

# NUSCR NATTER



Photo by Roger Lawson

## President's Ponderings

Welcome to the 2018 NUSCR Natter.

As you read on, you'll find it has been another great year for NUSCR with lots of ringing, drinking, tours, parties and other social activities. I even remember some of them. Well, I have photos anyway.

The 60th Anniversary Dinner in February was a huge success. I'd just like to add my thanks to all those who helped make it happen and were able to get there on the day, especially those who pretended to enjoy my awful jokes. It was great to see so many of you. Because of its popularity, however, the dinner was over-subscribed and I would like to offer my sincere apologies to those who were not able to get tickets in the end. I do hope we can see you at another dinner soon. There is copy of the group photo on the last page here but if you would like a print for yourself let me know.

NUSCR members, past and present, have continued to make a huge contribution to ringing in Nottingham, not just at All Saints but at many other towers in the city and beyond (17 Coniston Rd is again the top "tower" for quarters in the Guild this year). It was particularly gratifying to see NUSCR's contribution recognised by an ART Award, shared with our friends at BUSCR in Birmingham, for "a University Society that has made a Significant Contribution to Promoting Ringing to Younger People".

That contribution has continued with another bumper crop of freshers this year. There are several who are new to ringing, but are making great progress, and others who are more established ringers, including some familiar faces. Welcome to you all.

This year has also seen the wedding of Christian and Esther Brown, the birth of Tom and Christine Langton's second child, Edward, and the 25th wedding anniversary of Michael and Rachel Chilvers. If you have any other news of, or from, past members please let me know, especially if it would be appropriate to share at the next NUSCR dinner.

I know Ed has spent some time updating the format of NUSCR Natter, I do hope you like the results but please let me know what you think.

Happy ringing,

**Roger.**

**President NUSCR**

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### Notable Events This Year

- Achieved "not last" at the Tewkesbury Shield
- HLF Application is now submitted
- NUSCR won the NUA Striking Competition!
- NUSCR won The ART Award for a University Society that has made a Significant Contribution to Promoting Ringing to Younger People



## Masters Mutterings

Taking over from Vic at the AGM in February was a slightly overwhelming feeling to say the least. My year as a fresher saw NUSCR's 60th Birthday; a huge year with the NUA in Nottingham, the 60th Dinner and all sorts in between. That said, Master was a role I had hoped for and I looked forward to what lay ahead of me!

As with every year, there was little time to settle into the role with Crawford cup fast impending. NUSCR has no shortage of excellent ringers who have won many a striking competition, however the wedding of Christian and Esther meant a lot of NUSCR were away. Still, through some last minute searching I found a band who did us proud.

As the year has progressed, the day-to-day running of NUSCR became natural and practices maintained decent attendance, decent ringing and of course, decent drinking.

Like last year, we had an outstanding influx of new members to the society, all of whom fit superbly into the society's ethos. Regular attendees include Ann, Chris, Colm Dan, Ed, Eli, Eloise, Emily, Estella, Fiona, Laura, Rebecca and Tom. It has been an absolute pleasure to welcome them to NUSCR and I look forward to introducing them to you in February

In welcoming new people to the society, we have naturally gained a whole host of people new to ringing. Realising that practice already had lots to get through, I set about the task of organising some extra teaching with the other experienced members of the society, and they have progressed quickly thanks to it. With the addition of more experienced ringers we have had some very good surprise major, particularly Yorkshire and Cambridge, practices also feature Grandsire and Plain Bob Caters as well as Little Bob and Pain Bob Royal regularly.

NUSCR's Social events have been plentiful this year with regular Friday pub sessions as well as the usual trips to Nottingham's Goose Fair, Bonfire Night and the Christmas Market. Along side the social events we have had a number of tours this year and their reports feature later in this edition of the Natter. Do take time to read them and see what we've been up to! My thanks go to all those that have helped with the organisation, transport and attendance for all of our tours, making everything NUSCR do an unmitigated success.

Finally, I wish to thank my committee and of course Roger for working with me to make, what I hope has been an enjoyable year for everyone.

**Ed Walker**

## Peal Secretary's Scribblings

This year NUSCR haven't been as busy as previous years with regards to ringing quarter peals as a society (although our members certainly haven't slowed down!). In 2018 we've scored 74 quarters – 6 in tower and 68 in hand – and 3 peals: one of NUSCR Royal for the 60<sup>th</sup> dinner followed by two to celebrate the wedding of Christian and Esther Brown!

