

# THE RESEARCH NETWORK

## NEWSLETTER

Editor: Nick Tanner Editorial Advisors: Phyllis Vangelder, Tom Punt

Issue No. 15: February 2010

### NIGEL SPACKMAN ELECTED CHAIRMAN

Prior to the AGM of the Research Network in December, Nick Phillips announced his intention to resign as Chairman and invited nominations for his successor. Nigel Spackman, who was co-opted on to the Steering Group earlier in the year, expressed his willingness to serve as Chairman; at the meeting itself, he was nominated by Nick Phillips, seconded by Jane Gwilliam and elected *nem con*.

Nigel's career in market research, outlined in the previous edition of the *Newsletter*, included directorships with AGB, BJM and finally TNS, before he retired in 2008 to become a non-exec Director of Network Research. His outside interests include walking, climbing and a small investment (doubtless for purely financial motives) in an Australian vineyard. We look forward to benefiting from his experience and skills and welcome him to the helm.



We are delighted that Nick Phillips has agreed to remain on the Steering Group for some months, to ensure a smooth handover of power. Nick had been Chairman since the AGM in December 2005. His

gentle style of committee management was a joy to behold—he would allow the occasional brief foray into idle chat and gossip but would quickly bring the meeting back to order without ever a hint of reproach. In this, as in so much else, he was a great



asset to all the meetings that he chaired. Members of the Steering Group clubbed together to buy him membership of the Wine Society, their only regret being that the Society's list does not (yet) include the product of Nigel Spackman's estimable estate.

Minutes of the AGM were circulated to members in December so there is no need for a comprehensive review of proceedings here. As Peter Bartram would be keen to point out, attendance at our AGM is far higher than that achieved by the MRS in recent years; nevertheless, with fewer than 30 members present this year, we are keen to attract higher attendance in future. The Steering Group is considering changing the timing of the meeting and placing greater emphasis on the social occasion around the meeting itself, so watch this space for further news.

### SPRING LUNCH: 22<sup>ND</sup> APRIL AT BOROUGH BAR

This will be our sixteenth Network Lunch and, once again, we keep to the eastern side of the City within easy reach of London Bridge main line and tube stations. This time we will visit another very spacious and popular venue. The Borough Bar, 10-18 London Bridge Street SE1 9SG, is a lively bar and restaurant and the scene of many novel events attracting a sophisticated local business



clientele. Individual invitations will be sent out shortly. It is within an easy walk of the Borough High Street exit from London Bridge tube and right next door to the

Georgetown, which many of you visited for last year's Spring Lunch. Usual prices (£25 members and £30 guests) include pre-lunch drink, table wine and two courses; bar and coffee facilities are available after the lunch. You can book your tickets now by sending your request and cheque to our Secretary/Treasurer Gill Wareing at 6 Walkfield Drive, Epsom Downs, KT18 5UF (enquiries to her at 01737 379261).

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## THE WAY WE ARE NOW

Guest editorial—Nigel Spackman

**A** former colleague recently pointed out to me that 2009 was the first time since 1991 – as far as we could remember – that the market research market went backwards in terms of total revenue. One consequence of this is that very few current senior managers in research agencies have had any experience of managing in a recession.

Managers' reactions have been different from the 1990/1 recession when my memory is that most businesses tried to keep their staff because they wanted to be in good shape for the recovery, and were willing to put up with lower margins in the meantime. Not so this time, when redundancies are the order of the day.

The outcome is that we have far more unemployed researchers now than for many years. Alongside this is the double whammy that has hit employment among interviewers; firstly from the recession, and secondly from the shift to on-line. One outcome of this is that the calls being made on the MRBA are

increasing, at a time when its income is *decreasing*, because investment returns on the Association's capital are inevitably poor. Last year the gap between income and expenditure was the biggest in their history.

What can we do about it? It has always been the policy of the Research Network to support the MRBA financially, and last year we were able to give them £750 from our surplus. But I very much doubt that will make much of a dent in their needs. One answer is for our members to help the MRBA with their time and experience and another is, of course, for those of us who can afford it to help with funding. This could be via the MRBA's annual auction which is from March 15<sup>th</sup> to April 15<sup>th</sup> at [www.mrba-auction.co.uk](http://www.mrba-auction.co.uk). In the present circumstances it's vital that we do what we can to support our industry's charity at a time of its greatest need.

*(You can read more about the MRBA, and ways in which you can help, on page 7 of this Newsletter.)*

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## THE WAY WE WERE

Peter Bartram's selections from MRS Newsletters of yesteryear

### 35 years ago (1975):

**R**ecessions then and now: in his Conference speech MRS Chairman **Frank Teer** said "My impression is that few people found 1974 as bad as they expected, and as yet doomsday has not arrived in 1975. This is not to say that times are booming and the research industry is bucking the trend but I do not believe that research has been as hard hit as some other service businesses including advertising." *(Is this still true of the current recession?)*

**Pat Kensley**, in a Fieldwork Supplement to the Newsletter, quoted various interviewers on why they had chosen this kind of work. One said: "So why, oh why, do we go on? Well, my husband's theory is that we are all curtain peepers. We just love to ask questions of perfect strangers that we would never dare to ask of even our nearest and dearest." More tellingly, another said: "Surely £3.50 exclusive of expenses for a seven-hour day is not the level of pay which will attract the type of people required to do the job efficiently."

