

THE RESEARCH NETWORK NEWSLETTER

Editors Phyllis Vangelder and Tom Punt

Winter 2004

THE WAY WE ARE NOW

Since its establishment in 2002 the Research Network has grown from strength to strength and at the end of 2003 we had 190 members. The indications are that the majority of you have re-signed for 2004 and we welcome you once again. If for any reason you have not returned your membership form we would be most grateful if you would do so, with the contribution you wish to make.

During our first full year we held two very successful lunches at the Reform Club (April) and the Carlton Club (October) and also our first AGM where there were around 30 members present who gave your Steering Group valuable indications of the way in which you would like to see the Research Network develop. Remarks made by

members on re-signing for 2004 indicate that we are enjoying the experience of keeping in touch.

Our accumulated experience in the industry is of great value to the research world and it is important to make our voice heard. If you are still a voting member of the MRS be sure to use your vote for the Council elections; ballot papers must be with the Society by 5 p.m. on Feb 23.

Please continue to give us your feedback, including anything you would like to see changed. Contact Gill Wareing the Secretary/Treasurer at the address on Page 2 of this Newsletter or email her at gwareing@lineone.net. We like to keep members' CVs so if you have not supplied one you may like to do so.

THE THIRD RESEARCH NETWORK LUNCH AT THE CARLTON CLUB OCTOBER 2003

Once again the Research Network was privileged to meet in a stylish venue. Its third lunch was held on 16 October at the Carlton Club in St James's Street, thanks to our host, Joyce Fuller, an ex-BMRB interviewer and a member of the Club. To mark the 70th anniversary of the founding of BMRB a number of ex-employees of the company generously donated funds so that the cost could be kept to £15 a head. We are very grateful to them for their contributions.

About 100 researchers attended the lunch. For some, it was quite a surreal experience, sitting in rows, school-style, beneath the portraits of ex-Prime Ministers belonging to the Conservative Party. However, they were by no means intimidated by the august surroundings, and as is now becoming the norm at Network gatherings, took great pleasure in renewing acquaintances with friends and

colleagues. Table-hopping was a bit difficult, but this did not deter noisy greetings and exchanges of telephone numbers and email addresses.

Among the attendees were several ex-Chairmen of The Market Research Society and former CEOs of leading market research companies. We were very pleased to welcome David Barr, Director General, and Jennie Beck, Chairman of the Market Research Society, as our guests.

We may not always meet in such imposing venues. In fact the spring lunch has been arranged in a modern City restaurant (see page 2 for details), although in October, thanks to Lord McIntosh (aka Andrew McIntosh), we hope to meet in the House of Lords. Wherever we meet, however, there is a warm, convivial atmosphere, pointing to the fact that the Research Network has touched a nerve.



Left to right.
1. Reception
2. Joyce Fuller with David Barr
3. John Davis/Frank Macey/ Peter Southgate

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*AS WE GO TO PRESS IT IS WITH SADNESS THAT WE LEARN OF THE DEATH OF DR JOHN TREASURE. OUR TRIBUTE IS ON P.8

THE FIRST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE RESEARCH NETWORK: 2 DECEMBER 2003.

Peter Bartram, Chairman opened the meeting by reporting on its activities during its first successful year.

He stated that in principle the original objectives are still valid but that these should be amended to ensure that membership is not confined to present or past members of the Market Research Society but open also to all who have had a strong connection with the industry.

Commenting on the role of the MRBA in setting up the Network and its continued support, he was pleased to report it has not been necessary for the Network to take up funds allocated to it by the MRBA.

Following this review several decisions were agreed about the structure and organisation of the Network.

