

THE RESEARCH NETWORK

NEWSLETTER

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THE WAY WE ARE

Membership of the Research Network is remarkably consistent from year to year, with departures (of one kind or another) roughly balanced by new joiners. Guests invited to Network lunches are one source of new recruits.

A glance back through the records recently suggested that Justin Gutmann was especially successful at inviting guests and converting them to membership. He has therefore been invited to join to the Steering Group and to take responsibility for increasing membership of the Network. We are delighted to report that he has accepted this challenge!

This summer's edition of the *Newsletter* is once again packed with a mixture of regular and one-off articles. Peter Bartram continues to amuse and delight us with extracts from MRS Newsletter archives; and Jane Bain has contributed another selection of Nature Notes, with more examples of stunning photography. We have recollections of the Spring lunch and the Summer party, together with a notice about the forthcoming Autumn lunch.

Lawrence Bailey has contributed some thoughts about possible cooperation between universities and research agencies. In fact, Lawrence has been especially busy in the last few months—in addition to writing this article, he has also started work on developing an Oral History of the market research industry. This is being carried out in association with the Research Network and will involve, over time, interviews with a number of Network members. An article on page 5 of this *Newsletter* describes, in broad terms, what the project is about and how he is carrying it out.

We have commented before on the breadth of interests and activities of retired researchers and we have two such examples in this edition: a fascinating article on Liz Hauck and her migration from researcher to artist, and a piece by Jackie Dickens on her recently awarded Diploma in Wines & Spirits. And Nigel Spackman's interview with Phyllis Vangelder is sure to bring back memories of the days when market research was a rather different process and a very much more intimate industry.



AUTUMN LUNCH: 20TH OCTOBER AT CHEZ GERARD

We've done British, Malaysian, Turkish and Chinese in recent years—it's time to go French. This year's Autumn Lunch for Research Network members and their guests will be held at Chez Gérard's Southbank restaurant, between Waterloo station and the Royal Festival Hall.

According to its own publicity, "The restaurant brings a little

bit of Paris to London and the Parisian brasserie style interior of Chez Gérard complements the food nicely and projects a lively atmosphere."



Invitations, and precise details of the restaurant's location, will be sent out later in the summer but please put the date in your diary—from 12:30 on Thursday 20th October. We look forward to seeing you there.

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THE WAY WE WERE

Peter Bartram's selections from MRS Newsletters of yesteryear

30 years ago (1981):

July: In reporting on the MRS Riverboat Trip, **John Samuels** chose to highlight the sartorial styles of those present, declaring that "as we traversed the gangplank to the good ship Nautica at Lambeth Pier it was obvious that a few people had come directly from their daily toil. I noticed at least half-a-dozen pinstripe suits and even two briefcases. And **Eric Adler** was wearing his usual leather jacket – what a versatile garment it is!"

Others caught in John's sights included **Valerie Farbridge** with "white yachting trousers surmounted by an anorak apparently made from a chequered flag". **Val Lyon** "looking as though valium wouldn't melt in her mouth, was carefully casual in blue denim and a most intelligently selected pair of wedge-heeled canvas shoes"; **Fred Johnson** was "in a very nice soft brown flannel suit that would have graced any cocktail party in the North-western Home Counties" and **Gillian Comins** was dressed "like the personification of one of her own sample designs – efficient, high quality and beautifully matched."

John concluded that at £6 a head the trip had been a bargain "nicely timed to fill that tiresome gap between the Derby and Wimbledon."

October: In the Val-id column, a nice story told by 'the urbane **Bill Mabey**', formerly SRG's man in Hong Kong. A potential client called one of their Asian offices and asked "Could you please tell me how much a survey costs?" "It depends" came the measured reply. "On what?" the enquirer asked. "On a number of things like the number of questions you ask and the number of people you question." "But I only have one question to one person" the prospect replied. "Which is what?" the cool SRG man countered. "How much does a survey cost?"

December: Reporting on the MRS/AMA Seminar in New York, **Valerie Farbridge** said that **Dr Walter Burgi**, speaking with no visual aids and walking down into the body of the hall, had her vote as the most amusing and charming speaker at the conference. ... He talked about doing research in Latin America—"Revolutions are not a problem. You stay indoors for a day or two and then it is back to normal." He also warned that one should not use a

normal buying scale among the Latins. "The lowest point on the scale must be 'I will buy', with the top point being 'I will certainly buy and pay for'." Apart from that he reckoned Latins were just the same as everyone else, except "income information is *totally, but totally, unreliable.*"

And 25 years ago (1986):

October: One can't be sure, but in what appeared to be an ad for MRB, written in Old Testament style, the focus was on the number of their top people who --following **Simon Orton** and supposedly to please their new chief, **John Goodyear** -- were *bearded*; eg. **Tim Bowles, John O'Brien, and Richard Bedwell**. This apparently "angered **Philip Mitchell** who for many years had toiled to keep his face smooth. And he said unto himself 'I know what I must do to find favour with my new king.' And he took his wife and journeyed into the desert. And when he returned, lo and behold, there was another beard in the land of MRB. And all were sore afraid."