### And 30 years ago (1980):

Speaking at a well-attended meeting of the North-west Regional Branch of the MRS, Professor Andrew Ehrenberg covered topics such as presentations, data reduction, rounding, and the need for simplicity in research tables. But more controversially he asserted that "graphs, bar charts etc., are for the ignorant." Sensing a mood of revolt in his audience, he then backtracked a bit, but still claimed that "their role should be relegated to one of illustration." *(Would he still say that today?)*

In the letters page, one received from the Home Office: Madam—It was interesting to read in the April Newsletter about Regional Activities and the doings of "the delightful Kate Dowling" and "the lovely Jackie Hickman." But why are none of the men deemed worthy of an adjective? Why not "the delightful John Samuels" or "the lovely Ted Dixon"? Are they less attractive? From "The Charming Mary Tuck."

*[continued overleaf]*

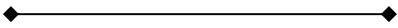
**John Bound** reviewed a book entitled 'Market Research' by Paul Redmayne and Hugh Weeks and published in 1931, which was apparently "the standard and indeed only British text on the subject throughout the 1930s." It portrayed a world very different from today, in which, for instance, "research for a shoe manufacturer would have to make allowance for the general use of clogs in Lancashire," and "the buying habits of working women are very apt to be ignored in market investigations." John Bound also added that "although the authors were perceptive in many areas, sampling was not among them."

**And 25 years ago (1985):**

MRS Chairman John Samuels considered the future of the MRS and in particular its Annual Conference. He asked Pym Cornish whether it is better that such events are run by ourselves or by paid organisers. Pym replied: "Conferences are one of those things in life that are better done by amateurs than by professionals – like making love."

A letter from Fred Johnson of British Gas: "I am writing to express regret at your latest introduction into the Newsletter – the column *Round the Square In Seven Days*. I like to read personal, relevant and interesting comment about members and their companies. However I dislike to see the Society's main communication instrument used to poke fun and thereby possibly upset members ... There should be no pleasure to members to see leading figures and companies ridiculed and discomfited ..." (*Lighten up, Fred!*)

In the next issue, John Wigzell responded: "I am an unashamed supporter of *Round The Square* ... Let us show the world we are big enough to take a little leg-pulling." And then Graham Moore of British Gas (where else?) countered with a letter saying "I was appalled and moved to inform you that I am not at all happy about it." Finally, Valerie Farbridge wrote that she found it "very funny indeed." (*But sadly, 'Round The Square' did not long survive.*)



## AUTUMN LUNCH AT BALLS BROTHERS MINSTER PAVEMENT

**Tom Punt**

The Minster, in Mincing Lane, is a monumentally impressive building which, when it was opened in 1991, was described by the *Independent* as "one of the great walking nightmares of post-modern architecture". Others have described it as a modern interpretation of Mervyn Peake's Gormenghast or as a 'stealth building', with roofs and walls at angles that seem designed to avoid radar detection.

Underneath this neo-gothic extravaganza is Balls Brothers wine bar on Minster Pavement and it was at this interesting, spacious and welcoming venue that we held our 15th Network Lunch on 22nd November 2009. We were particularly pleased to see, amongst

the almost record attendance, many old friends, several new members and a number of guests, some of whom we hope may join the Network before long.

This venue was just splendid—plenty of room to move about and socialise, a very good lunch efficiently served and (no complaints!) in more than adequate quantities of both food and wine. Consequently, the atmosphere was electric with cries of recognition and bonhomie. The *Independent* in 1991 did add that nevertheless the Minster was a rich addition to the City landscape and would provide an enduring subject of conversation—as will our dream of a venue to which we shall doubtless return, one of these days.



Bob Tofts and Ed Ross



Paddy Costigan (guest) and friends



Nick Phillips and Geoffrey Roughton

## A MAN OF COMPULSION

Eric Adler

*Our call for contributions from readers brought a crop of interesting letters. Here Eric Adler writes about his compulsive opera habit:*

I write about compulsion. My compulsion. My compulsion about music. Not just my compulsion about symphonic music, oratorio (I've sung in Barts Hospital Choir since 1990, having been coerced—very happily—to join by Liz Nelson) or opera but very specifically about Wagner.

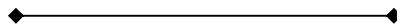
I cannot live without Mozart, Verdi, Puccini or Richard Strauss—but given a choice, it *has* to be Wagner.

His music wrenched at my soul in 1988 at a performance of *Siegfried* in Cardiff and has not only remained there but is compulsively entrenched.

In August 2009 I returned from my third visit to Seattle, where I saw/heard my 71st Ring Cycle. In addition to this quartet, I have been compelled to attend scores (*no pun intended?—Ed.*) of performances of *The Flying Dutchman*, *Lohengrin*, *Tannhäuser*, *Tristan & Isolde*, *The Mastersingers* and *Parsifal*.

I cannot fully understand exactly what my compulsion does to my soul, and frankly it matters little. What does matter is that it remains there and lifts my musical emotions on to a plane where nothing else exists.

So, compulsion. My compulsion. My musical compulsion, but foremost, my Wagnerian compulsion.



