



THE WAY WE ARE

At last, this latest edition of the Research Network newsletter can include some reviews and a preview of our 'normal' programme of face-to-face events, as we have managed to run a successful Spring Lunch and Summer Party so far this year, with many members delighted to catch up and socialise in person.

Naturally, our popular online NED Talks have also kept us in contact during February and April this year and synopses of these two highly entertaining talks are featured in this edition. Firstly, Neil McPhee told the music fans among us about the influences of technology on music performance and recordings from the 1950s to the present day. Then, in a new 'conversational format' with Sheila Byfield, Paddy Barwise discussed the 'war' against our valued media institution, the BBC, by some political, competitive commercial or even general public factions around the world.

There are photos of our Spring Lunch and Summer Party events in this issue, which were greatly enjoyed by the members who attended. We also preview a very special social event to mark the 20th Anniversary of the Research Network, to be held at The RAF Club in Piccadilly, London on 11th October this year. We are hoping for really good attendance, along with the addition of members' guests in the expectation that some of these will actually join the Network next year. Please look out for the invitation which Gill Wareing will send out and meanwhile, do save the date.

Also featured in this edition are excellent general interest articles by Simon Chadwick and Jane A'Court, and a short photo story to see if any readers may be interested in glassblowing. And we cover RN member Don Osborne's latest historical books, now that his professional activities have changed direction from a distinguished market research career.

In addition, we have Peter Bartram's personal career reminiscences in The Way We Were, along with Jane Bain's superb Nature Diary photos and a brief update on our other Steering Group and New Membership sub-group activities to keep you up to date.

As always, we would greatly value any future contributions from members to include in up-and-coming Research Network newsletters on any topic of interest. We also greatly value hearing news of individual Network members, including new activities and interests, career developments or new lifestyle directions. Don't hesitate to get in touch! Please make contact via editor@research-network.org.uk

AUTUMN LUNCH: 11TH OCTOBER AT THE RAF CLUB

This next event is very special, as it celebrates the 20th Anniversary of the Research Network. The venue is The RAF Club in Piccadilly, where we previously hosted a highly successful lunch in 2017.

The specific location of The RAF Club is 128 Piccadilly, London W1J 7PY, near Hyde Park Corner. The venue is a beautifully maintained historic building, formerly the Ladies Lyceum Club. It features stylish oak panels and stained-glass windows at the main staircase. The RAF Club website gives more details if required.

We will be welcomed with drinks in the Churchill Bar,



followed by a three course lunch with wine in the Sovereign's Room, which was formerly the ballroom. On the day, we can establish whether some spontaneous ballroom dancing after lunch is permitted!

We would like to encourage members to bring a guest wherever possible, in the hope that such an event will encourage them to join the Research Network themselves.

Look out for the official invitation which Gill Wareing will send out soon and we hope to see many of you there.

THE WAY WE WERE

More recollections compiled by Peter Bartram

The chaos and stress brought on by a house move seemed to indicate that my further trawling of past Newsletters, Research Magazines and Journals for this column would be impossible, as they were buried within 42 storage boxes yet to be opened and examined. The five months it has taken to complete the moving process prompts me to warn superannuated researchers against doing that late in life, and despite eventually finding one brilliant conveyancing practitioner, it brought to mind the quote from Shakespeare's Henry IV part II: "The first thing we do, let's kill the lawyers."

But happily, in Box No. 23, a few new nuggets have just been found, mostly from 40 years ago:

Reporting on a qualitative research seminar chaired by **Sue Robson** in October 1982, **Paul Feldwick** asserted that "the quest for an impossible objectivity is something that greatly reduces the usefulness of qualitative research." And...

In his paper **Tim Bowles** said that "qualitative research is overused tactically and underused strategically"

Lorna Winstanley opined that for her, "the real value of qualitative research lies more in providing understanding than in merely delivering judgement."

And finally, **Neville Darby** took a broader view, concluding that marketing is fundamentally about understanding consumer needs, and "you have to be very aware of what people want in order to provide it."

In the same issue of the *Newsletter*, **Sheila Jones** listed the negative views of market research often expressed by clients who are not themselves in market research. These included:

- Too academic/statistical/irrelevant
- Respondents don't know what they want (challenging Neville Darby's comment, above)
- Research is just an added cost, detracting from profits
- My sales force tell me what the market's thinking
- Why should I want the customer's opinion? He's ignorant (a view still held, with few notable exceptions, by many conveyancing lawyers?)

We have reported earlier on **John Samuels'** assessment of the MRS River Boat Trip, but a couple of extra gems from it deserve an airing:

- As they passed downstream, the DJ's commentary likened Cleopatra's needle to a phallic symbol and also noted that "the posh building on the left belongs to Unilever, which is why your soap powder costs so much."
- **Patsy Douglas** was "wearing a multi-coloured oriental silk jacket which suggested the move to running group discussions had brought the usual vast income."

In the same year, **Susie Fisher** reported on an AQRP meeting at which **Professor Hans Eysenck** was due to speak, but arrived 55 minutes late. Ignoring the professional experience of his audience, and revealing his ignorance of market research anyway, he then delivered his standard lecture on psychology for first-year students. In doing that, he offered some well-tried nostrums, including:

- "You can be bright without being creative, but you cannot be creative without being bright."
- "Creativity does not occur in an IQ of 110 or less."
- "Most creatives tend to be of a melancholic kind, introverted and unstable."

He then failed to immerse himself in the many questions and comments which followed from the distinguished researchers present, and departed.

In the November 1982 issue of the Newsletter, the front-page headline was "New Library Facilities for the MRS." The library was not subsequently used by many, and it was not until 2016 that a proper research archive began to be created.

