

Has *Birmingham Inter-Varsity Club* changed over the years?

As a long-serving member I am sometimes asked if IVC has changed. My usual answer: "not much".

In an attempt to give an object answer, I have done a snapshot of events over the last 50 years by reproducing the back page diary of June bulletins from 1959, 1969, 1979 & 1989.

June 1959 IVC Bulletin back page activities

Weekly Events:

Sundays:	Canasta	Club Office
Mondays:	Tennis	Wingate Club
Tuesdays:	Bridge	Club Office
Wednesdays:	Club Night	Club Office
Fridays:	Hops ¹	MUO ⁰
Saturdays:	Coffee club	Pattison's

Other Events:

Tue. 2nd	Theatre visit	Alex
Thu. 4th	Scottish Dancing	Beehive Rooms
	Bridge Meeting	Club Office
Fri. 5th	Hop ¹	MUO ⁰
	Tour de Llwynon ²	Llwynon ²
Mon. 8th	Music	Club Office
Tue. 9th	Coffee Party ³	164 Green Lanes
Wed. 10th	Bulletin Deadline	
Thu. 11th	Ice Skating	Rink
	Theatre visit	Alex
Fri. 12th	Hop ¹	MUO ⁰
	Welsh 3,000s	
Sat. 13th	Midland Gliding Club	Long Mynd
	Theatre Visit	Rep.
Thu. 18th	Scottish Dancing	Beehive Rooms
Fri. 19th	Hop ¹	MUO ⁰
	Midnight Hill Walk	
Tue. 23rd	Theatre visit	Alex
Thu. 25th	Ice Skating	Rink
Fri. 27th	MIDSUMMER BALL	Botanical Gardens
Sat. 27th	Theatre visit	Belgrade
Sun. 28th	Ramble	Forest of Dean
Mon. 29th	Work Party	Club Office ⁰

"Club office" = Our rented premises, above a seedy bookshop, 90a Hurst Street, City Centre.

⁰ MUO = Manchester Unity of Oddfellows premises <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oddfellows>

¹ Hop is an old term for a dance.

² "Llwyn on Isaf": IVC's bunkhouse near Barmouth.
Also referred to as just "Llwyn-onn" or "The Farmhouse".

³ After coming for a few weeks prospective members were invited to a "Coffee Party" where they are told about IVC and what is expected of members. At the same time the committee chats to them and informally assess them as suitable for membership. (This system continued until the 1990's).

Average age in 1959 - mid 20's Annual Subs 30/- (£30 in 2009 money)

June 1969 IVC Bulletin back page activities

Friday 30th May	Tennis	Wingate Tennis Club, Rotton Park
	LAST HOP OF THE SEASON	M.U.O. Livery Street
Sat.31st May/1st June	Hillwalk Weekend	Llyyn-onn Isaf ²
Mon. 2nd	Tennis	Wingate Club
	Music Pam Brandreth's choice	Club
Tues. 3rd	Theatre: "The Glass Menagerie"	The Rep.Th.
	Table Tennis	"The Junction " Harborne
Wed. 4th	Rubber Bridge	Club
	Coffee Evening ⁵	Club
Thurs.5th	Playreading "Waiting for Godot"	Club
Fri. 4th	Tennis	Wingate
6 / 8th	I.V.C. Associatican Weekend	Afloat with N.Staffs
Sat. 7th	Sailing Weekend Ken Gibson	Llwynn Onn ²
Sun. 8th	Phoenix Folk Group	White Lyon Horsefair
	Ramble (see noticeboard)	
Mon. 9th	Tennis	Wingate
	Music: David Smith's Choice	Club
Tues.10th	Duplicate Bridge	Club
	Table Tennis	The Junction
Wed. 11th	Natter N'Nosh ⁴ Jean Loosemore	Solihull
	Coffee Evening ⁵	Club
Thurs.12th	Phoenix Jazz Records with P.R.W.	Club
Fri. 13th	Tennis	Wingate
13th/15th	London Houseparty	Hodeston Herts
Sat 14th	Table Tennis Weekend	Llwyn Onn ²
Mon. 16th	Tennis	Wingate
	Music: Brian Mann "The Lady And The Fool"	Club
Tues. 17th	Rubber Bridge	Club
	Table Tennis	The Junction Harborne
Wed. 19th	BULLETIN DEADLINE	
	Coffee Evening ⁵	Club
Fri. 20th	Tennis	Wingate
Sat. 21st	Visitors' Weekend	Llwyn Onn ²
Sun. 22nd	Phoenix. For details see noticeboard	
Mon. 23rd	Tennis	Wingate
	Music: Sue Webb's Choice	Club
Tues 24th	Duplicate Bridge	Club
	Table Tennis	The Junction
Wed. 25th	BULLETIN WORKPARTY	Club
	Coffee Evening ⁵	Club
Fri. 27th	Tennis	Wingate
	Natter N'Nosh ⁴ at Atherstone	
Sat. 28th	Hillwalk Keith Miller	Llwyn Onn ²
Sun. 29th	Ramble	
Mon. 30th	Music: Open evening	Club