## TALKING OF FLAT-BOTTOMED CRAFT ...

Ted Whitley

*... while the description of Terry Darlington's exploits on his narrowboat prompted these reminiscences from Ted Whitley:*

Speaking of trips in flat-bottomed craft, may I add my experience? In the summer of 1945, after the end of the European War, as No. 1 I took part in bringing a Tank Landing Craft from the Clyde to Port Taufig. We were on our way to the Far East. We had no ballast apart from a spare engine bolted down on the tank deck. This was a feat of sheer lunacy, among many dreamt up by their Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty. It was a point at which I lost all respect for authority. Two flotillas of twelve craft each had tried before us and been lost with all hands in the Bay. We were more fortunate with the weather, though in fact the worst part of the voyage was down through the Irish Sea. With the sea just off the port bow, we stood on the bridge watching the tank deck ripple under the impact. The vibration was such that most of the drink raised to our lips went down the chin. In desperation we steamed into Fishguard, to be told we had come

through a minefield. Perhaps we steered through the mines, or possible missed contact, being so high in the water and with such a small draught.

After that, it was a great trip. Doing about 7 knots, with extended stays in Falmouth, Gibraltar and Malta, it took us about 10 weeks. When we got to Port Said we were much relieved to learn that the Indian Navy was to take the craft on to the Far East.

We then languished under canvas on the west side of the Great Bitter Lake at Kabrett. We had two cutters and I was able to learn to sail. I had a large bell-tent to myself with a raised bed and mosquito net. My batman was Sudanese, called Abdul Sid Abundi. One of the wilder members of our group took great pleasure in waking us at six with a bucket of water—not so bad as it dried out in half an hour. Then one morning he arrived without bucket but with news of Hiroshima. Many years later it puzzled me that I was back in Pompey in time for VJ Day. How could that be? I had forgotten that it took Japan nearly three weeks to surrender.

# LATEST NEWS OF US DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Terry Darlington

*Several readers enjoyed our review in the last issue of Terry Darlington's books. Sadly, his narrowboat Phyllis May was destroyed in a fire at the boatyard in November. Fortunately Terry and Monica weren't on board at the time and they are clearly not the sort of people who hang around moping: just four days later, they had bought Phyllis May II.*

*When we asked Terry if he'd like to write a paragraph or two about the news, he wrote back, reasonably enough, that he "couldn't think of anything to say about the fire that is entertaining or interesting except that I think our new boat will be a cracker!" By way of substitute, however, he did offer us the following article on our New World cousins, drawn from observations on the Indian River voyage.*

Perhaps we should explain our sample base, which some may feel untypical. Our recent year in the US was passed sailing in an English narrowboat down the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, which stretches from Virginia to Florida, and the Americans we met were mainly Southerners.

We loved the Southerners, though we do not doubt that the Northerners, and indeed the Westerners and the Easterners and the ones in the middle, are excellent folk as well.

In our minds the Southerner is best characterised by what Alexis de Tocqueville, the French lawyer and traveller, said in 1831: "as long as you are staying with a Southerner you are made welcome, and he shares all the pleasures of his house with you."

Wherever our narrowboat moored we were besieged with visitors, all friendly, nearly all offering gifts—piloting us over the big sea crossings, airplane flights, dinners and lunches and parties and barbecues, buckets of shellfish, bottles of moonshine, T-shirts, pork scratchings, friendship, advice—and they *never* wanted anything back.

Manners are different to the UK in many ways: Americans don't make appointments like the British—they just turn up. They will drive a hundred miles each way on a minor errand. Sometimes they are early—you are never early in England. They are fatter than we are, but don't often set out to drink too much, as the British do at every opportunity. They get divorced more than we do; they go to

church more than we do. They go to bed early and they get up early. They don't expect to be offered a drink or a coffee on every visit or to sit down and drink it formally. They tell you they love you more readily than we reserved Brits, and they will go to dinner with you on Monday and Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday as well, as if you could be snatched away by cruel fate at any instant. They *don't* say "I just love your crazy English accent!" (this may be a regional variation because of the way Southerners speak). They have shops that sell beads for beading and quilting supplies for quilting—shops unknown to us.

Much of the above is due perhaps to the pioneer background of the US. The gifts of food so that travellers will not starve on your doorstep and shame you. The relaxed approach to appointments—you had a long way to come and there were probably Indians. A sense of informality—Christmas is more informal, marriage is more informal, visits are more informal. Drink can get a hold on you in these lonely wildernesses—so let's pray together, let's do some quilting or beading instead of going to the bar.

Where the Americans seem most like us is in their love of dogs. Just as in England, strangers will stop you without hesitating to pet your dog and ask a lot of questions and our whippet Jim made us many friends. We did not see another whippet in the US, and everyone thought Jim was a greyhound puppy, and said he looked like a baby deer.

Finally I should mention that in the South they are not quite sure that the civil war is over, or that they lost.

We shall never forget our lovely American friends, and write to many of them still. Their ways are not quite our ways but near enough for social purposes. We are hoping that some will come over and see us soon and we will all go down the pub and drink some decent beer and do some quilting in the corner.