October: Following Pegram Walters' assertion in a recent advertisement that it was "All Chiefs and no Indians", and "it's no accident we don't hire juniors" a flurry of correspondence ensued about their perceived attempt to make a virtue out of not hiring and training new graduates at all.

John Goodyear waded into the argument first, accusing **Bill Pegram** of Pegram Walters of being selfish, irresponsible and parasitic, by leaving to other companies the task of training new graduates.

In November, other letters in support of Goodyear followed thick and fast from **Derek Stonebanks** of Incus Research, **Janet Katz** of Lipton Export Ltd, **Kit Molloy** of MIL Research, **David Penn** of Market Trends, and **Bill Foy** of Commercial Market Research. These prompted Bill Pegram to respond that the biggest complaint of research buyers was against agencies which send a director to an initial meeting and the final presentation, whilst leaving a junior trainee to run the project between whiles.

Bill then asserted that he was not against training, but believed in *industry* training via MRS courses and seminars, and he concluded by saying "So come on John, stop getting your beard in a twist."

December: As part of the MRS '40 Years On' celebrations, a number of distinguished researchers were asked for comments on our trade. A few examples:

John Potts: "One of the major frustrations in research is not knowing what happened to your work—whether you helped the companies or not."

Bill Wilson: "Quite a trait among market

researchers is introspection. I think they are as much fascinated by their discipline and methodologies as in giving clients an answer."

David Pickard: "This guy who's got umpteen millions to spend wants to talk to an MR man (*or woman?*-Ed.) who can talk in his own language."

Tom Cauter: "Always hire a person who is more intelligent than you are."



SPRING LUNCH AT TULI

Tom Punt reflects on the latest Network lunch

In April we lunched at this "Far Eastern Fusion"—in practice, predominantly Chinese—restaurant in Tooley Street near London Bridge. The chief impression left of this meal was that it was like the grand banquets that are put on in Beijing to impress foreign visitors: the food kept coming and coming and so did the wine.



about which he promised to give more details at the Summer Party. This, it transpired, would be the Network's 10th Anniversary lunch, preliminary details of which can be found on the News of Members page of the Network's website (www.research-network.org.uk).

All that was missing were the periodic toasts and speeches. We did of course have one speech from Nigel Spackman, our Chairman, who gave us a round-up of members' news since we had last met in 2010—as usual, some glad and some sad. He also hinted at an important event to take place in 2012,

All those attending seemed to agree that this was a splendid lunch and gave special congratulations to our hardworking event organisers. The service was second to none and left some wishing the lazy Susans, or table-top turntables, could be used at all Network meals.



SUMMER PARTY—AURIOL KENSINGTON ROWING CLUB

Tom Punt

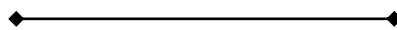
Thursday 7th July was a day that began gloomily—the weather, that is, not the mood of members, whose indomitable spirits were soon further improved by the welcoming glass of Pimms. Gradually the sun began to shine and after lunch the invasion of the balconies began.



There were just over 60 members plus some ten guests. The club is a charmed venue and only a ten-minute walk from Hammersmith tube so one wonders why this lovely Party is not overbooked—even accounting for those members who begin the season early in the south of France.

This year we perhaps missed our accustomed divertissement. The club has acquired a piano which someone might have played but sadly the ivories remained untinkled. Nigel, however, entertained us with his usual light-hearted speech during which he revealed exciting plans for our tenth anniversary celebrations in 2012 and talked about pay-offs which we can now only dream about. You can hear and see him speaking in a video on our website (www.research-network.org.uk) if you want to know the details.

So next year, forget about those Olympic tickets you didn't get, stop worrying about the lack of an invitation to the Palace for the Jubilee, and hasten to the riverside for our 2012 Party which we promise will be a great summer precursor to our 10th Anniversary Autumn Lunch. Our very own two Janes are better party planners than even the most aristocratic and here they both are enjoying themselves at AKRC in July.



JOHN HOSKER

Shortly before going to press, we learnt the sad news of the death of John Hosker. John was Director-General of the Market Research Society during the late 1980s.

AN ORAL HISTORY OF MARKET RESEARCH

The Steering Group has responded enthusiastically to a proposal from **Lawrence Bailey** (see panel below) to compile an Oral History record of the market research industry.

Oral history has been defined by the Centre for Urban History at Leicester University as “the recording, preservation and interpretation of historical information, based on the personal experiences and opinions of the speaker ... It is an invaluable way of preserving the knowledge and understanding of older people.”

That last sentence chimes perfectly with one of the principal aims of the Research Network, which was expressed in the inaugural Newsletter thus: “To ensure that the ... historic contribution of longstanding members should be communicated to the broader MRS membership and elsewhere.”