A Final Note: There have recently been calls for Research Network Members to make contributions to the session at this year's 75th ESOMAR Congress which will look at the most important innovations which have shaped the research industry. Looking at the MRS Newsletters housed in the AMSR archive, one can see that many researchers have already listed these over the years, but the best route to the answer lies simply in reading **Colin McDonald's** magisterial book covering the history of the industry: "Sampling the Universe."

SPRING LUNCH AT EV

The Spring Lunch was a very welcome return to Research Network socialising with excellent food and drinks, after so many frustrating lockdowns interrupted our social event programme from early 2020. It took place on 26th April 2022, and nearly 40 members, some with guests, came along to one of our favourite informal restaurants: Ev in Isabella Street near Southwark Underground Station.

Ev provides Anatolian Turkish cuisine coupled with friendly service which we always enjoy. On the day, the weather was also kind enough to allow early arrivals to meet and chat together on the terrace.

The menu was as interesting and tasty as usual, comprising three generous courses, with hot and cold meze dishes before the main course and dessert. Wine was provided too, so the cost of £35 per person was excellent value, all brilliantly negotiated and organised by our in-house hospitality experts, Jane Bain and Jane Gwilliam.



SYNOPSIS OF NED TALKS

Graham Woodham

Since the last *Newsletter* in February 2022, there have been two NED Talks and synopses of both now follow. The first one, held on 23rd February, was by Neil McPhee, describing the influence of technology on the music of the 1950's onwards. The second talk was by Paddy Barwise on the 6th April and adopted a new format of a discussion between Paddy and Sheila Byfield. Sheila has since produced the synopsis which follows on from Neil's, below. Their topic was 'The War Against The BBC'.

From The Studio To Your Bedroom by Neil McPhee



This is me, playing somewhere back in the 1960s!! © Neil McPhee

I have been conscious of music and speech sounds from the late 1950s from my young days listening to our home radiogram to the wonderful exploration and experimentation of the 1960s, through to the amazing technology which facilitates sound origination, transmission, recording and listening today.

I recall the impact of various sounds on me: the early (dreadful!) audio quality of my parents' 78s to my own tape recordings of my guitar playing, through to various broadcast speeches and so on.

The most basic analysis of the technology of those early days' audio shows it to be a major improvement over the very early days of 'sound' but it still needed improvement.

We can trace the history of sound through four basic phases, from the early Acoustic era through the secondary Electrical phase and on to the Magnetic Tape, then Digital eras.

We are concerned here with the time from the 1950s through to today, from the days when the task of recording and broadcasting was to portray the original sound as accurately as possible. Contrast this with the ability now for the original sound to be manipulated in any number of ways to improve 'listenability', improve clarity and to add creativity to the original sound.

A brief history of recording "waves"

- Sound recording can be divided into waves, driven by technology
 - Acoustic era (1877–1925)
 - Electrical era (1925–1945)
 - Magnetic Tape era (1945–1975)
 - Digital era (1975–present).
- Arguably, much classical/jazz music recording is still "live"
- While much "pop" is recorded in different places at different times

Diagram: "live" recording → "multi-track" recording

28/02/2022 (c) Neil McPhee RESNET ZOOM 7

This has moved both the studio and its engineering status from one of 'technician' to 'co-creator/facilitator'. The days of Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band, recorded on four track tape recorders, to the domestically available Garage-band and other DAWs (Digital Audio Workstations) has arguably democratised sound, its production and distribution by making it possible for pretty much everyone to create and disseminate sounds from their own bedrooms.

Key sound manipulation techniques, made amazingly easy, affordable and versatile by technology, essentially seek to add or subtract ('boost' or 'cut') various audible frequencies in the human range of 20 to 20,000 Hz, and add some effects to enhance audio appeal.

Among these effects are such key buzzwords as:

- Individual volume/track balance
- Chorus, Tremolo, Flanger and Phaser
- Reverb, Delay and Echo
- Equalisation and (left to right) Panning
- Sound Compression (balancing loud and quiet passages) and Distortion

While you do not need to know about these things (unless you are interested!) you are hearing their application in everyday life, from your TV and radio, from music you listen to, through to our own Oral History

interview recordings, all of which have been tweaked to improve their audio quality (including the clink of glasses and cups in one of my interviews, conducted in a busy café/bar).

On a personal and amateur recording level, I have visited Sweetheart Abbey (near Dumfries) on several occasions while visiting my family there. It is a fascinating and atmospheric place and I have been trying to capture my impressions of this atmosphere in musical writing/recordings. To give an appropriate 'sound', I have used a combination of the delay and reverb techniques which I described earlier, to give that echoey sound and reverberation so characteristic of large, ruined spaces. I can do this easily with various special effect pedals, costing under £200.

The key point here is that these techniques and technology are readily available. Similarly, the technology I first used in market research qualitative interviewing in the early 1970s was a primitive reel-to-reel tape recorder, before moving on to the compact cassette, recorded on the amazing Sony Walkman (Professional WM D6c) which I still have working today. Subsequently, we moved on to today's digital stereo recorders/smart phones. The same also applies to video recording technology, providing not only vastly improved clarity and quality, but easy and professional levels of editing and replay.

The development of this technology has had three key influences on sound, as shown in the figure below.

It has allowed the improvement of the quality of sound, making it a more appealing audio experience which is readily available to a much wider range of professional and enthusiast audiences.

This has permitted the shifting of both the time and place of the recording, such that we can hear the speech/music recording when and where we choose, not simply at the original time and place (e.g. a concert hall). We can literally take all our sounds with us via our mobile devices or internet technology wherever we go and whenever we want to listen to them.



It allows specific techniques and sounds to be used which give access to our own audio-cultural libraries and experiences.

