



five musical interludes

four homerton histories

three retirements

two holiday adventures

one remembering poetry

farewells ...

... and more besides



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a word from the editors



Dear Readers,

Music & Numbers ... and not a Partridge in sight

Hmmm, I didn't quite manage to shake off the role of Newsletter editor, but I was much relieved when half-way through the year John Hopkins volunteered to join me in this interesting but slightly time consuming task. Hopefully the baton has started to be caught. We celebrate this by synthesising our two subjects (Libby) numbers to classify the range of articles and ordering them interspersed with musical interludes (John).

***Five** musical interludes: John Finney's observed music lesson, Jane Edden's serendipitous Steel Pan moment and John's own Composing in Residence. Add to these Three Evensongs and the May Week Summer Concert to make up five.*

***Four** connected to Homerton's history: Two pieces from Peter Cunningham, Leah Manning and Abolitionists ...; David Bridges honouring Paul Hirst's work during one time of government upheaval, and Kate Pretty questioning what she should and perhaps should not place in Homerton's Archive. These last two finely illustrate the strength RSMs have to contribute to Homerton's **past** times.*

***Three** about retirement; Bev Hopper skipped for charity, Lizzie Madder gives an account of a second year of 'leisure' and Sue Conrad reflects on how being an RSM helped in her transition from Homerton being a workplace to becoming one of 'play'.*

***Two** holiday accounts: Philip Rundall reports on his trip to Egypt maybe the only travel guide you will need if you too make a visit, and you may perhaps view Pizzas and Figs differently after reading two of Tim Rowland's holiday memories.*

***One** detailed research account on Remembering Poetry by Gabrielle Cliff Hodges is not only full of interesting points but illustrates the importance of collecting reminisces from 'ordinary' folk before they are no longer with us.*

There is also: a local walk courtesy of Stephen Grounds; A Circle of Dance snippet from Trish Maude and, sadly, four farewells to RSMs to include.

*(If you require a **zero** then this year you will notice that there is no RSM interview - next year perhaps ...)*

Happy Reading ...

Libby & John

Cover photo: Homerton Perfection captured by Anne Thwaites on RSM committee day, May 2023
Acknowledgements: with thanks to Anne Thwaites & Peter Cunningham for proof reading

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Chair's Letter: Holding on to Memories

Libby Jared

The three worded title to last year's Chair's Letter *Same and Different* was accompanied by a mathematical explanation and examples of Homerton and RSMA focussed 'things' that had either remained the same but, if not, then by logic they were different. It really wouldn't do, would it, to keep the same title and anyway in retrospect it would be very odd if the following year did not at least have something new about it. So *Same and Different* has been consigned to the past, though even the act of thinking about the last year itself highlights continuity and change. As each year passes our store of personal and professional memories increases as so surely does the importance of ensuring that these memories are shared with others who follow us.

However, before abandoning same and different altogether, I would like to mention two occurrences that I thought would never change – even though I did know they just had to at some unspecified time – and one event which didn't change from the previous year but nevertheless evoked wonderful memories.

First, just as a new school year was beginning came the news that the Queen had died; the College's special visitor of some ten months earlier was now HM King Charles III. The Queen's seventy-year long reign ensured that more citizens had known no other monarch than those who had. Born six weeks before the Queen came to the throne, I had always enjoyed saying that I had lived under two monarchs, even if now I have to say three. But of course we have some RSMs who can double that number. If that does not signal RSM's long memories, I am not sure what will.

Second, this time last year many of us were still beginning to take small, tentative steps towards making a return to living in the way we were used to pre-pandemic both with our RSM social events and elsewhere. Even so, I thought that we would need to be cautious for evermore. Although I was one of the lucky ones whose families and friends had escaped unscathed, I never envisaged that I would ever feel able to sit in a jam-packed Royal Albert Hall as I did last Sunday evening (August 13th) and listen to The Budapest Festival Orchestra playing live at the BBC proms. The concert was truly wonderful as was the feeling of finally 'really living' once more. (Our late Queen told us we would.)

But to return to *Holding on to Memories*. Homerton now has a dedicated archive room and archivist allowing it to constantly grow for interested parties in future years. The more recent history of Homerton is surely a key area that the Association can participate in. For a start, the current RSM Newsletter is undoubtedly a valuable resource recording many a tale of past practices and possibly, at

times, adventures. It appears that our very own Peter Cunningham spends much of his 'retirement' delving into archival material, and with the on-going Heritage Project has begun to record life histories of various subject departments and personnel. In this edition of the Newsletter, for example, David Bridges includes a rich history of developments in teacher education during the time Paul Hirst was in Cambridge; John Hopkins reports on his time as Homerton's Composer in Residence and Kate Pretty in writing a well-crafted appreciation of Sir David Harrison, Chairman of Homerton's Trustees from 1979 to 2010 and the crucial, supportive role he played in helping Homerton to achieve full college status within The University. These three examples can only serve as an illustration of what RSMs can offer – there is so much more.

Indeed, Kate Pretty has, as might be said, set the ball rolling in her article 'On Archiving' raising fundamental questions of what would be and what might not be sensible to be kept in a College Archive; what part of a person's history relates specifically to College and what might be better kept elsewhere. Whatever the outcomes to these questions turn out to be, Kate helpfully suggests that "we need a scheme for encouraging an oral history of who we are and why we did things". This might become an adjunct to or further immersed within the Heritage Project, but one thing is certain RSMA has a significant role to play here and an important contribution to make to College.

A visit to be Proms can in no way be connected to Homerton, but it was a personal memory never to be forgotten. In a similar vein of never to be forgotten, so was my visit to St Paul's Cathedral in June to hear the Charter Choir sing Evensong (more on this in my Three Evensongs article appearing later in this Newsletter) which is most definitely a wonderful Homerton-related memory.

This year's copy of the Homertonian arrived on my doorstep a few days ago. In it there are plenty of memories conveyed by others (some) much younger than RSMs. Having read Sasha Grantham's inspirational article, our not being able to have coffee mornings is insignificant to what the students faced and had to overcome. They truly deserve our congratulations for all their achievements. As indeed does our Principal. Simon's friendliness in dropping by at Coffee mornings and his wish to include us in College events are not only very much appreciated but add to the desire to give back by holding on to, and sharing, our memories.

Kind regards, Libby





Principal's Message

Simon Woolley, Lord Woolley of Woodford

I know I don't need to tell any of you how beautiful College is on a warm summer day and as I sit looking out of my office window, I'm reminded just how privileged I am to be Principal here. Nearly two years after my appointment I feel increasingly both "at home" and honoured and confident about what my role is here. At one level I've got to keep this well-oiled, well organised ship running - housing and feeding many hundreds of students, nurturing and caring for an ever-increasing team of staff, empowering them to do their best in all things, and, in an often intense high academic bubble, I've got to make sure that student wellbeing is also a very high priority. I'm always reminded by my great team of Fellows that alongside welfare, teaching is our core business.

However, we don't just want our students to have a world class degree, but also a strong and decent character. My superhero Dr Martin Luther King Jr, summed it up beautifully when he said;

"The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education."

And what might we mean when we talk about character? There are many components to character, but, if I was to pick three for our students, they would be, in equal measure:

Humility - no matter what, not thinking you are a better human being than others.

Decency - being kind, thoughtful, understanding.

Self-belief - having a quiet self confidence that you can change the world.

These facets of a person's character along with a world class degree, is, I believe a formula for great success.

As I closed my Charter Dinner speech this year I said: "My superhero, Dr Martin Luther King, passed the baton to my other Civil Rights Icon hero and Homerton Honorary Fellow, Rev Jesse Jackson. Amongst others, he has passed it on to me, and I in return have 1200 batons to pass on to Homerton students, so they too can change the world.



Addressing Ukrainian Students at Homerton

Photo courtesy of David Johnson

Simon Woolley
August 2023



HM Queen Elizabeth II
Coronation 1953

By
(a very young)
Philip Rundall

The 'Philip' visible in the top left this picture refers to our Philip, not the Queen's Consort!





Remembering Poetry

Gabrielle Cliff Hodges

As a former English teacher and teacher-educator, I have always enjoyed finding out how people read and enjoyed books in the past. Because most people's experiences have not been documented, I look for evidence between the lines elsewhere, for example in novels or biographies. However, a novelist's aims tend to be more artful than documentary, so their works need to be read with caution.

Teachers' perspectives are especially hard to come by, as the photograph below suggests.



School children in 1896, Weston Colville,
Cambridgeshire
(from <https://thereadingroom.org.uk/history-2/>)

There are two figures behind the latticed window looking out. Are they teachers? We don't know, but the image encapsulates how teachers' views at the time were often hidden behind the frameworks within which they were obliged to work. It is unusual to discover their ideas or opinions. A book by Wendy Robinson (the first Homerton alumna to become an Associate Fellow of the College), *Pupil Teachers and their Professional Training in Pupil-Teacher Centres in England and Wales 1870-1914* (2003) provides some information, especially about pupil-teacher centres where more could be learnt about teaching. However, pupil-teacher centres often provided for urban rather than rural areas. Mabel Kathleen Ashby's book, *The Country School: Its Practice and Problems* (1929) focused on rural elementary teachers and the need for them to be well-educated and trained in their subjects as well as in psychology and pedagogy. But her work appears to have been largely overlooked. For example, no mention is made of it in Henry Morris's memorandum on village colleges (Morris, 1925) even though he had apparently appointed her as Advisory Teacher to Rural Schools in 1924. Nonetheless, Ashby argues forcefully the need for teachers to realise how different all their pupils are: there is no such thing as a *rural* child (Ashby, 1929).

One work I have read quite recently in which I have found hints of elementary school English in the early years of the twentieth century is a collaborative (auto)biography called *Lifting the Latch: A Life on the Land* by Shelia Stewart. It documents the life of Mont Abbott of Enstone, Oxfordshire (1902-1989) as he told it in old age. Stewart learned about Mont from her local butchers who heard him singing unaccompanied in a village pub one evening. They asked Stewart to seek him out and the encounter resulted in weekly visits and a developing friendship between Stewart and Mont as he spoke into her tape-recorder about his long life.

Mont's remarkable memory enables him to recall fascinating details about village life from his earliest days in a large family where the eldest children had already left when Mont and his younger siblings were born. Much of the book depicts his 'life on the land' as a ploughboy, carter and shepherd, punctuated by reminiscences about friends, neighbours or employers and a heart-rending account of his engagement to a nurse from Oxford.

Mont's memories of his time at elementary school are particularly compelling. He was an intelligent boy who reached the Top Standard at the end of his schooldays and also received from the local landowner (Lord Dillon of Ditchley Mansion) a silver pocket-watch which he treasured for the rest of his life, awarded for good conduct and never having a day off. However, possibly because of his social status, he was not considered scholarship-worthy and watched enviously as others headed off for further education at nearby grammar schools. In later life Mont could be scathing about some of those scholars but gives credit to his schooling for his own achievements:

I took to learning. Reading, writing, reckoning come easy to me. Folks be amazed that I, a labourer and eighty-two, can spell and reckon straight off. All credit be to my schooling. Many a time in my life I've stood patiently by, the answer all buttoned up in my head, while my master's run out of fingers (p.20).

His 'master', a local farmer, may have been to grammar school but, to Mont's mind, it had not taught him much. He, meanwhile, had acquired a valuable ability for mental arithmetic:

It used to puzzle me, with all his grammar-school education and his thousands of pounds, he could only count sheep one at a time, stabbing the air with his forefinger ... Thanks to old



Shepherd Hathaway, I always stood quite still, holding up my crook, dividing 'em off in tens in my head ... Thanks to my old schoolteachers I could reckon in my head ... (p.197).

The headteacher of Mont's school from 1902-1929 was a man called George Glover. His wife, Lavinia, was an assistant teacher at the school, known affectionately by the pupils as 'Ma' Glover. From very occasional references to these two in *Lifting the Latch*, it is possible to catch a passing glimpse of them as teachers. Amongst other things, to my delight as an English teacher, poetry features briefly. For example, Mont tells Stewart that he thanks his teachers for him having learnt to read so that he can enjoy the companionship of books and newspapers, as well as more practical skills such as

to reckon and plot so I can budget my pension and plan my produce, and even to sew... Only yesterday as I sewed on my braces' button, I could hear Ma Glover's voice chanting in my boyhood ear'ole:

*Three good stitches at the bole
Up and in to every hole.
Leave some slack to make a stem,
Up and in, and round agen.
Twist it down from the head,
Fasten fast, and cut the thread.* (p.204).

Sound advice! Moreover, although women usually had responsibility for teaching sewing, in Mont's case it was Mr Glover as well who

made us keep a needle and thread always in our desks. If ever there were as much as five minutes' slack between ... furrows of mental arithmetic, spelling, drill, dictation, spouting poetry, practising pot-hooks and chanting tables, 'We'll have a go at threading the needle!' he'd suddenly announce. 'See if the boys can beat the girls today. Needles up! Threads ready!' (p.205).

Lifting the Latch contains many other snippets of interest such as Mont's reflections on some of his many friends, family members and neighbours. In particular, he recalls wistfully young men of a similar age to him who were called up in the First World War, some of whom did not return. (Mont himself tried to enlist but was not allowed to since he was needed on the land.) He also talks vividly about some of the many women he knew. One was the aristocratic Miss Bruce who lived alone on the edge of the village. Mont helped her on several occasions when her horses or cattle were in difficulties, his shepherding skills and animal husbandry knowledge (not to mention his great strength) proving valuable.

There is one specific anecdote in the book, though, which I found especially telling. Mont says that by 1966 Miss Bruce 'were getting a bit wandery' (p.198). She had been picked up by the police a few times at night, found walking a long way away from her home. She denied all the accusations of unpredictability, saying she just fancied a walk. With Mont, however, one of the things she kept returning to again and again was Walter de la Mare's poem, 'Nod'. It was, says Mont, 'a poem about a

shepherd what old Glover had learned us in Top Standard and I'd written out for her many years ago' (p.199). On one particular evening, Miss Bruce called to Mont across the brook to tell him that the previous night she had had a vision: she had seen a new heaven and a new earth in which Mont and his flock of sheep had become the shimmering golden flock of Nod, as described in the first two verses of de la Mare's poem:

Softly along the road of evening,
In a twilight dim with rose,
Wrinkled with age, and drenched with dew
Old Nod, the shepherd, goes.
His drowsy flock streams on before him,
Their fleeces charged with gold,
To where the sun's last beam leans low
On Nod the shepherd's fold.

Mont told Miss Bruce that her 'vision' was a mere trick of the light, the late evening rays of the setting sun slanting through the beads of rain on his sheep's fleeces, making them appear 'charged with gold'. Miss Bruce was apparently not listening, though, just chanting the poem in a 'wayward' voice.

I have not been able to find where de la Mare acquired such information, though it may have been a known phenomenon. In *Period Piece* (1952), Gwen Raverat claims to have seen something similar when she was sent away for her final two years of what turned out to be unhappy schooling:

In all that time there is only one vision that I keep: a flash, seen through the garden hedge, of some sheep in the next field, with the frosty, winter light running along their backs. It seemed like something from another world: the real world, to which I should escape some day. It kept me alive (p.74).

Whatever his sources, Walter de la Mare first published 'Nod' in *The Listeners and Other Poems* (1912). It was, therefore, very modern poetry for Mont and his classmates to be learning in 1915. What I would love to know is when and where Mr or Mrs Glover had discovered it and why it was chosen for the Top Standard to learn by heart. Did he find it in *The Listeners and Other Poems* and, if so, how did he come by that particular book? Moreover, why did he select 'Nod' rather than, say, 'The Listeners', one of de la Mare's most famous poems which remains one of his most popular? It may be that Mr Glover was responding to one of de la Mare's central appeals: 'Poetry was, for him, the road into reality, not aside from it ... [and] ... his attention had intensity, throughout his life' (Whistler, 2003, pp.84 & 88). Whistler also goes on to say that:

Many did, and still do, respond intuitively and deeply, far beyond the conscious understanding of their years, to de la Mare's poems. Nor is this confined to children of a cultured background; Glasgow teaching-nuns, London elementary schoolteachers and dockland public librarians reported to him in letters through the years ahead that they found the most unlikely children



arrested by the more romantic and least childish of the poems (*ibid.*, p.98).