- **Annual subscriptions.** Most members have paid the £25 membership subscription for 2003, but a few have paid a lesser sum. The principle has been not to deter individuals who cannot afford to pay. It was agreed that the membership subscription should remain at £25. Following renewal notices in January, a membership directory with full contact details will be sent only to members who have renewed their membership.
- **Lunch meetings.** The policy to date has been to charge members a maximum of £15 per head to attend the lunches. This has been possible due to generous sponsorship of the last two lunches by Geoffrey Roughton and BMRB ex-employees. It was generally considered that those who were unable to attend the lunches should not have to subsidise those who did and that sponsorship should not be taken for granted. It was agreed that the 2004 spring lunch should be less grand, taking the form of a buffet, with cash bar. The next autumn lunch will be at the House of Lords. Following a vote, it was agreed that the charge for lunches in 2004 may be raised to £20 where necessary.
- **Regulatory requirements.** In view of the fact that the Network holds data information on its members, it was agreed that it was prudent to register under the Data Protection Act.
- **Targeting and eligibility for membership.** It was agreed that membership should be open to those who have worked, or are currently working in the market research industry, with no age barrier being set. Further broad scale mailings are not envisaged as new members are now joining the Network as a result of word-of-mouth communication. Members were asked to refer to the Network anyone who they feel would benefit from membership.
- **Communication channels.** It was agreed that the current method of communication, both by email and post should continue. No action will be taken in developing a website for the time being.
- **Newsletter.** There was unanimous agreement that the Newsletter should continue in its present format.

At the close of the meeting Frank Winter proposed a vote of thanks to Peter Bartram for initiating the Network and for his Chairmanship. He in turn wished to place on record his grateful thanks for the support of the Steering Group in making the Network the success it has become.

NEXT LUNCH MEETING 22 APRIL 2004 AT SINGAPURA LIMEBURNER LANE EC4

Our next lunch meeting will be at the Singapura Restaurant 1-2 Limeburner Lane EC4. There will be a three-course buffet meal of Thai-style food and the cost will be £20 to include pre-lunch drinks and table-wine, and thereafter a cash bar. Some 'English' and vegetarian options will be available, but note that the cuisine is generic S.E. Asian and not specifically Thai.

This City venue is very stylish and will have a somewhat different 'feel' from our last two lunches at West-End clubs but we guarantee it will be equally enjoyable and provide a spacious room in which to mix.

The restaurant is at the first left turning up Ludgate Hill from Ludgate Circus, roughly opposite the City Thameslink Station, and the nearest Underground stations are Blackfriars and St Paul's. Early booking



is essential since numbers are limited to around 130. To book please send your cheque for £20, payable to The Research Network, to Gill Wareing, 6 Walkfield Drive, Epsom Downs, Surrey KT18 5UF. Members will have priority but may, on this occasion, bring a potential member as a guest at a cost of £30 payable by the member. If you would prefer a wholly vegetarian menu or have any other special dietary requirements please mention this when you book.

THE WAY WE WERE

30 Years Ago (Newsletters of 1974)

- ❑ John Treasure succeeded Sir Claus Moser as MRS President; Gerald Goodhardt was MRS Chairman
- ❑ The first MRS Diploma Awards were made to 25 successful candidates (*none* of whom are recognisable as leaders of the research industry in 2004?).
- ❑ Jim Rothman joined Stephan Buck as co-editor of the Journal (shouldn't this long-running partnership be given an anniversary celebration?)
- ❑ Following the 1979 General Election, John Barter offered to discuss the shortcomings of the polls with Robert Fletcher 'over a pint'. Did it ever happen?
- ❑ An obituary for Dick Desbrow, one of the founder members of the Society whose 'most significant contribution was in the technical and research area of media selection'
- ❑ There was a big row about the reliability of qualitative research, following a critical contribution to the Journal of the Market Research Society by John P May of Bristol Polytechnic. Angry letters from John Goodyear, Judie Lannon and others were countered by Roger Gane's assertion that the R&D Committee should issue a statement "defining the purpose of qualitative research and indicating the (rare) occasions on which it can be used without subsequent quantification." (Roger: Are you still saying that?)
- ❑ Henry Durant, interviewed by Brian Chappell, reminisced about the Second World War, "a very exciting time to be doing market research." "The Gallup Poll never missed a week," he said, and revealed that "Lord Haw-Haw was most effective when he told truths which had not been released by the Government". Meanwhile, Mark Abrams was doing content analysis on Goebbels' propaganda. Desk research is not like that any more.