In conclusion, due to the limitations of space and time, I couldn't include a discussion of such critical issues as the role of Real Music vs Music Business, focusing on the ways in which technology has (always) made a distinction between the world of the 'music business' (essentially concerned with money-making) and 'real' music (made by ordinary members of the public, often played locally with little thought of earning an income). Similarly, we could have discussed the role of money and technology in determining the public's tastes in sound, or the historical patronage/funding of sound.

Perhaps for another time!

Finally, I am delighted to acknowledge the input and assistance by my 'brains trust', comprising four researchers well known to us: Roddy Glen, John Griffiths, David McCallum and John Mackay. Their memories of playing, broadcasting and recording over the period under review were of immense assistance. Special thanks go to all of them.

© Neil McPhee, February 2022

Professor Patrick (Paddy) Barwise Interviewed by Sheila Byfield

The Research Network was delighted to be joined by Paddy Barwise (<https://www.patrickbarwise.com/>) to discuss his latest book, *The War Against the BBC*¹.

Paddy is well qualified to write such a book. He was already studying television audience behaviour with Andrew Ehrenberg in the 1970s—they did the original revenue forecast for Channel 4 in 1979²—and he still works on TV issues.

Interviewing him, Sheila Byfield began by asking why he and Peter York wrote the book. He replied that as co-presenters at the MRS Awards lunches, they found a shared indignation that the BBC, Britain's greatest cultural institution—popular,





trusted, admired around the world by Britain's democratic friends and feared by its authoritarian enemies—was relentlessly attacked within Britain itself.

Sheila suggested the idea that the BBC has had its day and is its own worst enemy through complacency, bias and failing to spot the political and media enemies circling it.

Paddy agreed that the BBC is in peril, mainly because of cumulative funding cuts. It is also endlessly criticised for alleged political bias, but we need to distinguish between the views of the public and professionals (politicians, 'think-tankers' and journalists) attacking it as part of their day jobs. Almost two-thirds of the public agree that the BBC is biased—but they disagree about which way! Roughly equal numbers see a bias to the left, the right, or neither. In contrast, professional

Beeb-bashing is overwhelmingly from the right, disseminated in the right-leaning 'SMET' newspapers (the Sun, Mail, Express and Telegraph).

All UK broadcast news is regulated to be 'duly impartial' but the rules are enforced more strictly at the BBC because it is the biggest source of news consumption and the one most likely to be mentioned as a source of trusted news.

Among other issues⁴, Sheila raised the strategic challenge of attracting younger audiences, whose BBC consumption has declined over the past decade.

Paddy pointed out that young people watch less television now because they have so many other choices. The BBC is still the biggest media brand across all age groups. But he agreed that allocating resources between content and services for older and younger audiences was a huge challenge. This is because the BBC's real (inflation-adjusted) funding has reduced by over 25% since 2010, against rising real costs and competition.

The BBC is still consumed an average of two hours a day across the total population, but is often taken for granted. A recent BBC-commissioned study found that after living with no BBC for nine days, 70% of those who initially said that the 43p per day licence fee was poor value for money, changed their minds⁵.

In Paddy's words, "There is no other brand, in any product or service category, that is used anything close to two hours each day by the British population".

In Sheila's words "Long live the BBC".

¹ Patrick Barwise and Peter York, *The War Against the BBC: How an Unprecedented Combination of Hostile Forces Is Destroying Britain's Greatest Cultural Institution ... and Why You Should Care*, Penguin, November 2020

² Patrick Barwise and Andrew Ehrenberg, *The Revenue Potential of Channel Four*, Independent Broadcasting Authority, 1979 (reprinted in Admap, November 1979)

³ (Patrick Barwise, Steven Bellman and Virginia Beal, 'Why do people watch so much television and video? Implications for the future of viewing and advertising', *Journal of Advertising Research* 60, 2 (June 2020), 121-134; Patrick Barwise, 'Privatising Channel 4: A Bad Idea Whose Time May Have Come', *InterMedia* 49, 3 (September 2021), 34-36.

⁴ E.g. alternative funding models, discussed in detail in *The War Against the BBC*.

⁵ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/2022/deprivation-study>.

SUMMER PARTY AT DOGETT'S COAT AND BADGE

We were very lucky at this year's Summer Party, as the local climate authorities at Blackfriars Bridge supplied us with the ideal weather for a social event on the third floor terrace at Doggett's Coat and Badge. It was beautifully sunny but with a gentle breeze so essentially, we only needed to go inside to select our buffet food and buy drinks from the bar. And no rail strikes on that day either...

The event was held on 5th July with 36 members and guests having booked their places. There is now a very friendly new staff line-up at the pub and the buffet was incredibly generous. Many of us made several trips to the food table during the afternoon.

The price was excellent value at £30 for members and guests, in return for characteristic Doggett's hospitality and exclusive use of the open-air terrace, including a welcome cocktail on arrival.

Hopefully, the selection of photos on the page opposite gives a sense of the very enjoyable time we had.



RESEARCH NETWORK: PROJECT AND ACTIVITY UPDATE

We are obviously very pleased that our social event programme is being revived now and apart from our face-to-face social events, with the Autumn Lunch and AGM with Christmas drinks still to come this year, we want to continue with our NED Talks in the Autumn. Our first one is provisionally lined up, so please look out for Gill Wareing's invitation which will be sent out during the summer. And any other members who would like to give a NED Talk on an interesting topic of any kind will be very welcome. Please contact Adam Phillips to arrange this.

We are determined to do all we can to keep our Research Network membership buoyant and we now have a highly active Membership Development Strategy Team, created and run by a specific Steering Sub-group headed by Jane A'Court with Adam Phillips. Our aim is to recruit new members with a younger age profile across all research, insight, innovation and data analytics disciplines. Jane and Adam are in the process of recruiting a set of Research Network 'champions' to encourage new members under the 'Stay Connected' banner, using our social networking events and subsidised lunches to attract those who want to keep up with work friends and colleagues, as well as meeting new people.