It made great sense, therefore, to offer Lawrence our support. Putting his proposal to Nigel Spackman, Lawrence wrote:

“It would be desirable to create an audio resource that would be of interest to Market Researchers in years to come, via interviews with some of the luminaries of our industry. There are now ‘oral histories’ being collected for a variety of purposes, but they all follow the aim to provide vivid, first-hand accounts that go beyond the scope of written records.

“What I have in mind is a series of one-to-one interviews in a style not unlike *Desert Island Discs* (without the music!), in which plenty of time would be devoted to reminiscence and narrative regarding the events and people that have shaped and developed Market Research ... I would hope for interviews that bring out the character and interests of the interviewees as well as their knowledge about phases in the development of the industry, and the research activities that they themselves have been involved in.”

Initially, at least, Lawrence will conduct all of the interviews himself (“the interviewing task seems tailor-made for a psychologist-quallie”). The Network can help by suggesting and contacting suitable interviewees, as well as exploring ways in which the interviews themselves should be stored and indexed, in a way which maximises their usability. The Steering Group has also offered to reimburse reasonable travel expenses within the UK.

Lawrence has just embarked on the first phase of interviewing; the process will inevitably be a slow one but over the next year or two, we hope that a number of Network members will take part. We shall, of course, also keep you informed about ways in which you can access the interviews yourselves. And if any members have direct experience of the archiving and indexing of oral records such as these, we should be very interested to hear from you—please contact Nick Tanner at editor@research-network.org.uk.



SEGMENTATION, RESEARCH AND CONVERSATIONS...

Lawrence Bailey is a Senior Lecturer at Leeds Business School but will be known to many members through his 33 years' experience in market and social research—he ran his own consultancy for 14 years and previously worked with BMRB, Catalyst and the NOP Group, amongst others. He has contributed an article, ‘Businesses, Universities and Sitting in Boxes’, to this edition of the Newsletter—see page 9.

Lawrence’s work at Leeds Business School led him to give a Valedictory Market Research Lecture in January of this year, entitled *Market Segmentation, Qualitative Research and Conversations across the Garden Wall*. The lecture drew attention from practising researchers around the country; it included mention of Bill Schlackman and Wendy Gordon, and ended with challenges to both academics and the market research industry, not to mention the Market Research Society itself. The lecture can be viewed at www.youtube.com/watch?v=WdQREwSRu7g and the slides found at www.lfbailey.com/Vale-Lecture.pdf.

TALKING TO PHYLLIS

Nigel Spackman

To mark Phyllis Vangelder's recent retirement from the Research Network Steering Group after nine years, chairman Nigel Spackman visited her to hear about her career in advertising and market research.

What was your first connection with market research? I'd come down from University and I got a job for a year with Sanatogen working for a woman who was starting a market research department. She had previously worked at P&G where you had to learn the whole interview by heart, and then rush back to the car to write it all up, so that's the way we did it too. Ellen and I did the whole lot—we interviewed, we went to the Town Hall and sampled, we did everything. We went all over England, because there were just the two of us. For that year it was fantastic training

When was that? Well... (long pause)... I've already told people I'm 80 this year so that's all right—it would have been in the '50s. Then I got a nice job with the IPA as Assistant Research Officer, and followed that with a job as Research Information Officer at an ad agency, Greenley's, working with Mona Rumble, which I loved. Then a couple of children came along, and in those days you stayed at home when your children were young.

In your first job, did you have any impression of the research industry? No. I had no idea that this could have been the first step in a career. I was vaguely aware of the MRS, though I wasn't a member but I used to hear about the lunches. Of course when I went to the IPA I knew about the MRS because I shared a lovely office in Belgrave Square with Ivan Gale, and he talked nonstop about market research. I learned so much about the industry just listening to him. He knew everything about sampling techniques, readership research, the make-up of the industry etc.—he was really very knowledgeable: it was like having tutorials about market research.

Who was running the IPA those days? Jim O'Connor was the Director General, who was a good person to have because he knew how to run things. He was obsessively tidy. If he had anything on his desk it was lined up and straight.

So what then? Well having had children, I got restless after a time as one does. I was doing a bit of abstracting, indexing, interviewing, reporting and so on, and then I heard about this job at ten hours a week as Publications Officer for the MRS. The Society was in Hertford Street then and Freda Anderson was

Secretary. There was no question in those days that the staff had anything to do with the running of the Society. The volunteers were in charge of everything. I was interviewed by the Publications Committee headed by Andrew McIntosh. The whole of the Committee were lined up telling me about the job. And at the end Andrew said "Is there anything else you'd like to say Mrs Vangelder?", and I said "Well you haven't really asked *me* anything", so one of them said "Mrs Vangelder, is your husband in market research?" And Andrew said "Well it doesn't really matter because Mona Rumble knows you". So that was the interview!

What did you have to do, as the Committee members were so involved? They decided strategy, but they didn't do the work. Andrew had to have editorial help because the proofs were piling up on his desk, and he had a job to do, and of course he was in politics too. I was editing the Journal, but not the Newsletter (as it then was) immediately, but I began to do that shortly afterwards, and then of course I did all the Abstracts, and the Yearbook. And then eventually we started *Survey*, so that was another publication to edit! There was quite a lot...but it wasn't ten hours a week by then. At one time I was Secretary of about five or six committees, to say nothing of the sub-committees and working parties they generated.