*Terry Darlington—author of best-sellers *Narrow Dog to Indian River* and *Narrow Dog to Carcassonne*, formerly Chairman and founder of Research Associates. Also Monica, who was his Managing Director and now acts as his manager; and Jim, who is a whippet and acts as their dog.*

# THE COST OF MORAN

Joe Moran

*Many of you will remember Joe Moran, Reader in Cultural History at John Moores University and author of *Queuing For Beginners* (in which he made good use of the Mass Observation Archive) and *On Roads*. He recently wrote the following in the *Guardian*, reproduced here with his kind permission.*

If there is one thing I would like to see more of in 2010, it is those statistics that purport to tell us how much such and such a thing is costing the British economy. 2009 offered pretty slim pickings on this score. We had to make do with the following newspaper stories about how much actual or possible events were costing or might cost the economy: EU regulations (£184bn by 2020), hangovers (£54.7m a year), ID fraud (£1.7bn a year), headaches (£1.5bn a year), arthritis (£2bn a year), illegal downloads (£120bn a year), swine flu (£1.5bn a day), staff pulling sickies in the summer heatwave (£190m a day), the loss of the British Grand Prix (\$1bn), people using social networking sites at work (£1.38bn a year), health problems caused by stiletto shoes (unspecified millions in lost working days), Andy Murray getting knocked out of Wimbledon (£150m), and a snowy day last February (£3bn). Admittedly, this is a far from exhaustive list, but I still think we will need to pull our fingers out and do much better this year.

Naturally, there are a few statistical pedants who claim that these figures may not always be 100 per cent accurate. They argue that such statistics are essentially a spurious extrapolation of the cost-benefit analysis, where you try to measure externalities—unseen costs accrued by society as a whole, like time savings or accident rates—as well as direct costs. For all their anomalies, you can see how cost-benefit analyses might be necessary if you are going to commit public money to expensive infrastructure like a new road. But, the pedants argue, things become more problematic when you are trying to compute, for instance, all the billions of pounds lost from people staying off work, the so-called 'productivity hole'. For this assumes that when people are at work they are all dutifully contributing to our GDP every minute of the day—rather than, say, attending meetings where the only thing that gets decided is the date of the next meeting.

In any case, these pedants say, the economy is not a self-contained totality, something you take money

out of like a cash register. Money that isn't spent on one thing can get spent on something else. Even employees who are off sick might be earning money for Beechams and the companies who advertise consolidated loans in the middle of Countdown.

These pedants are right, of course, but they miss the point. The purpose of these figures is not to convey accurate information but to offer reassurance. These statistics are always cited by their originators with enormous authority, as if only an ignoramus could possibly disagree with them. When we have heard so much recently about funny money—toxic debts, sub-prime mortgages, money that turned out not to exist after all—then this sort of confidence is immensely comforting. Thank God, we think, that someone is keeping count and knows how much everything costs, especially now there is no money left and we are all going to have to survive on war rations. In the current climate of austerity, the work of the costings industry offers a consoling mood music.

Statistics, as the social scientist Joel Best writes, are "numeric statements about social life". We think of them as simply facts that we hone out of reality like coal from a seam, when in fact they are numbers we create to make sense of the world. For example, if you think that something is really annoying, like people using Twitter or going on strike, then finding out that this is costing the economy lots of money can give you a pleasing sense of righteous indignation. The actual figures don't really matter. Most of us are no good at distinguishing between large numbers. £20m or £20bn, it's all Greek to us. We're just supposed to think "ooh, that's a big number, what a waste of money".

Most importantly, these statistics give us a sense of the ebb and flow of the year. In January, for instance, we always have figures about the money being wasted by staff who are still hung over after new year parties, or who can't get into work because of the snow. Then, in June, we will be told how much all those malingerers who are calling in sick to go to the beach or to watch the World Cup are costing us. Such statistics remind us of the eternal cycle of the seasons, the kind of work that used to be done by winter solstices and harvest festivals. And that is why it is vital we keep producing these figures telling us how much everything costs. Without them, you see, we simply would not know what day it is.

# MORE THAN EVER, THE MRBA NEEDS YOUR HELP

Rossanne Lee-Bertram

**A**s most of you will know, the Market Research Benevolent Association (MRBA) was important in the establishment of the Research Network—seven of the nine members of its Management Committee are also members of the Research Network. The Network has supported the MRBA financially every year since its inception.

The MRBA provides financial assistance to colleagues and their immediate families who work or have worked in the research industry. Many seek its help because they are unable to work for a time, because of a sudden illness, injury or other personal problem.

## Unprecedented demand

Last year the number of applications the MRBA received doubled. And this represents a three-fold increase over previous years. While it has stepped up its marketing efforts to generate more awareness of its services across the industry, undoubtedly the economic downturn and the lack of work in the marketplace have contributed to this unprecedented demand. Coupled with the lower rate of return on its investments, the MRBA is now giving out more money in loans and grants than it is receiving in income.

In recognition of this, and because of the support the Association feels it has in the industry, the MRBA is revitalising its membership programme to raise more funds. A number of structural changes to the MRBA were outlined in the talk that Claire Harris gave to the *Network's* Autumn lunch in October. All existing 'Members' (including Governors) are now being called 'Friends' of the MRBA.

