

THE RESEARCH NETWORK NEWSLETTER

Editors: Phyllis Vangelder and Tom Punt

Summer 2005

THE WAY WE ARE NOW

We continue to be a vigorous and thriving Network of over 200 senior market researchers.. Some of us still work full-time in the business. Many of us have developed, or taken up, new lively interests both inside and outside research. Previous Newsletters have recorded some of these – members renovating old houses, travelling long distances to speak to marketing or research organisations in Australia and New Zealand, studying for additional degrees, sitting on committees devoted to preserving the environment, contributing to the life of ancient cathedrals and publishing books on subjects other than research. These are only a few examples of our lives 'after research'.

Our years may be advancing but we are definitely not what used to be called the 'pipe and slippers brigade'. This is, we hope, reflected also in our activities together in organising lunches in varied and interesting venues, planning new activities, of which our Summer Party is one and, if we may say so, in devising new and up-to-date means of communication within the Network. We manage to do all this whilst continuing to maintain a healthy financial position.

But the Network is yours and we make another plea for every member to tell the Steering Group where we are getting it right and also where we are going wrong, and to give us your suggestions for new initiatives or activities.

We continue to enjoy our six-monthly lunches and an account of that held in April 2005 is below. We have managed to choose a good variety of venues, the result of much investigation and negotiation by the Steering Group, but we also look for your own suggestions for future venues. Our next Lunch is planned for 21 October 2005 at the Chartered Accountants Hall (See Page 2).

As well as reading this Newsletter, remember to visit the Network website at the following address <http://members.aol.com/resnews/UPDATE>. You can give us your comments online at this site or email them to gillm.wareing@ntlworld.com or write to Gill at the address on Page 2.

PLEASE SEE PAGE 5 FOR AN IMPORTANT CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR THE CHAIR OF THE STEERING GROUP.

THE SIXTH RESEARCH NETWORK LUNCH AT THE BANKSIDE RESTAURANT SOUTHWARK 13 APRIL 2005

In his book *London: The Biography* Peter Ackroyd says 'The South Bank has always been associated with entertainment and pleasure' and also with 'thieves, mountebanks and actors' and it was there that we went, to the Bankside restaurant, for our Spring Lunch. Though providing a sharp contrast to our previous lunch, held on the opposite bank of the Thames in the House of Lords, the Bankside proved to be an equally enjoyable, if somewhat more informal, experience.

The food, served buffet style, was good and plentiful and, though the room was crowded, we regarded this as a manifest sign of the health of the Network. Because it was less possible than usual to make oneself heard at a distance, this had the positive effect of encouraging people to move around from one table to another. The lively gathering was made merrier by an equally plentiful supply of extra wine thanks to the foresight of our Chairman! Some photographs appear below.

Frank Winter, Dennis Leigh



Richard Piper, Johan Aucamp, Alan Spink



Tom Punt, Rudy Goldsmith



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THE WAY WE WERE

From the Newsletters of yesteryear, and also with acknowledgements to Ian Blythe's History of the MRS (now available!)

35 years ago (1970):

- With Bert de Vos as its Chairman, and Freda Anderson as its Secretary, the MRS moves from Hertford Street to Charles Street.
- The Rt Hon Anthony Wedgwood Benn, speaking at the Annual Conference says "Market research is the bridge at which the people as a whole meet those who exercise some power in the community, and (with great prescience?) he foresees a time when "pressure groups might use survey research techniques to make their views known to government."
- As the key speaker at the November Luncheon Meeting, Mr Rudy Goldsmith's chosen topic is one on which he is an undoubted expert: "How to profit from market research."

And 30 years ago (1975):

- The two-year term for the MRS Chairmanship is introduced
- Tony Thorncroft, writing about the Annual Conference in the FT, says "This is not a good year for the research industry ... there are few research companies that are not 10-15% lighter in staff than they were 9 months ago, and ... there are very few vacancies."
- Pat Kensley, writing in the Fieldwork Supplement, quotes one interviewer as saying that interviewing "offsets the danger of becoming a cabbage" and another who says "my husband's theory is that we are all Curtain Peepers – we love to ask questions of perfect strangers that we would never dare ask our nearest and dearest."

And 25 years ago (1980):

- The last MRS Annual Luncheon was held; it was subsequently abandoned through lack of support
- The subject of an *Admap* Seminar chaired in October by Stephan Buck was 'Advertising and Marketing to 50-65 Year Olds' – who (encouragingly for Network Members) are described as the 'Affluent Middle-Aged'. Speaking at the Seminar, Charles Channon says "Quality of Life is particularly important at this stage – comfort, graceful living, personal care and leisure activities."
- Len England, in September: "One of the differences between Ronald Reagan and myself is that, at his age, I would not want to be President of the USA. I'd rather sit and smell the flowers."
- In September, James Adams writes a letter claiming that the honour of introducing mapping to marketing and MR belonged to Mike Halbert when delivering a 1967 paper on perceptions and preferences for *knickers* "which brilliantly retained the attention of delegates." But one month later James Rothman somewhat spoils the story with a letter asserting that he had got there first with papers delivered in both 1966 and 1964 – though he also referred to an even earlier 1929 paper on mapping by Hotelling in the *Economic Journal*.