When you got involved with the Society what was your impression of the industry then? It was like the Research Network, in other words people knew each other, and there was friendship across companies, and because I was at the centre of it I got to know an awful lot of people. There was a very good social life then with more functions, monthly lunches, conferences and so on. When I think about the social life we had it was really very good. It was a vibrant industry as it was growing rapidly and I was always being asked to keep tabs on how big it was.

How did the Society itself change in the early years? I think it changed according to where it was. Freda was in charge in Hertford Street, with a couple of girls to help, but it was really run by the Chairman and Council and all the committees. Then we moved to Charles Street, and Ivan Gale came in to run it; it became more efficient and the staff had a bit more control. But the Chairmen of the Committees still decided the strategy and had enormous involvement. So you had to work closely with your Chairmen. They changed every year or two, and as you can imagine,

there was a great difference between working, with, say, Andrew McIntosh and Fred Johnson or Eileen Cole. Then we moved to Belgrave Square and Peter Clark took over as Secretary-General, I think Bill Blyth was Chairman. They got in some management consultants in an attempt to make the Society more professional. One of the changes was to elevate the role of Secretary-General to Director General.

Were there ever any occasions when your Chairman said “you can’t put that in” or “you must put this in”? Oh yes, quite a few! The worst was when one Chairman decided that we should have a gossip column. I never wanted one as I thought there was always a chance that someone would be hurt or offended and the *Newsletter* was essentially a publication for its members, but I was over-ridden. And the people who wrote the gossip column overstepped the mark, and we got into a very political situation. I can’t remember the exact problem but we had to stop doing the column. In a Society run by its members you aren’t an independent journalist and it’s no good kidding yourself you are.

The situation seems quite different now? Yes quite, quite different. The people who took over *Research* made it plain they were running it, not the Society, and I believe now it’s a separate business. They learned from the past, but I couldn’t stick my neck out against a Chairman in those days.

If you contrast the industry from when you first got involved with the Society now, what are the main differences? The first thing is that it’s huge and I don’t know everybody any more, and secondly the buyers don’t seem to have the status that they had when I was in it. Now they seem to have to get Board approval for everything they do, so it seems to be much more difficult for the Research Departments in the big companies than it used to be, and they seem to find it harder to do anything innovative. Everything has to be much safer than it did.

And from the agency side? It’s so competitive, and people are fighting to win the same jobs, and you are lucky if you get them. It’s much harder than it was. And of course the technical differences are very strong, with more internet research, and now children even do interviews on their mobile phones. But I suppose it’s still essentially the same work. I once interviewed Jan Stapel and he said “Hardware... software...and computers...have not changed what the client wants: readable reports and clear conclusions. Good questionnaires, efficient sampling and human interaction remain paramount. There is more machinery but it’s still a people business.”

Looking back what would be your highlights? I haven’t got a sense of a particular achievement. What I will say is I had a wonderful time. I was involved in so many things. For example all the stuff about the election when the polls got it badly wrong, in R&D conferences, and in the launch of *Survey* magazine.

My memory is that *Survey* was positioned as a publication to show the benefits of research to the wider community. Exactly, yes. It was a good magazine, had an excellent mailing list, and was an effective PR vehicle. I was involved in the original idea, the naming and everything—we did a lot of work on it. If it had been positioned as a PR publication I don’t think it would have folded. It had to be closed because it didn’t make money after about two years, and the Society had got into trouble financially and had to save money. It was a shame – it was a good publication, and I’m quite proud of my involvement in it.

What about the downsides? Well there was the move to Oxford Street, that was terrible. What an awful place! The Society went downhill from then until the money got better.

And what happened after the Society? After I left the Society in 1993 I went to ESOMAR and edited their NewsBrief, and went all over the world with them—it may not have looked as if I left the Society because I was still editing the Journal and doing the Abstracts on a freelance basis. And I did an ABMRC magazine.

And now what do you spend your time doing? I don’t do any research. I’m an active member of the University of the Third Age; I go to a lot of classes, and I run a class on English Literature. I’m still involved with the Debating Group and report the debates it holds in the House of Commons.

How do you feel now looking back on your career in research? I felt I had a very good and interesting job, rather than a *career*. I was very lucky. But I didn’t have a career in market research, because I wasn’t a market researcher.

But I think you could say you succeeded in publishing? I always saw myself as an editor, and if I had any skills that’s where they lay, even though I did have a background in market research. I had a lovely job, which changed over the years—it certainly wasn’t the 10 hours a week I started with, and the job seemed to change every year. It was certainly never boring.

LIZ HAUCK: A LIFE AFTER RESEARCH

Peter Bartram

Many readers of this Newsletter will remember Liz Hauck, who founded the very successful research and brand development consultancy Hauck Research International. Starting in 1985, it grew so rapidly that by 2002 (with John Samuels as its Chairman) it had 100 employees and a turnover of £10 million; and at that point it was sold to a large public marketing group.