There will be further news on the Membership Development initiative later in the year, but if you think you know of some people in our industry in their 50s or 60s who could be interested in joining the Research Network, please make contact with Jane, Adam or Gill Wareing.

The Oral History Project, run by Frank Winter, is progressing with its excellent new relationship with The Archive of Market and Social Research (AMSR) where the interview audio files are now stored, with links from the MRS and our own website. Five new interviews and biographical summaries have been added to the AMSR website, making a current total of 39, which are proving of interest to students of marketing and research as well as existing members of the industry.

The latest interviews to be uploaded are:

- Hugh Bain (Part 2)
- Linda Henshall
- Phyllis Macfarlane
- Phyllis Vangelder
- Adam Phillips

Three or more further interviews are scheduled to be conducted during 2022.

The link to the Oral History Project archive via the AMSR website is: <https://www.amsr.org.uk/oral-histories/>.

Beyond our own Oral History Project, AMSR has been growing its archive with materials donated by members of the research industry. The collection comprises examples of qualitative and quantitative research from the 1970s onwards. The indexing and search processes are now much improved, and searches for any topics of interest to RN members are likely to be highly rewarding. You can start a personal archive search via the AMSR website by clicking the orange button on the top right of the website home page or keying your name into the search box.

Earlier in the year, Frank Winter also organised a Research Network Membership Survey to gauge what members think of the Network and what we do, as an update from the previous survey from 2016.

Frank has carried out the analysis of member responses which have been charted by Jane Bain. The findings will be summarised and discussed at this year's AGM and Christmas drinks event, and a full account of the key findings will be included in the February 2023 newsletter. Everyone on the Steering Group would like to sincerely thank all the members who took the time to complete and submit their responses on the survey. We are also very grateful to Chris Beech and Alistair Sweeney from Cobalt Sky, who administered the online survey for us.



A GLASS BLOWING ADVENTURE

Graham Woodham

Just for fun, has anyone ever tried glass blowing? When my wife Julia finally left her research and insight career behind, one of her new activities was to develop her interest in painting and join an artists' group. At one of the exhibitions where some of her paintings were shown, she met Adam Aaronson, a professional glass blower with a studio near Guildford in Surrey.

She bought me a gift voucher for a half day beginners' course for my birthday and I found the whole experience fascinating. I'm sharing this in the newsletter as a 'picture story' to try and bring the experience to life for any members who may be intrigued.

With close attention and help at all times by Adam and his two highly skilled assistants, I made a glass tumbler and a bowl. There were three others on the course, and we could all choose our own colours and shape of bowl or vase, then take it in turns to do the difficult part of the exercise! The colours are in glass granules and you use a hollow steel blow pipe to wrap a big globule of molten glass around the end from one of the furnaces as a starting point.

You then dip and twist the plain glass into the colour granules and follow a flexible sequence of blowing, non-stop twisting of the pipe to keep the glass in a symmetrical form, followed by opening out, re-heating and shaping the glass vessel repeatedly to reach the size you want, over about 15 minutes.

Then the glass vessel has its base flattened and you shape the neck with a large pair of metal tongs. When you and Adam are happy with its potential, you let it cool for about a minute before being removed from the pipe, checked again and then cooled gently for a few days.

Five days later you can collect your glassware, finding your name miraculously etched on the base, and take it home to show off to your friends.

It was a fascinating 3 hour session and firmly recommended by me as long as at no stage do you lose concentration and drop it as you are twisting your blow pipe round!

Adam Aaronson's studio is on the Epsom Road, West Horsley, KT24 6AR and his website address is www.adamaaronson.com.



NATURE DIARY

Extracts from Jane Bain's Nature Diary: January–June 2022

The year starts with a mixture of sun and lots of rain. Covid is still with us, in the form of the highly infectious Omicron variant which I catch, frustratingly, just at the start of a spell of blue skies and unbroken sunshine.



January: Confined to barracks self-isolating, I pass the time photographing the birds outside my kitchen windows. A young male sparrowhawk becomes a regular visitor. He has not yet perfected his hunting skills and perches above my bird feeders in the hope of an easy meal. An endeavour which is invariably unsuccessful.

The mild weather continues and by the end of the month there are signs of spring everywhere. I start seeing robins in wary pairs, herons are already nesting, violets and crocuses are coming into bloom and bumblebees feast on early cherry blossom.



February: I visit a friend in Barnes and decide to return via the reservoir. A male kestrel has been hunting regularly in the woods at one end and I am lucky enough to find him, resting briefly on a tree by the path.

Storm Eunice lashes the country and the 'Big Jet TV' live commentary on planes struggling to land becomes a surprise YouTube hit. On the river, a heron is in similar difficulty. Balanced precariously on a mooring buoy, it flattens itself to avoid being battered by the fierce wind.



March: The trunks of trees sometimes have hollows, where branches have broken off, which hold small pools of rainwater. Looking up I see a bluetit, smart in its spring plumage, drinking from one of these cups.



There are carpets of self-seeded grape-hyacinths in the cemetery. Tiny bee-flies rest their long spindly legs on the petals while they hover, feeding from the flowers.

April: As their breeding season approaches, swans become extremely territorial. An unsuspecting juvenile swiftly discovers that this patch of river is already taken.



Terrapins live very successfully in the reservoir, crawling out of the water to sunbathe on warm days. This large individual has a favourite spot on a broken plank.

May: The weather is getting warmer and dragonflies begin to appear. A tiny vivid thread of colour catches my eye and I am thrilled to see a small red damselfly, barely more than an inch long and listed as nationally scarce.