NUSCR have had plenty of notable firsts and milestones again this year, a small selection of which includes: Alex Speakman's first Quarter; firsts for NUSCR for Harvey P, Lena R, Ann T, Estella H, and Ed M; first spliced surprise for Adam W and Lydia P; 50<sup>th</sup> quarter for Lydia P and Ed W as well as the 350<sup>th</sup> quarter for Christian Brown.

We have rung for some notable events throughout the year: Christian and Esther's wedding, the 60th Dinner and Remembrance Sunday, along with many other celebrations including births and graduations!

With the number of new and upcoming ringers in NUSCR continuing to rise I look forward to what we can achieve in the next few years!

**Adam Wilmott**



## Dinner Weekend: NUSCR's 60th Birthday!

The weekend got off to a flying start when the annual dinner weekend peal was scored. For NUSCR's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday the obvious method choice was NUSCR Surprise Royal which was rung at All Saints' in a time of 3h 2m. The band was chosen to include as many past masters and past Presidents as possible. It was a challenge and thanks to the experience and skill from the older generations it was successful – congratulations to all of the band. The band then piled into the available cars and journeyed to Beeston to join the rest of NUSCR waiting in the Star Inn. Many celebratory pints were then shared with friends old and new.

The Dinner Day Tour began at Clifton Holy Trinity. Many of us squashed onto the very busy tram out to Clifton and arrived to the first ringing of the day. The 'games room' out the back of the ringing chamber provided entertainment for those not ringing. Sadly, the team building exercises did not improve the quality of the ringing from certain individuals (you know who you are!).

Following on from Clifton, it was a dash in the rain to the tram to get to St Peter's in the city centre. The tower quickly filled up with late arrivals, those travelling from further afield and the sleepy heads recovering from the heavy night before. The ringing chamber was bursting at the seams so a large proportion of us resorted to waiting on the roof. In traditional NUSCR style there was some unusual ringing; the rounds on 13 provided many laughs and even more when attempting to stand all 13 at backstroke.

Due to the fantastic turnout we struggled to fit into a single venue for lunch! The party split between two Wetherspoons pubs; The Roebuck, Nottingham and The Last Post, Beeston. A few pints were drunk, but there wasn't long before it was time for ringing at St John's, Beeston.

After ringing at Beeston, it was time for everyone to put on their posh frocks and for the pre-dinner drinks to start flowing. The committee house was full of people, with Vic on the phone to Roger sorting out last minute details and last-minute ironing of dinner shirts going on in the dining room. With the visiting friends from BUSCR staying in the committee house, people were running around like headless chickens trying not to fall over each other.

The table entertainment, raffle prizes and committee were kindly chauffeured to the venue by Ellis, who then returned to the committee house and the BUSCR members. Once at the venue, the committee diligently set to work to dress the tables and manoeuvre the birthday cake into prime position on the top table. A huge congratulations and thank you to Emma Jones for the wonderful cake! Guests began arriving at 7.00pm and were greeted by a champagne reception; a lovely addition helping the 60<sup>th</sup> feeling like a really special celebration. As the room began to fill with NUSCR members from every generation it was lovely to be able to talk to people about their experiences of being a member of NUSCR.

Dinner was announced, and the room turned into a frenzy, with all 120 guests trying to navigate the seating plan. The table of freshers were seated directly in front of the top table; a decision which Vic later regretted! The first course was brought out and we were treated to a delicious tomato soup. The main was equally scrumptious and I was told by experienced dinner-attendees that it was some of the best food we have had in years.

During dessert, it was noticed that both Vic and Roger were frantically scribbling on pieces of paper. Turns out their speeches were being written ready for imminent delivery! Can't say I blame them with everything else they had had to organise. After the plates were cleared and coffee was served, it was time for some ringing. The hand bell touch was flawless, with members not ringing putting in the bobs with poorly timed party popper detonations.

Then it was time for the guest speakers. As it was a special occasion, we were treated to two guest speakers. NUSCR was very privileged to welcome Christopher O'Mahoney, President of the Central Council. His speech was very enjoyable, with many anecdotes and laughs shared. Our second guest speaker was Jack Page, a Birmingham ringer and a friend of many members of NUSCR.