25 Years Ago (Newsletters of 1979)

- ❑ Harold Wilson was President of the Society and Eileen Cole its Chairman; 720 delegates attended the Annual Conference
- ❑ On 27th April, the first (and only?) re-union meeting of ex-Chairmen of the Society was held at Rules Restaurant with 21 out of the possible 27 attending. The MRS Council apparently felt they saw little of them after they had stepped down and it was decided to remedy that
- ❑ Among the obituaries in the first half of 1979 were those for Joan MacFarlane Smith, Dick Gapper, and Paul Berent.
- ❑ And the MRBA, just over a year old, handled its first case, making an award of £300

LIFE AFTER MARKET RESEARCH

1. HERE AND THERE – by Phil Barnard

The working world divides into retirers and non-retirers. Many friends and ex-colleagues, especially the Americans, fall into the latter group, seemingly preferring to work on indefinitely. But ...

Actuarially, a British male retiring at 57 has only about one-quarter of his lifespan remaining to do what he really, really wants.

Houses, Gardens and Trains and Boats.

So, what is that? My wife, Jeannie, and I share a love of exploring country houses and gardens, belonging to a small group of like-minded people who also attend lectures that complement the visits. Although other parts of Europe have featured, this primarily provides a wonderful way to learn about our own country.

We are continuing our love affair with exotic/luxury train journeys, actually discovering some newcomers to our Berkshire hamlet whilst on the Eastern & Orient Express in Malaysia! However, mode promiscuity has reared its head and the trains in my life have been joined by the two small ships of Hebridean Cruises, which carry a maximum of forty and seventy guests respectively for what is essentially a floating house party visiting ports and islands other ships cannot reach.

Friends of Culture

Having more discretionary time also permits greater exploitation of our 'Friends of ...' memberships of art and theatre societies, especially Shakespeare's Globe. Through the good offices of Philip Mitchell, another Research Networker, we have also joined a private cinema club at Pinewood Studios and are watching films again after a break of several decades.

What has particularly surprised me is the plethora of small-scale exhibitions of painting/sculpture dotted around the countryside, typically in farm buildings, and the wonderful chamber opera companies that perform in beautiful country house surroundings to audiences of about eighty.

Our Countryside

Although still enjoying what London has to offer, the lure of the countryside is strong and led us to buy a second home on Exmoor four years ago. The converted cider house has been ideal but is no longer large enough for grandchildren-enhanced family gatherings. So, enter our 800lb gorilla of a farmhouse and courtyard of barns and other buildings. This is very much at the upper end of insane restoration projects but will eventually be glorious if we don't run out of time, money or (virtually an oxymoron) willing and capable Exmoor builders.

The possibility of having over-embraced the countryside was borne in on me as I sat reading 'Bat News' (the organ of the Bat Conservation Trust) having just returned from the National Festival of Ponds & Lakes held near Salisbury. The word 'sad' momentarily crossed my mind before we headed down to Somerset for a few more days of village fairs, pub food & drink, DEFRA negotiations and glorious drizzle.

Does exercise get a look in? It does if you count skiing, short bursts of 'aggressive' gardening and steering a quad bike. One of the major plus points about the Exmoor ruin is that it lacks a pool, although the sheer boredom of swimming has already led to a few spins on a mountain bike; at least the view changes.

Philosophy

I believe it was Belloc who said, "There's nothing worth the wear of winning/But laughter and the love of friends". Retirement heightens the value of friendship and provides more time to enjoy it. It is also the time for some re-living of the fun of the past as I do regularly in meeting old pals from school, university and business, either informally or through reunions. The success of The Research Network suggests I'm not alone in appreciating this. Where does all this leave my modest ambition to read all those books with a glass or two of whisky to hand? Not entirely in tatters but, if I may be permitted a word of advice, there's no such thing as a simple life but you can make it easier by not trying to build a ha-ha in a National park.

2. THE RETURN OF THE JOBBING GARDENER – by John Bound

Why A Jobbing Gardener?

Quite a few years ago at a Conference I described myself as doing odd consultancy jobs and so being a Jobbing Gardener. In the Conference write-up I found myself described as retired with time for gardening. I then for a time contributed a column to the MRS Newsletter as it was then under some such title as 'Thoughts of Jobbing Gardener'.