Pied wagtail chicks bob on driftwood at the water's edge. They are well camouflaged and I hear them cheeping for food before I see them. The frazzled parents flit from chick to chick, supplying them with insects.

Painted lady butterflies are long distance migrants, travelling here from as far away as Central Asia each summer. I see this one earlier than usual, in mid-May.

June: The male peregrine swoops low over my head by Charing Cross Hospital. Their chick has recently taken its first flight and he is keeping a protective eye on it.



Two moorhen chicks have hatched from a nest in a friend's small motorboat. The parents are caring for them and my friend decides to leave them there until they are bigger and can scramble out. They do so a week later, just in time for the boat to go to be serviced.

LETTER FROM AMERICA

Simon Chadwick

A House Divided Against Itself

As I write this, it is one day since the U.S. Supreme Court (SCOTUS) handed down a decision that is sure to add kindling to the fire of division that plagues the United States today. The decision to overturn *Roe vs. Wade*, the landmark ruling in 1973 that baked a right to abortion into the country's constitution, will not only set Democrats against Republicans, but also women against men, state against state, poor against rich. The justices who voted for the ruling included two who were appointed by Donald Trump, both of whom had sworn in testimony before the Senate that they would do no such thing. One of those justices was confirmed by the Republican majority in the Senate shortly after Trump was elected in 2016, after that same Senate had refused to consider Barack Obama's nomination for the seat for a record-breaking 293 days. Mitch McConnell's rationale at the time was that the nomination had occurred too close to an election and that the people should decide. Four years later, when Trump nominated Amy Barrett to the Court a mere month before a general election, McConnell conveniently forgot this argument.



Why am I bringing this up?

Because it illustrates in technicolor the chasm that exists in America today and the visceral nature of the struggle on both sides for power. Through one lens, this seems like a recent and modern phenomenon of American life. But in actuality, it is not. This is a struggle that has persisted from before the nation's founding and that has its roots in the populations that originally inhabited this land and that survived and thrived through conquest of its native peoples. It is a story of divided and diametrically opposed values, philosophies, backgrounds and religions. It is also the story of the struggle for dominance and 'damn the consequences'.

The story begins with the first migration, culminating in the founding of Jamestown, Virginia in 1607. This was mercantile migration designed to bring economic benefits to the shareholders of the Virginia Company of London and backed, both explicitly and implicitly, by aristocracy and the Crown. It was no accident that the first slaves in the colony arrived only a short while later in 1619. Virginia evolved into a place that was resoundingly Anglican and that followed the societal structure of Britain closely.



The second migration was that which led to the Pilgrims' arrival in New England some 11 years after Jamestown was founded. These were very different people, driven to leave Britain due to persecution for their Puritan beliefs and mores. What they set up in Plymouth was a theocracy in which people were ruled and judged by their 'moral behaviour' and were harshly dealt with, if they strayed from the norms that their elders prescribed from the pulpit.

This was followed by the third, mainly Quaker, migration starting in the 1650s. Brutally persecuted in New England, they were finally able to secure their own lands in Pennsylvania in 1681. These were peaceful people who

were advocates on behalf of Native Americans, who set standards of tolerance and who were the first among those to push for the abolition of slavery.

They were followed in the fourth and final migration from the UK, by those who were mainly from the Scottish borders and Ulster. At the time, these were extremely violent regions and those who emigrated, brought with them a visceral disregard for government, and what would today be regarded as a very 'libertarian' viewpoint. Their stance bordered on 'get out of my way or die'. Arriving originally in Virginia and the Carolinas, they went on to populate most of what are today the Southern states.

So, what you have in the origins of the country is an uneasy mix of mercantile, fundamentalist religion, tolerance and quasi-violent libertarianism. And that is the mix that, even after mass migrations by Germans, Irish Catholics, Italians, Jews and Asians, still persists today. From the beginnings of this country, it has been sometimes an unholy alliance and at other times outright war between these vastly different factions of American existence. Just a few major flashpoints in U.S. history illustrate the fragility of this co-existence:

- The Constitution itself was a compromise between the mercantile/libertarian South, and the more 'liberal'/tolerant North in which slaves were counted as three-fifths of a person in order to give the South the congressional representation to which it felt it was due.

- Prior to the Civil War, those same alliances were 'duking it out' as to who dominated Congress by determining whether new states should or should not allow slavery—the more that they did, the more the South could dominate the direction of the country.
- The Jim Crow era sought to perpetuate the Confederate mercantile/libertarian alliance and to continue an economic and social model that the rest of the country found to be an abomination.

Today, we see a continuation of these old battles but with a more recent twist. When you look at voting patterns across the U.S., they are very similar to historical battle lines—the South being more conservative, more libertarian, more pro-guns; rural areas in the mid-West following much the same approach, while the North-East, West Coast and urban areas are more liberal, more community-oriented, more willing to see the Constitution as a living document. What has changed is that the alliance has now shifted to one where fundamentalist religion and the libertarian South have joined forces and are determined not just to co-exist with the rest of America, but to dominate it. This extends not only to areas such as abortion, but also to gay marriage, contraception, gun control, eviscerating central government, and the role of democracy itself. This alliance, like its predecessors, places little value in democracy and is quite content to settle for a mix of autocracy and theocracy, if it means that it dominates the national landscape in perpetuity.



In doing so, the Southern/fundamentalist alliance has intentionally cultivated a cult mentality, aided and abetted in no small part by Fox News. In this mentality, facts that run counter to cult beliefs are ridiculed as 'fake news' and no matter what the evidence that is put forward (for example, the Jan 6 Capitol riots) it is dismissed out of hand. It is this that results in book burnings (of Harry Potter, no less), bombings of abortion clinics, the rise of private militia, mass shootings (of which there have been 277 this year alone, at the time of writing) and voter suppression.