On the other hand, Mr Glover might have chosen 'Nod' from the five de la Mare poems included in the English Association's poetry anthology, *Poems of Today* (1915). But unless he recorded the fact anywhere, we may never know. Perhaps it doesn't matter, though I would very much like to know more about what Mr and Mrs Glover enjoyed reading and why 'Nod' was chosen for learning by heart.

When, about a century later, I myself chose 'The Listeners' as one of five poems for choral reading with Secondary English PGCE students, I talked with a small group of them six months afterwards to see what they remembered. One student told me she did not remember much of her own group's poem. However, she vividly recalled the group who had chosen 'The Listeners' and the visceral effect it had. Group members placed themselves behind her so she could not actually see them: 'I could only listen ... [but it] sent shivers up my spine ... tingling' (Cliff Hodges, 2016, p.384). I think Walter de la Mare would have liked that!

De la Mare's poem, 'Nod', has the potential for a similarly visceral effect. Nod's name and that of his old sheep dog, 'Slumber-soon', along with other words in the poem such as 'evening', 'twilight', 'dim' and 'drowsy' make it sound like a lullaby. However, the last stanza intimates something more final:

His are the quiet steeps of dreamland,
The waters of no-more-pain,
His ram's bell rings 'neath an arch of stars,
"Rest, rest, and rest again."

As Mr Glover may have been all too well aware, 'Nod' was probably much more illuminating for a future shepherd like Mont than the banal section called 'Useful Knowledge: Animals' in Thomas Nelson's *Royal Readers No. II* (n.d.) which begins:

THE SHEEP –

What does the sheep give us? Wool.
What is all the wool of one sheep called? A fleece.
What do we make of wool? Flannel, blankets, carpets,
coats, warm gloves and socks, and many other useful things ... (Anon., n.d. p.42).

Although the above might perhaps have been useful knowledge for urban children it would not have been for Mont and his ilk. Indeed, it is unlikely to have encouraged them to take any pleasure in reading at all

and fails to acknowledge what we now call the 'funds of knowledge' (González, Moll & Amanti (eds.), 2005) on which children will draw in their learning. 'Nod', on the other hand, clearly stayed with him by heart for life.

The morning after Mont's attempts to explain the poem to Miss Bruce, she was found face down, drowned in the brook. It was not treated as a suicide since that would have meant she was not eligible to be buried in the village churchyard. Despite differences in social standing between her and the villagers, she was a popular contributor to village life and they wanted her to be buried in the churchyard – which she was.

Before *Lifting the Latch* ends, Mr Glover is, once again, remembered. Mont's memories seem both vivid and far-sighted:

Every morn he bound us as a Christian school,
'hands together, eyes closed', for a prayer and a hymn;
and again at the end of the day 'to support us ... till the shades lengthen and the evening comes'. I grant it were a very enclosed world, but he opened the gate as wide as he could for each child. There must be many a dedicated teacher ploughing a lone furrow in today's field of education. Plod on! There'll be an unknown Mont to bless thee at the end (p.205).

Author's note: Sheila Stewart was my own first (nursery school) teacher. Sadly, I did not read *Lifting the Latch* until after her death.

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The Well beside St Andrew's Church, Toft with plaque describing its restoration marking the Millennium year - see walk on pages 28 & 29.





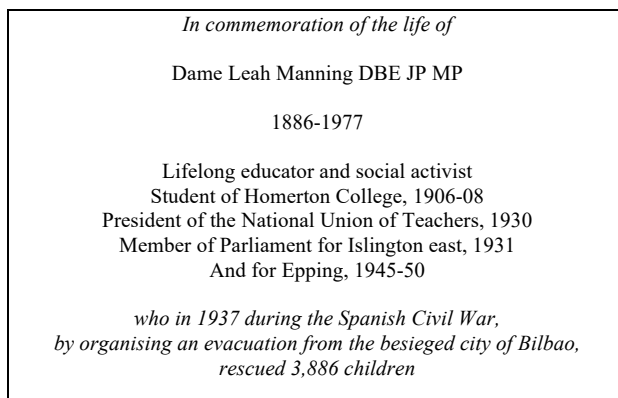
Memorialising Mrs Manning

Peter Cunningham



To Homertonian, Cambridge Head Teacher and Heroine of the Spanish Civil War, we erected our own memorials back in 2019.

The brass plaque reads:



But the Basques beat us to it in 2002, *euskal estiloa* as they might say!



The Basque Children of 1937 Association (BCA '37) was founded in November 2002 by Natalia Benjamin, daughter of a Basque woman teacher and Manuel Moreno, son of a *niña vasca*, together with Helvecia Hidalgo, herself also a refugee. The Association has maintained strong links to Homerton, and Carmen Kilner, a BCA '37 Trustee, identifies an article

from *Deia*, an important Basque newspaper, reporting that:

At the end of 2002, at the request of the Association of retired evacuees of the Spanish Civil War, the Council of Bilbao dedicated a newly constructed, pretty square in Txurdinaga, with the name '*Jardines de Mrs Leah Manning*'.



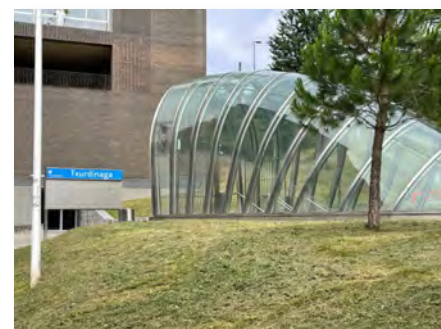
The square is enhanced with sculptures in the style of Eduardo Chillida, a prominent Basque sculptor.



Moreover, a path leads from Mrs Manning's gardens to a beautifully configured and well-maintained play area for children:



PS A final delight for Cambridge educational pilgrims might be the adjacent *Euskotren* station, the entrance to which is designed by architect Norman Foster, with echoes of his Law Faculty Building on the Sidgwick site.





A Tribute to Paul Hirst: Special Issue

David Bridges

*Extract from a special issue of
Journal of Philosophy of Education*

Many RSMs will remember Professor Paul Hirst who was Head of the Department in Cambridge from 1971 to (about) 1998. He was a trustee of Homerton and a good friend to the College, helping it navigate a path that led eventually to its achieving full college status. Many students from the BED programme will have delighted in his sometimes quite histrionic lectures on such unlikely topics as the correspondence theory of truth ('p' is true if and only if p – as you will all know!) and his hallmark forms of knowledge thesis.

As a tribute to Paul's contribution to philosophy of education, his London colleague Patricia White and I have edited a special issue of the *Journal of Philosophy of Education* (57:1 published February 2023 by Oxford University Press) with contributions from 24 international scholars drawn from all over the world. The Introduction takes the form of a conversation between Patricia and myself which discusses, among other things, Paul's 'conversion' from the position when he was arguing for a curriculum based on distinct forms of knowledge to one based on social practices (OK read the special issue if you are getting lost!). In the conversation I reflect on ways in which Paul's time in Cambridge might have influenced this much discussed move. This may ring some bells with older members of the RSMA.

Paul Hirst was, of course, centrally involved professionally as well as philosophically in debates about educational theory, and in particular its place in teacher education. In Cambridge he was, after all, head of a Department of Education whose main business was the provision of a Postgraduate Certificate of Education as well as of a University Faculty that included members from Homerton College with its large Bachelor of Education programme and the Cambridge Institute of Education with its extensive programme of in-service training for teachers. Though, when he started in Cambridge in 1971, the foundation disciplines were in the ascendancy, by 1984 all those directly engaged in

teacher training were required to have 'recent and relevant' classroom *experience*; the discourse of *school based* in-service training advocated by the James Committee (Department for Education and Science 1972 and reaffirmed in Making INSET Work, DFES 1978) and *school centred* initial teacher training (SCITT—first proposed by Secretary of State Kenneth Clark in 1992 and formalised through a series of government circulars in the next five years) were becoming well established and higher education institutions were experimenting with the accreditation of prior *experiential* learning (APEL). Kenneth Clark also introduced the requirement that 80% of the one year Postgraduate Certificate of Education programme should be in the form of *school based practice*. In parallel with these developments Paul Hirst was establishing the first MPhil degrees in his department including an MPhil in Curriculum that was staffed by a team that included John Elliott, David Ebbutt, Mary James and myself – all with roots in classroom action research, which in an important sense inverted the relationship between the knowledge of the academy (educational theory?) and the experiential knowledge of teachers. As Elliott wrote:

The rationale for involving teachers as researchers of their own practice is connected with an aspiration to give them control over what is to count as knowledge about practice. As action researchers, teachers are knowledge generators rather than appliers of knowledge generated by outsiders (Elliott 1994, 133).

I offer this background because Paul Hirst was at the centre of these developments both in Cambridge and as a contributor to national debates, and this makes me ask whether it played some part in his 'conversion' to the discourse of social *practice*, albeit that this had a sophistication that was sorely lacking in wider educational policy discussion.

REFERENCE: John Elliott (1994) Research on teachers' knowledge and action research, *Educational Action Research*, 2:1, 133-137, DOI: 10.1080/09650799400200003

**Missed the deadline?
Why not write an article for the next RSMA Newsletter?**





A Music Lesson Observed circa 2015

John Finney

*An edited version of a blog from John's blog site
jfin107.Wordpress.com - Music Education Now.*

The music department is at the far end of the school, by the playing field where sea gulls come at the end of break time. They were there last time I was here. Some things don't change but there is big change in the layout of the music room. The tables that had previously grouped pupils into ready-made ensembles have moved to the sides and now support paired keyboard work when deployed in what is a re-designed curriculum.

This is a 12.00 to 1.00 lesson for this year 8 class, their last year of musical entitlement in this school. Twenty-eight smartly uniformed pupils enter to the recorded sound of Senegalese Drumming. They quietly follow well-practised protocols of bags down, coats off, planners out, chairs round ready to music.



The Instrument

Fourteen djembe sit waiting in the centre of the room. Somebody wants to know about the djembe with a slit standing by the piano. The teacher explains. Then a call from the teacher, 'lads, come on' to two boys not yet with chairs round. Djembe are gathered to be shared in pairs and then the three part technique learnt in the last lesson, 'bass-

tone-slap', revised with the teacher leading from the front as virtuoso master drummer.

Pupils in their pairs are labelled 'right' and 'left' and it is 'rights' who play first with plenty for 'lefts' to be imaging and imagining as they look, listening and move inwardly and sometimes outwardly too. What follows is quick fire call and response work deploying mnemonics to support the rhythmic patterns. There is a 'you are very nice – thank you very much' x 3 and so on building an extended structure.

There is lots of repetition, recursion, hard-nosed rehearsing and a particular focus on the 'bedap' effect. 'Again-again-look-listen-let's try it ... knees-side thighs ... is it together ... better... listen ... is it together? Can you feel it in your back? Now the 'bass' technique is

worked on. 'Look, it's a cricketer's bowling action' and the teacher shows how the whole thing is a dance of the body despite being seated - a swaying forward, a side movement and a myriad of subtleties impossible to describe. And then the call to Daniel to remember to keep the mouth of the djembe open i.e. the djembe leans forward for it to speak.

The teacher draws the class into a perpetually mobile discourse of music, imagery and metaphor. This is 'rapid progress', pacey stuff. Now it's 'lefts' turn to play but not before 'rights' have written an assessment of their progress on their postcards given on entry to the classroom. At the completion of the 'rights' playing comes a gentle complaint about 'lefts' having more time than 'rights'.

Now step 2 of the lesson, making things harder by upping the tempo. The quality of movement is again emphasised as the teacher dances with her djembe. Jan comments that he had noticed how the register had been marked and how the teacher had moved rhythmically back and forth as a call and response – with 'name-here', 'name-here' ... The teacher shares with the class her bad school-wide reputation for failing to mark the register and how the email notifying failure in this respect is made public through the staff email. A short discussion follows about more efficient ways of registering pupils. Pupils are not short of ideas. The short diversion ends and back to a concern for ensemble, for fluency and for the music to be felt. And now the structure is extended further and the vocals learnt last week added.

The teacher apologises for not knowing what the words of the song mean but that the important thing is that we know this is a welcome song. Final performance and much satisfaction. Seven minutes to 1.00 and djembe to centre of the room. Time for reflection and the class are asked to write a 'Dear ...' postcard to the teacher telling what had been gained from the lesson today. "Not a 'I liked the lesson', but at least three sentences, a proper postcard message please. I will read them all and keep them for ever. And this will help me to organise groups for next week when you will be making your own pieces".

The teacher collects the postcards with a smile of approval for each pupil. 1.00 and lunchtime. The teacher goes into virtuoso drummer mode inviting the class to move in time as they leave. They do and they don't. The teacher and her class are alive and well and another 'good-enough music lesson'.



Skipping!?!

Bev Hopper

Almost everyone has friends or family who have had some sort of cancer diagnosis, so on my 67th birthday I had a mad moment and signed up to do 100 skips each day in February to help raise funds for Cancer Research UK.

My initial practising showed that my stamina and ability to bounce were not what I'd hoped they'd be ... to say nothing of my pelvic floor! An added challenge was that I'd be in southern India for the latter half the month where I'd expected temperatures in the 30s and with high humidity too.

I know that times are tough at the moment, but I hoped that people might be able to show their support and fund lifesaving research by donating even a small amount.



So, early February saw me struggling to manage much more than a dozen skips without getting tangled up. Frustrating to say the least! I used to be able to skip quite well. By mid-February my technique had improved or perhaps my movement memory had started to kick in, as I managed 46 continual skips before any snags. Then, amazingly after playing netball, I managed 80 in one go - perhaps it was my netball friends who were watching that spurred me on?

Then we arrived in India and as I hadn't had any sleep for over 24 hours, I couldn't manage more than 3 jumps before tangling - my coordination and balance were wrecked. The next few days were much better despite temperatures in the 30s, so I made up the 100 I'd missed. Four days later I was quite dramatically 'struck down' and for 24 hours had close encounters with only my bed and the bathroom, so that was a challenge too.

It was fun seeking out interesting places to skip, including at the beach being cheered on by tuk-tuk drivers and by the world's largest bird sculpture (allegedly) which was accessed by cable car. Inevitably there were some interesting explanations of what the crazy English woman was doing!



One of the most moving moments was during an overnight stay on a boat. I nipped ashore to do my daily skip and was spotted by the daughter of the house next to our mooring. She was a nurse who was working towards gaining her occupational English qualification so she could begin nursing in New Zealand and was very keen to practise her English. We got chatting and she asked about my skipping and soon, to my surprise, she became very emotional. It turned out to be a year to the day since her father had died from cancer. We both ended up in tears and after much hugging, we wished each other good luck as we parted. Quite a moment.

So, I'd like to hugely thank everyone who has supported me in my challenge. Together with gift aid, I raised over £600. Yes it was hard and frustrating, particularly at the start and in the heat, but also fun and satisfying to feel my skill developing/returning.



Have I kept up my 100 a day after the end of February? I'd love to say yes, but despite my good intentions, I'm sorry to say no, though my rope is close by in the kitchen drawer, so you never know. I might have another mad moment in the future.





Another year in the life of

Lizzie Madder

Nearly two years since retirement. Who knew I would be so busy. So much to do and so little time seems an apt enough phrase at the moment.