Still Gardening

Rather to my surprise, I find myself still doing some work. When I was paid by the University of Strathclyde to go away quite a few years ago – I am reluctant nowadays to go into exact dates – I styled myself a consultant, and also started doing some work for Andrew Ehrenberg who was then at the London Business School as a Research Professor. Andrew undertook my education, and I have been doing odd jobs for him ever since. This has brought me into contact with academic marketing researchers in Australia and New Zealand where Andrews's ideas have had great impact.

Antipodean Gardening

Last year's Australia and New Zealand Marketing Academy Conference was entitled "A Celebration of the Work of Ehrenberg and Bass", Frank Bass being an American in a similar field who has also had much influence. In Britain, Andrew has just been elected an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Statistical Society, which is some recognition of his fundamental work.

Remarkably, when I went to an Australia and New Zealand Marketing Academy Conference held on the Gold Coast of Queensland, an agreeable experience I may say, I looked round and realised that I knew more people there than I had known when I attended the last Market Research Society Conference held in Brighton. The Research Network is of course quite different, which is a pleasure.

Mid-Life In Academia

Of course I was surprised to find myself an academic in middle life. I worked for many years for what I shall discreetly refer to as an international fmcg company until I found my career moving sideways. As it says in the Book of Exodus, "There arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph". I felt that rather like Pharaoh they subsequently rather lost their way without me, but I was fortunate to find myself working in the Business School at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow.

I would advise any marketing researcher going into academic life to stick out for a Chair, as a number have proved can be done. This means you do not actually have to run courses. Running courses involves not only teaching but tedious things like marking papers. Teaching is all very well, but is a tie – like the stage, you have to be there on the night. Professors do only interesting things – one-off lectures, writing papers, attending conferences. They do though have to go to lots of meetings. I also recommend a doctorate. Not having one, I was always at the back of any official procession, along with the Chaplain.

I found my limited knowledge of quantitative techniques useful – anything mathematical attracted only the cleverer students. I spent some moderately useful years there. Though when I come to think about it, few of my students went into marketing research. At that time there was not much of it based in Scotland anyway. Marketing research was a compulsory subject in the Business Degree at Strathclyde, as was Statistics the first year, but proved of little help in teaching research. Hands up those who have ever had any need to quote the Central Limit Theorem.

And Currently in the (British) Commonwealth.

To return to today, it is again remarkable that nowadays places with relatively small populations, like British Columbia, or indeed the whole of Canada, can support a marketing research industry. Telephone interviewing and qualitative research probably account for some of it. New Zealand with two and half million people also supports its own profession, and although Australia has a bigger population, the individual States, widely separated as they are, are in many ways separate and small markets. The sample sizes required remain much the same whatever the size of the human population, but there is, I suspect, a law by which the budget in any market may sustain a useful sample size. It is just that the number of breakdowns thought essential decreases so that each is still based on some adequate minimum sample size, and the total budget restriction is met.

Research in Canada is interesting. When I went to Canada a couple of years ago I attended the Professional Market Research Society Conference in Toronto, and found myself being entertained at an opening party by Graham Peters and his wife – Graham was the Chairman. I had breakfast with Ivor McGloughlin, and at the Dinner sat next to Donald Monk, whose death was sadly recorded only a few months later. British researchers have had some influence in Canada. Norman Mould, whom some may remember, was running a research company a year or two ago.

Lessons

I have learnt a lot about research since I gave up doing it. I have a little presentation, which I will do now to academic institutions, and indeed, to anybody who will pay a modest fee, entitled "How I wasted My Employer's Money on Marketing Research". It was I hasten to add, the very best research, like the best butter, which the March Hare used on the Mad Hatter's watch with unsatisfactory results.

I should at this point say something serious about research, and it is about Andrew Ehrenberg. Andrew wrote in the end pages of his book 'Repeat Buying' the following lapidary summary:

Of the thousand and one variables which might affect buying behaviour, it is found that nine hundred and ninety nine usually do not matter. Many aspects of buyer behaviour can be predicted simply from the penetrations and the average purchase frequency of the item, and even these two variables are interrelated.

I wish I had known that when I was doing research.