And what of Donald Trump in all of this, you ask? He was serendipity writ large. He didn't invent all of this, he just happened to come along and recognise that this was his ticket to power. In doing so, he became the symbol of the 'rebellion' against liberal society and the fact that he was prepared to do anything to hold on to power was just grist to the mill. But the problem goes deeper—much deeper—as we have seen in these latest rulings.

The United States is not, and has never been, a unified nation. At best it is a fragile combination of diverse and sometimes diametrically opposed philosophies and interests. Today, those differences risk tearing the country apart at its seams, as one alliance seeks to dominate over the whole.

Only time will tell whether or not it succeeds.

MY FAVOURITE HOBBY—GOING ON WINE TOURS

Jane A'Court

The editor thought that this particular hobby of mine would be interesting to our newsletter readers. Over the last 15 years, I have been on over twenty such tours all over the world – multiple regions of France, Italy and Spain, plus Slovenia, Portugal, Greece, South Africa, Argentina, Australia and New Zealand. (All the tours I have been on are run by Tim Syrad Wine Tours and I have unashamedly used his blog as an aide to writing this article). I am going to focus on the two trips I have already done this year, and I hope after reading this article, you decide to do a wine tour yourself.

After no trips happening during Covid, it was wonderful to get on a plane in May and go to Greece. As we were focusing on wines from the Peloponnese we stayed in Nafplio, a delightful town with a fort on an island in the middle of the bay. I could only remember having drunk Assyrtiko before, so I was very excited about what was in store, and I was not disappointed.



On the first morning, we visited the **Kiriakos Koroniotis** winery in Nemea. The grapes are sourced from across the Peloponnese, and his 'Argus' Syrah is made there. We were served their wines along with local breads and cheeses among the laboratory equipment in the winery.

Next, we visited **Tetramythos** near Patras (home to the Mavrodaphne grape variety) which is one of Greece's most prestigious wineries, and our visit showed us why. The splendid modern winery was rebuilt after a fire in 2007 and there are amazing views across the mountains to the gulf. Vineyards are on steep slopes at altitudes from 650 -1,000m, many north facing which helps to keep the vines cool. The white grape Roditis is often used in retsina across Greece, and we enjoyed a modern version of retsina, made with only 1kg of pine resin per 1,000 litres of wine – adding just a hint of pine to its complexity and very drinkable.

Their 'pure' Roditis was a lovely delicate wine, with blossom and green apple flavours, while the Black of Kalvryta, a nearly extinct black grape variety making a comeback, was fresh, fruity with grippy tannins. Their Mavrodaphne (which we enjoyed with a sour cherry compote finishing our fabulous lunch), was glorious.

The second day saw us back in Nemea which is home to the Agiorgitiko grape variety, a deep coloured grape that has dark fruits and smoky notes on the nose and palate, and can be made in a variety of styles from light and fruity to complex, oak matured and even sweet—made from sun dried grapes.

The first visit was to the **Palivos** estate, a family owned winery. They placed great focus on the nuances of terroir, with grapes from the higher altitude vineyard producing wine of greater concentration and structure. Our tasting in the barrel cellar confirmed the diversity and quality of the wine, and their flagship Nohma, which is a blend of Cabernet, Merlot and Agiorgitiko, was a terrific wine with great ageing potential.

Next to the **Semeli** estate, probably the most famous in Nemea. High in the mountains, its modern winery overlooks the Nemea valley to the south and the gulf of Corinth to the north. Here we explored the developing terroir focus of Greek wines, with wines made in the Koutsi district, including a 2003 vintage of their Grande Reserve—lovely dried fruit, forest floor flavours and a silky mouthfeel. This was the venue for one of our lunches—another five course extravaganza that required some sleeping off during the return coach journey!

On the last day we went to **Mantinia**. Here the Moschofilero grape is king; this indigenous variety has pink skins and produces white and rosé wines: dry and sweet.

Firstly, we visited the Kalogris winery near the village of Kapsia. The lovely family here are passionate about their land which is organically run with swathes of clover, adding to the soil's natural fertility, and at the traditional family homestead, the focus is on 'slow winemaking' in the ancient cool cellars.



Paintings depicting Hercules slaying the lion (whose blood the Agiorgitiko grape's juice is said to symbolise) and Saint George, after whom the grape is named, were present at the modern **Constantin Gofas** winery, but the highlight of this visit was the walk through the vineyards to an idyllic shady glade beside a stream, followed by a tasting under the trees. Their wines ranged from light whites through extremely high quality reds, (including the Vasilio Grande Reserve 2015) and a Vin de Zemnes sweet wine that had spent 5 years in barrel and five years in bottle; this was a perfect match for chocolate.

As usual we had super dinners on the first and last evening, and I highly recommend this region for wine.

In June, I was off to Southern Burgundy, staying in Mâcon focusing on the Mâconnais, Chalonnais and southerly parts of the Cote d'Or—regions that lack the prestige of their northern neighbours, but are capable of producing wines of extremely high quality and value for money. Given the close proximity of Mâcon to the 'cru' vineyards of Beaujolais, we spent a day there too.

Our hotel was the 360 Panorama hotel, a beautifully converted post office in the centre of town with a spectacular rooftop bar. The first night is always a delicious dinner. Each day we boarded our coach to visit at least two wineries in a specific region, meeting owners and winemakers, and exploring the winemaking approaches before tasting a comprehensive range of their wines.

Mâconnais

After a lovely supper the night before, the first stop the next day was at **Domaine Corsin** in the village of Davayé, in the heart of Pouilly Fuissé country. Giles Corsin makes wine from his own vines, and is also a négociant, making wine from bought-in grapes. We tasted three Saint-Vérans of increasing age and complexity, and then worked through four Pouilly Fuissés.