## Please help the MRBA continue to offer support

If you are not supporting the MRBA already, or if you are contributing but could give a little bit more, you could make a real difference. Here are a number of ways you can help:

- Individuals and companies can become 'Friends'. Please join today and encourage other colleagues as well. You can download an application form from its web site at [www.mrba.org.uk](http://www.mrba.org.uk), email [info@mrba.org.uk](mailto:info@mrba.org.uk), or ring its Secretary/Treasurer, Danielle Scott, on 01845 6520303 to obtain a form.
- Please spread the word by letting your company and any past, present and retired colleagues know how the MRBA can help. Anyone can contact the Association in complete confidence by ringing 01845 6520303, emailing [info@mrba.org.uk](mailto:info@mrba.org.uk), or visiting [www.mrba.org.uk](http://www.mrba.org.uk).
- Much of the MRBA's income comes from fund-raising. Right now, it needs more donations for its Annual Online Charity Auction, which runs from March 14 to April 14. Sought-after items such as the loan of a holiday home or cottage; airline, concert, theatre or sporting event tickets; vouchers for a round of golf, day out shooting, or health spa treatments are ideal. Clients can help too. Promotional gifts, electronic equipment, or donated services such as design, consultancy and training, are also popular. Please contact Linda Henshall as soon as possible to offer your donation(s) by emailing her at [linda.henshall@newfieldwork.co.uk](mailto:linda.henshall@newfieldwork.co.uk).
- And don't forget to visit the web site, [www.mrba.org.uk](http://www.mrba.org.uk), from mid-March to place your bids and pick up some bargains.

As always, the MRBA is happy to receive single, one-off donations through the Gift Aid facility on its web site. For whatever you can offer, the MRBA will be most grateful. Thank you for your support.



# THE NETWORK WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK GROUP

Tom Punt, Webmaster

We set up our site, [www.research-network.org.uk](http://www.research-network.org.uk), in its present form in March 2006 (although I had maintained a rather primitive FTP site practically since the foundation of the Network in 2002). The present site is regularly brought up to date and I know many of you visit it from time to time. Much archive material is contained there—photos of all past and recent social events, a complete archive of Newsletters from the very first in Spring 2003 to this number, reminiscences of members' early days in research and so on. You don't, for instance, need to rely on your memory to tell you what date a particular social event was or who was there. Photos of the most recent social event usually appear within a day or two.

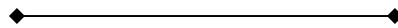
What might keep the site livelier though is to make it more of an online meeting place than it is—not to supplant face-to-face discourse but to add to it. For instance, we can use the Forum to discuss any topics of interest to us, such as the use of MR in the media, uses and abuses of statistics, and polling—a currently topical subject. We can also raise any other topics of more general interest to those of our age and experience or just leave a message about changes in our whereabouts or activities for our Network friends and acquaintances.

There may be other things that could be put on the

site that might engage you. For instance, what about a simple 'letters page'? Some of us get published in the national or local press from time to time so why not on our own site? Other ideas, some of which have already been tried are:

'Where are they now?'" enquiries about someone in the business you knew long ago but cannot track down, individual photo-galleries of members (not holiday snaps!), career summaries, links to a broader spectrum of other websites of interest to us—to mention only a few ideas. But also please give your news, if you would like me to publish it, and, more than anything, send me your feedback and suggestions for how *your* website might be used or improved. An email to [webmaster@research-network.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@research-network.org.uk)—including any adverse comments, of course, but especially with your constructive suggestions—would be greatly appreciated.

Finally, for those of you who use Facebook, just a reminder that you can find The Research Network there too, as a Facebook group. Created by Alan Morris, the group now has 33 members. Find your friends there, start a discussion and do spread the word!



## DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY?

We are always keen for written contributions from members and welcome your letters, news, reminiscences or other articles for publication in future *Newsletters*. Obviously we have to reserve the right to edit these for space or other reasons but we try to do so with a light touch! We should also be grateful for any of your comments on the style or content of this *Newsletter*. If you would like to write something, or have a suggestion that you would like us to follow up, please contact the Editor, Nick Tanner, either at his address as shown in the Members List or by email to [editor@research-network.org.uk](mailto:editor@research-network.org.uk).



**IAN BLYTHE**

*Our last issue contained a brief announcement of the death of Ian Blythe who died peacefully in August, aged 70, after fighting cancer for 20 months.*

Ian played a prominent role in the public face of market research, working untiringly for many years on its PR and external relations. He was widely respected in the communications industry and in the '80s sat on both the MRS and ABMRC Councils, chairing the MRS Events and Regions Committee and sitting on the Professional Standards Committee. As part of his external relations remit he introduced the 'Your Opinion counts' programme, an attempt to convince the public about the desirability of market research surveys and public opinion polls. Ian and his wife Doreen visited the States to obtain data about its YOC program before launching it successfully in the UK, with a 'Your Opinion Counts' Week in May 1989. He also introduced a New Members' Dinner. In 1991 he was invited to represent the MRS on the panel of judges for the newly instituted IPR Awards. To Ian's pleasure, market research was selected as the basis for this first event.

His history of The Market Research Society, *The Making of an Industry: The MRS 1946-86*, was a labour of love. Helped by Doreen, he meticulously documented the people associated and the work undertaken by MRS and its Committees and Working Parties of volunteers in its first 40 formative years. The archival material in the original volume and the updated one, with the sub-title *A History of Growing Achievement*, are unique in providing a picture of the workings of the Society and its contributions to the industry. The data about the MRS are set against a backdrop of the evolution of marketing research in both the USA and Great Britain. Debrah Harding, the MRS Deputy Director General wrote that his book remains a testament to the key role that Ian played in the Society's development and recording of its history (the bulk of this book was typed and laid out by Doreen in the years before computers, using an electronic golf ball typewriter).