For many, retirement after such a career might entail a shortening of horizons in a mental landscape which dwells on past achievements and is content with the enjoyment of time with family and friends.

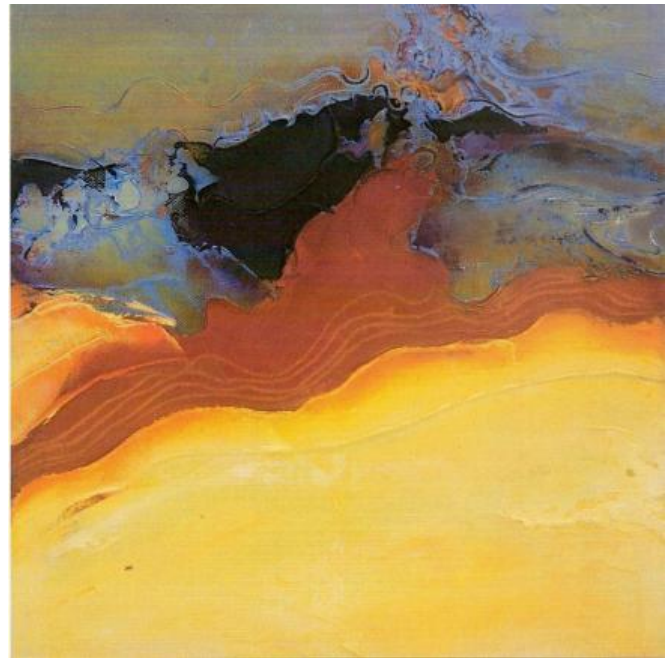
But for Liz, this was capped by an entirely new enthusiasm for art: inspired by her father, she took up painting and completed two years of a Degree in Fine Arts at the University of the Arts in Wimbledon. She experimented with different media and techniques but mainly preferred the richness of colour, the texture and the flexibility offered by oils. And over time her work became more abstract and emotive, inspired by abstract impressionists such as Kandinsky, Rothko, Newman and Still, together with the contemporary artists Anselm Keifer and Kurt Jackson.



Moon River, 46cm x 46cm

Then finally this summer she took the plunge and participated in the Surrey Open Studios event and, like 100+ other artists across the county, opened her

home near Leatherhead to visitors. On display there were 41 of her most recent works, all offered for sale with all the proceeds, including materials, donated to the Eve Appeal for Gynaecological Cancer Research. As Liz has put it: "My mother died from ovarian cancer in 2008, sometimes called the silent killer because symptoms can go unnoticed. This has been



**Summertime... And The Living is Easy
60cm x 60cm**

a wonderful way to link my love of painting to a cause very close to my heart."

The success of this, her first exhibition, has been truly remarkable: out of the 41 paintings displayed, she sold as many as 36, raising £8,325 for her chosen charity. On the strength of this, she has now been signed up by promoters www.theartagency.co.uk enabling her to participate in five further exhibitions per year (the first of which will be in the Cotswolds in September) and to continue raising money for the same cancer charity.

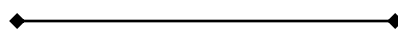
Liz describes her style as "expressionistic, more about emotion than representation of the natural world; it is about intuition, reflection, contemplation, and the ephemeral and ever-changing nature of our reality. The process is similar to the improvisation of a jazz player; a kind of 'riffing' around the initial idea using colour, shape and texture. As in jazz, I employ discordant elements to highlight a visual harmony..."

I don't know the outcome until it emerges... and 'meaning' lies in how the painting makes the viewer feel—the emotions, images and memories they evoke."

Altogether, this approach seems to be one which might well be expected from someone who, like Liz, has a background mainly in qualitative research. Its appeal is unmistakable, and if any Research Network Member wants to know more, she may be contacted at liz.hauck@btinternet.com.



River Deep and Mountain High, 76cm x 61cm



BUSINESSES, UNIVERSITIES AND SITTING IN BOXES

Lawrence Bailey



Here's a theory. It seems that whenever people need a classification or explanation, they're likely to reach for a 2x2 matrix. (If you'd like me to defend that, I'd be happy to bore you expansively at a Network lunch sometime.) They're easy to think up. How about Qual/Quant v. Cross-sectional/Longitudinal? Or there's the Boston Consulting Group matrix—the marketer's delight, with its Stars, Cash Cows, and so on. The problem is, once you've put things in the four boxes, there doesn't seem to be anywhere else to go. The matrix almost defines how to think.

The one that gets my proverbial goat combines research supply and purpose. Take a look at the figure below. It tells us that, by and large, universities do research for publication while research agencies do research for client advantage. Of course, there are some important exceptions, but on the whole research agencies don't spend a lot of time trying to get into top-rated peer-review

journals, and universities don't pursue clients with the kind of service offering that research agencies provide.

