness the development of the Students' Union into the Guild which exists today. I have very fond memories of my time at Birmingham; my affiliation is as such that I chose the Guild as the venue for my wedding reception in 1997. A wonderful day, at least until I was thrown into the Mermaid Fountain in my morning dress. Now, as Chair of the Guild's Trustee Board, I am proud to say that the essence of the Guild remains as it was



"Think back to when you first experienced the Guild. We all have our own unique story to tell - our own tale of what we did, how, when and where. That is the beauty of the Guild - everyone has their own piece of its history.

The Guild's purpose is the same now as it has always been - to make University life for students at Birmingham that much better. Although the people may be different, having looked at past pictures, clothing and hair styles have certainly changed but our values remain the same.

I am proud that our Guild has such a rich history, one unparalleled by many other institutions. From a founding member of the NUS, to the 1970s rent strike, pushing the liberation agenda to the forefront, helping battle apartheid and

demonstrating against a rise in tuition fees - we have all contributed to make the Guild what it is today.

The 'Guild of Students: Our History' is a snapshot of what has been uncovered in our archive, I hope you enjoy it."

Mark Harrop
President of the University of Birmingham Guild of Students (2011/12)



A Brief History of the Guild

PRE-GUILD

1828
Birmingham Medical School founded, a forerunner to the University of Birmingham.

1875
Josiah Mason founds the Mason Science College, based in Edmund Street.

1895
A canvassing sub-committee is formed in 1895, marking the beginning of the Union's official lobbying element.

1902
In the first ever recorded minutes of the Guild of Undergraduates Committee (March 11th), a sub-committee is formed, tasked with achieving the abolition of lectures and other academic commitments on a Wednesday afternoon to allow students to participate in sport and other extra-curricular activities.

1905
The 'University Club' (subsequently the Guild Club) opens in Great Charles Street.

1922
The National Union of Students (NUS) is created after the Inter-Varsity Association and the International Students Bureau agree to merge to promote, defend and extend the rights of students. The Guild is a founding member.



Edgbaston campus, the new Guild building



Guild Council (1930/31)

1930
The Guild officially moves into its new building on the Edgbaston campus.

The management of the Guild of Undergraduates and its policies passes from the 'Guild of Undergraduates Committee' to 'Guild Council'.

1933
The Union Committee orders the creation of a 'Black Book' containing reports of all incidents that take place. Included is an entry 'involving the unauthorised distribution of Communist literature'.

1940
An 'Air Raid Precautions Committee' is formed to safeguard University property. The Guild closes at 7pm each night in order to save costs, and obey the blackout regulations during the Battle of Britain.



Plans for further Guild extension, 1959

1950
The Guild opens a catering service providing food for over 1,000 students every lunchtime.

1957
A fire devastates large parts of the Guild's Edmund Street building.



The new Mermaid Fountain statue is lowered into place, 1961

1961
The Mermaid Fountain, designed by William James Bloye, an English sculptor, active in Birmingham either side of World War II, is installed, thus completing Mermaid Square.

1960
The Guild is extended further to accommodate a 'West Wing' that helps to form the square.

The University closes its Edmund Street Campus, meaning that all University and Guild operations are now based solely at the Edgbaston campus.

The role of Guild President becomes a full-time sabbatical post.



1880
Mason Science College opens.
Mason College Students' General Meeting establishes an 'Association of Students' known as Mason College Union; seen as the birth of the modern Guild of Students.
Josiah Mason is Life President.

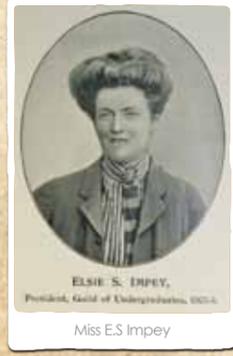


Josiah Mason

1900
Joseph Chamberlain MP successfully secures a Royal Charter for the University of Birmingham (an amalgamation of Birmingham Medical School and the Mason Science College) and becomes its first Chancellor (March 24th).

Mason College Union becomes 'Birmingham University Union'. The word 'Union' however refers to the facilities used by the students, rather than the student body itself. The Union is overseen by a Union Committee, who are tasked with running the Union and organising social events for students.

A 'Guild of Undergraduates' is formed, see page 11 for more information.



ELSI E. IMPEY, President, Guild of Undergraduates, U.G.A.
Miss E.S. Impey

1907
The first female Guild President, Miss E.S. Impey, is elected.
The University authorises a grant of £40 per annum to the Guild.

1909
A compulsory annual subscription fee is introduced for students to gain access to Union buildings.
King Edward opens the University buildings at Edgbaston.