It's lovely to be able to book daytime events and do spur-of-the-moment activities. Our diaries are cluttered with 'why don't we book this' or 'let's go there'. In September, we went behind the scenes at the Theatre Royal in Bury St Edmunds, then we headed off to Crosby, outside Liverpool, to see the Antony Gormley statues on the beach and in the sea. A magnificent spectacle. We stayed in the guest house that Gormley had stayed in, which added to our pleasure.

In October, we visited Messums Gallery in Wiltshire. The Gallery had been on my radar for years, and we couldn't not visit the amazing exhibition of giant sculptures by Laurence Edwards (you can still see the sculptures on the Messums Wiltshire website). There was also the Swavesey Open Art exhibition, which had reopened after the pandemic. I was delighted to win one of the three prizes *and* sell a painting.

November, and we stayed in a cottage in Dungeness on the south coast. A fabulous place, bleak and wild and beautiful; it felt like being at the edge of the world, and with the extra bonus of being near my daughter Daisy, in Hythe. One afternoon, I joined a bunch of twitchers oblivious to the pouring rain, having walked up from the RSPB reserve, standing at the front of the cottage, looking at a rare Siberian stonechat in a nearby bush.

Peter and I went to St Mawes for Christmas. A very pretty Cornish cove. We joined in carol singing at a local hotel on Christmas Eve, and were especially moved by two young women singing Silent Night in their native Ukrainian. I couldn't hold back the tears. From there we crossed the Fal on the Prince Harry Ferry to Falmouth for one night, and then on to Bournemouth to visit Peter's daughter in her new flat.

In January, I was invited by an art group to do a demonstration of a landscape watercolour painting. Now, this was completely out of my comfort zone and I had already made excuses over many months until I finally felt 'well they must *really* want me!' So shaking like a leaf, heart in my stomach, I took along my paper and paints - and was made very welcome. Three hours later, I came away having much enjoyed myself, but at the same time I was pleased that the ordeal was over. No sooner was I home than I received an email from the group

secretary asking if I would run a teaching class. Again, making my excuses, 'I'm not a teacher', 'I don't even know how I paint, I just do it!'

I was persuaded to return to the group in May and although I found it hard work, I was thrilled when they produced some lovely work. They enjoyed experimenting with twigs, sponges, cling film, toothbrushes...no doubt the 'teachers' amongst you are having a chuckle!



One of the highlights of my year was to visit the Linnean Society in London. I knew of the Society from my earlier botanical art days, but had never visited. I had been reading a book, *Miss Willmott's Ghost* about the Victorian horticulturalist, Ellen Willmott, and it described the volumes of books, *Genus Rosa* (1914), which she had written with illustrations by Alfred Parsons. I made an appointment to see the books at the Linnean. It was quite an amazing experience to be able to handle the two fabulous volumes of rose paintings. I spent a very happy morning there. It's worth a look at The Rosarian Library website for more information. She was an extraordinary woman, he an amazing artist.

This was followed by a health scare! Having had problems with my jaw for some time, a consultant thought there was a possibility of a tumour. As anyone who has had to wait for hospital results knows, it's a very difficult, life-on-hold time. However, two weeks after a scan, I was told there was no tumour; I have osteoarthritis. Phew!

My sister retired last year, and achieved her first retirement ambition by renting a villa on Lanzarote for six weeks by herself. She then invited me to join her for a few days in April. It was my first visit to the island, and we had a lovely time visiting local markets, swimming in the sea, eating paella, and siesta-ing in the afternoons! Two weeks later, Peter and I were about to go on a river cruise in the south of France. Two days before we were due to fly to Lyon to join the boat, we received a phone



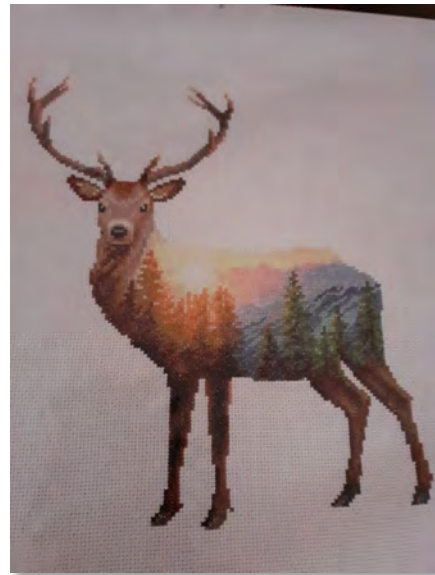
call to say that all river cruises were cancelled due to the lock keepers joining the French strikes. There were no rivers open. Disappointing yes, but two hours' later we had arranged another holiday to take its place, a week in Madeira. It was quite a beautiful island, and it was fun to go off-road in a jeep up almost vertical roads and travel on the cable car to the tropical gardens.

We've just returned from a week in North Wales, and I was disappointed not to be able to try out the Zip Wire Experience, due to my heart condition. But was delighted to watch Peter flying through the air at 100mph! It had been many years since we had been to North Wales, always going further south to the Pembrokeshire coast, and we were dazzled by the beauty of the mountains. Quite breathtaking, a truly gorgeous area. And here I must thank Trish Maude for her Nordic poles class a few years' ago. I took my poles, there being many hills to climb, and couldn't help smiling remembering her 'left foot, right pole' instructions as we paraded up and down the Combination Room. Peter was so impressed with my sticks, he now has his own, and it has transformed his unsteady gait as he now marches well ahead of me on walks with much confidence. Thank you, Trish.

In between these mini-adventures, I've been sketching a lot, but not painting a great deal. I'm writing poetry, still sewing clothes, meeting up with friends, gardening, and I've taken up an old hobby again, counted cross stitch embroidery. I can recommend it as a very therapeutic, relaxing and satisfying pastime.



An embroidery for a close friend



An embroidery for my brother's birthday

Now we're preparing for our next adventure, a trip to Dubrovnik, and I'm trying to re-learn the Serbo-Croat I was taught as a teenager by my father, before visiting my grandmother who lived near Belgrade, in the former Yugoslavia. I'm amazed I can still count to 100.

Sve najbolje

1969, Yugoslavia

Two days by smoky train.
Salami, peppers, people
stuffed together like cabbages
in a pot. A sour smell, unwashed
brandy smell.
Chickens swinging by their legs.

A village called a town,
Baba Maria's house, a pig
by the toilet shed, a water pump.
The army band playing
'The Last Waltz' in the open air
dance hall. We thought it romantic.

One dinar would buy anything:
a pivo, a cockta. Waitresses refused
to serve us in our hussy minidresses.
Two girls abroad, alone, was shocking
enough, practising our dobras and hvalas
on the dark-haired boys. It felt like Romance.

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“Many hands make light work” & “The more the merrier” ...

We know that many people prefer not to spend their retirement on any committee. However, we could really do with some RSMs volunteering, **not** to be on the Committee **but** to do just one small thing during the year to help us out by, for example, arranging a social event, organising or doing a talk (in-house or, for those further away, by Zoom), planning a visit etc. etc. ...





On retirement from Homerton

Sue Conrad

Four years after retiring from my role of Bursar's Secretary, and on the point of stepping down from the role of RSMA Social Secretary, I have spent a bit of time reflecting on 'the story so far' in terms of life as a retired person. I have concluded that I am very lucky. I am very lucky to have spent just shy of 30 years in a job that I loved at Homerton, at a time in the life of the College which would be described as 'interesting' by anyone prone to serious understatement. I am also lucky to have remained connected with the College and many of my colleagues after retirement.

Such a continuing connection certainly does not appear to be the experience of most retirees. Many of my friends have retired from senior positions in large organisations and have simply walked out of the door on their last day never to return, and never again to be contacted by that organisation or anyone in it in any meaningful way. To be fair, this doesn't seem to bother them. But I think it would have bothered me, because I feel working in a residential College really is different to working just about anywhere else. There is something about working in a College which makes you feel part of what I can only describe as a family. In many ways it becomes your life. Perhaps it is because, despite the academic purpose of the College, you are working in what is largely a domestic setting, with residential students not only working and studying around you, but also going about their everyday lives in quite a public and visible way – having meals, taking their washing to the laundry, chatting on the staircases about what they did in town last night, heading off to the sports fields in their kit, doing their music practice in rooms well within earshot of offices where staff are working – not to mention the late-nighters sneaking down to the Buttery for breakfast still in their dressing gowns! You just don't get all of that in the average workplace.

Then there is the nature of much of the work itself, which follows a regular pattern, but changes throughout the year – student interviews, admissions, timetabling, recruitment of academic staff, all the work around exams and graduation, budget-setting, conferences, and the ever-present challenge of buildings and grounds maintenance. A pulse that becomes part of you, and you of it.

Personally speaking, there was something else. Homerton was the backdrop to a number of significant events in my life. I can remember as if it were yesterday the morning I picked up the telephone in my little broom-cupboard of

an office on ABC staircase to hear my Dad saying that he was waiting for an ambulance to take my Mum to Addenbrookes. She died later that day having suffered a brain haemorrhage. Similarly, I remember my son calling me from a friend's house to say that he had gone to Grandad's where he went after school in the afternoons, and there was no answer when he knocked on the door, the curtains were still closed and the milk was still on the doorstep. I feared the worst, called an ambulance and rushed home to find that he had died suddenly overnight. I also remember the great kindness and support of colleagues on both of those occasions. There were happy occasions as well, but naturally, those events stick with me. And I always knew that I would be supported through difficult times like that. I don't think that happens in every organisation.

Also of course, my stint began pretty much at the point that the College – faced with many challenges – was being asked to consider selling its site to a supermarket and moving to Milton Keynes. It ended shortly after Homerton gained a Royal Charter making it a full College of the University of Cambridge complete with new student residences and educational buildings, a significant investment portfolio, extensive holdings in local residential and commercial property, and a conference business that was, and probably still is, the envy of other Colleges. I felt proud of having been part of that journey, and would have been sad to have just waved it - and those I shared it with - goodbye on my last day.

It is striking how many College staff remain in post for a very long time – even with my 30 years' service, I was by no means the longest serving inmate.

Perhaps the simplest way of putting it is that a College is a living, breathing entity, and you either become part of it and stay for a long time, or you move on quite quickly. I am very glad that I stayed for a long time, and that I am – through the auspices of the RSMA – still able to be part of it.

I did write a final paragraph about feeling a bit irritated when I was rushing around with some urgent mail to get to the pigeonholes before post collection time and got stuck behind a crocodile of white bobbing heads (aka RSMs) heading down Paupers walk towards the Combination Room. I also commented that as an RSM, with a white bobbing head myself, I now feel a bit 'poacher turned gamekeeper-ish' but I had second thoughts that it might not be appropriate ...



It all began at Brent Town Hall

Jane Edden

The focus for this piece was to be the history of Steel pans at Homerton omitting the backstory, but in the process of addressing it I came to realise that it was so inextricably linked with a part of my own history, that I've ended up writing rather a different article to the one I set out to write - hence the title!

When does a love affair begin? There is usually a moment in time imprinted on the brain, and for me it was when I first heard the sound of Steel pans at a reception at Brent Town Hall back in the 70's. I remember going into the school where I was teaching the next day and enthusing about the new sound just experienced. Imagine my delight however, when at the end of the financial year, I was invited into the Head's study to hear the magical words: "Miss Edden, we have some money remaining, would you like some steel pans in school?" (Can you see this happening now?!) So this particular journey began, which led me firstly from Neasden to Trinidad - the home of pans - for a year's teaching exchange (with a brief to explore the world of pans) - a hugely enriching experience, which included taking part - 'playing' in the Trinidad Carnival. Finding it hard to settle on return, I found myself applying for an advisory job in Cambridge and anticipating rather a different kind of musical life ahead.



As I had suspected there were no steel pans to be found anywhere in Cambridge, but I'd been in post only a few months when the County Music Adviser asked me to visit a school in Godmanchester, where there were indeed some pans, but whose teacher had left. Delighted to help, the school eventually decided that they would be better placed elsewhere. So it was, that I visited every Cambridge City primary school offering them a set of pans, but this being a novel concept in Cambridge in the 1980's, not one of them wanted to take up the offer. At

the time, I was doing some work at Harston school and when mentioning this to the Head, Pat Legge, she leapt at the chance - "We'll have them!" The history of the Harston Harmonites (originally pans enough for five players, eventually for eighteen) is indeed another story, but suffice it to say that with their very high exposure Barbara Pointon would have certainly heard them or heard of them. I'd met Barbara when she'd asked me to give some input into a Sounds Exciting Course she was running at Homerton. Two worlds collided, as they did again when in 1986 I was given a two term sabbatical from the County - together with a room at Homerton - in which to write up my MA thesis (on Trinidad Carnival). Barbara, being the excellent facilitator that she was, soon had me away from my desk and much to my surprise doing some teaching (the thesis was finally written up after term time!) As a result of this I came eventually to share a split appointment between the County and Homerton, and once assured that she then had a steel pan tutor on the staff, in 1989 Barbara ordered a set of steel pans for College. What a treat!



The cellars in Trumpington House became their home (make what you will of the Upstairs, Downstairs divide, although there was always fun to be had in every part of the Music Department!) and the students loved rehearsing there - as one Alumna observed: 'it was in the cellars of Trumpington House that lifelong friendships were forged'. It was only sad for us all when we were relocated in order to house the wine cellar.

How to make the best use of students' experience with the pans gradually emerged over time, and as news spread that 'Homerton has a steel band', invitations followed (one Alumna remembers clearly taking the pans to the BBC studios to be part of a schools broadcast programme).





In addition to regular rehearsals and preparing to play for each end of term concert, what became an important and established part of

the student 'Pans experience', was either taking the instruments into schools to run workshops, or have the children come into college. As teacher trainees, this not only enhanced their teaching experience, but introduced the children to an entirely different form of music making.

Naturally, the children were always very receptive and sent thank you cards back to College for the students, often with characterful illustrations of their experience.



One of the highlights of the year was of course playing at May Balls. This was always preceded by an audition, and over the years Pandemonium came to play in many of the Colleges. To make music in the Great Court at Trinity for example was in itself a privilege, but what was particularly exciting were the occasions when, as part of our reimbursement, we were permitted after our slot to change into our finery and then participate in the night's festivities. Memories flood back of being on dodgems at Corpus and clutching a glass of bubbly on a punt in the early hours after Clare the students were always very generous in including me in their midst. My last ball before I finally stopped teaching at College, was with the renamed Absolute Pandemonium in 2017 on a stifling hot day at Murray Edwards.

Five years before, in 2012 it having become clear that the original pans had seen better days, the decision was made to invest in a new Trinidadian style chromed set, which have been well appreciated by all subsequent cohorts of students and are still in use today.

It is most gratifying to know that steel bands have now mushroomed in Cambridge and it is no longer unusual to hear of another group forming.



Not only that, but a number of past students now have their own bands in schools across the country and have thus been able to instil the love of

making music with pans to other generations. For me it has been wonderful after more than thirty years, to reunite with three generations of past students - some from the original cohort - to form an Alumni group - 'Stealin' the Show'.

It seems apt that this was initially to play at Barbara's Memorial concert, but we have met subsequently (all meetings must include food and wine of course!) and we were all thrilled to be asked to entertain at the Charter Dinner.



Pans have followed me round for nigh on fifty years, but perhaps I can finish with sharing perhaps the most memorable time for me personally, which was the surprise appearance of the Harston Harmonites in Cambridge market square on my wedding day in 1988. After walking down the aisle to Purcell, with friends playing trumpet and organ, imagine the complete contrast of sound which greeted us at the church door - 'Congratulations' on steel pans, beaming in from somewhere unknown. Those who know St Edwards church will realise that there is no view on exiting, so leaving the photographer in the lurch in order to follow the sound, and dragging my poor Orkadian husband down St Edwards Passage to emerge onto the market square, we were met with the sight of not only the children playing (with white bows on the pans), but crowds of Saturday shoppers - some having shinned up lampposts - patiently waiting in anticipation, clearly fascinated by what was about to happen. (I'd been asked many times if pans were to be part of my wedding celebrations but no, we wanted something small and intimate!)