The trouble is, Oxbridge and the Russell Group universities have got the top-left box pretty well sewn up. Nowadays, they employ lots of lecturers who do little or no teaching; they churn out publications instead. And just a cursory look at the turnover figures shows that the bottom-right box is dominated by a few, very big research companies.

This makes things very difficult, both for the '1992' universities (new universities that received their charter after 1992), with their emphasis on good teaching and training, and for the small research agencies with their 'craft' research style. Even if the 1992 universities wanted to get serious about commercial research, they couldn't easily afford the investment needed to compete with big market research agencies; and even if the small research agencies wanted to earn some 'prestige points', they couldn't easily afford the time to earn fame through high-status journals.

It gets worse... Even within their 'natural' silos, the 1992-universities lose out when the relevant quango carries out a Research Assessment Exercise. And the small commercial research agencies have to make do with the big clients' metaphorical crumbs, rather than a steady supply of their huge cakes.

		Supplier	
		Universities	Research Agencies
Purpose	For publication	★ ★ ★	★
	Client advantage	★	★ ★ ★

So all is lost! But is it really? Suppose universities and research agencies actually talked to each other? What if there was co-operation, rather than competition? No doubt I could be criticised for banging on about that possibility for decades, but we seem now to have reached the point where research agencies desperately want to resist the 'default' positional trend as mere information-providers, and universities protest that they are not ivory towers, remote from the commercial world.

Perhaps, at last, the time is right for a meta-consultancy. Senior decision-makers in all kinds of client organisations often find it necessary to turn to management consultants, academic thinkers and marketing specialists as well as market researchers. Does it make sense for market researchers to claim that they're brilliant at everything? Experience suggests that senior people in the business world view these several resources as separate contributors towards their own decision-making. But knitting together the distinctive strengths that these professionals offer implies a need for meta-

consultants, who can draw upon direct contacts in market research agencies, universities, management consultancies and beyond.

For example: universities can be useful for quick 'knowledge-mining' and new thinking; or for psychology laboratories if ad hoc research would be best served that way. Management consultants are a well-practiced source of advice if change-management or business growth is implied in the client's objectives. And of course, you can't beat a good research agency for an up-to-the-minute reality-check survey, or the skills needed for focus groups that yield real understanding.

If you're interested in the meta-consultancy concept (and you can grant me a bit of indulgence in offering a reference), you might like to see a write up on why it's a good idea (!): *Journal of Consumer Behaviour* (2002), v.1 no.4, pp.400-406 ('Decision Resource Consultancy: a convergence of disciplines that aid consumer marketing'). And if you know a company that really wants to set one up, send them to me!

WINE ADVENTURES

Jackie Dickens

How interesting – but I wouldn't be any good at tasting wine because I wouldn't want to spit it out' is a typical response to my revealing that I have been studying wine for over 3 years. Of course people assume that you have just been slurping away and learning fancy language to describe the stuff.

Let me hastily admit that, like the rest of you I am not averse to a good slurp. But studying for the most recent course I followed—the Wine & Spirit Education Trust Diploma—was a hard slog, and entailed writing four 2000 word assignments and taking six different theory and tasting exams, one of which lasted all day. (Being quite unused to writing by hand, my right hand was so curled up after three



Jackie receives her Diploma in Wines & Spirits from Hugh Johnson OBE

hours' effort that I could barely even hold a glass!)

Viticulture is fascinating—the influences on the end product of soil types, sub-soils, slope direction, climate, weather and modifying features (like cooling sea breezes). Learning about these influences for nearly all the wine producing countries in the World—from Italy to Israel, Switzerland to South Africa—was quite an effort. Viniculture, by contrast, is pretty technical these days and as I didn't even do O-level chemistry I found this hard. Most difficult of all was remembering the legal stuff which defines how wines should be made and classified (for example, what constitutes a 'grand cru' as

opposed to a 'premier cru' in different regions of France).

But the pleasure, then and now, has far outweighed the pain.

I can't tell you what fun it is seeking out wine makers who have been well rated by wine writers or have won medals, tasting their wines and observing the obvious passion they have for their work. There are also great bargains to be discovered, providing that your spouse manages not to sigh as yet another case is crammed into the car. For example, some Crémant de Bourgogne we bought near Mâcon this year for €6.30 a bottle beats many cheap Champagnes (and of course is made in exactly the same way as all Champagnes are). I have tasted my way around France, parts of Italy, South Africa, New Zealand and



Australia, and more trips are planned.

The constant adventure offered by the world of wine is terrific. You never stop learning. From being someone who 'knew what she liked' and tended to plump for one of the usual suspects on a wine list, I have definitely

extended my comfort zone. I am long past thinking a white has to be Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc or Pinot Grigio. I have discovered the racy dry Rieslings from Alsace, fresh and fruity Grüner Veltliner from Austria, Albariño from Northwest Spain (Alvarinho in Portugal), Fiano from Italy and many others.



Chatting up sommeliers is very rewarding. Once I've made it clear that I know a bit, I always ask for advice. "You know your list far better than I", I say and indicate a few of the wines I have been considering. I invariably get a great, good value recommendation.