ANCIENT WISDOM

Getting old will be more fun than most of us think
Headline in The Times

MADELEINES AND METHODOLOGIES – THE ST. JAMES MODEL

Eric Willson reminisces about the beginnings of the St James Model. This model, in very brief summary, was used by branded goods researchers to assess the key attributes on which particular brands competed and to determine what gaps existed for particular brands and how likelihood of purchasing would change if those gaps could be reduced or eliminated.

Expressed technically, the St. James Model was based on bi-polar semantic differentials, usually measured as 5-point or 7-point responses. The scales were often developed using the Kelly-triadic grid method described in a previous Research Network commentary. The St. James model relied on the assumption that respondents could evaluate a set of branded, competing products on these scales. The number of scales varied according to the complexity of the market and the stage of refinement of the battery, but 15-30 scales were not unusual.

What made the St. James Model unique and then contentious, was the use of the concept of the ideal product. In addition to rating actual brands, respondents were also expected to rate their 'ideal' brand on the same dimensions, without omission. We loved his less technical, and more personal, memories.

Readers who wish to have a longer technical description can be sent one, prepared by Eric.

Eric writes: When Phyllis asked me if I would pen a few words on the St. James Model, I thought it would be a simple labour of love, recalling my early experiences of modelling consumer behaviour in market research. I soon discovered how much I had forgotten and how little material was easily accessible to check my failing memory. Please excuse what may seem a rambling sequence of apocryphal stories, connected by tenuous links.

The Begetter – Alan and His World.

Alan Hendrickson was the author of the St. James Model and the first main paper, entitled 'Choice Behaviour and Advertising' was read at the Admap World Advertising Workshop, Southampton, October 1967, although the model was operational before that. If you have an original print of this paper, it could already be a collector's item.

I cannot tell the story of St. James without talking about its author, and I make no excuse for doing so. I am eternally grateful to Alan for introducing me to the delights of good food, fine wine, fast cars, good skiing, clear thinking, hard working and lots of fun.

Alan was an American psychologist, who settled in London with his wife Elaine and they both had strong connections with the Institute of Psychiatry. He worked at AAL (Advertising Assessment Ltd) alongside Brian O'Malley, Alan Frost and Malcolm Brighton. After some tricky negotiations with AGB, which bought AAL, he went on to found CRC (Cybernetics Research Consultants), which was the birthplace of data analysis in the UK. During his reign there, he chose well and a succession of data analysis 'gurus' worked with him, including Jim Inglis (who probably remembers more about St. James than me), Barry Quirke, Richard Kottler, Peter Finer, Terry Barnett, John Williamson, Mark Katz and Ed Ross. All of them went on to become key figures in our business. He left to concentrate on his theory of how the brain functions and to set up PTT (Pulse Train Technology), still a major supplier of software to the MR industry and Demotab, its DP bureau.

If the stories are to be believed, Alan conceived the model whilst occupying premises overlooking St. James Park, hence the name, which Woolf Olins could never better. He had great success with the model and it soon became the leading product in its field. It was pre-eminent until the mid-70s by which time it had run its course, despite a feeble attempt by me to revitalise it with a 'line-extension' paper to the MRS Conference, in 1972. Alan kindly volunteered to co-author that paper with me, to guarantee publication. He certainly made me squirm when he stood up to introduce the paper by saying, "Eric actually wrote this paper, so I will leave him to deliver it" and immediately sat down, without any

prior warning to me. This was the first official MRS paper for St. James and it came under heavy fire from the anti-factor analysis brigade headed by the big guns of Andrew Ehrenberg and friends. I had not anticipated this assault and was only rescued by a stout defence of factor analysis in psychology from the floor (the name eludes me now).

Clients

Weetabix was the greatest early success for St. James and a succession of leading brands, mainly from Unilever were then subjected to the model, including advertising testing. There were hundreds of models run, even more if you count the 'mini-models' which were devised to measure importance dimensions (key drivers as we came to know them) within clusters (segmentation).