**BOOK NOW FOR THE SUMMER PARTY 26 JULY AND FOR OUR NEXT LUNCH
21 OCTOBER 2005 - TRAFALGAR DAY - AT
THE CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS' HALL 1 MOORGATE PLACE
LONDON EC2R 6EA**

Our next event will be the Summer Party at the Auriol Kensington Rowing Club 14 Lower Mall Hammersmith W6 9DJ. All Members have already been sent the notification by post or email but if you haven't yet got your ticket there is still time if you telephone Gill Wareing and then post her your cheque for £12 to the address below. You may buy tickets for partners but this must be done before the event, We are sure this is going to be a great informal get-together.



OUR NEXT LUNCH on 21 October 2005, Trafalgar Day, will be at the Institute of Chartered Accountants Hall, 1 Moorgate Place London EC2R 6EA. This is a splendid Hall and a Grade 2 listed 19th century building. The nearest tube stations are Moorgate and Bank, each within easy walking distance. Early booking is advisable. Send your cheque for £25 to Gill Wareing at 6 Walkfield Drive Epsom Downs Surrey KT18 5UF and let her know also of any special dietary requirements you may have. A separate notice of this Lunch will be sent to all members and a map showing directions will be posted on the website.

LIFE AFTER MARKET RESEARCH

JIMMY ADAMS, a Network member and distinguished media researcher, was prompted, by re-reading Tom Corlett's *Ballade of Multiple Regression*, to contribute the following example of government using an incomplete or wrong set of variables. His first example refers to what used to be called 'Rate Support Grant' an arcane and mysterious process that continues even today to be a political minefield if entered by politicians of any party.

I retired reluctantly, under strong pressure from my wife. I determined that I was not going to spend my retirement Doing It Myself but looked forward to wider travel, and more time to spend with the arts and with music. To keep my brain alive, I decided to try to understand consciousness. All but the last I have achieved.

What was not planned was an involvement with politics – in a way. Reading the local paper, I saw a piece saying that old people in the area were in danger of going hungry because there were not enough volunteer drivers to take them their Meals on Wheels. So I signed up, and helped out until my sight became too feeble for me to drive any more. In the meantime I had involved myself in other projects to do with welfare for the elderly, and eventually was asked to join something called Better Government for Older People. I was elected Chairman of a group covering the South East Region; during my two-and-a-half years we produced a series of reports to various bodies about issues which concerned our constituents.

In the course of this, I discovered that the Civil Service use of multiple regression makes the most aggressive market researcher look like a shrinking violet. Local government finance, or the central government contribution to it, is allocated by something called Formula Grant Distribution. When he was the responsible minister, Nicholas Ridley told his PPS "only one man in the civil service understands this, and he's retiring at Christmas". Our experience suggests that he may not have been replaced.

I quote a number of paragraphs from our submission to a consultation on the subject.

" The formulae are the basis for the distribution of some £36.5bn of taxpayers' money in the current year, and their disposition plays a crucial part in determining how much extra we have to pay in Council Tax. We should, therefore, all be concerned about the subject.

In the White Paper entitled *Strong Local Leadership - Quality Public Services* the Government states: "the SSA formulae are not readily intelligible to the public or even to councillors". Since they cannot be understood without a knowledge of regression analysis, we would agree with this view."

(From this point I quote only paragraphs relating to the particular formula for elderly in care homes).

" How does it work at the national level? The Potential Elderly Supported Residents for England is calculated to be 267,748. (We have rounded this figure since we find it absurd to talk of 0.592694 of an individual. This compares with the DoH estimate at 31st March 2001 of 204,879 LA supported elderly residents The PESR figure is thus 30% higher.

Even more surprising, perhaps, is that the DoH estimate of the same date for residential places, that is to say, the maximum number which could be accommodated, is 236,743. The PESR forecast is even 13% higher than this!

How does it work at local level? Not surprisingly, in view of the national picture, most local SSAs are considerably higher than the actual levels of permanently supported elderly residents. But the overestimation varies considerably; in the cases we currently have, from +13.5% to +48.6%.

Are we surprised by these findings? By the total picture, yes, since it would have been possible to scale the figures back to the appropriate national total. But in general, no.