King Edward opens the University buildings at Edgbaston.

1921
The 'Birmingham University Hospital Carnival' begins.

1928
Construction work begins on the Guild building, which is located on the east side of Edgbaston campus.



Construction work on the Guild building

1932
The 'Saturday Hop' launches at the Guild.

1936
The Guild employs a permanent member of staff, and is the first student body in the country to do so.
Guild Council unanimously passes a motion to introduce seminars for all students.

1939
Guild News runs numerous front page articles castigating the Guild for its perceived favouritism towards its Edgbaston building over its Edmund Street building (March 1939).



Guild news article

1948
Construction work begins on a 'South Wing' extension to the Guild building, made possible by a £20,000 donation from Sir Charles Hyde, proprietor of the Birmingham Post and its associated papers - who provided £100,000 for the original Guild building in 1928.
Guild Theatre Group (GTG) is formed.

1958
The University Chancellor and former Prime Minister Anthony Eden congratulate Guild News on its 21st birthday (February 1958).

1959
An Elections Committee is formed to oversee Guild elections.

1962
The 'Mermaid Bar' opens within the Guild (formerly on the Edmund Street Campus). The bar is later named 'Fingals', and then 'Beorma Bar' (2000).
'Guild News' renamed as 'Redbrick'.

1963
The Student Executive sends a letter of condolence to the White House signed by over 1,000 students, following the assassination of President Kennedy.

1967

Carnival RAG cause chaos in the city after planting a fake bomb on a building site to raise publicity.



Redbrick front page features Carnival's bomb hoax

1969

The Guild President, Mike Terry, is arrested after protesting at a demonstration against Enoch Powell.

1971

The role of the Vice President becomes a full-time sabbatical post.

1974

Junior Common Room (JCR) Committees are established in Halls of Residence to provide social activities and political representation to students.



Roy Evans, first black President

1977

The first black President, Roy Evans, is elected.

1979

Students' Union financing is changed to automatically include a Students' Union fee in the student grant, rather than the student paying the Union for membership separately. This leads to enhanced negotiations with Universities nationally over block grants.

Duran Duran perform at the Guild.

1980

The Guild celebrates its centenary year. A 'Rent Fund Account' is set up by the 'Rent Strike Committee' (Guild Officers and Junior Common Room Committees (JCR)). 856 students pay their hall fees into this account instead of paying the University. When the strike ends in 1981 (following various concessions, including a £6 'linen allowance' and a commitment not to pursue legal action against the Guild) the Committee agrees to keep the interest accrued on the account and distributes it to the JCRs.



Guild centenary plaque

1991

A LGB (Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual) Committee is established.

1996

The Birmingham University Radio Network (BURN FM) is founded and begins broadcasting.

The Advice & Representation Centre (ARC) opens in the Guild.

1994

The 1994 Education Act passes through Parliament. Early drafts of the bill (including a section making all payments to the NUS illegal) prove hugely controversial and - following a high profile campaign from the NUS - the bill is watered down significantly, though all students now have the right to 'opt out' of their Students' Union.

2004

After concerns of competition with the new 'Hub' social area on the Vale run by the University, Guild Council approves a motion allowing the Executive to look into relocating the Guild elsewhere on campus (this idea is eventually scrapped).

The Government votes to introduce 'Top Up' Fees for tuition, meaning all students now pay £3,000 annually. The motion only passes by five votes; the closest the Labour Government ever comes to electoral defeat.

2003

Guild Officers are embroiled in legal controversy after apparently censoring a flyer advertising the forthcoming visit of anti-war MP George Galloway.

Birmingham students mobilise in London to protest against the proposed introduction of 'Top Up' tuition fees.

2006

The Community Warden Scheme is established in partnership with the University. The scheme employs students who proactively work to improve the standard of living for both students and local residents in Selly Oak.

Guild President attracts national media attention with his 'Ding Dong the Witch is Dead' Guild Council motion, calling for a party on the date of former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's death (the motion narrowly falls).

The Guild enters into partnership deals with city centre clubs as a means of generating extra revenue and promoting variety to students.

2009

Guild Officers organise a campus demonstration against rising Hall Fees.

The Guild opens its own student lettings agency, the SHAC, a new business venture designed to both improve housing standards in the local area and diversify Guild income streams.

2011

Voter turnout in the Officer Team Elections breaks all current records with 7,193 students voting, representing 27% of the student population.

Comic Eddie Izzard pays a visit to the Guild (1st May) to persuade students to vote 'yes' in the Government's Alternative Vote referendum.

