

# A tribute to Norman McCubbin's teaching

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A long and distinguished teaching career

**~1993 – 1998 : St. Anne's College Oxford**

**1998 – : University of Bristol**



# Norman's teaching in Oxford



# St. Anne's College 1993-1998



## **NORMAN TAUGHT:**

- **EM & Optics**
- **Quantum Mechanics**
- **Nuclear & Particle**
- **General Revision**

I have tried to make contact with some former students going back 15 years.



# Messages from the ex-students

Swamped with well-wishes – just a representative sample here ....



# Messages of well-wishes con't

- Stuart Sim (95-99): "tutorials were on Saturday mornings. Norman gave very good tutorials - especially the first one we got from him which was **amazingly good. He was very enthusiastic and energetic!**"
- Anthony Justice (92-95) : Dear Norman - Many thanks for the enthusiasm and patience you showed in coaching us through finals! **Your ability to clearly and simply explain the complex really set you apart as a brilliant teacher and a true champion of the world of Physics.** I wish you all the very best on your retirement.
- Jason Cowell (95-99): What I do remember was that we followed Norman's tutorial question sheets, which **stuck out in my mind as being excellent.** Please pass on my best wishes for his retirement.
- Helen Parker (93-97) : I have an abiding memory of one tutorial with Norman. I believe we were discussing waves. **Norman was always incredibly animated and enthusiastic, which was really infectious and often entertaining.** On this occasion he took on the role of "wave" and began to stride across the room to illustrate something....starting at one end of the room he advanced towards us, striding confidently - unfortunately there was a coffee table in the way. It interrupted the wave's progression across the room with Norman well and truly tripping up over the table and falling over onto the floor. He recovered quickly dusting himself down and continuing on with the tutorial.

Please do pass on my very best wishes to Norman for a happy and healthy retirement, and thanks also because **He was a very patient teacher who really helped me to get through.**

- David Harvey (95-99): **Norman was a fantastic tutor.** I do remember him having to help you into his car once because you were too paralytic to stand up after a physics dinner.
- Anon (94-98): "Well Prof McCubbin, plagiarism is a very serious accusation."