Crudely put, the formula is based on regression analysis of a set of factors which show significant correlations with data on admissions. They include factors which are almost certainly causal, such as age and living alone, and those which are almost certainly not, such as receiving income support. More importantly, factors which might be more causal, and therefore more predictive, such as high blood pressure, or serious long-term memory loss, are simply not available."

We went on to compare the forecast of demand based on the formula with a naïve forecast, the actual figure for the previous year. The latter gave a much better result!

Another consultation related to voter turnout in local elections. Some (probably including Mr. Blair) believe that this is related to the proportion of local money coming from central government (which varies from less than 20% to more than 50% in different districts), but this has never been proved or disproved.

A university geography department had conducted a large multiple regression analysis to investigate this, without success, and an even larger one is under way. We pointed out that, unless a simple relationship between the two existed, adding variables would not produce one, and offered to run the regression for free, given the data, which are available. Our offer was not accepted.

Overall, it was not a very encouraging experience but, like banging your head against a brick wall, there is relief in stopping.

HUGH BAIN, a member since the initiation of the Network and a regular attender at all events, describes the perils that await a tranquil stroller along the Thames engaged in making an innocent photographic record.

Having escaped the attentions of 'health care professionals' for most of my life, it was disconcerting to be diagnosed a few years ago with a blocked bile duct, constricted coronary artery and pancreatitis, all within the space of three months. However, thanks to some extremely competent consultants and high tech surgery, these problems were soon fixed with a few stents and some internal re-plumbing.

All my doctors were unanimous in recommending 'fresh air and exercise' for my convalescence. 'Walk' they said, 'Every day'. 'Three or four miles', they exhorted

Walking, in my prior experience, was something one did mostly in airport terminals and car parks and from necessity rather than pleasure, but obediently off I went.

It's true that Day 1, I only got as far as The Blue Anchor, Day 2 to The Rutland, Day 3, The Dove (we live by Hammersmith Bridge).

However, I soon began to cover increasingly long distances (for me) and progressed on the North side of the Thames westward beyond The Dove, to The Old Ship, The Black Lion and even as far as the Mawson Arms, owned by Fuller's Griffin Brewery near Chiswick Eyot.

Sadly, alcohol being 'contra-indicated' for pancreatitis, these charming riverside pubs became milestones, rather than occasional ports of call, over the period of my convalescence.

Though lacking such pit stops, there are alternative and even prettier walks along the South side of the river:

- in a Westerly direction from Hammersmith Bridge to the wildlife preserve on the Leg Of Mutton pond at Barnes Reservoir;
- in an Easterly direction, past the Harrods' Furniture Depository building and on to the wildlife sanctuary of the Wetlands Centre.

Both these have become alternative routes for my daily walks, which are now habitual.

Lacking a dog and feeling that our cat, though also highly interested in birds, would be an extremely reluctant walking companion, I decided to take a camera with me instead to record anything interesting that I might meet on route. I have always wanted to compile a personal photo diary and this seemed a good opportunity to start. Little did I anticipate what would follow from this decision.

A few days into these walks, I was standing under Hammersmith Bridge taking a few snaps when two police persons (one quite pretty) came down to where I was on the riverbank. One of them (not the pretty one, sadly) came up to me and said 'Excuse me, Sir, but may I ask what you are doing here ?' I noted the 'Sir' but, pointing, hastened to reply 'See that heron over there, I'm taking photos of it.' His expression seemed to indicate that he felt it was more likely 'heroin' that I might be interested in, than a heron, so, quickly switching the camera to display mode, I added 'See, that's the picture I just took'. He looked and in a surprised tone of voice said: 'Oh...it's in flight !'

'That's the whole point of the photo' I said, which was a mistake. 'We were told the CCTV showed you photographing the bridge.' he replied, in a disbelieving tone of voice. Nor did he appreciate it when I said that, as I lived just by the bridge, I had no wish to see it blown up.

Still very suspicious, he proceeded to establish my name, address, date, place of birth and SDE (self-defined ethnic) code. The latter two details were equally dubious as I was born in Malaya, a Muslim country, while I inherited an exotic combination of Scottish, Portuguese Eurasian, English and Burmese blood from my grandparents.

Anyway, he conscientiously wrote down the answers on a Metropolitan Police Form 5090. Form 5090 was introduced after the Lawrence enquiry to codify police powers to stop and search suspects. It requires the officer to state the 'object' of his inquiry and the 'grounds' on which he conducts his questions or search. The suspect also has the right to receive a

carbon copy of the form. In my case, the 'object' of his inquiry was 'Section 44 – Anti-terrorism' and the 'grounds' for his stopping me were: 'Male taking photos of wildlife on river' (my version) 'Believed possibly taking photos of Hammersmith Bridge' (his version). I treasure my copy of the form and might even have it framed one day.