Vice President (Welfare), Johnny Davis becomes the first Sabbatical Officer to successfully win re-election for a second year in office.

2012

The Officer Team successfully lobby the University to trial a 24 hour library provision.

1970

1968

The Guild publishes a seminal report on the need for student representation on University committees including Senate and Council. Negotiations between the Guild and University break down, resulting in over a thousand students occupying the Great Hall, Vice Chancellor's Office and other administrative areas.

Mike Terry OBE is elected as President.

"One serious event which always sticks in my mind occurred around the end of term in December 1968, the year of considerable upheaval and troubles on campus. Some bright spark decided to cheer us all up by painting bright red the private parts of the rearing horse statue outside the Union."

(Deborah Herrington, Your Memories, University of Birmingham Alumni Website).

1973

Prime Minister Edward Heath visits campus, leading to student protests over the low level of grants and financial aid available.

Paul McCartney and Wings perform in the Deb Hall.



Paul McCartney and Wings, Debating Hall

1975

Following a proposed 30% rise in Halls of Residence fees, the Guild Executive calls a rent strike, attracting support from thousands of students.

The Guild President gives up the chairmanship of Guild Council in favour of a new 'Independent Chair'

The Queen visits the University.



The Queen visits the University.

1980

1981

1,600 students take part in a one night 'work-in' following drastic cuts to University spending and library opening hours.

1987

The Redbrick newspaper becomes free for all readers following greater financial support from the Guild and external advertisers.

1982

The Guild receives a 5% cut in funding following reductions in spending by the University, leading to a focus on developing commercial services in order to increase income.

Baths and showers are available in the Guild for students. "Bath plugs can be hired on surrender of a Guild Card, and towels are available for 10p".

1990

1990

The Snooker Room is replaced by 'Berlin's Bar'.

1993

The University provides funding for Student Representatives based in academic departments.

'Regent's Bar' becomes 'Old Joe's Bar'.



Old Joe's sign

1997

'Fab', a new Saturday night event opens at the Guild, and swiftly becomes hugely popular with students looking to avoid the expense of the city centre at the weekend.

1999

The Job Zone opens, providing students with opportunities to find part-time work.

All major sports clubs and sports societies are handed over to the University.

A sabbatical position, Vice President (Student Activities & Development) aimed at supporting groups and societies is created.

2000

2001

The Student Mentor Scheme, based in Halls of Residence, is established.

The Guild takes over the bars in Mason and Chamberlain halls, which are open until the development of the Hub in 2004.

2000

'Beorma Bar' opens.

Carnival RAG organise their first 'Carnage' charity Bar Crawl in the city centre.

The Queen visits for the University's centenary.



The Queen visits



New Joe's bar

2008

Online voting is used for the first time in Guild Officer Elections, and special 'voting pads' are purchased for use in Guild Council meetings.

Jennifer Larbie is elected as the first female black President.

Students vote 'yes' in a campus wide referendum to approve the Guild's transition to a Company Limited by Guarantee. A new Trustee Board is established, made up of Officers, students, alumni and lay members.

2010

2010

The University hosts the third Prime Ministerial TV debate for the General Election (the first such debates to be broadcast live in the run-up to a UK election). The Guild and NUS actively lobby members to 'vote for students' in key marginal seats.

A £4million refurbishment of the Guild's ground floor is completed.

The Guild is awarded a bronze Students' Union Evaluation Initiative (SUEI) award, only the 11th Union in the country to be accredited.

The Guild Officer Team leads protests on campus after the Government's advisory panel (the Browne Review) proposes a rise in tuition fees. The University's Vice Chancellor sits on the panel.

The Graduation Ball is held on campus.

The Guild becomes a registered charity.



Graduation Ball 2010

University of Birmingham Special Collections

The Special Collections library and staff team have been an essential source of knowledge in compiling this publication. Below is a comment from Special Collections on the archive they hold, with particular reference to Guild of Students material.

The Cadbury Research Library: Special Collections holds the institutional archives of the University of Birmingham, including records of the Guild of Students. These records include material relating to the Guild's predecessor, Mason College Union, which date back to 1881.

The archive contains minutes of Guild committees; Guild publications including copies of 'Guild News' and 'Redbrick', and other student magazines including copies of 'The Mermaid' which were issued from 1904 to the 1970s; Guild handbooks and annual reports; and a large number of photographs relating to student activities from the 1920s onwards.

The Guild of Students' archive is a fantastic resource for anyone interested in student life at the University of Birmingham - from the institution's beginnings as Mason Science College in the 1880s through to the early 1990s. Copies of Redbrick continue to be collected and Special Collections have recently been involved in an alumni-funded Heritage Learning project to begin to create a contemporary archive documenting aspects of student life in 2011 and 2012.