All this was achieved on a desk-sized IBM 1130, 16-bit, 32k memory computer which read 80-column punched cards (from Bert Prosser) and spewed out reams of continuous fan-fold computer stationery in attractive shades of green and white. The main data disks held something around 250,000 characters of information in a 2-foot diameter, 3-inch deep plastic case, of which we had dozens racked from ceiling to floor in all corners of the office. In the early days, CRC even shared a computer with Geoffrey Roughton's MAS in Victory House, 99 Regent Street. The computer operators had to work all night, stealing morsels of Indian food, which were left to stay hot on radiators in the stairwell shared with Veeraswamy's famous Indian restaurant.

The agency executives (particularly from RBL, now RI) who commissioned St. James Models are a star-studded reminder of the leading thinkers in the 60s and 70s who went on to become captains of our industry. I hope those omitted will forgive my memory, but the following names spring to mind:

David Beazley, Jim King, Jon Wilkinson, Tony Lunn, Max Blackston, Adam Philips, Eileen Cole, Phil Barnard, Sally Baldwin, Bill Pegram, Geoffrey Roughton, Jenny Bowen, Paddy Standen, Dick Westwood, Gillian Comins, Barbara Martin, Alan Leighton, Maureen Johnson, Simon Godfrey, Doug Johnson and a cast of thousands.

Competition and Closure

Imitations soon sprang up and when Unilever Computer Services (UCS) released their 'CRIMP' model (Customer Report on IMPortance), Alan got very upset at what he saw as commercial piracy and wrote (without my knowledge) a stiff letter to Eileen Cole (then head at RI) demanding satisfaction. Unfortunately for me, I chose the same day to fill up Alan's Rover 3500 with cases of

Chianti Straccali, which I was distributing as Christmas bounty to RI execs in New Fetter Lane. Luckily for me, I was intercepted by a friendly group head, who saved my bacon by heading me off before I marched into Eileen's office bearing unwanted gifts.

Despite Alan's disillusionment, CRC promptly recruited Brian (Brain) Skinner and Gabriel (Gabby) Goldstein from UCS to spearhead CRC's latest venture into time-sharing computer systems, at which they proved to be masters. My close colleagues are indebted to Brian for devising what became known as the Brian Skinner technique for debugging programming problems. Told briefly, Brian quickly noticed that colleagues who sought his aid often solved their own problems just after they had described all the circumstances clearly and carefully to him. He soon replaced

his real self with a mounted photograph of himself under which was written a message to the effect ... "come in, sit down, have a cup of tea, now slowly describe your problem to me...". We still use this infallible method today and have even managed to dispense with the photograph.

Alan sold the majority interest in CRC, firstly to 3i venture capitalists, who then sold out to GSi, a French conglomerate. Alan soon found he preferred to pursue his other interests elsewhere, CRC began to break up and most of the key directors went their various ways.

THE GROWSER

This series provides an opportunity for you to write, anonymously if you wish, about anything, vaguely connected with our collective experience perhaps, about which you have strong feelings. Mr Growser writes as follows.

Hocus-Focus "It ought not to be allowed"

Listening we are given to understand, is today's watchword for politicians. In much political qualitative research there is, from what one gathers, at least from accounts of it on television, precious little listening. We used to call what are now called 'focus groups' group discussions. Many of these political focus groups seem to use a plethora of projective techniques and direct questions answered individually by separate members of the group and there is little natural discussion. By stifling discussion I think we may be losing something important.

When Charles Madge and Tom Harrison founded the original Mass Observation in 1937 their objective was to apply anthropological techniques to the British population by noting what people said to each other and how they behaved in natural situations. To this end MO set up a panel of 'observers' who kept diaries in which they noted down what they had overheard and seen, mainly in public places such as, in the social context of the time, cinema or bus queues, or, when the war started, queuing for rations. Much use was made of these techniques in work for the Ministry of Information on morale during the war years. By modern standards the reportage seems a little naïve and subjective but it was based on the words and actions observed in real-life situations. Reports were richly illustrated with verbatim material. For instance in May 1940 when French resistance to the German invasion was crumbling rapidly one such 'overheard' was "What's the use of France? Or if they have an army what do they do with it?"