I have since also aroused the suspicion of an irate father, who asked whether I was trying to photograph his child and was I 'one of those paedophiles, like the ones in Chiswick Park' (news to me).

So, if you ever visit Hammersmith's riverside and wish to take a snapshot of the bridge, or any of the local inhabitants, BE WARNED !

I'm joking of course because, on a pleasanter note, I am approached quite often by locals who, having seen me taking pictures along the riverside, start a conversation by saying 'Hello. Are you an ornithologist?'; '...the bird man?'; or even, on occasion, '...the seal man?', referring to the seal which took up residence on this reach of the Thames between mid-2003 and March 2004.

In fact, for a river in such a built-up and over-populated area as this part of London, we see a rich variety of wildlife, such as foxes, herons, cormorants, gulls, mute swans, geese (Canadian, Egyptian, Greylag), moorhens, coots, tufted ducks, great crested grebes, even kingfishers occasionally. I also frequently see and have photographed cormorants and herons catching eels, flounders, dabs, mitten crabs, etc..

So, if you do attend the Network Summer Party at the Auriol Rowing Club or might visit this stretch of London's riverside in future, welcome to an extremely picturesque and interesting part of The Thames.

'ONLY CONNECT'- TOM PUNT REPORTS ON A SURVEY OF MEMBERS

A total of 60 replies was received, a rather poor response rate, perhaps, bearing in mind the relevant universe, of around 30%. However with many thanks to those 60 who kindly did respond, here is a short account of findings.

Of this sample of members, 85% had access to a PC, 83% at home, and 15% had no access. The percentage with no access was rather greater than the 11% of members in July 2004 who did not supply an email address but the evidence is that the vast majority of members have a PC at home and an email address.

Nearly all with access to a PC had Internet access, 57% via a broadband and 27% via a dial-up connection (1 person had a PC but no Internet access). Most used the Internet at least once a day, other than just to read email. For 57% of the sample, therefore, downloading the various communications and the Newsletter is a relatively quick task but may present some effort for the sizeable minority with a slower connection.

During the last twelve months we have placed online a pdf (Portable Document Format) version of the Newsletter; as an alternative or additional way of accessing this publication. The majority of members (78%) possess the Adobe Reader necessary for reading pdf files and an extra 3% said they would be prepared, if necessary, to download this from the Adobe website. Although we will continue to supply a Word version of this Newsletter, if you would rather not receive this but just to have notification that the pdf version has been placed online let us know.

At the last AGM it was decided to continue to maintain the basic website we have developed in order to provide news for members in between Newsletters. Rather less than a third of the respondents to this survey had visited the website to the date of the survey but mainly because they had not yet got around to it or had only just heard of it. Only a minority expressed hostility to the idea (to quote one respondent 'I am a natural Luddite') or saw no point in providing an online means of communication.

NEW NETWORK CHAIRMAN NEEDED – VOLUNTEERS AND/OR RECOMMENDATIONS ARE INVITED NOW

We will always be grateful for the energy and insight of our founder chairman Peter Bartram and it was with great regret that we heard Peter announce at the last AGM that he would be standing down at the end of 2005. There will be further opportunities for us to pay a proper tribute to him. Meantime Peter writes as follows:

In order that the Research Network should be reinvigorated by a fresh talent and style, the current Chairman of the Steering Group will be standing down at the end of this year, and all Members are asked to identify suitable candidates for consideration and approval at the AGM in November.

The strong support and hard work of the Steering Group Members ensures that the Chairman's workload is not heavy, and in every way (except financial!) the responsibilities are rewarding and enjoyable.

If you wish to enquire about it, or suggest anyone (including yourself) to take the Network forward into next year and beyond, please do contact Gill Wareing in confidence at 6 Walkfield Drive, Epsom Downs, Surrey KT18 5UF or telephone 01737-379261.

MADELEINES AND MEDIA RESEARCH

We are often asked to strike a lighter note. We continue the tradition of light verse, introduced in the Winter Newsletter, by reprinting, with kind permission, the words of a song composed by Neil Shepherd-Smith and originally performed by him at, appropriately, the New Orleans Readership Research Symposium in February 1981. Provide your own guitar accompaniment and enjoy!