The Guild of Students' archive, and the University archive as a whole, is open to all interested researchers, including staff and students of the University, alumni, and members of the public. The Cadbury Research Library: Special Collections is housed in a purpose-built facility in the Muirhead Tower building on the Edgbaston campus with a dedicated reading room for researchers to consult material. The archive collections and rare books are kept in purpose-built stores which provide the correct environmental conditions for their preservation and safe-keeping.

To register to use the Cadbury Research Library: Special Collections go to special-coll.bham.ac.uk/index.shtml

The catalogue for the Guild of Students' archive is available to view online calmview.bham.ac.uk

For any other queries about the University archives or the Guild of Students' material email special-collections@bham.ac.uk or telephone 0121 414 5839

'Follow us' on Twitter @CadburyRL



Democracy

Every year, the Guild Officer Elections give students the chance to determine who will lead and represent them. The first President of the Guild of Students, Uley Sargeant, was recorded twenty-one years into the Guild's existence, in 1901. Other roles included the Warden, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer. The first female President, Miss E. J. Impey was elected in 1907.

In 1937 Guild Council agreed that all candidates for President must have been a member of Guild Council in order to be eligible to run, and in 1959 an elections committee was formed to oversee all Guild elections.

The President became a full-time sabbatical position in 1960 and it was not until 11 years later that the Vice President also became a full-time sabbatical position.

Since the 1960s, the President and Vice President were elected annually until the 1970s when, on a number of occasions, two Vice Presidents were in office at one time. It was also common for Presidents to be male and Vice Presidents female.

For some, a year in office could be turbulent. In 1975 Guild President, Andrew Vallance-Owen and Vice President, Tim Owen, resigned over education cuts only to be re-elected two months later (May). Andrew Vallance-Owen returned to the Guild in 2011 as Chair of the Trustee Board.

The number of Officers increased in the 1980s ranging from three to four, with four Vice Presidents existing in the early to mid-1990s, growing to five in the latter half of the decade. During the last ten years, Officer Teams included as many as seven Vice Presidents. Today, the Guild elects one President and six Vice Presidents.

It was not until 1977 that the Guild elected its first black President, Roy Evans, and in 2008 the first female black President, Jennifer Larbie. In 2011, the Guild re-elected its first Sabbatical Officer, Vice President (Welfare), Johnny Davis for a second term. It was during this year that the Guild achieved its highest ever voter turnout of 7,193 (approximately 27% of the electorate) in the Officer Team elections.

In 2008, the Guild introduced online voting for its Officer Team elections, whilst historically voting always took place via paper ballot.

During 2008, a campus wide referendum was also held to approve the Guild's transition to a Company Limited by Guarantee. 4,010 students voted, around 14% of the total student population, and well over the 2,853 students necessary to achieve quorum. Of these, 3,740 voted 'Yes', 197 voted 'No' and 73 abstained. This transition sanctioned by the referendum included the creation of a Trustee Board composed of the President, Vice President (Democracy & Resources), Vice President (Education), and Vice President (Student Activities & Development), students, University personnel, alumni and lay members.

A second referendum took place in 2010 asking students to vote on a reform of the Guild's democratic structures. Following a yes vote, a series of theme related forums were introduced and Guild Council streamlined.



In 1968, Mike Terry OBE was elected as President. During his year of office the South African Spingbok rugby tour took place in Britain and Mike, along with other Students' Union Presidents, arranged anti-apartheid demonstrations. In 1969 he became NUS Secretary and led the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) through two decades of campaigning and lobbying, until the mission was complete in 1994. After the first democratic elections in South Africa, AAM changed its name to ACTSA: Action for Southern Africa, and still exists today.

- 1 Guild Council predominately made up of female students due to the war (1915/16)
- 2 Guild President, Arthur Large, being 'christened' in the fountain (1961)
- 3 Another President being 'christened' in the fountain



GUILD OF STUDENTS
PRESIDENTIAL & VICE-PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTIONS, 1975/76—13th MARCH, 1975

BALLOT PAPER

1 ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT:

Write :
* 1 ' opposite the name of your first choice.
* 2 ' opposite the name of your second choice.
* 3 ' opposite the name of your third choice,
etc.

<i>Names of Candidates</i>	<i>Order of Preference</i>
BILL DANIELS	
KATH HARTLEY	
STEVE MOON	
BOB NEWMAN	
P. RABIE	

2 ELECTION OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT:

Write :
* 1 ' opposite the name of your first choice.
* 2 ' opposite the name of your second choice.
* 3 ' opposite the name of your third choice,
etc.