Jack's speech was based on the children's story 'We're going on a bear hunt' but transformed to have a ring theme. His tale of 'We're going on an outing' was very amusing and (having had a reasonable quantity of alcohol) went down an absolute scream with NUSCR. Many thanks to both guest speakers for joining us in our birthday celebration.

With the meal finished and speeches concluded, it was on to the dreaded photographs and it was time to move from the Senate Chamber up to the Great Hall. The traditional Masters', Secretary's and Treasurers' photos were taken, although there was a slight delay as we temporarily lost Vic! Then came the big group photo; Roger did a fantastic job of co-ordinating all of us into organised lines. Even the balloons behaved and did as they were told! To be able to stand amongst all of you as a new NUSCR member, I can say that it was honestly an absolute pleasure. The photo (featured on the back page) shows my new family that I love being a part of.

Then it was ceilidh time! The band had been incredible, waiting for us as the speeches had over run. The music was fantastic, and the atmosphere was better than I could ever have expected. The band, knowing NUSCR so well, played our favourites; 120 guests made a lot of sets and a lot of baskets! Due to the length of the speeches, the ceilidh time was cut slightly short. However, the wonderful band members extended their set for us so that we could have a decent length dance, despite the late start. There was a short interval to the ceilidh as the raffle was drawn, but then it was back to the dancing. Sadly, in one of the last dances of the night there was a small collision resulting in a banged head and light graze. But luckily there were no serious injuries. Then it was time for the final dance. A huge round of applause was given to the incredible ceilidh band and then it was time for carriages.

Guests began to leave, and it was time for the clean-up operation to begin! Those who perhaps had drunk a little more than was good for them were bundled into taxis, and it was left to Vic and her team of little troopers to tidy up the mess we'd left. Coats and scarves that had been mislaid throughout the evening were found and returned to worried owners. After all the guests had left, it was down to the wonderful committee to sweep the floor and finish off the last few bits of tidying. Unfortunately, Gnorman the Gnome was 'accidentally' damaged in the clean up process and was peacefully laid to rest in a bin on University Park Campus. RIP Gnorman. Roger's car proved very useful in transporting the NUSCR birthday cake to safety. And then finally the dinner was over! But the big birthday weekend did not end there...

Quite a few sore heads awoke on Sunday morning and made their way to ringing at All Saints'. There was a wonderful turnout to the service ringing, with some Surprise Royal making an appearance. The tower was full of people from all generations, which was a pleasure to see. Following All Saints' ringing, we headed back to Beeston where it was time for the Inter-generational Striking Competition.

The striking competition had been organised by Andy Wignell and our beloved President. There were plenty of bands with some generations being represented twice. The aim of this competition had been to allow ringers from across the generations of NUSCR to compete in a friendly competition to see which generation was 'the best'! Everyone congregated inside Beeston Parish Church, with bands disappearing up the tower when it was time for their chance to prove they were the best generation of NUSCR – with a band of all stars representing Nottingham Trent / TPSCR. Meanwhile, Vic and Roger cut the birthday cake, which was distributed out. Even after everyone had had a slice there was still a significant amount of cake left. But you'll be happy to hear that when the leftovers were taken to practice the following week, they were demolished rather quickly! Results were announced, and the winning band was the 90's Boys band. They were delighted but a good effort was given by all teams.

The results of the Intergenerational Striking Competition marked the end of NUSCR's birthday weekend. People began to leave and embark on their journeys home. The committee were kept busy with people wanting to take them aside and thank them for a wonderful weekend. It was an incredible celebration of a lively and thriving society. A huge congratulations to the committee for organising it all; good luck to the next committee for having to follow it! It was lovely to meet so many new people and I can't wait to see many of you next year at the 61<sup>st</sup>. Have a wonderful year. See you in February!

**Ed Walker with forgotten details added by Vic Halford**

## Summer Tour 2018 – The Far, Far North

When one becomes an alumnus of NUSCR, they find themselves planning their year (and annual leave allowance) around the weekends of summer tours, dinners and other frivolous entertainments put on by the society. This year's summer tour to the land far north of the wall (Newcastle and surroundings) was one I was most looking forward to, and as per usual had no shortage of wondrous bobs, beer and banter.