Quite what they made of a very excited bride being presented with a pair of engraved claves (her conducting trademark) whilst a tolerant husband



smilingly looked on, we'll never know, but the photograph captured some of the occasion and appeared on the front page of the Cambridge Evening News the following Monday.

Would you be surprised to learn that when my story ends, yes, I would like pans to be there at my funeral ... why not?! They've been such a joyous and integral part of my musical history, and for now thankfully that continues...



Italian Food

Tim Rowland

One of the pleasures of travelling abroad is experiencing different foods, or even familiar foods but differently. I have decided to write about two holidays in Italy, about 15 years ago.

This first story still makes me smile when I remember it. I was on a group walking holiday in Sorrento, with about 30 people in the party. We walked around the Bay of Naples and the Amalfi coast, took a boat trip across to Capri, and we went to visit the ruins at Pompeii.

On a 'free' day, a group of about 8 of us took the train along the coastline towards Naples as far as Herculaneum. In the morning we made a visit to the ruins. Afterwards, we looked for somewhere for lunch. Outside the site it all looked a bit quiet until we saw what looked like a bar in a side street. Two men were propping up the bar. We asked if they did food. They pointed to menus on three tables on the pavement. The drinks list seemed to be limited to just one bottle ... but the food! The menu showed an astonishing list of pizzas, about 20. We decided to share, and we ordered three kinds of pizza, impressed that they could do it in the tiny space behind the bar. We sat down, and fifteen mins later a moped came around the corner, with three pizza boxes strapped to a carrier on the back. The moped-boy duly brought the boxes to our table, and we ate from them, bare-handed ...

Well, the pizzas were excellent! And far from feeling let down, we were amused and simply charmed by the cheerful hospitality of the barman, and the barefaced audacity of the enterprise.

By way of introduction to my second story of food-in-Italy, here are two verses from the third chapter of the Book of Genesis, about those first two 'people like us'.

"When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves".

And a Preface: I grew up in working class, post-war East London. We ate very well at home, but by modern standards the diet was restricted. I like to talk about foods that are commonplace now but "didn't exist" before 1965. Such as aubergines, courgettes, yoghurts ... any cheese other than cheddar. Sardines and spaghetti only came in tins. Starters?!

Two years after the Sorrento trip, Judy and I took a holiday in the Itria valley in Puglia. We had rented a villa built around a trullo – a circular stone house, with a conical roof. It was very relaxing, with time spent reading, talking and thinking. But I did a little walking too, just to explore and to breathe in the air. The setting was very rural, with little traffic, and I found a few 30-minute walks on the country roads and tracks around the villa.

On one walk I noticed a tree with what looked like some fruit hanging from the branches. The tree trunk was in a field, but the branches hung tantalisingly over the road. The fruit was a rich purple, and soft to the touch. In the end I took two fruits back to the villa and presented them to Judy. She confirmed what I'm sure you will all know: ripe, fresh figs. In my world until then, figs had only existed in dried form, in long boxes which you bought at Christmas. We washed the figs. I cut mine in half, took a big bite and swallowed ...

.... and then ... I knew that I was naked!

In that moment I felt sure that I had died and gone to heaven.



Needless to say, we helped ourselves to one or two more figs that week. Convinced that I could now live forever on fresh figs alone, I sought them out when we returned to England. I found some at a greengrocer in Bristol. Needless to say, they tasted nothing like the fresh Italian figs that I stole from that tree in the Itria Valley.





A Trip to Egypt

Philip Rundall

You've got to go too! were the words of my musical partner, Mike, when I told him Patti was off to a conference in Cairo. He told me what a wonderful time he and his wife had had cruising down the Nile, visiting temples and other ancient sites, and staying overnight in the desert. And, he reminded me, as he was himself going to the US for a short while, that we had a gig free diary, so there was a decent stretch of time available. The next step was to find out whether Patti was able to extend *her* trip, (Cairo would be her second conference destination having one to go to in Germany en-route) so we could have a 10-day holiday. Luckily, she was up for it and so my ticket was booked.

Leading up to my departure, I watched everything I could find on BBC iPlayer on Ancient Egyptian civilization. Thank you Dan Cruickshank and co!

March 16th was largely spent sitting waiting at Heathrow Terminal 2. It felt terminal. The flight was delayed and I was compensated by being presented with a £7 Pret a Manger voucher, which didn't even cover what I ordered. On arrival at Cairo airport my case was, of course, the last to appear. Finally, I went through a virtually empty massive entrance area and finding Patti not there, I ventured out of the building (against her strict instructions), to face the noisy throng, where I found her smiling and saying that she hadn't been allowed into said entrance area.

The hotel she was staying at was close to the airport and as she had been told that I should bring along our wedding certificate to prove that I was her husband, I had it in my travel bag, just in case, but it turned out to be nonsense.

March 17th next morning we took an Uber taxi to Downtown Cairo where we found a much more modest hotel, where the desk staff were very helpful. We quickly decided to make it our base and leave the large cases there and travel on, just with rucksacks.

I have travelled in India, Malaysia and the Philippines, and nowhere have I encountered the traffic chaos you find in Cairo. It is pure anarchy. Crossing a road is a nightmare and yet one might occasionally see an ancient old woman cross in Tai Chi mode, in slow motion, without deviating her straight path, and somehow she survives! You just have to commit to it and go. On one occasion our taxi was moving so slowly we decided to pay, get out, and walk. It was far better than just sitting there, and you notice so much more. Above all it was the

constant noise of blaring horns that I found particularly irksome.

The Egyptian Museum was a fascinating first encounter with Egypt's past. We rather enjoyed its rather shabby, dusty interior, and the fact it hasn't been turned into a pristine, modern museum. The collection is massive, so we must have missed much, but the Tutankhamen treasures we never got to see when they were on show in London, were a priority. To stand before the famous gold mask was quite something, its face struck us both as being utterly beautiful. The gold jewellery was also exquisite.

The Islamic Art Museum was very different as it has an immaculate clean interior, was deliciously quiet and so a joy to walk round and study such exquisite objects. The only other place of note we visited in Cairo was The Citadel, which we didn't particularly enjoy.

Before leaving Cairo we went with a guide to Giza, Memphis and Saqqara. On the eve of my flying out to Cairo I looked at black and white photos of my mother, Olga, standing in front of the Sphinx and the Pyramids, on her way to Baghdad, where she first met my father. They married a fortnight later and it was there that I was conceived. I have been aware of my mother having seen the pyramids throughout my life, and I suspect most of us have been aware of their importance since childhood. But, I wasn't prepared for the impact that seeing them in the distance from a speeding car on a highway would have on me. Even from afar they looked immense and it brought tears to my eyes.



Seeing the pyramids close to I will also never forget. I imagined how they once looked with a pristine polished white limestone covering and gold tips at their apexes, reflecting the sun - it must have been unbelievable. And yet, we were even more moved when we later stood in front of the Step Pyramid of Djoser at Saqqara. It's the

first pyramid built and also the oldest known ancient Egyptian stone structure. Nearby we entered the tomb under the crumbling pyramid of Unas. We had to crouch down low and descend a long downward tunnel until we reached three small chambers. The walls of the central chamber were covered in hieroglyphic inscriptions that are, according to our guidebook, the earliest and least corrupt of the mortuary literature of ancient Egypt (2385 - 2355 B.C.). Next we went on to Memphis, where most of the stone was broken up and removed to create Cairo, but what remains is still worth seeing.

March 20th 7pm we left Cairo, travelling by overnight train to Luxor. We paid extra so we could have bunks, but it's not the easiest or the cleanest way to travel. It reminded me of travelling by train in India, and if we were to return to Egypt, we'd probably choose to fly instead.

March 21st 5.30am we were greeted by our guide, and we immediately drove to the West Bank of the Nile to the Valley of the Kings. It was a big contrast from Cairo, it being rural, very pleasant and much slower paced. Our guide was nice enough, but unfortunately her English was poor, and as someone with hearing problems, I found her impossible to follow. Every other word was "OK" but it wasn't! Patti, who normally can follow most people, also found it exhausting. At the Valley of the Kings we first had to submit to a mini-lecture illustrated by post cards. It was excruciatingly boring, particularly as we were already aware that there were excellent information boards in both English and Arabic.



But never mind, once in the tombs we were on our own and they were amazing: the complexity, the skills involved, the beauty of form, and the subtlety of colour. We were lucky to arrive so early as visitor numbers were not oppressive. The tombs we entered

were in this order: Ramses IV, Tutankhamun (pictured here), Ramses III and Ramses I. By the time we left the queues were stretching back a long way at each tomb entrance. Having seen Tutankhamen's treasure in Cairo, it was exciting to enter his tomb and to even see his body there!

Days later, we bought *David Roberts' Egypt*, a beautiful book of the famous lithographs based on his paintings made back in 1846. It was interesting to compare the summit of the mountain at the top left of his picture "*The Valley of the Kings*" with the same summit that I happen to video on my iPhone. It is identical. Roberts' skill and accuracy is extraordinary and it's fascinating to see how different the monuments looked back in his day - temples drowning in sand and a Cairo free from mile after mile of high rise apartments!



We next visited the Mausoleum of Hatshepsut, a place that visually, even in photos, had always impressed me. Set against those desert mountains with a clear blue sky, it was stunning.

Finally, near Luxor, we saw the Colossi of Memnon. In David Roberts' two pictures of them, they're represented in a bare landscape, quite different from today. I think this makes a huge difference - seeing them in a visually cluttered environment lacks the romance and the remote atmosphere. But they're still quite something! Time didn't allow us to see the Luxor temple, something that really disappointed us. Karnak also. As our guide said, "You'll just have to come back."

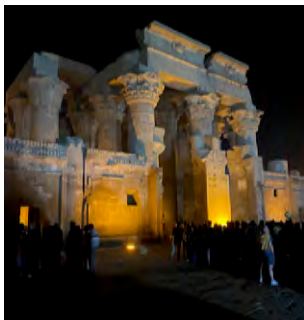
We joined our boat and so began our cruise down the Nile to Aswan. What a pleasure it was to be aboard. We had a decent sized cabin with a large window that opened wide so you could sit watching the activity on the river and the landscape as it slowly slid by. Yes, the bathroom was a bit grubby, but unlike some other passengers, we were happy to put up with this. Most importantly, like everywhere else in Egypt, we found the staff really friendly and helpful. Sitting on the top deck was fun with its artificial grass spread like an English bowling green in the middle of this huge river surrounded by desert. The food was not bad and we had no problems as non-meat eaters.

One thing that was immediately different - the sun was hotter than in Cairo. But, being on the river, the breeze made it perfect weather.



March 22nd 7.30am our guide Emad arrived and we set off on a pony and trap for the Temple of Horus in Edfu. Emad was the best guide we had all holiday - his English was good and he spoke clearly, with passion and he didn't ramble. We felt completely engaged and the fact that he'd actually worked at the site as an archaeologist really made a difference. The temple itself was awe inspiring in scale and fascinating to see with such an excellent guide.





We returned to the boat and spent a restful afternoon reading and gazing out towards the banks of the Nile. I was glad to have brought along a pair of binoculars too. By early evening we had reached the Temple of Kom Ombo, which was

floodlit. Our new guide spoke clearly but he wasn't as engaging as Emad. We returned to the boat and enjoyed some Egyptian dishes at dinner.

March 23rd overnight the boat carried on and we found ourselves in Aswan when we woke up at 3am and got ready for the 3-hour drive to the Temple of Abu Simbel. In fact the journey took 4 hours as the traffic ground to a halt for an hour to allow all the drivers to stop and pray alongside their vehicles, it being Ramadan. Nothing was said or explained - we just sat there. At last we got going and the journey was through endless desert. It just goes on forever and you look at it thinking, if I were to set off walking into all that, I'd be dead.

Abu Simbel must be one of the most famous religious sites in the world and yet, for both of us, it was the least satisfying experience of our entire time in Egypt. Others on our mini-bus thought it wonderful but we decided not to share our thoughts, not wanting to bring them down. If you study the 1846 pictures of David Roberts, the mountain side that the temple was carved out of looks completely different to the man-made 'fake mountain' created when the temple was dismantled and moved to safety away from the water when the High Dam was built. Yes, they've used real rock, but it looked so artificial that the whole appeared, to us anyway, as if it had escaped from Disneyland. Oddly enough this extended to the temple itself as it too looked fake! However, once inside, this feeling lifted and we found it a powerful experience. But, the biggest problem of all, particularly once inside, was the sheer numbers of tourists. We both found it depressing and couldn't wait to escape. One of the things we found *really* annoying was the way people constantly take photos of one another or take selfies. It was as if most were not spending time actually looking at the extraordinary art but simply trying to find opportunities to take snaps of themselves. It simply created bottle necks and slowed down the movement of the crowd. I suspect crowds moved far more smoothly before the invention of the smart phone! The final straw at Abu Simbel was being charged £10 (Sterling) for 2 cups of coffee. We refused to pay this and threatened to walk away - we got it for £4. The journey back through the desert in daylight was interesting, as it's ever changing.

Upon returning to Aswan we had lunch and then had an attractive small wooden motor boat all to ourselves and we travelled up the cascade stretch of the Nile to Elephant Island where we enjoyed the colourful Nubian houses (pictured above right) and the many camels. On the way there, there was a bit of drama too, when the boat suddenly juddered to a halt, hitting a rock. At first we

feared that the prop shaft had broken, but it took two boats to drag us off, and to our relief the motor still worked. This stretch of the river is particularly attractive with lots of islands, huge rock formations and nice vegetation and it was a great way to recover from the Abu Simbel disappointment.



March 24th we had an excellent female guide who took us over the old British built Aswan Low Dam and then on to the much later built, High Dam, further back down the river. Both were fascinating to see and it happens that there is a personal family link, as my great-grandfather, General F.H. Rundall C.S.I. R.E. in retirement, having been Inspector General for Irrigation in India, lectured and became a consultant. He was the first engineer to propose the building of a dam at Aswan in 1876 after he was invited to Egypt, at the invitation of the then Khedive, to examine the delta of the Nile and to submit plans and estimates for its irrigation. He suggested a dam be built, not far from the site of the present Old Dam. Nothing was done however as the Khedive was bankrupt and there was no money to do anything in Egypt. My great-grandfather had nothing to do with the eventual building of the Old Dam by the British, 23 years later, whose construction began in 1899 and was finished in 1902. I found it interesting to read that the High Dam has reduced the amount of silt that flows along the Nile, forcing farmers to employ fertilisers, whereas the Low Dam has six sluice gates that allow the silt to pass through, and so feed the land.



Our next cultural trip involved travelling again on a small boat to the island temple of Philae (pictured above). Again, it's a temple moved from its original position, but unlike Abu Simbel, you'd never guess as there's no man-made mountain involved! It wasn't particularly crowded, so it was another great experience. On the way back to the boat we stopped at the ancient stone quarry where lies the massive unfinished obelisk, which came to nought as

the stone cracked. It was hot work climbing up to see this in the midday sun, but it was well worth it.

As our train was not due to depart the following day from Aswan until 5.15pm we removed our stuff to the Sofitel Old Cataracts overlooking the Nile - the lovely and expensive hotel where Agatha Christie wrote much of her book, *"Death on the Nile"*. The views from the terraces were wonderful, the Nile shimmering down below.