<i>Names of Candidates</i>	<i>Order of Preference</i>
NICK BARTON	
GORDON BRIDGWOOD	
SIMON DAWSON	
JOHN GRAHAM	
TONY WARNE	



4 Mike Terry, Guild President 1968/69, is arrested at a demonstration against Enoch Powell (October 1969)

6 Mark Cassidy, Guild President (1979/80)

5 A.N. Allen, Guild President (1964/65)

8 A candidate in the elections; the Grey Dalek (1977)

13

9 Paper voting ballot station

10 Charles Clarke, NUS President, (1975) speaking in the Guild Council Chambers, later became a Labour MP

11 Mike Terry OBE, Guild President (1968/69), later NUS Secretary

12 Roy Evans, the Guild's first black president (1977/78)

13 Sabbatical Officers quit over education cuts (1975)

14 Kirsten Jongberg, Guild President (2002/03)

15 Guild of Students election ballot paper (1975)

16 Sabbatical Officer Team (1997)

17 Tim Reith, Guild President (2000/01)



20 Mike Stanley, Guild President (1959/60)

21 Officer Team (1977/78)

22 Election candidates (2010)

18 Election candidates (2011)

19 Cat Little, Guild President elected with 80% of the votes (2001/02)



23 Inflatible sign encouraging the student body to vote (2008)



23

Campaigns

Guild Officers have created and nurtured campaigns to meet manifesto pledges and support national causes affecting students.

The launch of a canvassing sub-committee in 1895 marked the beginning of the official lobbying element of the Guild, or Association of Students as it was known then. When formed the Guild's intention was clear; to be the 'recognised means of communication between undergraduates and the University authorities', and the Guild was offered three representatives at University Court. One of the first sub-committees created by the Guild of Undergraduates Committee was tasked with abolishing lectures on Wednesday afternoons so students could pursue sporting and other extra-curricular activities.

In 1930 management of the Guild and its policies passed from the Guild of Undergraduates Committee to Guild Council; members were elected from academic constituencies and met fortnightly under the chairmanship of the President. In 1936 Guild Council unanimously passed a motion calling for the introduction of seminars for all students; at the time seminars were unheard of across the country.

Thirty-two years on, in 1968, the Guild published a report into the need for student representation on University committees. Negotiations between the Guild and the University subsequently broke down resulting in more than one thousand students occupying the Great Hall and other administration areas. A General Meeting of the Guild of Undergraduates, held outside

the library, finally ended the sit-in, something the University had never experienced before.

In 1975 the Guild Executive called a rent strike following a proposed 30% rise in Halls of Residence fees, which attracted support from thousands of students. In 1980 a 'Rent Fund Account' was set up by the 'Rent Strike Committee' and more than 800 students paid their hall fees into this account instead of paying the University.

In the 1980s, 1,600 students took part in a one night work-in at the library due to drastic spending and library hour cuts, and, as the Miner's Strike erupted nationally, campus was awash with demonstrations in support and opposition of the Government. Guild Council narrowly voted not to support the miners which caused uproar and resulted in vandalism of the Guild building.

Following the millennium, campaigns centred on rising tuition fees. In 2003 Birmingham students mobilised in London to protest against the proposed introduction to the 'Top Up' tuition fee. In 2010 the Guild's Officer Team led hundreds of students onto campus for the 'Browne Barrier' protest against the Government's Browne Review, which included Birmingham's Vice Chancellor on the review panel after it recommended lifting the cap on tuition fees.



1



5



9



2



6



10



3



7



11



4



8



12

- 1 Mass sit-in in the Great Hall (1968)
- 2 End Martial Law in Iran Demonstration (1973)
- 3 Miners picket
- 4 Anti-education cuts march
- 5 Protest against the rise in International Student Fees (1967)
- 6 Protestors during the Queen's visit (1975)
- 7 Protest against funding cuts (1982)
- 8 Demonstration outside the Guild against Enoch Powell (1969)
- 9 General meeting of the Guild that ended the one week sit in (1968)
- 10 Spartacist demonstration (1980)
- 11 Guild Council votes not to support the miners (1984)
- 12 Hyde Park CND demo (1984)

Student Groups

Student groups provide students with the opportunity to embrace student life outside of study. The first societies, or student groups, were formed in 1880 shortly after the 'Mason College Union' was established; these included the Botanical Society and the Cycling Society. Steadily over the years the number of societies began to grow.