SINGING THE REPLICATED MEDIA RESEARCHER'S BLUES

I was sittin' in my office on an ordinary day,
Playing with my P.C. in an absent-minded way,
When a gal came in to see me; I said: "How do you do?"
She said: "I am a planner and have I got plans for you!"
[Singing the replicated Media Researcher's blues.](#)

She was the prettiest woman that I had seen for weeks.
Her curves were almost normal 'cept for two outstanding peaks;
The points that formed her structure, as far as I could see,
The way they were distributed looked optimal to me!
[Singing the replicated Media Researcher's blues.](#)

She said: "I need statistics." I said: "Broken down by sex?"
She said: "I'll be the judge of that when we see what happens next."
I said: "But what's your market?" She said: "Any man will do.
And if our profiles match then I just think it could be you!"
[Singing the replicated Media Researcher's blues.](#)

I said: "What about weighting?" She said: "Honey, I can't wait!
I'm already way way over my planned insertion date.
I must have penetration to a reasonable degree
But, after that, the frequency's the vital need for me."
[Singing the replicated Media Researcher's blues.](#)

"Cos once the reach is adequate, then frequency's the stuff.
My function's almost linear; I just can't get enough.
For maximum exposure, baby, just you stick with me;
I'll give you several million opportunities to see!"
[Singing the replicated Media Researcher's blues.](#)

I said: "I'm working on a model." She said: "Well, good for you!
A model, handled properly, there's nothing they won't do.
A model should be flexible; a model should be fast,
And if you get the input right, the output is a blast."
[Singing the replicated Media Researcher's blues.](#)

"You have to check out everything to find just what one wants,
So try all combinations and you'll maximise response.
Now find the magic formula to show me how you feel;
But don't try simulation - it's got to be for real!"
[Singing the replicated Media Researcher's blues.](#)

Oh, she sent my confidence limits up to 99%,
Then drained all my resources; I was badly overspent.
And then she went and left me, saying, "I'm sorry but you see
I've found a guy to give me six insertions on T.V.!"
[Singing the replicated Media Researcher's blues.](#)

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GRUMPY OLD RESEARCHERS

Over the last year, at various trade shows and conferences, Neil McPhee and Derek Farr have been distributing the research world's answer to the recent 'Grumpy Old Men' TV series.

Their 'Grumpy Old Researchers' postcards invite us to send in stories drawn from our own experiences, from which they have been compiling "an anecdotal recitation of the utterly ridiculous and downright absurd requests bequeathed upon the poor market research executive in recent times."

Examples so far collected include –

- The tabloid newspaper editor who demanded "We want to do a survey that shows we are a nation of drunks and drug addicts – and get it f*****g right this time!"
- The client who, on 15-16 September 2001, complained that "Your sample of business travellers in the US has proved to be very inefficient with a large number of refusals and non-effectives"

- The request which said: "We want to survey 100 sufferers from Alzheimer's disease on the Internet within the next week. Do you have a panel?"
- The client who, based on a sample of 5 interviews, wanted "a presentation showing the percentage of people who liked the concept"
- The client who asked, "Can you recruit these High Net Worth individuals from our list? We will inform them that you will be calling. But you can't mention our name".

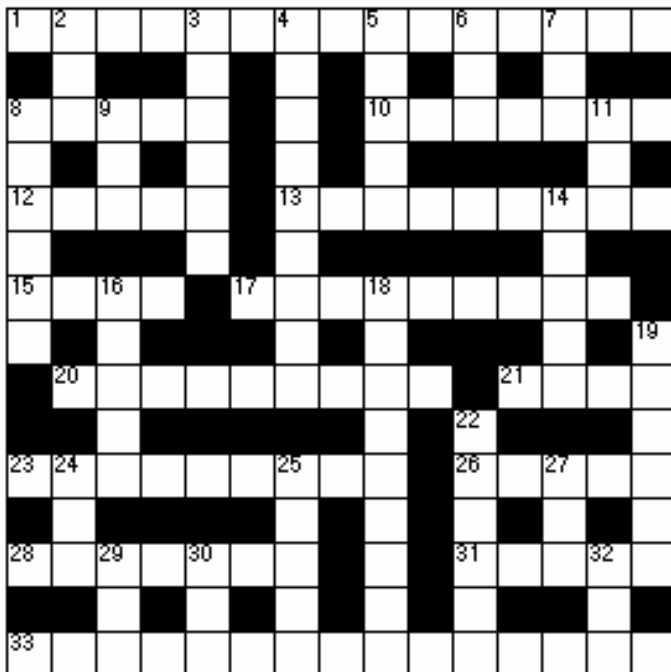
If you have any stories, whether recent or not, which can be added to the collection, please do send them to the Editors of this Newsletter, who will be pleased to display them in our next issue.

THE NETWORK PRIZE CROSSWORD

Richard Roberts-Miller has kindly compiled this special crossword for us. Nearly all the clues refer to situations or expressions that should be familiar to researchers. We are most grateful to Richard. Please send your correct solutions, either in the grid below, or listed, by post to Gill Wareing at **6 Walkfield Drive Epsom Downs Surrey KT18 5UF**.