When I was taught how to conduct group discussions in the early 1950s some of the same principles were applied by, so far as possible, creating a situation where respondents talked to each other, not to the group moderator, about things which interested them and in the order they decided. Of course the job of the moderator was to steer the discussion into areas on the 'topic list' but by a light touch on the wheel rather than swerving sharply. Ostensibly irrelevant remarks were ignored so far as possible and discussion often allowed to enter side-alleys. For instance I remember doing a group on the taste and consistency of sausages, then not enjoying a very good name after wartime meat rationing. The discussion digressed when people wanted to talk about other foodstuffs of their youth such as saveloys, pie-and-mash and so on... This seemed to me interesting since it was then easy to get them to talk about their sausage-eating experiences before the war and to create an atmosphere that my client was keen to evoke in promotion and advertising.

A long way from sausages, and to come back to my main point it seems to me that many focus groups used in political research are far too focused on a set of narrow 'issues' and not concerned enough with people's experience of everyday life as they live it and describe it. Anecdotal evidence in people's own words, on for instance waiting times in A and E departments, finding a suitable local school for one's children or discovering a house rubbished by burglars, seems not to be sought. Instead individual reactions are sought to current policies or elicited asking what car or dog political leaders remind people of -- what might be called the Clarkson-Harris index. What people experience or aspire to in their lives and in the society in which they live may be more relevant. Besides I may rather like poodles or indeed rottweilers or think the Skoda not a bad car.

Political research, it seems to me is now so centred on opinion polling and its qualitative equivalent the 'focus group' that it has forgotten to listen to what people are saying in the street or in the pub. Few real attempts, with some exceptions, seem to be made to try to recreate these situations in group discussions and thereby examine the grassroots directly. This is not an argument for populism or for naïve analysis. We have come a long way from the 1950s and have plenty of techniques for analysing the semiotics of group material.

So I say to Mr Blair and Mr Howard if you really want answers, commission some discussions which are *not* too 'focused'

ANCIENT WISDOM

For a fool, old age is winter. For a wise man, it is a time of harvest
Jewish proverb

We grow neither better nor worse as we get old, but more like ourselves
May Lamberton Becker

THE MARKET RESEARCH BENEVOLENT FUND

The MRBA was set up in 1977 to help people working, or who have worked, in research and their dependents if at any time they needed support. During these 27 years it has quietly and unobtrusively assisted hundreds of people either with a temporary emergency or, in other cases, over a period of years.

The Research Network was launched under MRBA auspices and we hope that it can act as a conduit for people who may need its support. If you know anyone in the research community who needs help or support please contact Gill Wareing in confidence on 01737 379261.

THE JEREMY WYNDHAM FOUNDATION

In our Summer edition we published a tribute to Dr Wyndham whose untimely death was announced in May 2003. Many friends, colleagues and business associates expressed a desire to contribute to a lasting memorial to his life. A memorial fund is now in place in the Junior School of Northwood College, the school attended by Jeremy's two daughters. Donations to this Fund will be used for a special initiative in maths or science, reflecting Jeremy's great interest in these areas. For instance two tickets to the Royal Institution Christmas lectures will be awarded annually and workshops involving outside speakers will be sponsored.

If you would like to contribute to this Fund please make donations payable to Northwood College accompanied by a Gift Aid form if applicable. A form, or more details, can be obtained from Brigid Baker on 07788 429484. Donations directly to The Bursar, Northwood College, Maxwell Rd, Northwood Middlesex HA6 2YE please, rather than to the Research Network.

THE RESEARCH NETWORK is organised by a Steering Group. Its members and their special responsibilities are: Johan Aucamp (Industry Liaison), Peter Bartram (Chairman), George Brzezinski (New Membership Solicitation), Jane Gwilliam (Events Co-ordinator), Linda Henshall (MRS Liaison. Membership contact) , Tom Punt, Phyllis Vangelder (Joint Editors Newsletter) and Gill Wareing (Hon. Secretary/Treasurer) . During 2003 we had the assistance of Steve Ellis and Pam Moy who, because of other pressures, have now resigned from the Committee. We thank them most sincerely for their efforts. We are very pleased to welcome Frank Winter to the Steering Group who is handling our Data Protection registration.