# Norman proudly receives his lifetime-achievement teaching award from St. Anne's teaching faculty



# St. Anne's "Schools dinner" [for 4<sup>th</sup> year students after Finals exams] (1993-1998)

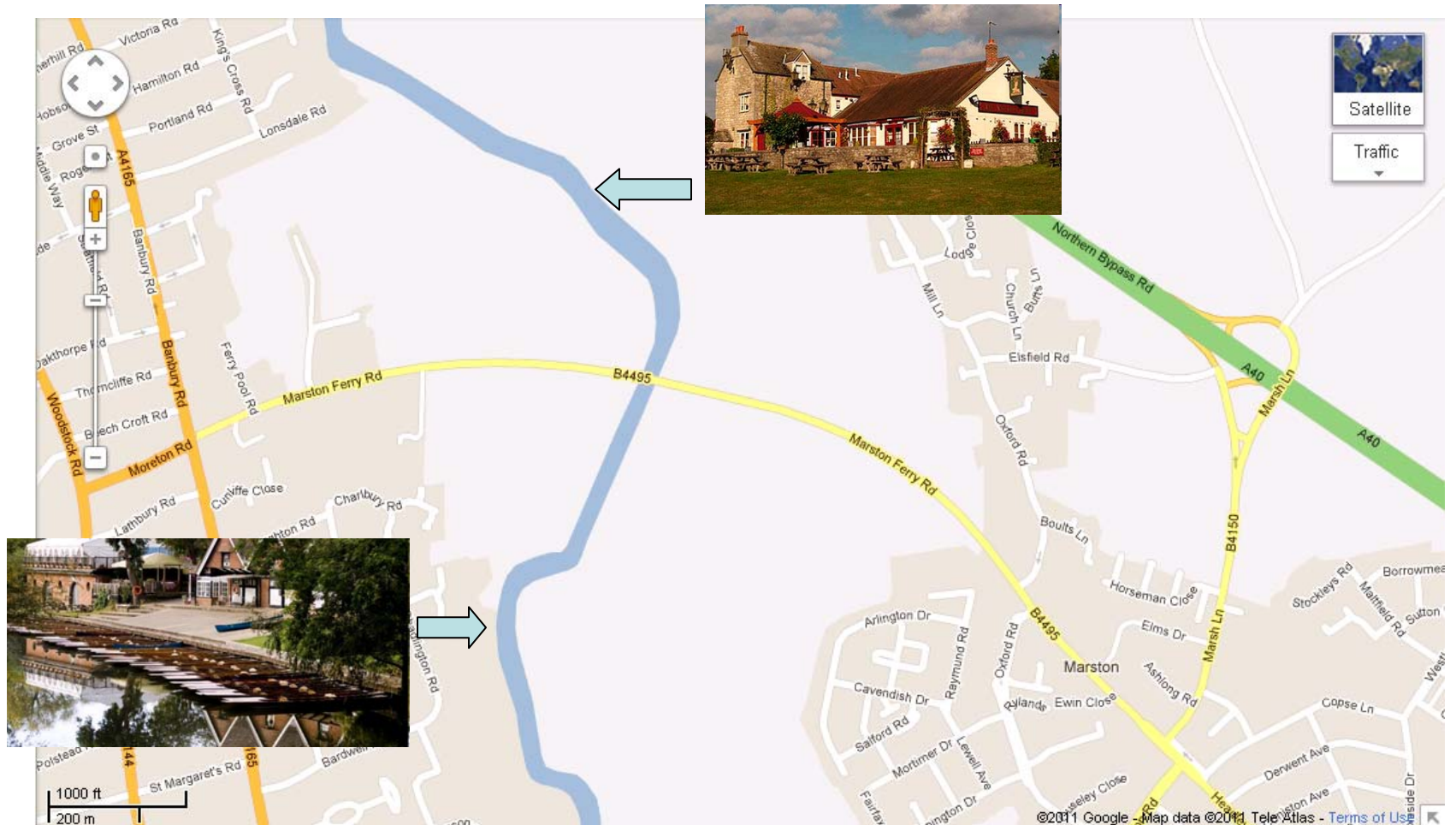
## Itinerary

- 13:00 Meet at Cherwell boathouse
- Punt to Victoria Arms, Marsden, light refreshments
- 15:00 Victoria Arms : Copious refreshments
- 18:00 Punt back: more light refreshments (optional)
- 20:00 Curry House or equivalent
- 23:00-24:00 Home