The best bit about travelling back to Cairo by train was chatting with other passengers in the restaurant car before settling down for the night. I dreaded returning to the chaos of Cairo. Indeed we'd been tempted to remain in Aswan, but as it was Ramadan the city was a lot less frenetic. But finding food to eat was difficult, and not having eaten the awful packaged processed breakfast on the train, we were ravenous and tired. We ended up

taking a taxi to the Hilton Hotel and plunged into their buffet with an oud player providing background music. I got to talk with him and when I told him that I play the mandolin, he handed me his instrument and I played a few notes. I was shocked when I realised that it was still plugged into the sound system - it was tuned in an unfamiliar mode, so I was completely at sea.

March 26th Suddenly we both felt we would like to be back home. I thought I had the beginnings of a cold and we both felt that we needed a rest. We changed our flight to leave two days earlier than planned and flew to Heathrow via Warsaw. Our stay in Egypt had been a wonderful experience and it has made me want to read a lot more about its ancient civilisation – we are already re-watching all those BBC iPlayer programmes. If you have a chance to go, go!



Composing in Residence

John Hopkins

Twice in my life (so far) I have been privileged to be given positions as a composer-in-residence; the first time from 1979 – 82, for the Eastern Arts Association, the second time from 2016 – 19, for Homerton College. Two very different situations, and at a considerable distance in time. So, what does a composer-in-residence actually do (or is supposed to do)?

With Eastern Arts, this was at a time when several regional Arts Associations (local versions of the Arts Council) were experimenting with the idea of hosting such a person, and in my case, the brief was very simple (though in fact, rather difficult to carry out). Eastern Arts covered the extensive area of Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Essex. My task was defined as 'doing anything I reasonably could to promote the awareness and appreciation of contemporary music.' Contemporary music was at that time interpreted to mean the output of so-called modern 'classical' composers – you've guessed it, the kind of music that nobody wants to hear!

What I actually did was to set up a number of workshops in various places: in schools, in libraries (out of hours, naturally), in adult education settings, and to encourage people who came along to make their own music, using a variety of percussion instruments that I carried around in the boot of my car. Each county's Music Advisor was a natural ally in much of this process, and the county youth orchestras of Norfolk, Suffolk and Hertfordshire offered some performance opportunities. Alongside this, I gave talks to music clubs, to WEA classes, and anywhere else

that people would give me an ear, to discuss why and how 'contemporary music' sounded like it did. Along with a generous bursary, I was also able to write new works for any regional organisation that was prepared to apply for a slice of the commission cake that Eastern Arts had baked for me to spend. Among the commissions I carried out were a choral work for Norwich Cathedral, a piece for the Samuel Ward Upper School's orchestra in Haverhill, a chamber piece for the King's Lynn Festival, a couple of other pieces of chamber music for the University of East Anglia and for the Hatfield Polytechnic (now the University of Hertfordshire). There were some others, but one of the crowning moments was conducting the Suffolk Schools Orchestra in a new work in the concert hall of Snape Maltings.

But all good things come to an end, and so the residency with Eastern Arts came to a full stop after three years, and I was then in the unenviable position of trying to make a living from writing music. This has never been an easy task, at least not since the French Revolution. The Arts Council itself came to my rescue with a major bursary for the first year, and in the meantime I built up a certain amount of private teaching together with a part-time position as composition teacher at what is now Anglia Ruskin. In parallel with that, a reasonably steady flow of commissions enabled me to create a substantial list of works, and a publisher helped to find performances.

The real difficulties start once you stop being a 'promising young composer'. There is always a steady



supply of even younger and more promising composers coming along behind, and eventually only a select few manage to break into the top flight where something called 'being established' is achieved. In my case, a lucky break led me to a part-time lectureship at Homerton College in 1988, since when my working and composing life had been based there until retirement. Of course, the College has seen many changes since those early days, and my work at Homerton developed first into a full-time appointment, then a University Lecturer in the Faculty of Education, and finally in the Faculty of Music. I like to think of that part of my career as an 'Odyssey-on-the-spot'; a variant of that experienced by Hans Castorp, the anti-hero of Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*, a novel that has been a constant factor in my life since I first became acquainted with it at university. Indeed, it was the source of one of my most successful works, a concerto for piano and orchestra which I named after the book. This achieved a number of performances, including ones by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the Danish Radio Symphony Orchestra as part of the ISCM Festival in Aarhus, Denmark. Its first performance can still be heard on my SoundCloud, at

Stream John Hopkins | Listen to Alternative interpretations: The Magic Mountain playlist online for free on SoundCloud

I was not one of those members of Regent House who voted to allow the University of Cambridge to continue its policy of (basically) compulsory retirement at 67. So it was an enormous pleasure when towards the approach of that ominous date, Geoff Ward spoke to me after a Fellows' Dinner at Homerton and suggested that I might like to become not just an Emeritus Fellow, but to be Composer-in-Residence for the College. Naturally, I agreed at once to this kind offer, and held several conversations with Geoff to decide what exactly I might actually do in this role.

Unlike the brief with Eastern Arts all those years ago, the role's definition was always a bit vague. I was to supervise Homerton music students who wanted to submit compositions as part of their Tripos, and to write some new 'occasional' pieces, as and when such occasions occurred. The most substantial work that I wrote for the College was called *Elevation*, for the concert in 2018 which celebrated the 250th anniversary of the College's foundation. This unfortunately did not manage to get recorded, but it was very well performed by an augmented college orchestra, conducted by Toby Hession. In addition, I have also written a number of pieces for the Charter Choir, which have featured in the weekly Evensong services at St. John's, and also been taken abroad by the choir on its summer tours (pictured on p. 27 of this Newsletter). Most of these performances have been excellently prepared and conducted by Daniel Trocmé-Latter, and a group of Four Latin Motets featured on the Charter Choir's first CD. These can also be heard on my SoundCloud, at

Stream John Hopkins | Listen to 4 Latin Motets playlist online for free on SoundCloud

As with the Eastern Arts residency, the one at Homerton came to an end as well, though in this case it was largely

down to my own decision. I rather foolishly attempted to establish a professional concert series, in the wake of the 250th celebrations, a project which was enthusiastically supported by Geoff Ward. However, the running of this series proved to be by far the most difficult aspect of my 'undefined' brief in the role. There was no shortage of keen young ensembles willing to come to the College to perform (and this was at the time we also had the Ligeti Quartet in residence, in partnership with the Faculty of Music), but there was at that time no obvious venue for these events. Neither was there much interest on the part of the student body, nor indeed the Fellowship. The experiment of using the Paston Brown Room for concerts was brought to a sad end by a failure to be able to give access for an audience member who arrived in a wheelchair. This broke the service lift and nearly involved an accident, and so that was that. Although running a concert series was never a part of my official role, I felt that I ought not to continue as composer-in-residence at that point. Sometimes, I think now that I made the wrong decision, but there it is and I have had to let it stand. Nevertheless, I am immensely grateful to Geoff Ward and to the College for enabling me to have a 'second-coming' as a composer-in-residence.

I wanted very much not to end on a 'dying fall', but I do feel that the contrast between my experiences of those very contrasted periods of time during which I was a 'composer-in-residence' do reflect the enormous changes in the way in which 'classical music' is regarded in our society and in our country. You may have been aware of Simon Rattle's unprecedented recent speech to an LSO concert audience, in which he stated that 'Classical music is fighting for its very existence'. This came at the same time as the furore about the BBC's decision to make substantial cuts to its own orchestras and to scrap the BBC Singers completely. Although these decisions have been reversed due to the extent of the public outcry, I am told by those in the know that the decisions are really just 'on hold'. The arts generally have been drastically marginalised in our schools, and without good, imaginative education in these areas, today's young people are being deprived of the opportunity to engage with the best that the past and the present has to offer as valid, life-affirming experiences.

In order to continue doing my bit for the cause, I have recently become involved with a group of people who run the Cromer Artspace, a gallery on the prom which features new visual art by both professional and amateur artists. Having established the gallery on a secure footing, the plan is now to organise an Arts Festival for the town, including as many other art forms as we can, naturally involving music as well. There are some wonderful venues available, such as the beautiful parish church, St. Mary's, and a superb theatre on the end of the pier. The Festival will be in the later part of October 2024, and I hope to involve the Charter Choir, current organ scholars and other ensembles from the College and the University in this project. I shall end with a restatement of one of my basic beliefs from the time of my first residency: If we truly understood the music of the past, we would have little difficulty in appreciating the music of our own time (and I am NOT just meaning pop music ...).





On Archiving

Kate Pretty

I picked up a second hand copy of Anne Lister's journals¹ the other day and found myself wondering why from 1816 she was driven to write a daily record about her clothes, her reading, her daily activities and, in code, her most intimate feelings. Her journal is not our only record of her: she wrote lengthy, detailed letters and travelogues but her editor decided to painstakingly decode and transcribe, and thus make public, this journal which was presumably written for herself alone as a reflective account and explanation of her own behaviour. For like the ladies of Llangollen, who she visited, Anne Lister was a lesbian. Later the documents were hidden and suppressed by generations unable to cope with the subject matter until the turn of the 21st century. But did Anne Lister think she was writing for posterity and is this how she would have chosen to be known?

I am struggling with my own archive hence the immediacy of the question. I have never kept a diary, or at least any intention of keeping one has usually floundered by mid-January. It is not that like Katy's little brother in *What Katy Did* I have been driven to writing day after day "fergit what did ... fergit what did ..." but rather that the process is fraught with embarrassment for who could possibly care what I thought and did. Diary writing has seemed pretentious and choosing what to write even worse – so give me letters over a journal any day. Letters at least had a purpose and were solicited or required.

When I retired in 2013 I left about seven large document boxes for deposit in the Homerton Archive. Some of them relate to the College and my time as Principal, others are related to aspects of my role as Pro-Vice-Chancellor and with the University's membership of a group of research-based global universities known as IARU. Among them is the detail of an IARU research project on the roles of women in those universities as a cross cultural study, led by Cambridge. Yet more boxes contain minutes, reports and documents about women at Cambridge from about 1976 onwards. These papers are not about Homerton but they are about me and one major thread in my career pattern. This raises a question – is Homerton the best place for them? – and do they, unaugmented by other material, represent me as I would wish to be remembered?

Sue Conrad and I were discussing this the other day. You will know that Sue did a huge amount of work on sorting the Bursary papers from the project known as Convergence, when from about 2000 or so the College went through the enormous labour of becoming a

chartered College of the University. We were discussing on how to link my papers on Convergence with her definitive set, mine often being the same papers annotated by me and thus personal, and with some papers not copied to the Bursary. What struck us both was the volume of work, alongside the everyday running of the College that marked the decade leading to 2009, and for me starting much earlier in 1991. It shows too that views on the Convergence project are different, yet of equal validity. Does the Archive need both and should they be reconciled in any official catalogue?

Sue and the Archivist, Svetlana, went on a foray to inspect a cache of Bursary papers housed in miscellaneous cupboards in the Victorian building and which should possibly be in the Archive, particularly where they relate to the development of the estate. Who remembers now our encounters with various supermarkets or the possibility of moving to the Rifle Range? Who remembers the external consultants probing to discover our sense of identity as we moved away from a direct responsibility for teacher training and tried to determine whether we would value our inheritance? Who now even cares and, as we reach for even greater diversity, how can we connect past, current and future members of the College?

We have just been through an unparalleled two or three years when memories, knowledge and tradition have been fractured and there have been losses to the Archive and the College. There is no record as to whether the same happened when the College moved here from London in the late 19th century, or in the minor crisis of becoming an all-female college shortly afterwards, or upon the admission again of male students in the 1970s. We might expect to find evidence in the Archive but the record is patchy and reflects our policy, or rather lack of it, throughout the 20th century. We probably do need a policy for collecting material, for recording these COVID years, before we lose our memory and we need a scheme for encouraging an oral history of who we are and why we did things.

Which brings me back to my own current involvement in the Archive and the sorting and cataloguing of my boxes. There are some more questions not only about me, but my predecessors and successors. Homerton was probably my life work in the sense that I worked here longest and made more impact than in my other posts. I have a box at home called Homerton Archive with things like offer letters, correspondence about the College's successes and failures and so forth. But it contains nothing of my



professional life as an archaeologist and, as I explained earlier, I'm not sure that it should, just as I'm not sure that the College Archive should retain all those papers about IARU or feminist activism within Cambridge.

The reality is that I shouldn't have dumped those boxes in 2013 though I am glad now that they didn't have to go back and forth to Scotland. Svetlana is used to families dumping the life work of former students into the Archive and accepting the onerous task of deciding what

should be kept. I want the College to have some record of my 23 years as Principal but find it almost impossible to know what that record should look like. So I'll take advice from our leading biographers like Peter Raby, I'll sort those boxes and throw out the incomprehensible notes of far-off meetings and as my memory fades I'll ask more and more of you – do you remember? ...

REFERENCE: ¹ *The Secret Diaries of Miss Anne Lister* (alias Gentleman Jack), Edited by Helena Whitbread, Published by Virago in 1988.



From the Archive: Abolitionists and anti-racism at Homerton

Peter Cunningham

A recent Guardian obituary (January 2023) of Jan Hardy who died aged 77, reminds us of a history that might be traced backwards in time. Jan was a committed anti-racist campaigner and county adviser for multicultural education in Hertfordshire, a co-founder of the Anti-Racist Teacher Education Network (Arten).

After teaching in the London borough of Brent, 1968-74, he joined Homerton 1974-86, where he identified inadequate preparation given to new and serving teachers on how to work in increasingly ethnically and culturally diverse schools. He married Samidha Garg and enjoyed visiting her family in India, where he would always find something new, different, and spiritually rewarding.

In 1986 he went on to be county adviser for multicultural education in Hertfordshire LEA where he was determined that schools should work with the Minority-Ethnic Curriculum Support Service, establishing systems and structures that would make schools accountable for raising achievement of minority-ethnic pupils. Arten, which he co-founded with Jane Lane, author of the Guardian obituary, was a network of teacher educators determined to embed anti-racist thinking and practice in the training of all student teachers. It constantly argued against government's lack of commitment and poor grasp of the issues involved, and in 2002 they published a Framework for Anti-Racist Teacher Education that was followed by many higher education institutions.

This modern example prompts a reminder of significant Homertonians in earlier centuries who campaigned for abolition of the slave trade and slavery in general. It's a feature of the British imperial past that left its mark on society and culture, for example in Cambridge colleges now being challenged in their historical consciousness, with retrospective action for symbolic restitution being sought.

We would do well to recall and respect some notable activists in our college history who set an example two centuries ago. Peter Warner has researched the work of George Bourne 1780-1845, student at Homerton Academy c.1800 and a pioneer of the American Anti-Slavery Movement, acclaimed as 'an intrepid advocate of human rights'. He took part in political discussions on slavery and the slave trade, along with other notable campaigners such as William Wilberforce and Thomas Clarkson, attracting the attention of government. He went to America, met the revolutionary political theorist Tom Paine, and preached against slavery. A prolific journalist, he wrote a book denouncing 'all the enormities of and iniquity of man-stealing' and was attacked by politicians and fellow-churchmen alike, but with the support of others persuaded the Presbyterian Church to pass 'Resolutions concerning Slavery' in 1818. Bourne has since been the subject of a major biography by an American scholar, Ryan C. McIlhenny, published in 2020 under the title *To Preach Deliverance to the Captives: Freedom and Slavery in the Protestant Mind of George Bourne*.

More recently in our 2021 RSMA Newsletter, Peter described the work of the abolitionist Robert Halley, admitted to Homerton Academy in 1816. He was influenced and befriended by the Principal, John Pye Smith, who invited Halley to preach in 1833 on the sinfulness of colonial slavery, 'the scarlet stain of Christendom ... pure, gratuitous, unprovoked injury'. He and fellow Homertonian Thomas Raffles worked with the national Anti-Slavery Society, ending his career as Principal and Professor of Theology at New College, London.