A small number of societies have continued to flourish to this day since their inception at the establishment of the 'Mason College Union'. As the years have progressed, the rising number of societies has led to an increase in the diversity of issues that they engage with. This includes the establishment of international societies such as Deutscher Verein and political societies, as well as awareness societies which have also been popular among students. The 1970s saw the establishment of the Women's Liberation Group and the Gay Liberation Front, as well as other lifestyle choices groups such as Vegetarian Society which was established in 1971.

The Guild has always had a variety of student groups. For example, the Columbus Society was open to all students with a 'mental age between 4 and 8'; the Abolition of Thursday Nights organised group outings for the sole purpose of enjoyment; and the Seal Society whose aim was to train a seal to swim the English Channel and many more. The Debating Society, which is still running today, has had an array of speakers one of whom was Sir Winston Churchill.

Media groups have always proved popular, and over the years have grown in both size and diversity. In 1936, the University newspaper 'Guild News' launched, publishing local and campus news, in later years the newspaper was renamed as 'Redbrick'. In 1987 it became free for all readers following greater financial support from the Guild. Redbrick, still in print today, now hosts an award winning website. As well as BURN FM (Birmingham University Radio Network), which was established in 1996, students also produced a short

programme named 'Concourse' which was transmitted twice weekly on Radio Birmingham and ran from 1970. G:TV is the University of Birmingham's own student run television station which first began broadcasting in 1968, and within three years had broadcast interviews with a diverse range of guests from John Cleese and Ernie Wise to Mary Whitehouse. In 1971 it was awarded first prize in a television competition organised by the National Student Television Association (NASTA) for producing a short light entertainment programme.

In 1921 'The Birmingham University Hospital Carnival' began. The annual students' carnival diverted its proceeds to the needs of the young, old and handicapped after the introduction of the National Health Service. Carnival RAG (Raising and Giving) the successor to the original society organised its first charity bar crawl in the city centre in 2000 and now runs numerous charitable events. Today, the Guild boasts several student groups primarily created to give to back to the local community, such as Kids Adventure and the Selly Oak Play Scheme.

Theatre performances have been a strong feature of University and Guild life. In 1926 Birmingham University Dramatic Society presented a play called 'Salma' which appeared in the local newspaper. In 1948 Guild Theatre Group was formed and today there are several theatre groups performing musicals, comedy and improvisation, traditional and original theatre such as Article 19, Gilbert & Sullivan, and Watch This.



1 Birmingham University Dramatic Society presents 'Salma' (1926) 2 Men's Tennis Team (1944/45)



13 Students attend a demonstration



14 Guild of Students' protest
15 Liam Byrne MP, Wheelie Bin campaign (2005/06)
16 Browne Barrier protest against the Government's Browne Review on campus (2011)



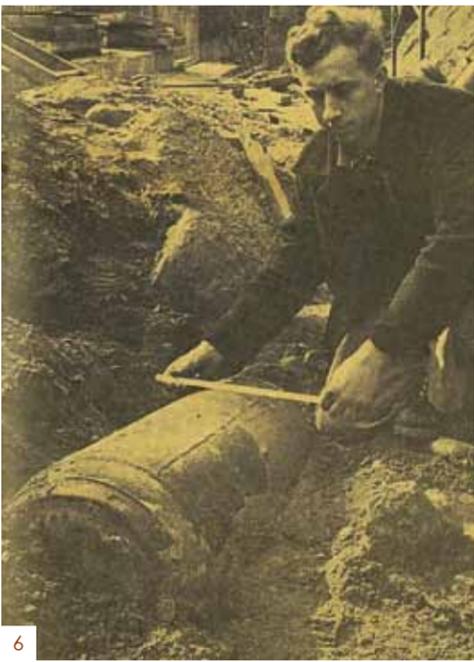
17 Letter to Tony Blair, Prime Minister, against the introduction of the Top Up fees (2006)
18 Get Naked for Fair Trade (2010)
19 Fees protest (2006)
20 Pro-choice demo against anti-abortion activists (2008)
21 Kill The Bill' protest



16 EDUCATION IS NOT A BUSINESS
19
21



This is to certify that
Chris Day
has decided Thursday Nights are boring.
Accordingly the above-named has become a full and associate member of
THE SOCIETY FOR THE ABOLITION OF THURSDAY NIGHTS
Date: 26th November Chm. Peter Keel



From: Mrs EDWINA CURRIE MP
HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA
Secretary: 01-219 4325
01-219 9611

9/2

Dear Philip,

Thank you for your kind invitation for 28th February. I'm afraid there's no chance of my coming, because

(a) I'm on a Standing Committee at present which meets Tuesdays and Thursdays - anyway I'm her-pained and can't get out of here easily;

(b) PR strikes me as the most boring topic you could possibly choose!