A PRIZE will be given for the first correct solution opened after the closing date of 31 August . This prize will be a free ticket to any Network Lunch of your choosing.

The winner will be announced at the Lunch on 21 October.



CLUES

ACROSS

- 1A Anyway, if pal with PC foresees correctly, we will all have one some day, but meanwhile - there goes the rain forest! (9,6)
- 8A One of the fruits of geodemographics? (5)
- 10A See 28A
- 12A I see classic medium (5)
- 13A Lip cream I ordered, based on trial (9)
- 15A Method for conducting research about the Caribbean? (4)
- 17A Like market research, may be used for illumination - or merely support (9)
- 20A Model glad about a very rare distinction (4,5)
- 21A Check current returns (4)
- 23A The power to hear a lumberjack's beat? (9)
- 26A Saintry group may conduct a test (5)
- 28A
- & 10A Grasp the head of a modern research buyer? (7,7)
- 31A Cheers heritage functions? (5)
- 33A Shows trust - even in a probability value (10,5)

CLUES

DOWN

- 2D Part of research that generates light (3)
- 3D Method used in quantitative research and in read-only memory (6)
- 4D Count how many English are good at maths (9)
- 5D Eat without hesitation and digest? (3,2)
- 6D Some parts of unstructured interviews can be enjoyable (3)
- 7D An MRS SIG initially (I can't get used to all these three letter acronyms) (3)
- 8D Nowadays deputy may give guidance (6)
- 9D Endless colds are characteristic of some Network members (3)
- 11D Long time between dinner and breakfast? (3)
- 14D Said to be in a position to be quoted (5)
- 16D Ill use is not the right answer (5)
- 18D Strange magic - part of a practical approach (9)
- 19D Now America is working, for example (6)
- 22D April's turn to do the binding? (6)
- 24D Admit to possess (3)
- 25D Bird the French count, for example (5)
- 27D An early British computer sign (3)
- 29D Error revealed in cosine tables (3)
- 30D Sticky sounding graphic user interface (yet another TLA!) (3)
- 32D Article found in neither qual nor quant (3)

Not Forgotten

BRIAN PYMONT

Phil Barnard writes

Brian Pymont died in France on 29 March 2005, following heart surgery. He was 68. Many in the market research world will remember him best for his 'Minivan' test market system although this was only one of several new product development research tools he launched for Research International.

Brian's career began in the late 1950s when he joined Unilever's Gibbs subsidiary as a trainee following Bancroft's School and National Service in which he saw duty both in Korea and Singapore.

Transferring to Unilever's market research company, RBL (later RI), in the early 1960s, he soon left behind the traditional young executive career path and pioneered behavioural- and micromodel-based volume prediction techniques.

At one time, the success of Brian's minitest markets meant he was running mobile retailing operations not only in the UK but also in several continental markets, giving him wide scope for his wonderful barrow boy/Flanaghan & Allen routines. It was with Microtest, however, that he achieved his greatest research triumph bringing to its launch and subsequent brand management a professionalism hitherto lacking in most parts of the research industry.

Brian was very much his own man with a maturity and confidence that contributed powerfully to his business life. He commanded enormous respect from all he worked with and immense loyalty and affection from the teams he led; all enhanced by a wonderfully pithy sense of humour and incisive wit.

On retiring in 1989, Brian was able to indulge more in his greatest passions: his francophilia (he and his wife, Kristin, settled primarily in their French home near Biarritz); choral singing; opera; wine appreciation and rugby. Above all, he was a family man and the sympathies of all Brian's research friends will be with Kristin and their daughters

BERT DE VOS

Bert de Vos died on 6 February 2005, aged 74. He was a leading figure in market research and advertising during the period spanning the late '60s and '80s. He was Chairman of The Market Research Society from 1969 –1970, President of the IPA 1985-1987 and President of the Solus Club in 1985. His market research career included periods with BMRB and Gallup Poll and Masius Wynne Williams (as it then was) where he was Research and Media Director. He was in fact a long-term Masius man, ending up as Vice Chairman in the 1970s and Chairman in the early '80s. D'Arcy Masius Benton & Bowles (DMB&B) was established in November 1985 by the merger of the Benton & Bowles (B&B) and D'Arcy-MacManus Masius(D-MM) advertising agencies, with Bert as Chairman.

Martin Simmons writes

Bert de Vos and I overlapped at LSE where he graduated with a first class degree. We first met when he was research manager at a small advertising agency. He then joined Gallup as Director of its retail services. Subsequently he took up an academic position at Keele University whilst retaining a consultancy with Gallup.