Also of interest, though not himself a Homertonian, is Josiah Conder, grandson of Dr John Conder, President of Old College, Homerton. John Conder had been born at Wimpole, Cambridgeshire, in 1714, coming from old nonconformist stock as *his* father and grandfather had



both served as ministers to an Independent congregation at Croydon in Cambridgeshire, and John started his ministerial career in Cambridge at Hog Hill Independent Church (now St Andrew's Street Baptist Church), in 1738. Britain's involvement in the transatlantic slave trade had received royal approval in 1663 and continued for 150 years while the emergence of racist ideas and pseudoscience were used to justify it.

Josiah was born in 1789, educated in Hackney at an Independent school, and worked as a bookseller, writer and editor in St Paul's Churchyard. In 1837 he transferred his journal, *Eclectic Review* to Baptist and slavery abolitionist Dr Thomas Price, but meanwhile had published *Wages or the Whip* (1833), an essay on free and slave labour. His poem 'The Last Night of Slavery' appeared in *The Choir and the Oratory, or Praise and Prayer* in 1837 (republished 1999 in *Abolition and Emancipation: Writings in the British Romantic Period* (Pickering and Chatto).

The 'British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society' (now Anti-Slavery International) founded in 1839, is the world's oldest international human rights organisation. Congregationalist Josiah Conder was a member of its founding committee, which convened the first World Anti-Slavery Convention in London 12-23 June 1840. The meeting attracted 200 delegates from Britain, 50 from America, and others from around the world. The Convention was portrayed in a remarkable painting by outspoken radical painter Benjamin Robert Haydon. Haydon's large canvas now hangs in the National Portrait Gallery, and this remarkable record of the anti-slavery campaign may be accessed online, where every member of the 135-strong audience is identified:

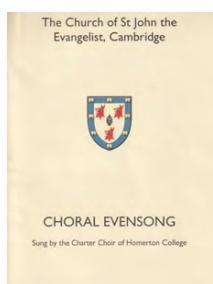
<https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw00028/The-Anti-Slavery-Society-Convention-1840>.

The main speaker in the painting is Thomas Clarkson, a leading campaigner along with MP William Wilberforce, both from St John's College, Cambridge. Josiah Conder is seen in profile, beneath Clarkson's elbow.

Returning to the present day, Homerton is privileged to have Dr Dita Love as a Junior Research Fellow. Her personal experience of racism and prejudice, gender violence and cultural trauma growing up as an Aromanian ethnic minority member in the Balkans, informs her work as a social scientist. In this year's Cambridge Festival, concerned with society, power and health, her commitment to abolitionist social justice was embedded in the Cambridge Creative Encounters project. Here she focused on youth-led community-university partnerships to remodel widening participation in higher education.

Dita's doctoral research introduced a new arts-based programme with marginalised young men in prison, working with poets, educators, and Hip-Hop artists in responding to their histories of exclusion and trauma. She has worked for a Drug Policy Voices project and was selected as an emerging European poet for Versopolis, a pan-European project connecting and bringing poetry closer to audiences.

Dita completed her doctorate at the Faculty of Education as a Gates Cambridge Scholar, and her work has been published in the UK, USA, and Australia. Examining young people's spiritual, moral, and cultural development in the quest for justice, through the media of Spoken Word and Poetic Inquiry, are explored with Cambridge Digital Humanities, focused on trauma-sensitive creative and critical digital methods.



Three Evensongs in Easter Term 2023

Libby Jared

In the spirit of waiting for a bus to find three turning up in quick succession, so thrice over during the recent Easter term, I found that 45 minutes of peace and calm of Evensong listening to the delightful singing of Homerton's Charter Choir was the perfect accompaniment to, even in retirement, the hustle and bustle of life.

As it happened each in its own way turned out to be rather more memorable than I think is usual – even if the third was always going to be different from the norm.

I decided when I saw Trish's termly invite to RSMs asking for readers at College Evensong that perhaps I should offer to do one but by the time - all of one day later - I sent a reply to Trish all but one of the dates I could do had been 'snapped' up by others. What it is to be popular. The remaining date would be ideal I thought coinciding as it would with the one chosen for our RSM's formal hall. Except that that particular Evensong would not be taking place at St John's Church 'over the road' but somewhere in town once Trish had sourced, as they



say, a location that could act as host, and from whence I would not have been able to get back to College in time for dinner. Never mind, I had at least volunteered.

However, having found it impossible to find an alternative location, College's Paston Brown room became Evensong's intended new home for the evening and being close to the Dining Hall, Trish 'got back to me' and I was once more on the list. In the event 'my' Evensong of May 9th, following a certain historic event in London the Saturday before, took on a special Coronation theme and whether that was the reason it was transferred to the Great Hall I cannot be certain but nevertheless that was where it would be.

As I hadn't been to Evensong for a while I decided that perhaps I should do my homework and go along to the Evensong the week before. This turned out to be more fortuitous than I realised at the time, but more on that later. This (first) Evensong was also special as it provided the opportunity for College to remember Sir David Harrison, its Chair of the Trustees for so many years, following his funeral a few days earlier. Kate gave an address – another tribute is printed later on in this Newsletter (p. 31). This Evensong also included a reading and a (second) hymn chosen by Sir David for his funeral. These choices provided me with two memories of my father's funeral a couple of months earlier, where he had chosen the same reading, though a different hymn. My father had been brought up in the Methodist tradition and had been keen to have his own father's favourite hymn, but eventually I had dissuaded him that as no-one would know it, perhaps I would read a few verses instead (I did) and he chose another favourite that I had sung many times. Come the day, we all stood up to sing the hymn and from my front pew I could hear no-one behind me singing – it so turned out that although I knew it no-one else did. The tables were turned for Sir David's choice as although I had spent my youth in the church choir, it was a hymn that I hadn't heard of. Incidentally, Evensong's first hymn, I did know, as it was sung at my wedding!

A week later it was the turn of the 'Coronation' Evensong in the Great Hall, and as it was to be followed by RSM's Formal Hall, Anne, Peter C and Tim R and I were chauffeured by (husband) Graham, not only in our finery but in our new to us 'big' car that can take five people, across town. We left with plenty of time to spare and reached the bottom of Brooklands Avenue still with 30 minutes to go, when perhaps appropriately 'the heavens opened' and the traffic ground to a virtual halt. Hurried phone call to porters' lodge but we made it with 15 seconds to spare. Trish told me where to sit and that an order of service was on my chair. I opened it – and this is where the fortuitous remark from above comes into its own – the first page bore no resemblance to what was going on and certainly wasn't what had happened the previous week. After a little to-ing and fro-ing of pages I noticed that the insert had been transposed and started with page 5 followed by 6, 3 and 4! Phew, all would be well and 'order' was resumed.

If the torrential rain caused havoc in travelling to the service, unbeknown to me, it continued to do so during it, as Anne explained later:

When we arrived in the Great Hall, there was some rather urgent mopping up going on around the Jane Benham Hay's 1859 painting, (known either as 'The Florentine Procession' or 'The Burning of the Vanities'). At the time I, for one, had no idea of the potential damage that this water might be causing. Everything started as normal for the evensong with the Charter choir standing under the rose window.

I was sitting towards the back of the congregation and about half way through the service, I, and others nearby, suddenly realised that there was a figure high up outside the rose window. Surreally, this person inched their way across the window until they were out of sight. All the while, the service was continuing with everyone nearer the window unaware of the extraordinary sight above them. (However they probably did notice and wonder why someone from the maintenance team crept into the hall, went to the painting and crept out again). A while later, the figure very slowly and carefully made their way back. At the end of evensong, those of us sitting at the back were agog to tell those near the front of the extraordinary sight high up behind the choir. Later that evening we walked past the Great Hall and looking up realised that there was a narrow ledge running across the rose window.

Subsequently, I had a conversation with Kevin Harben, who is a long serving member of the maintenance team. He, and others, had been called out because of the water pouring into the hall. They knew that the drainage did not cope with huge amounts of rain that fall in a very short space of time. In order to check that there were no other problems he had gone out onto the roof above the corridor adjacent to the Great Hall and made his way round to the front. There he had crept along the ledge – it is about a foot (30cm) wide and has a similar size of parapet. Clearly not a task for the faint hearted or those who do not like heights. Kevin said that the main problem was wriggling out of the narrow window to get onto the roof!

I am afraid I don't know if there was any damage to the painting – in some respects it was very fortunate that evensong was in the Great Hall and the leak was seen.

The third Evensong was neither across the road at St John's Church nor in the Great Hall but somewhere a little larger in the splendour of London's St Paul's Cathedral. I got there (and back to Cambridge by 7.30pm) under my own steam (well by train) and spent a happy two hours before it visiting the 'After Impressionism' exhibition at the National Gallery. So I leave it to John Hopkins to relate the journey that he, Trish and the Choir made to and from Homerton:

On Monday 19 June 2023, the Charter Choir gave the 5.00pm sung Evensong in St. Paul's Cathedral, and Trish and I had both signed up to travel on the coach. After the service, there was to be a reception in The Punch Tavern for both the choristers and the London branch of Homerton Alumni. The coach duly left Hills Road around 11.40am and encountered a rather over-full M11 on its way to London. Once off the motorway, and with the rehearsal time of 1.30pm fast approaching, the driver took a wrong turning that ended up winding through



many narrow streets in East London. There was an upside to this, however, discovered when Daniel Trocmé-Latter could reveal to one and all that we were actually now in Homerton! We finally arrived at the Cathedral about 1.45pm, and the choir rushed off to their rehearsal.

After the Evensong, we all walked to the top of Fleet Street, and discovered that the function room at The Punch Tavern was rather on the small side. Nevertheless, a very merry occasion it was with some (lots) of alcoholic refreshment and a welcome spread of buffet food. Our coach was waiting for us at 9.00pm in Victoria Street, and there were no mishaps or wrong turnings on the way back to college, where we arrived just before 11.00pm.



Trish has provided a copy of the programme's music (reproduced here) and further commented that:

The warm welcome given to everyone by the St Paul's clergy and staff; the wonderful support by families, friends and RSMs, which exceeded the available seating in the quire, and the large congregation in the nave, contributed to it being a special experience for the choir too.

Three Evensongs in one term can never be equated to three buses. I am so grateful that I made it to all three but especially the third. What a privilege it was to sit in the quire and what a delight to hear the Charter Choir sing so magnificently in such superb surroundings. The experience will remain with me forever.

(And if you have the opportunity to go an Evensong, or two or three, then all I have to say is do!)

Evensong, St Paul's Cathedral
Monday 19 June 2023 5pm
Director of Music Daniel Trocmé-Latter
Assistant Organist Shanna Hart (SH),
Organ Scholar Lorenzo Bennett (LB) (Year 2)

Responses	K. Leighton	
Psalm	119:65-80	SH
Canticles	G. Dyson <i>in D</i>	LB
Anthem	H. Howells – <i>Like as the hart</i>	SH
Voluntary	Reger – <i>Fugue in D (op. 59)</i>	LB



More from John on being a composer:

These three photos of the Charter Choir taken in Gibraltar (the rock in the background may give the game away) during their July 2022 tour. The Charter Choir have performed several of my pieces and included them on their summer tours abroad including on this tour my motet *Descendit Sicut Pluvia* (which incidentally is also on the first CD the choir made).



A Circular Walk from St Mary's Church, Comberton

Stephen Grounds

This is a pleasant walk starting and ending at the Church of St Mary at Comberton and passing through the village of Toft. If you are only interested in the walk you should allow about an hour and a half. Give yourself longer if you are interested in exploring the church and other features of the built environment.

It is best to start at Comberton church as there is a spacious car park there. In addition, there is a toilet in the church which is open to the public for much of the day. I have described some of the interior features of the church at the end of this piece.

Set off by walking around the site of the church in order to see some of the graves and to get a feel of the landscape. You should discover the churchyard extension on the east side of the church itself and if you look over the easterly facing wall you should catch glimpses of Cambridge as well as of the Gog-Magog Hills. Because the church is the highest point of the landscape the views looking eastwards are extensive.



The Causeway Comberton

interests of improved agricultural production this was closed in this period and the right of way was lost. My wife successfully stood as the district councillor at this time and campaigned for the retention of the track. She was successful at being elected but not in preventing the path closure!

The path was called Lot Way and you will come across it again in its western hemisphere manifestation after we have visited Toft. For the moment turn south along an ancient track called The Causeway. As you descend into the village you pass, on the left side, Church Farmhouse,

You should also note the short lane which begins at Royston Lane, passes the old vicarage and two cottages, before seemingly to vanish into "thin air". Until the 1980s there was a footpath connecting with this track and running eastwards across the fields to Barton, but in the

a particularly attractive building of the William and Mary period. The most interesting feature of this part of the walk is the surface of the Causeway itself. As with many of the tracks in the area there are a variety of opinions as to its antiquity, some suggesting a construction date in the Bronze Age, others something much less ancient. Much of the surface is made of cobblestones, interleaved with what appear to be vertically located slates. About thirty years ago the paved area was considerably overgrown and Comberton undertook a major clean-up which has stood the test of time. The track is still well-used.

At the bottom of the hill the north-south road, Royston Lane, sweeps in from the left. Taking care of fast-moving traffic, follow the road northwards all the way to the village cross-roads. At the moment there is much discussion of the future of the Three Horseshoes, the village's only remaining pub - in the 19th Century there are said to have been eight. The problems of financial survival are not peculiar to Comberton. In Toft the former pub is now a Chinese restaurant and the former village school is effectively ... a pub!

At the crossroads turn left and follow the main road, the B1046, to the west. You will pass a variety of shops and houses, including at least one from the 17th Century, not very different from Isaac Newton's family's house in Lincolnshire. (Look out for the fire marker on the wall.) You should now be approaching the very successfully run Village College. Note that it is actually in the village of Toft. In the interests of road safety you should cross the road and walk along the footpath-cum-cycleway. Look out for the Meridian sign, which was installed by the Meridian School to mark Queen Elizabeth's Silver Jubilee.

After walking about a mile you need to turn left, going southwards on a secluded lane which leads to Toft Church. At the church you should turn left on a track which is the Toft - Comberton track, called Lot Way (mentioned earlier).



St. Andrews Toft & sign to Comberton



The proposed route continues back to St Mary's Church. An interesting variation on this route is, nevertheless, to descend down the zig-zag lane to reach the Bourn Brook, which is mentioned in Stephen Tompkins' book *The Cam*, to explore the river basin right up to the old LNWR railway closed by Dr Beeching in 1964 - and then to return to Toft Church.

A number of local writers have written about Lot Way. Some consider it to be of prehistoric origin and one of several ancient tracks which were established in the pre-Christian era. Such authors speculate that such tracks provided dry east-west routes connecting the locality and its flint mines with Cornwall and its tin mines, far to the west. On the other hand some maps, including some recent ones, (e.g. Alison Taylor's map of 1997¹), show Lot Way as an east-west Roman road. I think that it is very likely that Lot Way was part of the Roman network of roads during the period of Roman occupation.



The way back to St Mary's Church is straightforward as well as charming. Initially you follow a forested track until you reach a stile going into the Comberton golf course. You then walk for about 100 metres on the golf course, before turning first left and then right, and following waymark arrows, until you emerge in an open expanse of the golf course, which, with due care, you cross.

Ahead of you is Lot Way, and in the distance some wonderful views and St Mary's. The only thing that can go wrong is choosing a very wet day, in which case you are advised to leave the golf course halfway between Toft and Comberton and head back northwards via the B1046.

It is worth spending a little while looking at the interior of the church: after all the church is the most significant building from the past in the village.