Next stop was with **Domaine Nadine Ferrand**. She started making wine after the death of her husband over 20 years ago. She works with her daughter and they own two hectares of their own vines and rent a further ten across different areas of Mâcon, and it was very interesting to hear about how the relationship between owner and 'tenant' works. Our tasting covered a number of appellations:- Mâcon Villages, Saint Véran, Viré Clessé, Pouilly Fuissé and the Ambre.

Beaujolais

On the following day, our first visit was to **Château Moulin-a-Vent**. On the terrace looking out across the vineyards towards Fleurie, our guide explained that the estate owns 23 lieux-dits ('named sites'). Grapes from these lieu-dit sites are vinified separately, and around a third are matured, most for up to a year in oak, as we saw in the cool cellars under the château. At the back of the château, we walked to the Clos de Londres, a walled vineyard less than an area of 0.5h, protected by the surrounding walls and woods. The famous windmill was virtually next door. The view was glorious.



Our tasting took us from a basic AOC Moulin-a-Vent through three wines from specific lieux-dits: Les Verillats, Champ de Cour, La Rochelle, all from recent vintages and each showing great character and ageing potential. We finished with the Clos de Londres 2015, drinking bottle number 851 out of 1,600 made!

After a stunning lunch at the Auberge du Cep, we took a short drive to **Château de Poncié**, which has over a thousand years of history—the owner of Villa Ponciago, as it was known in the 10th Century, donated his vineyard to the Abbey of Cluny (in the hope of eternal salvation), and wine has been made there ever since. They have 32ha of organically grown vines interspersed among 22ha of woods and other plantings to provide biodiversity.

In the winery, we tasted their wines: contrasting vintages of Beaujolais Villages Blanc, a youthful Beaujolais Villages red, and a progression of Gamays culminating with their two lieu-dit wines. Les Hauts de Py, 55 year old vines on a high south facing slope, was lighter and more floral, while Les Moriers, with 80 year old vines on a north facing slope, was more structured. The contrast between the 2018 and the 2016 vintages showed how beautifully Fleurie can age.



Chalonnais and the Cote d'Or

On the last of the three tasting days, we visited the exquisitely pretty **Château de Santenay**, crossing what had been the moat of the original 'camp' used as a refuge by locals during marauding raids prior to the Middle Ages.

The current château dates from the 14th and 16th centuries and its most important owner from a wine perspective was the founder of the Duchy of Burgundy—Philippe le Hardi. The last son of King John II of France, in 1395 he decreed that no Gamay was to be grown in his duchy, the very first rule that would lead to the system of French appellations, with the result that Gamay to this day can be found in many parts of Burgundy itself. The winery was recently re-named Château Philippe le Hardi and has 98ha of vineyards in Mercurey, Côtes de Beaune and Côtes de Nuits, along with a pretty phenomenal reputation for quality.

After another very pleasant lunch, we visited **André Delorme** in Rully in the Côte Chalonnais. We tasted two Crémants and a delicious Bouzeron 2019, which proved it is a mistake to pass over this appellation, which can only use the Aligoté grape, often considered inferior to Chardonnay. The whites from Givry and Montagny and reds from Mercurey and Rully gave us a complete tour of the Chalonnais appellations and were a great finale to our programme of visits.

Our final night's dinner was at the Poisson d'Or restaurant on the River Saône where we sat outside enjoying cooling breezes from the river. A remarkable tour which changed my opinion of wines from this region.

I am looking forward to my third and final tour for this year in September, when we visit the Douro valley in Portugal.

TALES FROM ENGLISH HISTORY, VOLUME 2–THE SECOND MILLENNIUM (DON OSBORNE)

This is a book by one of our Research Network members which we think many of you will enjoy. The content for this article was supplied by Peter Bartram.

Well-researched and well-written, these tales from history will give interest and pleasure to readers who are attracted to the idea of history, but do not want to get involved with academic study. This Volume 2 has 17 human stories drawn from the 11th to the 19th Centuries.

About the author:

Don Osborne had a long and successful career in market research between 1957 and 2001, starting as a management trainee in ICI and working at senior levels in BMRB, Research Services and RSGB. He ran his own boutique research company for 27 years and was a UK pioneer in qualitative research. He was also a founder-member of AQR, later AQR.



Looking back on his career, Don Osborne says he is “a relic from the days when researchers were regarded as the intellectuals of the business community who related to senior management of client organisations on marketing policy as well as data collection”.

One of Don’s early achievements was to write the brief for ICI’s advertising agency from which the Dulux dog character emerged and is still with us 60 years later.

He later worked in the specialist areas of media and international research, and later ran the National Readership Survey for 6 years, firstly at BMRB and then at Research Services after a stint as deputy head of the Survey Research Centre at the LSE, where he had graduated.

At BMRB, he specialised in readership surveys of all kinds, especially for local and regional newspapers where JICREG technical standards were required. Then at AGB, he was the international research director for RSGB, their ad hoc quantitative research division. He went to Tokyo to secure a contract with Dentsu, the largest Japanese advertising agency, to conduct research in Europe for their clients. He also toured Europe to explore radio audience research approaches and wrote the tender which secured the contract to conduct national radio audience research in the UK.

By the time he was 40, Don was ready to start his own boutique research company with three researchers in the office. Don Osborne Research, later Osborne Market Intelligence, worked for clients such as American Express and management consultancies such as Peat Marwick. He also enjoyed steady demand for small scale qualitative research, usually for advertising and product development projects.

As previously mentioned, he was a founder and committee member of AQR, later QRA and his main USP in qualitative research was that he conducted all focus groups and some in-depth interviews himself.