"Club" refers to our premises in Hurst St
(This was weeks before we moved into new premises in Barwck Street).

² IVC's leased bunkhouse near Barmouth (this averaged 2000 bednights per year).

⁴ Dinner parties in members' houses.

⁵ Regular Wednesday meeting in club premises.

Average age in 1969 - high 20's Annual Subs £2 (£30 in 2009 money)

June 1979 IVC Bulletin back page activities

REGULAR EVENTS (For Coventry and Redditch sub clubs see their pages)*

MONDAY Squash, Silver Racquets Club, Pershore St.
Croquet and Mahjong,
Tennis, at Tally Ho, opposite Cricket ground

TUESDAY Bridge, in Club
Table Tennis, Limbless Ex-Servicemen's Club Hagley Road

WEDNESDAY Squash and Badminton, at King Edwards
Coffee Evening⁵ in club

FRIDAY Badminton at Ladywood School, Freeth Street, Pub afterwards

SATURDAY Squash at Silver Racquets Club, Pershore Street

ACTIVITIES

Friday 1st	Folk Dance Group	Club
Saturday 2nd	CBSO Concert	
	Bad Taste Party	Club
Sunday 3rd	Malvern Ramble,	Meet Club
Wednesday 6th	Activities Group	Club
Friday 8th	M.A.S.H. Film, Cannon Hill	
Saturday 9th	Medieval Banquet, Bewdley.	Meet Club
Wednesday 13th	C.B.S.O. Concert	
	BULLETIN DEADLINE	
Thursday 14th	Live jazz	The Old Royal
Friday 15th	Coventry barbecue	
	Folk dance group	Club
Thursday 21st	Evening ramble,	Lickey Hills
Saturday 23rd	Folk dance in club	
Sunday 24th	Ramble Great Whitley	Meet Club
	Introduction to Japanese Cooking	Japanese member's flat Harborne
Tuesday 26th	Record evening,	103 Salisbury Road, Smethwick
Friday 29th	Folk dance group	Club
	Skittles Match, B'ham vs. Notts.	
Saturday 30th	Trip to Wimbledon	
Sunday 1st	Ramble, Ironbridge,	Meet club
Thursday 5th	Crown Green Bowls,	Cannon Hill Park
Saturday 7th	Party	Club

"Club" = Our own leased premises, third floor 65 Barwick Street. Venue for regular Wednesday meetings.
There were noticeboards where members signed-up for events.

* Coventry and Redditch Sub Groups each had five of their own activities,
Including pub nights and parties in members' houses.

These bulletin back pages are tidied-up versions that have been OCR'd. Until 1984 Bulletins were produced on A4 paper using IVC's own duplicator from wax-paper stencil masters. An example of an original is reproduced elsewhere on JohnPitcock.com Text was done with a typewriter (ribbon removed) and drawings with a stylus or occasionally cut electronically by an outside service <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mimeograph>. Bulletins were collated and stapled by volunteers on bulletin night. (There is a modern electronic duplicator where I work <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Risograph>).

Average age in 1979 - low 30's

Annual Subs £8 (£30 in 2009 money)

Committee Positions in 1979 (Then called Council)

Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, Bulletin Editor, Farmhouse Warden, Membership Secretary, Office Manager (Bulletin printing), Premises Manager, Publicity Officer + ALO (Association Liason Officer), Social Secretary, Sport Secretary, + 2 Ordinary Committe Members (acting as assistants).

At other times there were also:

Coventry Rep, Parties co-ordinator, Folk Dance Rep.