A church existed in the village before 1100. During the period of the Conquest it was granted to a religious foundation of Austin Canons, and then passed from ecclesiastical institution to institution until 1619 when it passed to Jesus College. It is still a living of Jesus. Until the Reformation the church, like that at Harlton, was dedicated to the Assumption, but the dedication was then changed to St Mary, a very popular dedication, at that time, in the district. The structure is mainly of field stones and freestone and the building comprises a chancel, an aisled and clerestoried nave with a south porch and a west tower. Nothing survives from before the 13th century. In the 15th century the windows in the south aisle were replaced. Other windows once contained prayers for those who had had them made. The Rev Robert

Stephenson pointed out to me the roof of the north aisle and the defaced carved angels, probably damaged by the infamous William Dowsing who in 1643 ordered the removal of six cherubim, as well as the destruction of 69 "superstitious pictures". A broken representation of St Barbara survived the iconoclast and was extant in 1748 as was a painting of St. Christopher by the north door. The period from the Civil War to the late Queen Elizabeth was punctuated by constant repairs. In 1665 the town plough was kept in the church which was filled in 1685 with stones, lime and rubbish. Records of 1728 and 1783 indicate that the church and chancel were in a state of tolerable repair. In 1820 the tower was repaired and there were funds used from the church building society and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. By 1898 a new chancel roof had been built and there were further tower repairs in 1921 and 1967. The most recent addition, managed by the late Don Fisher, was the north porch, referred to at the start of this piece.

St Mary's has been recently surveyed by the local branch of the Church Recorders. The church plate includes a chalice by Thomas Buttell of around 1570 and a paten of 1701. In 1552 there were three bells. They were sent to be recast at St Ives



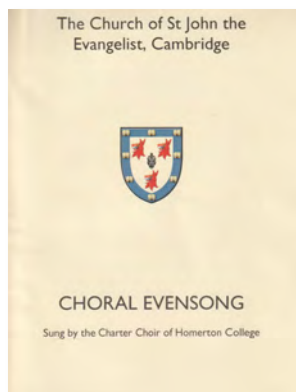
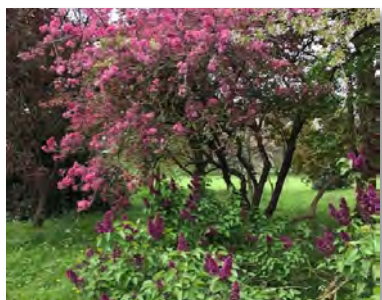
around 1630, but after the parishioners demanded that they be remade into four bells, the bellfounders would not return them for some time. There were four bells in 1900 and 1968, hanging in an ancient wooden bell frame: (i) 1633, Miles Gray, (ii) 1655 Christopher Gray (iii) 1711, (iv) modern.

The Royal Arms in Comberton Church include (in place of the familiar *Dieu et mon Droit*) a rare example of the motto of the House of Orange, represented in the British monarchy only by William III, who succeeded his uncle (and father-in-law) James II and VII at the Glorious Revolution in 1688. He reigned jointly with his Stuart wife (and cousin) Mary II until 1694, when upon Mary's tragic and lamented death from smallpox he became sole sovereign. On William's death in a riding accident in 1702 the throne reverted to the Stuart dynasty in the person of William's cousin (and sister-in-law) Queen Anne, so these arms can be dated to the period 1694-1702. The Orange motto should read *Je Maintiendrai* ("I shall maintain ..." [civil liberties etc.]) but unfortunately the painter's French spelling wasn't quite up to the mark!

REFERENCE

¹ Archaeology of Cambridgeshire, Alison Taylor, 1997, cited on <https://pghardy.net/comberton/lotway>





May 2nd 2023



Homerton
...



...
in Springtime



*Richard & Libby
(it's Richard's Roll)*



*John & Peter
(with Libby's roll sneaking in on the left)*

**Formal Hall
November 15th 2022**



Sir David Harrison CBE FREng

3rd May 1930 – 27th March 2023

This is not a full obituary for David like that published in The Times for April 10th 2023 but rather a personal view which tries to capture some of his qualities and personality and those parts of his life which were most evident to those of us at Homerton where he was Chairman of Trustees between 1979 and 2010.

David died on 27th March 2023 towards the end of his 93rd year. Knowing that his life was drawing to a close, and being orderly by nature, he planned his own funeral, choosing both the words and music through which those attending might share his understanding of the meaning and purpose of his faith and be comforted by it. His innate modesty prevented him from realizing just how many people would wish to be present to honour his memory and how willy-nilly a funeral in the limited confines of his beloved Selwyn College Chapel would have to be augmented by a later memorial service in a larger space. He was, after all, a loved and esteemed figure to two Cambridge Colleges, to three British universities and to countless other institutions at a national and international level. He spent his whole life in service to science and education and it was a long life.

In his later years David seemed to embody the idea of an establishment figure. He looked the part with his tall, elegant, silver-haired presence and faultless courtesy. Yet his origins were not grand; he had spent part of his schooling in the War in Sunderland returning home to Clacton County High School, where he considered studying history before settling on a career in science. After National Service with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers he came up to Selwyn in 1950 to read Natural Sciences where he got a double First before doing a PhD in physical chemistry which he completed in 1956, joining Selwyn as a Fellow in that year. At about this time Cambridge issued a publicity film about the joys of undergraduate life (for men) in which young men in flannels draped themselves elegantly along their mantelpieces, or over their bike handlebars or commanded the river in punts. It is worth seeing: David thought it was true to life and it evokes that part of his student life when he established his enduring close friendships with men like Christopher Johnson (also a Homerton Trustee) and Brian Thrush.

David was a distinguished scientist working on the heat capacities of liquids and fluidization and he helped to set up the new Cambridge Department of Chemical Engineering. He could have concentrated solely on a research career but, like many of his generation at collegiate Cambridge, he was deeply involved in the duties of fellowship and in the admission and teaching of Selwyn's undergraduates. Successive roles as Admissions Tutor and, from 1967 as Senior Tutor, led to his close

involvement with what is now called widening participation, with the teaching of science in schools and with the governors' roles in a number of schools so that he had a practical interest in teacher training. He and his wife Sheila, a former teacher who he married in 1962, were both governors of West Midland schools, David at Shrewsbury and Sheila at Malvern and vied with each other about their involvement.

Thus when he joined Homerton in 1979 he had an incomparable knowledge of the role of colleges in the University and of what was needed academically and financially to maintain Homerton's singular status as a long-established teacher-training college, affiliated within the University as an Approved Society but separately funded and with a Board of Trustees to assist in its governance. The relationship with the University was edgy. The successful introduction of the four-year B.Ed in 1976 revealed that there were many in the University who disapproved of the new Degree feeling that Education was an unsuitable subject for Cambridge University and that B.Ed candidates were less well qualified than their counterparts for other first degrees. David's standing in the University gave assurance that his appointment as a Trustee would mean that this slightly suspect cuckoo-in-the-nest 'college' would be appropriately advised and kept within bounds. Through all the years that followed the College was able to rely on the special respect in which he was held and the general feeling that if David supported the College then any new venture deserved consideration. This was particularly evident in the last ten years of his tenure as Chairman.



*Chairman and Principal at
the Royal Charter Celebration 2010*

When David joined the Homerton Trustees he was about to leave Cambridge to take up the Vice-Chancellorship of Keele, and then from 1984, the same role at Exeter University. Throughout that time he never failed to find time for Homerton despite the distance between Cambridge, Keele and Exeter. From 1994, when he returned to Cambridge to become Master of Selwyn, the distances were easier but he was no less busy and we made huge demands on his time. I had known him before I became Principal at Homerton for we had shared a similar trajectory at Cambridge (though mine was far less distinguished) but when we began to work together at Homerton from 1991, when he was what would now be called my line manager I was confident of his understanding of Homerton's needs and of his immersion in college affairs. How remarkable that was I only learned later when I became a PVC myself and had to balance the same interests.

David was a hands-off manager. If doubtful he would merely raise one devastating eyebrow and he allowed me, with the Vice-Principal and Bursar, to undertake quite risky projects in estate development, in the new BA and in the Homerton School of Health Studies. We knew that if we could persuade the Trustees, and in particular David with his vast experience of process at Cambridge, then we were if not safe, at least trusted. He only once intervened directly and that was in my first year as Principal. In June 1992 he and Sir Graeme Davies instructed me to enter Homerton for the RAE of that year with less than four weeks to concoct our submission. I complied, Homerton discovered its research capacity and never looked back. His timing was impeccable – his judgment perfect. He would say he advised – I knew it was an instruction, rarely given and gratefully received.

The Trustees were a distinguished body and for over two decades under David's leadership they helped to steer the College to full charter status. They were responsible for the College's spiritual welfare as well as its academic and economic well-being – now the responsibility of the Principal and Fellows – and because Homerton was a religious foundation and some of its Trustees were nominated by the United Reformed Church we began

every meeting of the Trustees with a prayer for spiritual guidance. David was an Anglican of course but his faith and his spiritual integrity were always evident in his role as Chairman and in his dealings with the College.

He was the kindest man I knew. He had a courtesy, an innate understanding of other human beings that was matchless and stemmed from his faith and his years of dealing with thousands of students, colleagues, employees and the wider political world. Former Homertonians have written to me about this sense of personal engagement. He and Sheila kept cats not just for their own pleasure but as therapeutic pets for Selwyn's students. Faced with a logistical problem about Admissions over a Bank Holiday he rolled up his sleeves and helped set up the Winter Pool. He gave active meaning to the true sense of charity.

It is hard for me to fully describe David's importance to Homerton and his role in bringing the College to its current status as the largest and newest in the University. He read everything we threw at him, he endured the scrutiny of the Council's review committee, he assisted in the somewhat fraught negotiations over the Faculty of Education and stood by us as we argued our case within the University and to the Privy Council. We could not have managed without his wise leadership and serenity under fire. He lent us his countenance and we owe him an enormous debt of gratitude.

I like to think that he regarded Homerton's translation to full collegiate status as one of his many achievements and his speech about it can be read in *Homerton: The Evolution of a Cambridge College* edited by Peter Raby and Peter Warner and published in 2010. It was certainly one of the most long-running of his projects. We already have Harrison Drive and Harrison House. I hope that we will consider adding a David Harrison photograph so that future members of the college can share that characteristic gently lifted eyebrow.... and know to whom they are indebted.

Kate Pretty
July 2023

Jean Ball

1933 - 2023

Jean was born in 1933 in Norton-on-the-Moors, to the north east of Stoke-on-Trent and on the boundaries of the Staffordshire moorlands. She lived in a small terraced house, with her mother and coal-miner father, along with several relatives, until she was sent to live with her aunt Alice and uncle Tom when she was 15. By her own account, this was a step up from sharing a house with five other grown-ups - one of whom required constant care - and she got her own room and a certain amount of freedom. She did recall some great memories

though, of being taken to the cinema with her father to watch cowboy films, which she retained a fondness for in her later years.

Jean was picked on at first at her school, being smaller than the rest of the girls, until she lay in wait for one bully after school and, again by her account, landed a punch that knocked her front teeth out. After that, she was never bullied again. She retained that feisty spirit well into later life.





Jean met John at Burslem School of Art, where he was taking the pupils of the school he was teaching at and she was studying textile design, having won a scholarship from the Colliery scholarship

fund. She always said that it was his voice that drew her to him and they had a brief courtship, which could have been longer, had not Jean visited John's mum and said that he'd better "get a move on". They married shortly after that.

Their life together was a happy one, beginning with a move out of Stoke-on-Trent to Somerset, where their daughter Kate and son Jon were born. They moved to Cambridge a few years later, where John had started a job as lecturer in educational psychology at Homerton College. Jean taught art for many years at Netherhall Secondary school, until her retirement.



*Wedding Day photo from
RSM Newsletter 2016*

Jean and John enjoyed many trips abroad with family and friends, however they never travelled together further than France, as John's aversion to flying meant that they could only travel by car and ferry. However, Jean did travel to more exotic places, including India, the Middle East and Russia, with her good friend Yvonne and there are a great many photographs in the house recording their adventures. John stayed at home and cooked his favourite food, spare ribs, completely messing up the kitchen for Jean's return.

In later years, they did very little travelling, preferring to spend time at home and enjoying entertaining and their wonderful garden. John was a Retired Senior Member at Homerton and Jean was thrilled to be invited to be a Senior Member last year. Until lockdown, she was also a member of the Homerton choir and thoroughly enjoyed taking part in their concerts and in practising her singing at home. After John died in October 2021, Jean's health declined at first gradually, then quite quickly. She died at home, peacefully, being well looked after by the excellent carers at Helping Hands and with the continued support

of Doug and Rebecca, their wonderful next-door neighbours.

Kate Ball

Kate mentioned in her final paragraph how thrilled Jean was to be invited to be a RSM. In my Chair's letter in last year's Newsletter I reported that, with College's approval, we had been able to add a further category in membership eligibility for others who, most usually through their support of a partner RSM, have forged a close association and links with the College. Jean became the second person we had the pleasure to ask the Principal to consider inviting to join us.

David Bridges kindly agreed to write to the Principal on our behalf supporting Jean's membership and with permission I include extracts (written in May 2022) from David's informative letter:

I am very pleased that Homerton is considering extending membership of the Retired Senior Members Group to a slightly wider range of people who have particular association with the College.

Jean Ball is a very obvious candidate for this privilege. She has had a close association with the College for nearly sixty years mainly through her late husband, John Ball, of course, but also in her own right. She was for many years a lively participant in the social life of the College and extended the hospitality of her own home to many Homerton colleagues (including the occasional Principal). I have recently been collecting tributes to John Ball for the RSM Newsletter obituary, and it is remarkable how many of these pay tribute not just to John but to the hospitality they have received from Jean. [...] Jean participated in a number of RSM events with John and was an enthusiastic member of the RSM choir (the demise of which she regrets every time we meet). Jean and John have given a number of art works to the College, and when John died Jean offered Homerton Library free choice of books from his valuable collection of 19th century children's literature.

Jean retains a great affection for the College, and I know it would mean a great deal to her to be invited to join the Retired Senior Members.



*Jean (centre back row) now a fully fledged
RSM member at the windy Summer Picnic 2022*



Hilary Campbell

1928 - 2023

Hilary joined the Geography department at Homerton in January 1972 and remained in post until December 1989. During this period, she contributed particularly to the teaching of development education and primary geography curriculum courses, working closely



Hilary at her niece's wedding 2012

with Michael Carr to inspire undergraduates and PGCE students to appreciate the potential contribution of the subject to the primary curriculum. Indeed, one of my first memories of Hilary is observing her in a team teaching session, working alongside Michael: a quiet, astute, perceptive presence alongside her ebullient and energetic colleague, offering incisive and wise observations, commenting on whether young children might *actually* engage with this approach to vulcanicity, tentatively suggesting that perhaps a more practical approach might bring more success! But Hilary could also be a forceful presence ... sharing a course with her on development geography, I was quickly informed that this 'new geography' I kept referring to, with its emphasis on a concern for human welfare and the use of models and statistics, had actually been a fundamental aspect of her undergraduate course at Edinburgh in the immediate post war years; "things come around, Mike", she was fond of saying, "as long as we stand still long enough to appreciate it"!

This week, I was privileged to be engaged in Hilary's funeral service, albeit through Zoom, and once again, I was reminded of the richness and diversity of Hilary's life and her experiences. Born in France in 1928, moving to London in 1933 after the death of her father, to Bournemouth on the outbreak of war, and to Dumfries in 1940, she was indeed a frequent migrant, adapting, learning and growing in so many different ways and overcoming so many different challenges. During the funeral eulogy, I was reminded again (as one always should be when funeral eulogies are coherent, perceptive and reflective) of Hilary's resilience, determination and joyfulness ... of her love of Scottish country dancing, of her strong faith and commitment to Congregationalism wherever she lived and of her remarkable service to the church in those different places, of her deep devotion to her family and the way her home at 250 Hills Road became "a magical Narnia kingdom for her children and grandchildren".