After being put up in a five-star luxury hotel (Vic, Adam, Lyd and Emily's front room) the dawn of Friday saw two cars depart Nottingham for the northern lands, myself leading the way to the petrol station with Ed's fresher-stuffed Citroen following. Well, they were, before Ed got lost in Beeston, causing a slight 20-minute delay. Strong start.

Nevertheless, NUSCR are never one to let hiccups get them down, so we pressed on through our trip up many, many miles of boring motorway to reach the delightful little village of Ovingham in the afternoon, having stocked up heavily on alcoholic supplies, ready for the fun that lay ahead.

Having been greeted by our resident northerner and organiser Vic and other half (Dan I believe his name was) we were led into her humble abode to be greeted by swinging benches, drinks, a lovely Border Collie named Poppy, and several peacocks. Yes, this summer tour went all out; one of these delightful beings, Charles, was especially pleased to see us, as he wouldn't stop squawking or pacing around us.



Photo by Ellis Whitehouse



Photo By Chloe Marples

All we needed was a set of Corgis and a butler and we would've reached peak Royal Family.

Once we'd spent some time blowing up balloons for tomorrow's church fete (and use them to create some scarily lifelike figures of ourselves) and cooked dinner, we retired to the village hall, and after the usual displays of air bed blowing woes, copious amounts of beer and a Cards Against Humanity game reducing everyone to stitches, the ringers turned in.

Hangovers aplenty, the group surfaced the next morning, just managing to force some breakfast down before being kicked out of the hall by people wanting to do an odd thing called "yoga", and proceeding out to Newburn for our first catch of the weekend.

Having bossed call changes, Grandsire, plain bob and others, we set about a leisurely stroll over to Ryton (predicted 20 minutes, quite a bit longer in reality) where we at first appeared faced with a lock-out with no key holder in sight.

Thankfully, a nice man cutting some flowers in the church spotted us in our plight and came to the rescue. A quick half an hour on the heavy eight and it was off to Wylam for our picnic lunch.

Vic chose the spot well, with a children's play park right next door. With NUSCR's reputation of being sensible, mature grown-ups absolutely committed to complex methods and respectable public behaviour, we of course had the time of our lives on the kids swings, rope courses and spinning and peddling each other round on merry-go-rounds until serious injuries were nearly caused.

After a ring on the Wylam six, we ventured back to Ovingham for a ring on the teeny-tiny but wonderfully sounding eight, before joining the church's festival downstairs, with some jumping straight on the BBQ, with others playing around with the mini-ring and coconut shies.

Back at the village hall, the ringers saw the evening away with more beer, cider and board games, which led to Ed having an extortionate four ciders and passing out on the floor. Luckily, when he awoke after his nap, his drunkenness was soothed by Jack Page's hideous 2.5% Sainsbury's Basics lager/water and some nurturing care and advice from Lydia including what to and what not to do on Tinder.



Sunday morning saw a split in the group, with some staying for more mini-ringing playing, and I, Ed, Chloe and Dan Calvert heading back to Wylam to have a stab at a quarter of Cambridge minor with two local ringers, which ended up changed to plain bob.

Sadly, it was not to be, with us firing out after ten minutes and then after 30, despite some excellent ringing from all throughout.

Drowning our sorrows on the mini ring and lunching, the group reunited and took the train into Newcastle to jump into the cathedral, where everyone pulled their weight with some wondrous 12 bell ringing. This was followed by St John's, where we did our best despite most of us being drugged up on A LOT of incense throughout the church and tower.

We then staggered out of the intoxicating church and into spoons for some grub, before catching the train home and join the peacocks at Vic's house for a bonfire and Twister sesh. It was both a wonderfully pleasant and hilarious evening. Back at the hall, we drank many more beers before I decided to turn in due to the impending 6 hour drive the next day. A few hours later I was awoken, saw dregs of daylight in the windows, but confusingly there were many sleeping bags empty. Where were our fellow NUSCRites? The hall was quiet, no conversations or lights. Had they been kidnapped? I had so many questions, but no energy to think of answers. No matter, the next morning revealed that a little expedition party had, in the heat of the moment at 3am, decided to go on a near-3 mile walk to Ovington and back, and still managed to get a couple of hours kip.