Best regards
Edwina Currie



3 Carnival Float depicting a mermaid (1959)

4 Guild Theatre Group's performance of 'The Sorcerer' (1957)

5 Poynting Physics 'Kremlin Krumbler', the winning Carnival Float (1956)

6 Carnival's hoax bomb planted in Birmingham city centre as a publicity stunt (1967)

7 Guild Theatre Group (1967)

8 The control panel in the Guild television studio (1968)

9 Medical students wash cars for charity (1968)

10 Bhangra Society (2009)

11 Humans Vs Zombies Society

12 Dying fly world record attempt (1981)

13 Society Freshers' Fair (1983)

14 Mick's Café Race (1981)

15 Debating Society in action

16 Society for the Abolition of Thursday Night's membership card (1974)

17 The Columbus Society

18 BRMB Guild TV recording (1974)

19 Life Saving Society (2008)

20 Talking Hands (2000)

21 Carnival RAG (2011)

22 Edwina Currie declining an invitation from the Debating Society (1984)

23 Alternative Performing Arts Society (2000)

Events

The Guild of Students has always been the hub for events and socialising with fellow students.

In 1905 the 'University Club' (subsequently known as the Guild Club) opened in Great Charles Street and included a designated room for concerts known as the Founders Room.

When the Guild moved to the Edgbaston building in 1930 a ball and formal dinner was held to celebrate the grand opening. In 1932 the 'Saturday Hop' was launched and is still being held today, although the music and name have changed over the years.

Student events have also been big successes. In 1950 the Carnival Ball was high on the social calendar, and in the 1970s the Guild's Deb Hall hosted Paul McCartney and Wings, and Duran Duran.

In 1981, in order to celebrate the Guild Centenary, a number of events were planned not only to celebrate but also to raise money for a community centre for the residents of Selly Oak. In 2010 the Graduation Ball returned to campus - a music stage, silent disco and funfair were all located in Chancellor's Court under the clock tower.

It is not only balls and music events that have proved to be big hits in the Guild's history - in 1975 the Queen came to visit the University and the Guild, and in 2010 the University hosted the third Prime Ministerial TV debate in the first General Election to hold them.



- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Opening ceremony of the University with King Edward VII (1909) | 7 Calvin Harris performs in the Deb Hall (2009) |
| 2 Mr Heath visits the University, students protest at the low level of student grants (1973) | 8 The Pirates play at the Guild (1978) |
| 3 Duran Duran perform at the Guild (1979) | 9 Paul McCartney and Wings play in the Debating Hall at the Guild (1973) |
| 4 Stanley Baldwin visit (1927) | 10 The Queen visits again (1975) |
| 5 Opening of North Gate (1930) | 11 Radio Stars in the Deb Hall (1979) |
| 6 Duke of Edinburgh visits, Electronic Engineering (1963) | 12 Ralph McTell in the Deb Hall (1974) |



12



13



14



17

The Guild Building

Over the decades, the Guild building has undergone a number of transformations. It was not until 1930 that the Guild officially moved to the Edgbaston site where it remains today. This followed a £100,000 donation by Sir Charles Hyde, proprietor of the Birmingham Post, and two years of construction. The building on completion included a hall, refectory, library, tea room, common room, and rest-rooms.

During the 1940s work began on the 'South Wing' of the Guild after a further donation of £20,000 from Sir Charles Hyde, and in 1950 a further extension was designed to accommodate a catering service 'what is probably the largest student-managed catering concern in the country'.

In 1960, with the addition of the 'West Wing', Mermaid Square was formed. A year later, Mermaid Square was completed with the design, by Birmingham sculptor William Bloye, and installation of the Mermaid Fountain.

The 1980s witnessed the first ever fast food outlet built within a Students' Union with the opening of Priestley's Fast Food, the Guild's answer to McDonald's.

In 2010, the Guild celebrated the completion of a £4million redevelopment. The development started as a concept in 2005 following student feedback. The project involved 18 months of extensive building work and three development phrases. The refurbished premises included, a new Joe's bar, membership area to house student services such as the Job Zone and Advice & Representation Centre (ARC), and redeveloped Mermaid Square.