On a personal note, Bert was a larger than life character with a huge presence. He played hard including rugger well into his 40s. He worked less hard but was a skilled administrator and delegator. He regarded successful management as 'the art of masterly inactivity'. He was also ambitious and ruthless, characteristics which earned him the accolade of 'The Machiavelli of St. James Square'. And he had a wicked sense of humour. Of all the fascinating characters I have met in advertising and research, not many have left a deeper impression than Bert. His brilliant career was based on a first class brain and his sheer presence as a front man with excellent communication skills in an industry where those attributes are rarely combined.

Ross Harvey, former Publisher of Admap, writes

The Tudor Queen Mary said that when she died, we would find Calais written on her heart. Bert said that when he died *Admap* conferences would be written on his liver – he imagined like rings in a tree. He was the sans-pareil chairman of the *Admap* annual conference, a role in which Bert really shone. His considerable intelligence enabled him to digest the contents even of the most abstruse paper and his astonishing gift for improvisation made it appear as if the whole had been rehearsed and there was an underlying theme – seldom the case.

BERT DE VOS (*Ross Harvey continued*)

His size and wit contributed to his air of authority – not least on a platform – he could thereby cool a heated exchange without being abrasive or deferential and sum up a morning's proceedings in a positive light. These great gifts stood him and *Admap* in good stead throughout the '70s and '80s.

He didn't have to tell jokes to make you laugh – his wit rode on the trivia of day-to-day. Some of the remarks I associate with him owe much to his time as a university lecturer. "These trainees draw a straight line from an unwarranted assumption to a foregone conclusion and suppose they have shed light on the problem".

I think he was shy under his bonhomous exterior and used wit to hold people at a certain distance. In the late '80s he would introduce himself from platforms as coming from 'that hot-shop' in St James's Square. The greatest irony is that he played a major part, albeit unwittingly, in bringing that about.

He was one of the very few media men to reach the top of the industry, a systemic fault that caused ambitious media men to break away and set up on their own. Bert didn't have to – he got there anyway.

A genuinely remarkable man.

JOHN NOLAN

John Nolan who died in May 2005 was a very bright and engaging man who was a most supportive member of the Research Network and a frequent attendee at meetings and events.

"Big John" kept his working life simple: BMRB for his early years, post-Oxford, and then his own company, Consumer Trends, until retirement. During this time he collected a Thompson Gold Medal award.

As a working colleague, he was characterised by a penetrating intelligence, mixed with an infectious, and frequently off-centre, sense of fun.

Outside of the workplace, he had a great fondness for cricket and travel – often managing to combine the two.

In his younger days, he was a stubborn and tenacious opening bat for BMRB; latterly a keen member of Surrey C.C. He was even known, on occasion, to cut an imposing, if somewhat unorthodox figure in the midfield of the BMRB football team.

John's love of travel found expression in frequent trips around the various corners of the world. A similar desire for expanded horizons, coupled with a distaste for the rigour's of the English climate, led him to acquire a house in Spain; where he would winter in true gentlemanly style.

All who knew him will miss the gentle twang of his Northern accent.

His memorial service at Twickenham and the reception at Richmond, hosted by his widow Maureen, were attended by many friends including a large BMRB contingent from the '70s.

RICHARD BRAINE

The Hon Richard Braine died peacefully on May 23 aged 66. He was the son of the late Lord Braine of Wheatley and Lady Braine.

His career in the market research industry spanned some forty years. In the 1960s and early '70s he worked for several major companies, including AGB, CPV and System 3; later and through the '80s as an independent consultant, data analyst and 'trouble shooter'.

Seldom a high profile researcher himself, Richard worked with some of the big names of his day, including Mick Alt, Mia Bartonova, David Beaton and Neville Darby, all of whom he valued as friends. From the mid '80s he worked mainly with his partner, Sue Pierssené, at Qualidata. He retired from market research in 1998.

Many erstwhile colleagues will recall Richard's intellectual acuity, advanced numeracy, expertise and diligence as well as the sensitivity and creativity which made him a qualitative researcher of unusual insight and vision. He will also be remembered for his charm, humour and eccentricity, as a modern jazz aficionado (and musician) and as an all-round bon viveur.

Few will be aware that Richard briefly held the world water speed record (700cc class, 1980, Lake Windermere) a distinction of which he was immensely proud, or that he celebrated reaching the age of sixty with a record-breaking lap in his McLaren M1c at Goodwood.

Richard's passing is deeply mourned by his wife, Sue, and he is sorely missed by his family and by friends and neighbours in Hampshire where he lived for the past 17 years.

GEORGE OWEN

George Owen died in April 2005. He was an unassuming man but had a very lively and enquiring mind and an honesty of purpose.