Not to be attempted by the faint-hearted



# Schools Dinner Punting River Cherwell

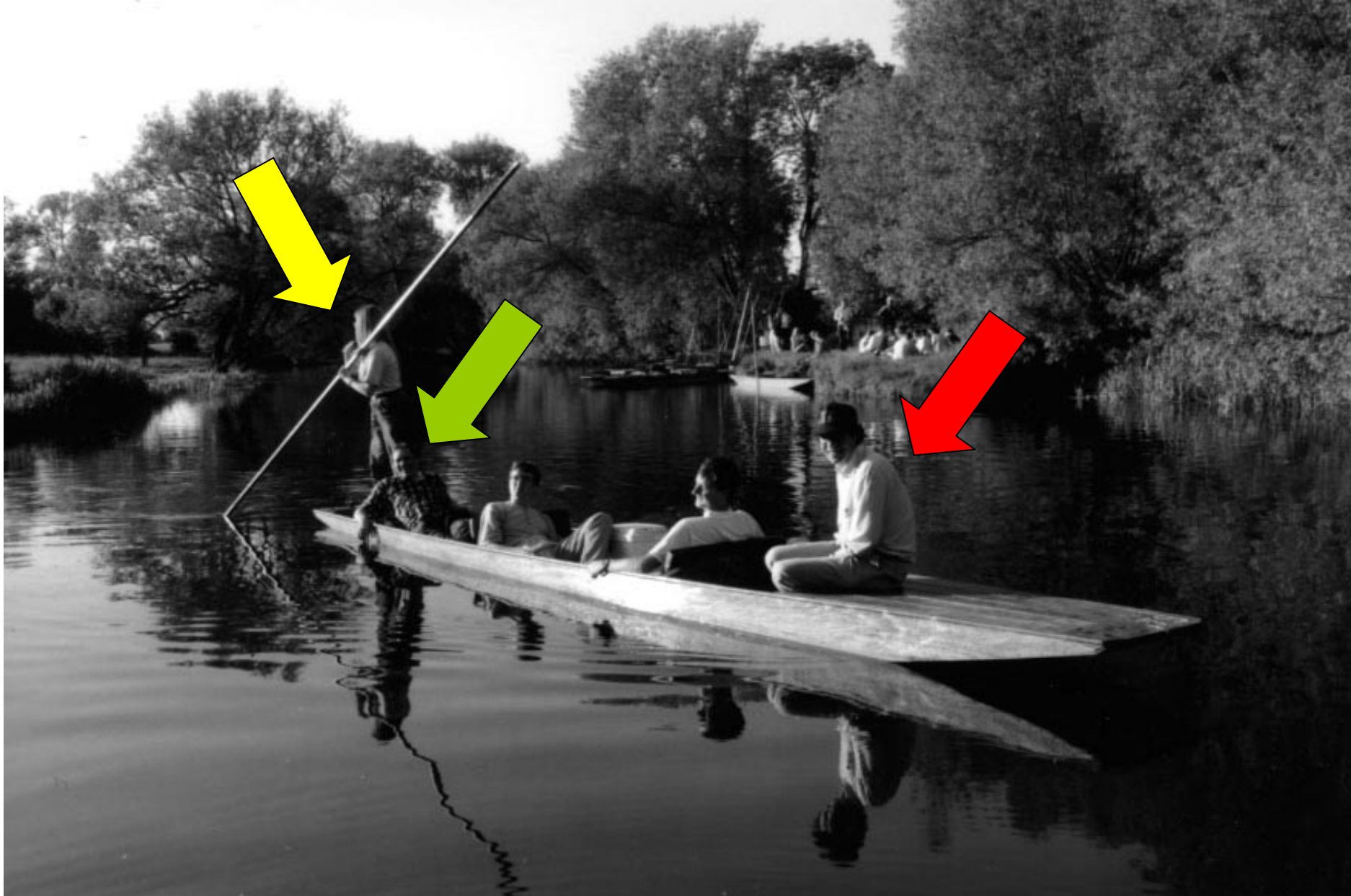


# We all relied on Norman to bring the students' favourite food/beverages

- Australian fruit cake
  - One single mouthful to be chewed for the duration of the punting trip
- Stuffed olives
  - Just show me a student who doesn't love them !



# Leaving the Victoria Arms







Oh dear !



# Norman paddles the boat to safety



# And finally - Norman to the rescue



# 1998 : Disaster strikes ! Norman gets “poached” by Bristol



**1998 Brian entices Norman from Oxford:  
Norman becomes Visiting Prof.**

**2003 But revenge is sweet -  
Oxford then poaches Brian from  
Bristol**





# The St-Anne's students weren't at all happy



It was only Brian Cox who seemed to see the funny side

# A distinguished teaching career in Bristol

- Anon 1 : In my time here I can only re-collect Norman teaching the PG courses. Though I can remember sitting [with him] in a dingy bar in Hamburg drinking copious amounts of beer !!
- Anon 2 : Yes. All I remember is that he did all of my teaching when I couldn't be bothered - ahem, I mean was called away on important duties. I think - 2nd year EM.
- Anon 3 : I suspect the peak of Norman's teaching at Bristol must have been before I paid attention to such matters. However, Anon 4 [cc'd] assures me s/he recollects something. To be fair to Norman, he has been kind of busy over the last few years!
- Anon 4 : What I said was I thought he had done some graduate lectures and possibly one of our current topics undergraduate lecture slots....but I believe he said he was a visiting professor who didn't visit.

And in summary  
may I liken Norman to  
my faithful car - 150k  
miles on the clock but  
still going strong



- ❑ The starter motor occasionally jams
- ❑ There's a bit of black smoke from the exhaust
- ❑ The occasional leak of fluids

But apart from that, just as good as new ....

# Norman, it's been a real pleasure ...

- A genuine honour working with you over all these years – one of the fields' truly nice guys.
- Have a fantastic retirement (although I don't believe it for a minute)
- You will always have a job teaching for St. Anne's. Generations of our students have missed you !



That's all folks !  
No questions please

**IT'S OVER**  
**UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER**



# 1995: John Malos retirement





# 1995: John Malos retirement