- 1 Edgbaston campus, the Guild building is to the far right (1931)
- 2 An artist's impression of the extended Guild building (1956)
- 3 New wing of the Guild building (1958)



15

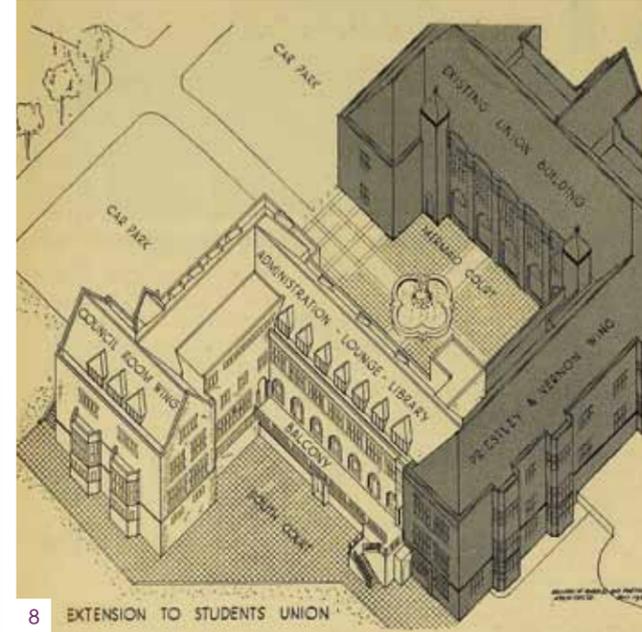
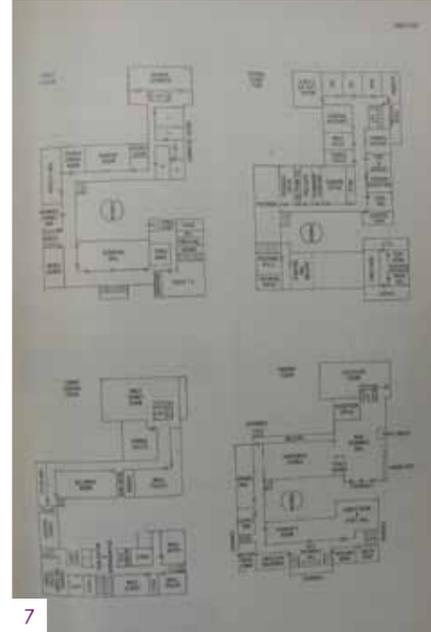
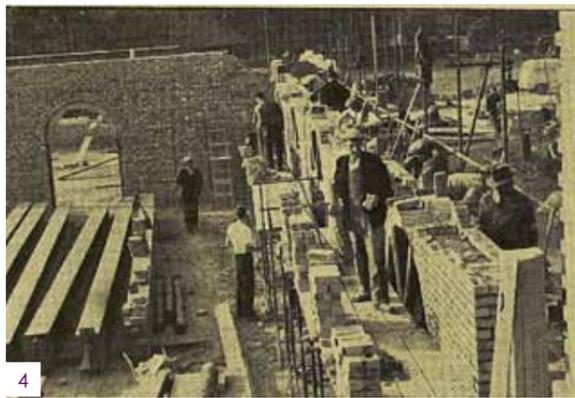


16



18

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <p>12 Winston Churchill attends a debate organised by the Debating Society (1983)</p> <p>13 Tony Blair Prime Minister visits campus (2001)</p> <p>14 The Queen visits for the University's centenary (2000)</p> | <p>15 General Elections Debate Day (2010)</p> <p>16 Minister David Lammy MP meets the Officer Team (2008)</p> | <p>17 Labrinth plays at the Guild's Gradball (2011)</p> <p>18 John Denham MP meets with the Guild President, Dora Meredith (2010)</p> |
|---|---|---|



4 The new Guild extension (1959)
 5 Guild from Edgbaston Park Road (1958)
 6 Last game on the Guild's croquet lawn before extension work begins (1959)

7 Guild of Students' floor plan (1983)
 8 Plans for further Guild extension (1959)
 9 The Guild building gets flooded (1962)

10 Guild coffee lounge (1981)
 11 View of the Guild (1982)
 12 The new Mermaid Fountain statue is lowered into place (1961)

13 Beorma Bar opens (2000)
 14 Guild shop (1981)
 15 Edgbaston campus, the new union building is at the bottom of the picture (1938)

16 Reception (pre-2010)
 17 Membership area (2010)
 18 Mermaid Square (2010)
 19 The new Joe's bar (2010)

Keep in touch

For more information on the Guild's history project or if you wish to get in touch and share your memories, please contact the Guild at:

Email: history@guild.bham.ac.uk

Web: guildofstudents/ourhistory

Twitter: @GOSHhistory

Facebook: Search 'Friends of the Guild'