We are very pleased with the warm reception that you have given both to the Research Network and to this Newsletter. Below are a few of the good things which have been said recently when members have signed for or renewed membership.

"Good to know you care"

"This sounds very interesting and useful to many involved in market research, even if not members of The Market Research Society"

"Great idea –there are so many people I fondly remember but whose paths and mine have not crossed recently"

"This is a splendid initiative –I really enjoyed the inaugural meeting and it was great to see you again, Gill"

"The idea of mutual support in the widest sense is excellent and I would welcome occasional social events"

and finally, surely a compliment

" I feel I am too young for this club!"

We are always interested to hear your views of the Research Network and welcome your comments and criticisms at any time

Not forgotten

We mourn the recent passing of the following people who contributed so much to the market research industry.

Dr John Treasure advertising and market research guru, died in 9 February 2004 aged 79. His funeral was held on 13 February and (yet to be confirmed) a memorial service is planned for 25 March at St. Bride's Fleet Street.

During the '60s, '70s and '80s he held numerous high-level positions: as Chairman of J Walter Thompson, Vice-Chairman of Saatchi and Saatchi, Dean of The City University Business School and non-Executive Chairman of Taylor Nelson AGB (now TNS).

In the '70s he was, inter alia, a President of The Market Research Society and of the IPA and in 2000 he was elected Master of the prestigious Worshipful Company of Marketors. He was also a President of the National Advertising Benevolent Association (NABS), Chairman of the History of Advertising Trust and a Director of Rowntree-Mackintosh for 14 years.

John Treasure was born in 1924 and after school and university in Cardiff he went to Cambridge to obtain a PHD in Economics with a groundbreaking thesis 'Three myths about British exports'.

He joined BMRB in 1952, becoming Managing Director in 1957. In 1960 he moved to JWT, which owned BMRB, as Marketing Director and was appointed Chairman in 1967. In the same year he became a Director of JWT in the USA and then Vice-Chairman in 1974.

John Treasure was extremely influential in many areas of advertising, marketing and marketing research, chairing and sitting on numerous committees and was a sought-after speaker at professional conferences and seminars. He contributed extensively to professional and trade publications and the national press, particularly on economics, communications and marketing. He was passionately interested in business ethics and was a trustee of the Foundation for Business Responsibilities.

For a famous Bernard Levin interview on Rediffusion TV he was dubbed 'Mr Advertising'. At a time when there was considerable criticism about advertising, he was an eloquent advocate of its contribution to the economy and well-being of the country. John Treasure had a profound influence on advertising and marketing in the last four decades of the 20th Century.

Adri Bakker, Founder Member and Honorary Member of ESOMAR died in The Hague aged 90. One of the small band of people who attended the first ESOMAR Congress in Amsterdam in 1948, he was a member of the ESOMAR Council from 1950-58 and a long-time Council Member of WAPOR, serving as its President from 1968-1970.

He became Secretary of the Nederlandse Stichting voor Statistiek (later called NSS Marktonderzoek) in 1945 and later its first Managing Director. For a book of interviews which Phyllis Vangelder conducted with ESOMAR's Founding Fathers, he told her "I could not find anything I liked better... I enjoyed it so much". He also said "Pioneers set standards and we cared about the parameters of research and the way we should practice it". .. "There is no doubt that the research business provides a very good and interesting life. I think we were very privileged".

In 1987 the Adri Bakkerstichting was set up with capital supplied by former shareholders of NSS. Its objectives are to support and/or subsidise scientific studies in the field of marketing and social research in The Netherlands. Several methodological studies have been conducted under its auspices.

Donald Clifton died on 14 September 2003 in the USA, aged 79. He founded Selection Research Inc in 1969, drawing on his knowledge of psychology to provide companies with accurate pictures of their employees' strengths by asking them a rigorous and carefully formulated series of questions. In 1988 he acquired and chaired The Gallup Organisation in Princeton, NJ, developing the business into a thriving international polling, management training and media company. He co-authored several business books, including the bestseller *Now, Discoverer Your Strengths*. Throughout his life he summed up his work and goals in a series of simple maxims like "Find people who like what they do best and let them go". He would add "Personally I like to ask questions and create surveys".

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