NUSCR are truly inspirational.

Monday morning, we were booted out of the hall by a breakfast club, so as an apology, Vic hosted us once again and stuffed us with sausages and bacon.

Loading up our cars, we then took a trip to the coast to look at a lighthouse, spot a headless seal and do some rock pool paddling. Vic loved the water, and Ed got very excited when he spotted crabs.

The last couple of hours were spent on the beach, and then devouring some of the finest fish n chips of the north, before the wayward journey home began.



After dropping my BUSCR passengers off in Derby, I hightailed it back to Essex to collapse after 6.5 hours driving. Within four days I'd covered hundreds of miles, drank dozens of pints, rang until I got blisters, and laughed until my face hurt.

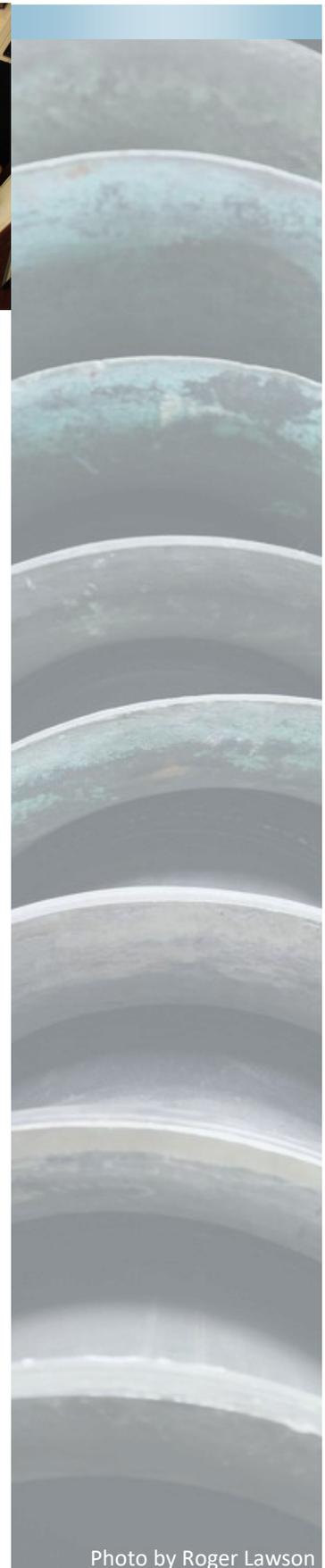
Give me that over the World Cup any day.

**Ellis Whitehouse**

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*“NUSCR are truly inspirational.”*

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## Freshers Tour: A trip to Taylors

The day began with an attempted vote of no confidence in the ringing master for making us get a 9am train to Loughborough, following a NUSCR pub sesh the night before.

Still, despite the early train for most of us and an early start for others, 21 people made it to Taylors Bell foundry where Peter England was to give us a tour of the foundry. Most of us were listening to the tour but Vic was distracted by a set of shiny gold bells that she had painted herself, just a few months ago while doing some work at the foundry.

The tour consisted of a look around the workshop, explaining how bells worked, explaining each component such as the headstock and cannons, a look at the wood working section of the workshop where we were shown how wheels were made and, to complete the workshop tour, a look at how bells are tuned.

After the tour of the workshop, Taylors opened the Foundry and explained to us the casting process, furnaces and ovens.

Following the tour of the workshop we went to ring at the foundry where we rang the very light 12. This was a challenge as it was the first time some people had run on 12, along side the challenges that are paired with such a light ring, regardless – we produced some decent ringing and had a good number of laughs and messing about, as is tradition with NUSCR.

Lunch was the next order of the day, we ate at the 3 nuns, a recommendation from Taylors. The food was excellent, and the atmosphere was lively as usual.

After lunch we headed to Loughborough Parish. Ringing here was very good, ranging from some decent rounds and call changes to Plain Hunt on 10 (with Lydia doing a sterling job turning the 30cwt tenor), finally finishing with some excellent Yorkshire S. Royal.

After a brief march, we hopped on a bus and headed to Bunny, the final tower of the day. During the ringing there each learner new to ringing made amazing progress, and the usual culprits of plan bob, grandsire and plain hunt were rung.