Doubtless many of you are already into wine adventures, and I know some of you are lucky enough to keep great cellars of fine wines. But for those who want to make new discoveries maybe future wine columns could be fun?



MARKET RESEARCH BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION

The MRBA was important in the establishment of the Research Network and several of members of its Management Committee are also members of the Network. It is right therefore that we should have the MRBA in mind both in terms of supporting it—which we have done collectively every year—and in referring to it anyone who is in need of its support. Its Secretary-Treasurer, Danielle Scott, would be pleased to answer any questions—contact her via the phone number or website shown on the right.

The Market Research Benevolent Association



0845 652 0303

www.mrba.org.uk

NATURE DIARY - SPRING/SUMMER 2010-11

Jane Bain

Recent extracts from Jane's Daily Picture Diary on and around the River Thames near Hammersmith.

February: A few bright sunny days early in the month signal an end to this interminable winter. Over at the Wetlands Centre the great crested grebes are beginning their elaborate courtship dances.



A pair of Egyptian geese have chosen a thick poplar branch as their regular display stand.



March: The nest-building season is now well under way. An intrepid pair of herons have found the perfect spot at the top of a tall plane tree and crows are taking advantage of the bark chippings in the Sailing Club flowerbeds.



April: Mrs Tawny Owl is now back in her usual nesting hole high up in a tall tree by the tow path, but this year, alas, we have not managed to spot any owlets.



Two of the house boat dwellers on this stretch of river keep bees—which are apparently able to cope perfectly well with the constantly shifting position of their hives on the rising and falling tide.

Walking past Chiswick Pier one sunny morning I realise that the bees on the boat moored by Pizarro's Restaurant have swarmed. A mass of them are still clinging to the hive, but the main swarm has gathered in the bushes right outside the restaurant—much to the consternation of the staff and customers.



May: The Little Grebes which I watched building their floating nest in the reeds in April are now raising a brood of tiny youngsters. At the slightest hint of danger, or if they just feel like some warmth and comfort, the little ones scramble up on their parents' backs and snuggle down in the soft feathers.



I am lucky enough to be at the Wetlands Centre on the day the first cygnets hatch. This is quite a long slow process. There are three cygnets when I arrive and while I am there a fourth emerges from its egg.



June: Hugh finds a great spotted woodpecker's nest in the woods by the river with a very noisy brood inside clamouring for insects and we spend several days watching from the undergrowth until the little ones leave the safety of their hollow tree trunk.



July: A few lazy warm summer days in between unseasonal spells of cold and rain. Over at the reservoir, the six cygnets are all doing well and are now nearly as large as their parents.

Terns hover hunting and diving for fish...



... and there are suddenly many new broods of young water birds.



We occasionally catch a glimpse of the peregrine falcons, or their youngsters which have now fledged, high up on the side of Charing Cross Hospital. <http://fabperegrines.blogspot.com/>

By the end of the month there is already a whiff of autumn in the air. Blackberries are ripening in the hedgerows and there are tiny green acorns on the oak trees. A squirrel dashes across my path one day in Chiswick Mall with its mouth full of ripe cob nuts, a sure sign that autumn is not far away.



JENNIFER BOWEN 1932 - 2011

Jenny Bowen, co-founder of the MRBA and former Hon Sec/Treasurer of the MRS, died suddenly in February at the age of 78.



Born in Cornwall in 1932, she studied Chemistry at Sir John Cass College, London, before moving into the market research sector with her first job at Procter & Gamble. She then worked as Head of MAS Survey Research Ltd (later absorbed into TNS) and from 1974 to 1976 was Hon Secretary/Treasurer of the Market Research Society.

In 1977, she co-founded the MRBA, the body which provides financial help, advice and support to people who are working or have worked within the market research industry. She served as the Association's President from 1983 to 1987, and prior to her retirement in 2006 as its Regional Welfare Officer for the South of England.

She retired to Salisbury, where she worked as a volunteer Administrant and Server at the cathedral and sang in the congregation choir. She was also involved in the Southern Cathedrals Festival as General Administrator and Chairman of the Salisbury Committee, and she served as Chairman of the Friends of Harnham Water Meadows Trust.

In addition, she was the Wessex Region representative of the Friends of the Historic Houses Association, and helped organise and run a number of day tours to 'not often open' houses in the region.

An enthusiastic walker with the Cathedral Strollers, she also found time to take part in the 200-mile pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostella. During this period, she was quoted as saying that "living in Salisbury is a bit like living in an Anthony Trollope novel—with Joanna Trollope overtones!"

Commenting on her death, MRBA Chairman Ian Brace said: "Much of what the MRBA is and does today was shaped by Jenny. Forthright, Jenny told you exactly how things stood. Generous and full of energy, she always made sure that things happened as and when they should—attributes that served her well both in business and as co-founder of the MRBA. Her passing is a great loss."