June 1989 IVC Bulletin activities

Regular Events:

Mondays	Tennis	Handsworth Victoria Tennis Club
	Croquet	Various gardens
Tuesdays	Swimming	Handsworth Leisure Centre
Wednesdays	Squash & Badminton	King Edward's School
Fridays	Badminton	Four Dwellings Leisure Centre

Activities:

Fri 2 nd	Folk Dancing	Victoria Club Handsworth Wood
Sat 3 rd	Chinese Meal	
Sun 4 th	Lunch and Walk	Cotswolds
Thu 8 th	Wine & Cheese	Club
Fri 9 th	Folk Dancing	Victoria Club Handsworth Wood
Fri - Sun	Le Mans Race ? (Roger Shingler)	
Sat 10 th	CBSO concert	Town Hall
Sat 12 th	Swing Sixties Party	Club
Tues 13 th	New Member's Pub Evening	Turk's Head
Wed 14 th	BULLETIN DEADLINE	
Thur 15 th	Snow	Hippodrome
Thur 22 nd	Romeo & Juliet	Stratford Theatre
Thur 22 nd	Silly Games	Bournville Park
Fri 23 rd	11 a-side football	Fox Hollies Leisure Centre
Sat 24 th	Pub night and Club visit	Lames Brindley / Bobby Browns
Sun 25 th	Jogging	Edgbaston reservoir
Sun 25 th	Ramble	Ullenhall
Thur 29 th	Indian Cookery demo & meal	Copper Kettle, Warley
Fri 30 th	Coctail Evening	Club

Coventry Sub Group had nine of their own activities, mostly pubs and meals.

They had their own account and committee member.

(Since 1979 Redditch sub-group had become an IVC in its own right, this folded after a few years).

Average age in 1989 - mid 30's Average age now - low 50's

Annual Subs £27 (£50 in 2009 money)

Has *Birmingham Inter-Varsity Club* changed over the years?

IVC used to be for graduates to continue the Social activities they'd enjoyed as students.

After looking at the old bulletins my answer is that IVC does many of the activities it always did; the main difference seems to be that, until the late 1960's, we had a weekly Friday "Hop".

A significant change has been not having our own city-centre premises referred to as "Club" (we've had four). Here people could drop-in to various events. Throughout the 1970's and 80's there were events most evenings in club (bridge, music, Wednesday club night, meetings, board games, slide shows, folk/country/Scottish dancing, table tennis. On a Saturday there was often either a party or a barn dance (members did the catering for these and "brought a bottle", often a party-seven or flagon of cider). IVC's last premises, 291 Corporation Street, wasn't really suitable for holding events so members got out of the habit of using the same venue for many activities.

"Club" was also a meeting place for car-sharing for events such as rambles. Rambles were usually 10 - 12+ miles – Don Matthews says he led one most Sundays for several years and people walked in all weathers. He says there used to be a problem finding enough people with cars. If they used a pub at all, it was only for a quick drink and toilet stop. There was sometimes a Chinese meal on the way home.

Members made more of their own entertainment: board games, music, bridge, chess, slide shows, dinner parties etc.

Some changes have been because of differences in society i.e. pub-going was rare as pubs weren't female-friendly and they didn't do food.

In the early days there were few professional jobs open to women: in the early 1970's about 1/4 of the female members were

teachers and 1/4 in the medical professions (mainly nurses).

Weekends away used to be mostly at our own bunkhouse two miles from Barmouth - called "Llwyn-on Isaf" or "the Farmhouse": a 17th century house that BIVC leased from a local sheep farmer from 1957 to 1993. (see elsewhere on www.johnpitcock.com). IVC had its own sailing boat which was kept at Barmouth from 1959 to 1974.

Sport was more of a social event – Don says it has become more competitive.

One thing that hasn't changed is the name IVC and debating about changing it - there is a mention in the 1966 AGM minutes of a discussion to its suitability.

Has IVC changed because members have got older?

Until the 1980s, there was a much greater turnover of members: in the early years we lost over 1/3 of the members per year and recruited a similar number of replacements. There was very little publicity budget: mostly it was by word-of-mouth. Many young people would have left as they married and had children - older people are more settled in their careers. More members than now lived with their parents.

Attracting people younger than the average member has been a recurring problem for IVCs

A quote from the minutes of the 1967 AGM, during a debate on the motion that that introduced an upper age limit of 40: "Activities would tend to cater for the 25-35 age group instead of the 20-25 group for which the club was originally founded" (motions on age limits and an historic age profile of members are listed elsewhere on www.johnpitcock.com) .

One change I have noticed is that members aren't, in general, trying to find a partner and settle down and start a family.

John Pitcock "Keeper of the Archives"

(With input from our longest serving member
- Don Matthews)

September 2010