Finally, we got back on the bus and headed home. After dinner at spoons the gaggle of remaining NUSCR headed to the Vic, joining a number of Beeston ringers for a social and chat fuelled by many pints and many gins!



**Fiona Kemm**

Photo by Roger Lawson

## NUA 2018—A Weekend in York

For many, the adventure of NUA began mid-afternoon. Alcohol supplies in tow, the first collection of ringers began their journey to York. A lack of seats though meant that they resorted to the safety of the train loo to consume their Pre-Pub Pint(s). The remainder made their way up to York a few hours later after their unfortunate university timetabling, with most people experiencing an easy escape from Nottingham, a perk of train travel.



On arrival in York, we made our way to The Postern Gate, ready for some much-needed alcohol consumption and a bite to eat. Pints and pitchers filled the table, the size of which increased at a rapid pace as more ringers arrived, with NUSCR naturally leading the way. A game of luggage Tetris began as bags piled higher and higher, in a bid not to block the fire escape. Seeing friends from previous years, or making new friends, the weekend got off to a fantastic start. Some surreptitious eyeing up of mascots occurred, with freshers being introduced to the aims of the weekend.

Upon leaving the Spoons Sesh we acquired “NUSCR corner” and set up the beds before recommencing with the drinking, following a restock of alcohol. Not long after our return to the hall I don’t think, I remember looking over to find our own Master, AKA King Lightweight, sleeping. What happened to seeing past midnight Ed? Clearly someone peaked too soon!

After an eventful night, of drinking, then the typical consequences of drinking, it was time to start a day full of ringing. First up was a bacon sarnie for breakfast, who doesn’t like the smell of bacon in the morning? Fuelled by bacon and caffeine, we set off for the Spurriergate Centre. At least there’s a lot of space there to fit all the ringers in the building. While this ringing was commencing, so was the striking contest back at St Lawrence. Two teams entered for NUSCR, giving everyone a chance to get involved.



Once the 2nd team had rung their test piece, NUSCR congregated around a bench outside the church, and began playing human buckaroo on a hungover member... Upon everyone reclaiming their items from the game, we made our way to St Wilfrid’s, and onto Clifton Parish for some light hearted but delightful ringing. We then had a break to grab some lunch, easier said than done when Spoons can’t serve food due to a technical error. We eventually found some food and some seats in part of the extensive Christmas market. York is a very busy place!

York Minster followed lunch, where we found a block (blocc) to stand on. The next challenge was to get as many NUSCR members to stand on the block as possible, with the resounding chant “on the blocc” making a regular appearance. Sadly York stole our idea, with a picture taken with the caption “on a blocc” \*Shakes head\* No credits to NUSCR...

Due to the sheer volume of ringers, we were split into 4 groups to go up the Minster. It’s a long way up! However for the opportunity to ring at the Minster most people are willing to do anything now. Some glorious 12 bell ringing was displayed to the city throughout the afternoon.

After the Minster, the time came to head back to the hall for dinner, with a booze themed pit stop on the way, of course. After a lovely chilli for dinner, and the announcing of the contest results, which NUSCR A won, the ceilidh began, with lines and circles and even a few disappearances of people and mascots! The evening was a barrel of laughs, with MUGCR’s Gerald still evading detection (wherever he is now). The final event of the day was the Boat Race, where we cheered on the teams in hushed tones so as to not disturb the neighbours. A big congratulations to NUSCR’s team for coming 2nd, with Leeds, the reigning champions, crashing into last place, with much elation from all the other societies.



The last piece of ringing of the weekend was for service at St Lawrence, fuelled by another bacon sarnie and yet more caffeine. We then made our way back to Spoons for a 2nd breakfast before travelling back to Notts.

The train ride home for most was a rather unpleasant experience, what with hangovers aplenty, but the weekend's missions can all be considered accomplished: Acquire mascots – tick, consume lots of alcohol – tick and don't lose the boat race – tick. Not only this but in winning the striking competition we have once again proven, NUSCR is the best University society in the north! A most enjoyable NUA experience.

**Rebecca Smith**



*“On the blocc.”*

## NUSCR 60th Dinner Photo



We hope you have enjoyed this years edition of the Natter and we look forward to seeing you in February for the 61st annual NUSCR Dinner!

**The NUSCR Committee**