Howard Biggs writes

George and I were brought up in Brentford Middlesex and attended the same grammar school in Chiswick. However, we did not meet until, at the age of fourteen I developed an interest in religion and attended a local Methodist Church whose principal attraction was a flourishing mixed youth club. George was already one of its leading lights.

We became close friends. I admired his athleticism – he became the school's shot, discus *and* javelin champion and was a good cricket and tennis player. Above all, however, it was his relentless search for knowledge that he pursued irrespective of the consequences of his questioning.

However in one respect I beat him to it – after university I landed a job in Research Services. George, meanwhile, had begun his working career in an engineering company in Merton but soon caught up, beginning his research career working first for Attwood Statistics and then for the advertising agency Hobson Bates, later amalgamated with Dorlands, finally setting up his own consultancy. Unfortunately we lost touch somewhat and our meeting at a Research Network lunch early in 2004 was our first for eight years. I shall always regret not seeing more of him in the intervening years.

Stuart Jackson writes

George often remarked that Margaret Thatcher's origins and his own were similar: like her he was born into a Methodist family but, unlike her, he remained a Methodist all his life. This slightly puritanical background imparted a serious-minded outlook and fuelled a determination to be his own master. Thus thirty years ago, after working for other companies, he founded his own small company – New Product Research and Development -- in Mayfair, later moving to Regent Street and then to Hertfordshire.

In a world where specialisation was becoming the norm, he chose the daunting path of being a generalist. However challenging or recondite a problem might be, he would accept it unhesitatingly.

He remained a full-time researcher until his death at the age of 75 and also kept up a number of public duties, one of which was the chairmanship of a local appeals committee for parents whose first choice of secondary school had not been fulfilled. It was a demanding task and one that exposed him to the raw emotions of disappointed appellants.

His intense and heroically defiant nature was extinguished at last in an operating theatre at Harefield Hospital.

BARRY LEE

We were very sorry to hear of the recent untimely death, from cancer, of Barry Lee, and our best wishes go to his wife and children.

He was a Director, and later Managing Director, of PAS in the 1980s and had previously been a Divisional Head at Louis Harris International. Many will remember his gentle manner and meticulousness, spiced with a fine sense of the absurd -- which will have served him well when he left the market research profession in the 1990s for a second career as a professional actor.

Bill Blyth, who was a contemporary at BMRB, recalls that Barry read biology at Oxford. Bill also remembers particularly Barry's contributions in the *Little Blue BAL(SH) Book*, a chronicle of the British Arrows League, the BMRB darts team. Barry's write-ups, which included accomplished cartoons, were eagerly awaited by his colleagues, if not the management.

LYNETTE FENLEY*Roger Banks writes*

Lynette Fenley, who joined Research International in 1977 and retired in 1991, sadly passed away on March 11, 2005.

Lynette was one of the first business-to-business (B2B) specialists in Research International UK, operating at a time when B2B research was much smaller and far less mainstream than it is nowadays.

Lynette was absolutely fearless – my first recollection of her involved her being winched from a helicopter in gale-force winds to conduct depth interviews on a North Sea oil platform. It was this courage that supported throughout her long illness.

Her many friends – both within Research International and on the client side – remember Lynette with great fondness. Not only was she a consummate professional, but she was also a great conversationalist, with wide-ranging interests both inside and outside market research.

Our thoughts go out to Lynette's family, especially to her husband, Chris.

MARKET RESEARCH BENEVOLENT FUND



Again we ask you to remember the MRBA, both to help its work by your donations and to refer to the Secretary-Treasurer, Gill Wareing anyone you think may need help, for instance in sickness or after bereavement. Help is given, in complete confidence, to those who work or have worked in market research in any capacity, whether or not they are or were a member of The Market Research Society. Gill's address is on page 2 and her phone number is 01737- 379261. The MRBA now has its own website at www.mrba.org.uk

Linda Henshall raised around £3,000 for the MRBA by organising the Silent Auction at the MRS Conference. If you have any further ideas for fund-raising ring or email Gill and she will put you in contact with the appropriate person.

COMMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

COMMENTS may be given to any member of the Steering Group whose contact details you will find in the Contact Directory distributed in Summer 2004. Members of the Steering Group are Jane Bain (International membership), Peter Bartram (Chairman), Jane Gwilliam (Events Organiser), Linda Henshall (MRS liaison), Tom Punt, Phyllis Vangelder (Joint Editors Newsletter) and Frank Winter (Data Protection and other regulatory matters).

PLEASE SEND NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS to Phyllis Vangelder at 17 Kenelm Close, Harrow HA1 3TE or by email to p.vangelder@btinternet.com. The next Newsletter copy date is 30 October 2005.

**IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY DONE SO PLEASE SEND YOUR MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM AND (VOLUNTARY) ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION TO GILL WAREING AT:
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