Following London University, Ian joined Brunning Advertising—the first agency to obtain a Stock Exchange quotation. They offered him a job in either media or market research. Not sure exactly what media involved, he opted for research. That set his career for the next 40 years. He set up his own market research agency, EMS (European Marketing Surveys), and moved into Greater London House with the advertising agency NCK, where he became the

agency's Research Director for seven years before it was acquired by FCB. In 1979 EMS was ranked No 20 in the AMSO table of market research companies by size of turnover. It was later merged into SRA, where Ian was Client Services Director. In the mid-eighties he formed BLM Research, with offices close to St Bride's Church in Fleet Street.

Alongside making a career in research and advertising agencies, Ian was always heavily engaged in the wider world of the communications industry. He chaired The Publicity Club of London in its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, among other events, organising a Guildhall Banquet, attended by no less than five Lord Mayors – past, present and future. There, as in so many other organisations with which he was associated, he was instrumental in raising much-needed funds for charity. During his Chairmanship £91,000 was raised for charity, the majority for NABS (National Advertising Benevolent Society).

Ian was admitted as a Freeman of the Worshipful Company of Marketors in 1988 and his elevation to Liveryman took place just a few months later. He was Chairman of four committees: Fellowship, Events, Membership and Regimental Liaison (he was commissioned into The Essex Regiment (TA) from the University OTC in 1962), as well as serving as the Company Swordbearer. He was instrumental in organising Prospective Members' Dinners where senior City luminaries provided information on livery companies and the Marketors in particular. Ian was appointed Junior Warden in 1999 and was installed as Master in 2002. During his year as Master he had the dual theme of Charity and Fellowship. He was of the old school of marketors – everything had to be done correctly within the Livery and in upholding the traditions of the City. During Ian's term as Master, the Company's charitable contributions doubled. He felt very strongly about issues concerning Company activity relating to its heritage – treasure, archives, history, merchandise and maintaining traditions and standards. He also spotted the danger of neglecting to record past objectives and achievements. He established the Heritage Committee and introduced the 'Heritage Corner' in the Marketors Newsletter, which recorded the history and role of, for instance, the Company Clerk, Beadle, Chaplain and Swordbearer. He was invited to attend the Luncheon at the Guildhall to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee, one of only 20 Masters chosen to represent all Livery Companies.

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Among his myriad of interests, Ian was involved with the Joint Industry Debating Group which meets at the House of Commons to debate marketing topics. Ian was Chairman for four years, chairing some 20 debates in Westminster on industry-related topics.

Throughout his life, Ian worked hard and played hard. Long before the term 'work/life balance' was invented, Ian embodied that ethos. He was a lover of good food and wine and had considerable talents in organising events. Many of us have fond memories of black-tie dinners both to enhance the profile of the industry and raise money for charity. Several of these dinners were attended by Royalty—the Princess Royal, Princess Michael and the Duchess of York. The *News of the World* actually carried a picture of Ian entering the hotel with Fergie! He was a great joiner of clubs: Henley, Hurlingham (where he organised eight consecutive tennis tournaments for MRS members), Royal Ascot, Leander, MCC, Henley Regatta, the Army & Navy and the Variety Club of Great Britain were just a few!

Ian was essentially a historian and archivist and the industry is grateful to him for his painstaking records. He was a larger than life man who put his heart and soul into everything he undertook. He and Doreen were generous with their time and spared no effort to ensure anything they were involved with was a success. His wide range of activities in the communications world made him very many friends, all of whom will miss his bonhomie, charm and wit.

A Thanksgiving Service for the life of Ian was held on 20 November at St Brides Church, Fleet Street, with addresses by Conal Gregory, formerly Parliamentary Consultant to the MRS, and Dr Roger Hood, Past Master of the Worshipful Company of Marketors. The music ranged from traditional hymns and Fauré's *Requiem*, to Gilbert and Sullivan's 'I am the Very Model of a Modern Major General' and the Ascot Gavotte from *My Fair Lady*.

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## MARY WALLIS-JONES

*Mary Wallis-Jones died in October 2009, aged 66, after a battle against cancer.*

**H**aving graduated in Sociology in 1966, Mary Wallis-Jones gained wide experience of quantitative and qualitative social and market research, for both public and private sector clients, before returning to full-time study in 1991. She obtained an MA in Applied Social Research in 1992 and moved to UEL where she has been a part-time lecturer in Research Methods and Computing and Data Analysis and a part-time researcher while studying for a PhD. She carried out and reported on the 1994, 1995 and 1996 surveys of the employment of newly qualified social workers for CCETSW, and also conducted a research project for NISW in 1998. In November 1999 she submitted the successful proposal for the last CCETSW survey of newly qualified social workers, which related to those who had achieved their awards in Summer 1999, and managed, analysed and reported on that survey at UEL. She also completed a further survey of the employment of social workers who qualified in 2001 for the Department of Health.