Reflecting on her time at Homerton, three things remain very focused in the memory: Hilary's fierce commitment to Christian Aid (and *fierce* is the right word when I recall an instance of her confronting an Anglican incumbent in a well-to-do Cambridge parish which was rather lukewarm about supporting Christian Aid week!); linked to this, her passionate involvement in development education and the formation of the Harambee Centre in Cambridge; thirdly, Hilary's humility, her quiet wit, her abilities as a listener, all of which equipped her so well for her gift of educating and was so highly valued by the students whom she taught. Hilary's was a remarkable life, so well lived, a life devoted to service and one who enriched so many different people, in so many different contexts.

*Mike Younger
June 2023*

Always Remembered

As each year goes by, it is ever thus that sadly a few members are no longer with us.

During the past year we have needed to say farewell to two members: Hilary and Jean who both lived to be in their nineties, experiencing childhoods very different to those that we younger ones have had.

There are three others included in this Newsletter, who are not precisely RSMs but who we should nevertheless pause to remember for their important contributions to Homerton life in differing ways: Sir David Harrison, Chair of the Trustees and a great friend and supporter to Homerton; Sheila Miles a lecturer for seven years, known to many who chose to study at Homerton and Keith Bennett personally known to many RSMs through attending social events with Carole, his wife and for being that important person who each year 'examined' our accounts.

All lived rich lives and set inspirational standards that can impact on our lives too.

Libby



Sheila Miles Middleton

1st August 1936 – 14th August 2022

Sheila (Miles) came to Homerton in January 1988. She was a lively, gregarious, compassionate person, a strong feminist and a proud socialist, popular with students and staff alike. Her main subject was Sociology and she thoroughly enjoyed working with her colleagues - John Beck, Rob Moore and John Ahier. Sheila threw herself into the life of the College and, living nearby, soon showed herself to be a generous hostess. She also had a serious side, caring deeply about social issues and always on the side of the under privileged. Sheila had worked with John Furlong and Madeleine Arnott before she came to Cambridge and went on to co-author books on teacher education with John Furlong and Geoff Whitty.

Sheila left Homerton in 1995 to move to Sheffield with her sociologist husband, Chris, whom she married during her time at Cambridge. Both Sheila and Chris then trained as counsellors in Sheffield and spent several rewarding years in the profession. They settled down happily in Yorkshire and were most hospitable when any of their many friends visited. Sheila returned to Cambridge as often as she could, always keen to look up old colleagues and friends. The same was true of London where most of her family still lived.

On a personal note, Sheila and I quickly became good friends once she joined the staff at Homerton. I warmed to Sheila's great zest for life, her interest in politics, people and parties! At one point we thought of writing a cookbook together, entitled *Cooking for Friends: the Miles & Styles Cookbook!* Sheila was a great reader and a lover of the arts. Even when based in Sheffield, she was a regular guest at Cambridge Burns Nights run by David Whitley and me.



*Sheila holidaying with Morag
Italy 2015*

We also travelled a fair bit, sometimes with other Homerton folk. A conference in Atlanta gave us the opportunity to include Boston and San Francisco in our itinerary. Italy was a favourite for both of us: we spent a wonderful holiday in the hills near Lucca and another in Montepulciano, supposedly to learn Italian. (I am still trying to learn the language and Sheila

was still taking Italian lessons to the end of her life.) Fornalutz, described as the prettiest village in Majorca, was another destination, this time with Holly Anderson, Jan Vaughan and others. Perhaps, best of all, were more local trips to North Norfolk which we both adored, sometimes with Jan Vaughan and Jenny Daniels, often staying at Jean Ruddock and John Gray's lovely cottage in Burnham Overy Staithe, where we would knock up delicious fishy feasts. Sheila's birthday was celebrated with the usual suspects at Southwold before the Covid outbreak. So many happy times to look back on.

Sheila was a dear friend who enriched the lives of those who knew her. She is much missed by her many friends, her sons Joe and Steve and their families, and most of all by her beloved husband, Chris. The world was a better place for having Sheila in it.

Morag Styles

Last October, Anne Thwaites had to send a message round to the RSM list giving the news that **Keith Bennett (5.1.1941 – 15.10.2022)**, had died suddenly and unexpectedly a few days earlier. As Anne wrote at the time: *Many RSMs will have known Keith as Carole's husband whose cheerful and caring disposition always lightened any gathering. Before his retirement, members may well have had experience of working with Keith when he was head teacher of St Paul's C of E Primary School. Countless Homerton students had formative placements at St Paul's and indeed a number started their teaching careers under his guidance there. [After his retirement he became a Professional Teaching Associate supervising students on Professional Placements and worked with Carole on the Overseas Trained Teachers' course.] Keith was a regular at coffee mornings with Carole and for many, many years has undertaken the essential role of 'external examiner of the accounts' for the RSMA.*



On November 11th several RSMs joined Carole, family members and other friends in a packed Holy Trinity Church in the centre of Cambridge for a Service of Thanksgiving for Keith's life. Amongst the many affectionate tributes there was one given by Keith's very close friend, George Hubbard. George spoke so movingly about Keith, the fun they had together on many occasions, including on the golf course and in the village pub. There were many joyous tales waiting to be told. (Ed.)



Circle of Dance

The tapestry in the Dining Hall entitled '*The New School*', is by Shezad Dawood. The image of the dancers seen in the tapestry draws on a photograph in the College Archive taken in 1944 showing students dancing in an open circle, barefoot, in the College gardens.



Homerton Dance Students 1944

At the time, dance was an important form of exercise, expression, cooperation and performance learning. The circle is a symbol of equality where no participant is more significant than another and, being an open circle, dancers are free to join and leave without disrupting the form and continuity of the dance.



The New School by Shezad Dawood (illuminated by summer sunshine)



*Midsummer Dance
(in the Archive Room)*

When Muriel Cordell, former Dance lecturer at Homerton and RSMA member, heard about the tapestry including the illustration of a circle of dance, she decided to donate a sculpture she owned to Homerton. The sculpture is called

'*Midsummer Dance*' and is by Christine Fox and it is currently 'resident' in the Principal's Room.

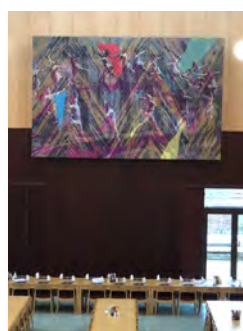
Muriel wrote: "Christine Fox (1922-2012) was a local artist living in Coton. She worked part-time in the Homerton Art Department teaching sculpture. Dance was very important within the Physical Education Department. One of the earliest forms of dance was that of an open circle."

Other works by Christine Fox can be seen at Clare College, Girton College and in the Women's Collection at Murray Edwards College.

Trish Maude



*Midsummer Dance
(in the Principal's Room)*



*Dining Room
(from the Gallery)*

HCMS May Week Concert 2023



The Homerton College Music Society May Week Concert offered an enjoyable mixture of music showcasing not only some of the considerable musical talent in the College but also a convivial approach to music-making. The audience was treated to a fascinating selection of performances: a beautiful piano solo played by Sophia Marine; a reflective song from *Waitress* sung by Louis Davidson; the Homerton Orchestra with some very ably-conducted, foot-tapping, fast-paced pieces, and two prize-winning aluphone compositions by Jack Robinson and George Wise played on an aluphone loaned to the College by Honorary Fellow, Dame Evelyn Glennie. There was also an impressive collection of choral pieces by the Homerton Singers, conducted by Douglas Coombes and Emily Nixon. They included a decidedly worse-for-wear

rendering of *What Shall We Do With A Drunken Sailor* and a haunting version of *I Walk In Beauty*, a traditional Navajo prayer, both arranged by Douglas. It was good to be reminded at the end of the concert that the Homerton Singers are not only open to College members but to singers within the local community as well.

A new addition to the concert this year was the Come-and-Sing/Play element performed by a choir and orchestra assembled specially for the occasion. The opening piece was conducted by HCMS president, Amber Coxill, with her own excellent arrangement of *Moon River* and *Strangers in the Night*. It was a rare treat to see a choir and orchestra bringing to life a new arrangement like this one. Amber – despite any anxieties she might have felt about her singers and players – seemed to be very much enjoying the effect of the harmonies she had created. The concert closed with Handel's *Zadok the Priest*, conducted by the Come-and-Sing/Play organiser, James Cairns.

The whole concert was, as this review suggests, an eclectic mix which appeared to be very much appreciated by both performers and audience alike.

*Gabrielle Cliff Hodges
(Come-and-Sing Choir)*



RSMA Social Secretary's Report 2022 – 2023

After the long pause in social activities due to the Covid pandemic, it was good to get back to normality at the beginning of the 2022/2023 Academic Year. During this year we have been able to enjoy a number of social events chiefly centred around our, during term time, monthly coffee mornings, which have often been followed by a RSM member presenting a stimulating talk.

At our first event of the academic year, October's coffee morning, and one year later than planned, we were at last able to officially welcome Lord Simon Woolley, Homerton's 'new' Principal. As Libby Jared our RSM chair was unable to be there, having managed to become Covid positive three days earlier, through the wonders of

email Anne Thwaites, was 'magically' able to deliver Libby's welcome to Simon on her behalf.

After coffee, I delivered a talk on the Royal Charter Archive – a collection of items and information, which I had brought together as a retirement project, relating to the College's achievement of the Royal Charter in 2010. This talk had originally been planned to follow the March 2020 Coffee Morning and was to have been given against the backdrop of the exhibition I had set up to mark the 10th Anniversary of the Royal Charter. All this, of course had been cancelled due to the Pandemic! As a bizarre conclusion to the 2022 talk, I was able to produce a pack of mummified Waitrose hot cross buns which I had found amongst the Exhibition material. I had been snacking on these whilst I was setting up the Exhibition and, on the



introduction of the Covid lockdown, had unceremoniously abandoned the remaining buns, along with all the exhibition material. They sat in the Porter's Lodge luggage store until I retrieved the material for the talk. Disappointingly, no one offered to try one!

After the November Coffee Morning, Paul Coleman, the Conference and Catering Manager, gave us a tour of the New Dining Hall complex. It was so interesting to look around the building and to see it in operation. Amongst the outstanding features are the much-improved working conditions for the Catering team, benefiting from natural daylight, good air circulation and a spacious well-planned workspace, delivery and storage areas. Additionally, students clearly relish the ability not only to dine in the building, but also to work throughout the day in the many comfortable workspaces. The building itself is designed for maximum sustainability, with ground source heat pumps and a planted 'living roof'.

RSMs were able to socialise in the Combination Room over coffee and mince pies at the December Coffee Morning. It was seasonally snowy, and I unfortunately missed the event, having strained my back struggling to get an oversized Christmas Tree in my small car a couple of days before! It was good to hear that the event was well attended.

In early January we gathered in the Great Hall for a fascinating talk by Philip Rundall about the collection of portraits of College Principals on display there. Philip was able to shed much light on the subjects, the artists, and the circumstances around the commissions. As an additional highlight Kate Pretty was present and talked about her own portrait!

We were able to have a second RSM member talk during the Lent term when in February as a follow-up to her article in the 2020 Newsletter, Gabrielle Cliff Hodges gave a most informative talk on 'The Life and Work of Sedley Taylor: Education, Philanthropy and Friendship'. Sedley Taylor (1834-1920) lived almost all his adult life at Trinity College, Cambridge. He was well known for his interest and expertise in music. He was an active member of numerous Cambridge University committees as well as being a lively raconteur and correspondent. He also had a capacity for lifelong friendships. Gabrielle focused particularly on how his own little-known progressive schooling may have informed his philanthropic work in adult life, especially in terms of education. She also discussed what she has learnt from her research about some of his longstanding friendships and his mother's Norwich family.

Although it had been the intention that, to coincide with the March coffee morning, Helen Andre-Cripps, the Head Gardener, would take us on a tour of the grounds. Helen advised a postponement - Spring was being a little late in arriving and there would not be a great deal to see or report on at that precise moment. We did think that if the weather was kind to us, we could take ourselves for a stroll around the grounds. As it happened the weather was certainly not very kind at all - snowing - and staying snug in the warm was the only option available; the prospect of hot drinks and conviviality in the

Combination Room for this well attended coffee morning obviously proved attractive!

We were able to hold two events (apart from two formal halls) during the Easter Term. In May, in the very well-appointed new North Wing Auditorium, Linda Hargreaves gave a talk based on her research into the changing role and nature of (small) rural schools over recent years. Again, we were treated to a very interesting talk on a subject with which some members (our Chair to name but one) had had first-hand experience, having attended what she now knows would now be classified as very small primary school.

Our social year came to an end when on 9 June we had another very well-attended coffee morning, followed by the Summer Picnic in the Orchard. Although this is always a pleasant occasion this one was extremely pleasant given the lovely sunny summer weather (which seemed to disappear rapidly a couple of weeks later never to return (at the time of writing) for the remainder of the season).

I am pleased to report that on the whole, Coffee Mornings have been very well attended recently, and we have been delighted to be joined on a number of occasions by the Principal, who is always so very welcoming to us.

Many of us who are fortunate enough to live locally (and often using our termly allowance) have also attended Formal Halls. These are always very enjoyable: good company, excellent food and wine, and lovely singing by the Charter Choir.

This year will see the end of my term of office as RSMA Social Secretary. I have enjoyed myself immensely and have found the role a great help in easing the transition from my 30 years in a busy, pressurised job in the Bursar's Office into retirement. You will find that I have written further about this earlier in this Newsletter in a piece entitled 'On retirement from Homerton' (p.14).

Being Social Secretary during the COVID Lockdown had its challenges, but again, I felt it a great comfort and privilege to be able to stay connected with RSMs and the College, albeit through email and other electronic means of communication. Many members rose to the occasion, contributing ideas and pieces of interest for circulation. In particular, I would like to give huge thanks to Philip Stephenson for his amazingly informative and endlessly entertaining and surprising 'Fitzwilliam Focus' emails, which he produced on an almost daily basis for months on end! Thank you so much, Philip.

My sincere thanks to all those who have contributed talks, tours and presentations. There is such a wealth of knowledge and experience within the RSMA membership, and it is great that members are able to share and benefit from it. My thanks also goes to the other members of the Committee who work so hard to keep everything going - thank you all for being so helpful and supportive. And of course, huge thanks again to Clare Ryan for all her help and support and patience, and unfailing good humour.





A full house ...



.... standing room only

Sue Conrad's Talk on The Royal Charter Archive October 21st 2022



Not the coronation chair for HM King Charles III



No walk in the Garden – it was snowing!

Coffee Morning March 10th 2023



**A big THANK YOU to both Carole & Sue
as they step down from the committee:**

**Carole as Social Secretary for one year
before taking on the role of Almoner until Easter this year**

**Sue for taking over from Carole as Social Secretary
these past four years**

Photo credits:

Front page, p.7, p.28 & 29, p.30, p.39 Anne Thwaites; p.2, p.8 Peter Cunningham; p.4 Philip Rundall;
p.8, p.31, p.36 Homerton Archive; p.27 John Hopkins; p.30 Valerie Maude;
p.30, p.33, p.36, p.39, p.40 Libby Jared; p.29 Stephen Grounds; p.36 Trish Maude; p.37 HCMS
Unless otherwise stated, other photos from authors of the articles in which they appear or family members for obituaries.





Anne
We will get the cork out of this bottle ...



Cheers!
(again)



Sue & Chris
...but will we get individual beakers?



John - just musing what to write
for next year's newsletter

Summer Picnic

July 7th 2023



The picnic just wouldn't be the same
without Roger's splendid basket



The Orchard – a perfect backdrop (& the sun was actually shining this year)