The Precentor of Salisbury Cathedral, Canon Jeremy

Davies said that her many friends and her immediate family will miss her "warmth, her kindness, and her beaming personality". *This is an amended version of an obituary that first appeared in the online publication MRWeb.*

Geoffrey Roughton writes: I was introduced to Jenny in 1963 or thereabouts by John Robertson. John and I had formed a market research company in 1957. He was a man of considerable energy and I got a call from him one morning: "Come into my office, there's someone I'd like you to meet". So there was Jenny— a young woman, barely 30, sensibly dressed, sitting upright on the edge of the chair and a big girl in every sense. John and Jenny had been working on a large survey (I think for James A Jobling, best known for its Pyrex range of glassware). I knew all about the survey, in which she was the client, as my main role was running the production side of the company and I was getting various missives driven, John would say, by 'Jenny Bowen'.

The company she was working for, under the leadership of Andrew Murray and Gerald Goodhardt, had one of the best market research departments of the major advertising agencies. I knew indirectly that Jenny was a formidable researcher, as indeed, were her colleagues. But here she was—a six footer, bright eyed, a naval officer's daughter with a science degree sitting in John's office. It was clear that in terms of transparent integrity she and John were kindred spirits. There was little doubt that she admired him for this and they reinforced each other. As two researchers they were a powerful combination. As a mere production person I was their inferior and I was nervous that they would just lord it over me.

But the meeting had a seminal effect on me. If we could get someone like Jenny on our team, it would be a big step up for us. So when John sounded me out about her joining us, I simply said "great minds". And so it came to pass and she was soon a director—one of the first women to become a director of a market research company in London. I felt very comfortable with Jenny; her style was reminiscent of a number of strong women in my own family—my mother and her six sisters, my aunts. When I met Jenny's mother and after she had met mine, I

realised that we both had come from a background whose parents were shaped by the 1914-18 war. Although Jenny did not have the same feelings towards me she had for John, there was a different kind of empathy from our having backgrounds of similar values.

And so we started working together. Her principles were unquestioned and unquestionable and this could lead from time to time to fireworks—indeed to quite severe heat. But with my background, I could survive the heat and Jennifer’s innate kindness would cool things down. Her cheerfulness would triumph. So despite appearing to be totally uncompromising, we always found a way round the rocks of principles perhaps sometimes too firmly held.

We faced a major challenge in 1973 with John’s death. This came at a time of severely worsening economic conditions and his demise robbed MAS of a powerful leader. It perforce thrust me into a role beyond my competence and the continuation of the company was very much in doubt. All my partners rallied round but I was well aware that Jenny could have left for greener fields; she might have considered such a move, but if she did, she never once mentioned it during a very difficult time. Some of our clients were as askanced by what had happened as we were. It was only some years later in reminiscing with John Bound that I became aware of how close a run it was and of the part Jenny had played in steadying the ship and keeping some key clients on board. She was loyal when it mattered. After this we reorganised the ownership of the company and Jenny became a shareholding partner.

Jenny had an active life outside the Company which would occasionally intrude. She had become involved in the Market Research Society and asked whether she could devote greater time to the Society. It was easy to say yes and so with indefatigable energy, she

plunged into holding a number of positions in the Society including Secretary and then, after retiring, her work for the Market Research Benevolent Fund. At a recent lunch of the Research Network I sat next to someone who said to me: “Jenny is the best Chairman of the Society we never had”. Nothing stopped her; she would be cheerful regardless, in fact sometimes in spite of herself.

But MAS’s time was coming to an end; market research had become a business. It was becoming all about money. Our Society was adopting new values. Time to move on; business was going to be less fun. The company was sold and I was pleased that Jenny did well enough out of it to help her to a new stage of her life in Salisbury. This was a wise move as she was never going to be happy with the new owners, whoever they were.

I saw rather less of her, but we were always pleased to see each other. She was a fixture: someone I had known through thick and thin, good times and bad. It was a relationship of ‘old comrades’. I was never on false grounds with her so it was restful—no need to keep up any pretences. She came to an MAS reunion around the time of my 80th birthday and we were rather looking forward to a repeat on her 80th, but it is not to be.

So looking back from my own point of view. Her support at crucial times; her loyalty, one might say forgiveness, despite my failings, has played a vital role in enriching my life. So I owe her; she’s in the top 10. I am thinking of that open smile nearly 50 years ago, of the hard work and companionship, the support she gave to me and others and now how very fortunate I have been in having known her and worked with her.

She was a good woman and I shall miss her.



STEERING GROUP

The Research Network is directed by a Steering Group consisting at present of Nigel Spackman (Chairman), Jane Bain, Jane Gwilliam (Events Organisers), Justin Gutmann (Membership and Recruitment), Linda Henshall (Relations with other MR bodies), Tom Punt (Webmaster and *Newsletter* Editorial Advisor), Nick Tanner (Editor *Newsletter*), Gill Wareing (Secretary-Treasurer) and Frank Winter (Data Protection and other regulatory matters). Their names, addresses, phone and email details are in the Members List. Please feel free to contact any member of the Steering Group on matters relevant to the areas they cover.