Mary had a strong public life outside market research. She sat on many school governing bodies

and was a senior member of the National Governors Association. She had a burning interest in young people and education and, in fact, wrote a doctorate on education policy. Her parents were committed left-wingers and Mary herself was a lifelong and active member of the Labour Party. She was also a keen singer and a member of choirs, including the Highgate Choral Society.

### **Carrick James writes:**

I have known Mary since the 1960s when we both worked at BCR - the Bureau of Commercial Research - more than 40 years ago. She also worked for the Government Social Survey, was head of Qualitative Research at Research Services Limited, worked for IFF Research Limited, and for many years she was a freelance qualitative researcher working on a range of topics with young people and developing an expertise in researching financial journalism.

We have known each other in the market and social research world, but I also cherish Mary as a long standing family and personal friend - she has been the godmother of my son Rory - and as someone who has shared interests in jazz, cricket, and what goes on in the world - call it politics.

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Market research is a mix of being a profession and being a business. Mary was always very professional and gifted in her research work, rather than a business person. She applied integrity, insight and great care to what she did. She had the ability to conduct qualitative interviews to find out what people really thought about and get beneath the surface

I particularly remember a government project we worked on in 1979 'The Social and Psychological Effects of Unemployment on Young People'. This was an intensive project involving individual depth interviews, group discussions and follow-up later meetings with participants. Mary did brilliant work in the design, interviewing and interpretation and recommendations of the findings. Her understanding of and care about the young people we talked to was evident.

Apart from the more serious findings, we were given by respondents a detailed explanation of how to conduct robberies of stores in Coventry—and the role of jam-buttie cars in the Newcastle and Jarrow areas of the North East.

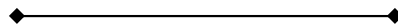
More recently Mary has been an active social participant in the Research Network.

Other nice memories come back—going to jazz gigs; spending Christmas with her, her son Joe and her amazing 90-year-old mother Veronica; watching cricket in Cape Town (Mary also managed to watch England play in Antigua); and in Cape Town being stopped by the police when we lost our way in the township of Khayelitsha —we thought it was our wonky number plate but the police escorted us on our way.

A market research question is to ask people to give three words that come into mind to describe somebody or something. As well as 'Professional', three other words come into my mind about Mary:

- Exuberant (Oxford English Dictionary: "Overflowing with high spirits")
- Fun: It has been fun to be with Mary.
- Brave: In recent years Mary has shown great bravery over the loss of her husband John, her mother Veronica and her own pain.

My family and others have suggested other words—generous, kind, cultured, bright, intelligently interested, and passion for life.



**We publish obituaries not only of Network members but also of other eminent people connected with the research industry who have recently died. In the last few months, four such people have died (including, most recently, Peter Cooper) and their notes appear below.**

## SUE BRADLEY

**S**usan Bradley died in October 2009, aged 59. She was a full member of the MRS and had a distinguished career in market research. Her last job was with the Coventry University Business School where she assisted with the Marketing Course. Previously she had worked with Avon Overseas as senior research consultant responsible for European product research before setting up her own successful market research consultancy in Leighton Buzzard.

Like so many other good researchers she was a product of BMRB's graduate training programme, which she joined in 1973. Following graduate training, she became Research Executive in the Qualitative Research Division. In 1976 she was

promoted to Senior Research Executive and transferred to the Industrial Research Division. On the closure of this Division she moved to the Consumer Division and was responsible for a number of continuous research projects such as DTI's Home Accidents Survey and the Holiday Booking Index. Promoted to Associate Director in 1980, she became responsible for BMRB's weekly pop charts for the BBC. Whilst compiling the *Top of the Pops* chart she uncovered the hyping of record sales.

In 1986 Sue married Malcolm Simmons, her teenage sweetheart, whom she met up with again when both were in their thirties. She is survived by her husband and 87-year-old mother.

## PETER COOPER

**P**eter Cooper died suddenly in February from an aneurysm. He was 73.

Peter was a uniquely gifted man and a major contributor to the world of market research as it developed in Britain from the 1960s onward. Although Peter's speciality, qualitative research, was known in the field of clinical psychology, it was the adaptation of psychological techniques and methodologies to the commercial world that marked him out as a true innovator and established his reputation amongst clients as well as fellow researchers.

He was at the forefront of a new wave of what was to become qualitative market research, whereby the consumer ceased to be a passive recipient within the market place to become a dominant partner. By the mid-1960s, through a greater practical understanding of consumer psychology, market research was a guiding, anticipating and consolidating force. Mass television advertising had relatively recently been launched and this made consumer goods companies as well as advertising agencies recognise they needed more and more information about the motives, attitudes and beliefs of their consumers and their markets.

In the mid-1960s Peter studied the French approach to understanding consumer needs, whereby target groups would be taken away for a long weekend in order to be observed as they expressed their relationships with different brands and products. In a pioneering move, Peter recognised that the same results could be obtained by bringing consumers together for three hour sessions to explore in depth emotional as well as practical responses to a range of issues relating to consumerism, from product placement to advertising, packaging to brand identity. During these Extended Creativity Groups, respondents were asked to draw, model with clay and role play.

He had graduated in 1959 with a first in psychology from Manchester University. Despite offers from universities in the United States, Oxford and London, Peter opted to stay in Manchester's psychology department and worked with his mentor Professor John Cohen, where they researched and published on aspects of the psychology of risk. Another significant element of his research at this time involved children's understanding of war and peace based on work carried out in Japan, Germany and the UK.