Don’s new career as a non-fiction author:

After retiring from market research, Don combined more family time with his intellectual interests in reading and writing non-fiction. He is most proud of writing *Feminalia: A Young Man’s Guide to Womankind*. This is an exploration of the physical, psychological and social aspects of sex and gender.

Now, Don is focusing on a series of stories called *Tales from English History* which are concise stories about historical characters. His aim is not to take strong ideological stances, but to give genuine historical interest and enjoyment.

Although a life-long student of history, Don insists he is a storyteller, not a historian. His works are therefore literature, to be read for pleasure. He says “History has the best stories. You couldn’t make them up.” The focus on English history is because it is what he knows best. He writes in plain English about our ancestors and predecessors, without modern ideological slants. He consciously writes women back into history and gives the inquiring reader little windows into the past. For example, the Tudor period is presented from the point of view of two women: Elizabeth 1 and Bess of Hardwick.

Volume 1 in this two-volume *Tales from English History* series was published earlier. Called *The Origins of a Kingdom*, its 12 stories cover the history of Britain from the Roman Conquest to the Norman Conquest, one thousand tumultuous years. As mentioned in the title of this article, Volume 2 is *The Second Millennium*. Both books are available in paperback and Kindle editions. Do try them for an accessible approach to our country’s history...

THE NEXT THEATRICAL PROJECT FOR DANNY WAIN

In the February 2022 newsletter, we included a synopsis of Danny Wain's NED Talk from November 2021 on his involvement with amateur theatre. In the synopsis, Danny flagged up his intention to pursue a new performance this year on the poet Philip Larkin. To demonstrate Danny's unorthodox and impressive ability to juggle his own research consultancy business with his involvement in 'amdram' as an actor, writer and director, we now have further news of this new scheduled theatre production.

Danny Wain writes: It seems a while since my Research Network NED Talk, but I thought on the back of that, perhaps Network members may be interested to hear of my next big theatrical effort. After a couple of toes dipped in the water (with 'The Dresser' in 2019 and 'Maybe It's Because' last year), I'm finally leaping back into theatre production with both feet! This year will see the first full-scale Strut & Fret production since 1999: 'Larkin With Women', which will play at The Old Red Lion Theatre, Islington from 31st August to 17th September. As well as producing, I'm playing Philip Larkin himself.

I appeared in the show at Richmond Shakespeare Society in 2018 and have always wanted to revisit it. As 2022 is Larkin's centenary, it seemed the ideal time. Hopefully, we can ride the tide of whatever press and media interest there may be in Philip Larkin this year. He's certainly a figure that increasingly divides opinion! The play focuses on the last thirty years of his life, during which he was the University Librarian at Hull, and particularly on his relationships and often simultaneous affairs with three very different women. One of them is played this time by my real-life partner Mia.

It's a lovely play, very funny but also poignant, and a cracking part for me. I never leave the stage—what's not to like?! Also as producer, I'm blatantly hoping to get as many bums on seats as possible, of course.

So if you are able to see it, (there are matinees), that would be really lovely. You can book tickets at www.oldredliontheatre.co.uk. The flyer is also shown here for more details.

LARKIN

With Women

BY BEN BROWN

31 August to
17 September 2022

Book tickets @
oldredliontheatre.co.uk

The Old Red Lion Theatre
418 St John Street, EC1V 4NJ
Nearest tube: Angel



*"My success has been built on failure.
It's only as a failure that I've been a success"*

Meet Philip Larkin. Arguably, Britain's greatest poet of the 20th century. Certainly, a highly complex and controversial figure. In this, his centenary year, Larkin divides opinion more than ever. A literary lion to some, an unforgivable bigot to others. Can you loathe the man and admire his work? Somehow, three strong, intelligent, independent women seemed to love both.



'Larkin with Women', Ben Brown's award-winning play, is a provocative, funny and moving expose of the last thirty years of Larkin's life - dominated by his relationships, and often simultaneous affairs, with a trio of very different women. The Bard of Humberside was also a most unlikely Don Juan in Hull...

This powerhouse production from five-star company Strut & Fret sits at the heart of the official 'Larkin100' programme. Commemorating his centenary, it's the perfect opportunity to re-evaluate the enigma of Philip Larkin - as writer, lover and human being.

with Lynne Harrison, Annabel Miller, Mia Skytte & Daniel Wain

Directors John Gilbert & Jenny Hobson • Designer Junis Olmscheid
Lighting Richard Evans • Sound Harry Jacobs • Producer Daniel Wain

31st August to 17th September 2022
Performances Tuesday to Saturday at 7.30pm
Wednesday and Saturday matinees at 2.30pm
Tickets £19.50 / £16.50 concessions
(Reduced price previews on Wednesday 31st August & Thursday 1st September: £16.50 / £15.00)
Book online at: oldredliontheatre.co.uk

Twitter: @ORLTheatre Facebook: facebook.com/larkinwithwomen Instagram: @strut_and_fret

With thanks to Marc Brenner, Michelle Hood & Lye Randall. Graphic design: Charlotte Salaman.
Photographs of Philip Larkin kindly provided by Hull University Archives (from the U PHO collection).



STEERING GROUP

The Research Network is directed by a Steering Group consisting at present of Adam Phillips (Chairman), Jane A'Court (Membership), Jane Bain (Website Editor and Events Co-organiser), Jane Gwilliam (Events Co-organiser), Linda Henshall (External Liaison), Nick Tanner (Website News Editor), Gill Wareing (Secretary-Treasurer), Frank Winter (Oral History and Data Protection) and Graham Woodham (Newsletter editor). Their names, addresses, phone and email details are in the Research Network Membership Directory. Please feel free to contact any member of the Steering Group on matters relevant to the areas they cover.