In 1963 he became one of the first academics to apply his understanding of behavioural psychology to the marketplace, and in 1966 with his then wife, Jackie French, he set up Cooper Research and Marketing (later CRAM International). In 1968 the company moved from Manchester to London where, over the following four decades, virtually all major companies sought Peter's advice on consumer behaviour. His methodology coupled with his insight and underpinned by his training as a psychologist meant that he was able to provide an understanding of the market in relation to the iconic brands of the day.

As long ago as the early 1980s, Peter brought together the International Qualitative Research Group with agencies from around the world. He was also acutely aware of the importance of new technologies and the internet in particular. In the early 2000s he co-founded QiQ International, an internet based venture combining aspects of qualitative and quantitative research techniques.

He contributed widely to the MRS, ESOMAR and ARF and published a number of landmark papers over the years on the theory and practice of qualitative research. In January 1999 he was guest editor of a special issue of the Journal of the Market Research Society on 'Qualitative research for the 21st Century'.

Peter saw market research as an integral aspect of the democratic process. In recent years, he began to explore the manifold ways in which economic change triggered emotional response: fear, insecurity, new ways of coping. His work illuminated two key factors in the current economic crisis, the psychology of money and the psychology of debt. Within psychology, money is a neglected topic, yet it is a fascinating psychological problem, since it is an intensely strong motivating force that, unlike other strong motivators such as food or sex, has no apparent or direct biological basis. Peter observed that, for many, the recession brings into focus profound existential fears: loss of home, love, freedom, self-respect, and to their lives. To some, it manifests in self-protection, blaming others, withdrawal: the economic crisis is 'deserved punishment' for 'past excesses'. To others the economic crisis is a 'cleansing', promising hope for a 'new beginning', 'togetherness', and for some 'spirituality'.

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Over the years Peter developed a fascination for phrenology and assembled one of the most significant private collections of phrenology busts, books and other related curiosities. In the mid-80s he sought to revive an interest in phrenology and commissioned a limited edition of Wedgwood phrenological busts, a collection of great beauty.

Despite creating an international reputation in market research, he never lost touch with his roots in psychology: he was first and foremost a psychologist and an active member of the British Psychological Society as well as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine. He also held research fellow posts at Universities in Oslo, Paris and London.

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## MARTIN FISHBEIN

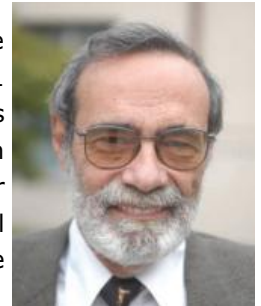
### Liz Nelson writes:

In 2003 in one of the early Research Network Newsletters, I wrote about Martin Fishbein's theory about attitudes and behaviour. On a sadder note I have now been asked to write his obituary for our Newsletter.

Marty died as he lived—having fun. It is difficult to describe how he combined a sense of theatre with his lectures, but there is no doubt he was a performer. He had audiences throughout his active five decades glued to their seats. Tom Punt tells the story of his attending an ESOMAR seminar in Madrid where Martin was speaking. "He arrived very late but a special afternoon session was put on for him - very late since it didn't begin until about 5.45 when most people are thinking of drinks. He didn't finish until almost 7pm but he kept a record audience all this time. We all had a late dinner".

Robin Tuck talks about Marty's New York Jewish sense of humour and how he loved London—largely because of the theatre and the opera. Gerald De Groot writes about this aspect of Marty's personality: "An important aspect of Martin Fishbein was his wide range of interests, which probably added to his skills and insights as a social psychologist. He was no culture vulture and there was never any pretence about him. He embraced theatre and opera, but also jazz, popular music and even the Spanish corrida. I have a vivid memory of Marty and his wife Debbie jiving in the Plaza Mayor of Pamplona during a San Fermín fiesta in the sixties. He brought to all these things the same degree of objectivity that is to be found in his academic work, and was never afraid to say what and why he didn't like and what and why he did. He was a wonderful companion and was taken too early."

Marty spent a long time at the University of Illinois, from 1961 until 1997. One of his students in the early 60's was Icek Ajzen who remained a collaborator for the rest of Marty's life — well after Icek moved to the University of Massachusetts.



Why did Marty leave University of Illinois? I don't know about readers of this Newsletter, but for me Marty was more famous than the University of Illinois in Urbana. He left Urbana as often as he could to lecture throughout the world. In 1997 Marty was invited to become the Harry C. Coles, Jr. Distinguished Professor of Communication at the Annenberg School for Communication and founding director of the Health Communication division of the Annenberg Public Policy Center. Philadelphia is a more lively place than Urbana but there was another reason.

Marty moved from his expectancy-value model into the theory of reasoned action. He became absorbed with the behaviour of people with AIDS. According to Icek Ajzen, Marty spent the remaining years of his life studying behaviour and how to change behaviours.

At the end of last year Marty and his wife, Debbie, planned a visit to London to coincide with a conference where Marty had been asked to speak.. Robin Tuck tells the story of having a great dinner with Marty before the conference. Marty was in good form. He died that night of a massive heart attack. What a way to go.

Fishbein's work is reviewed in a just published monograph: Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (2010). Predicting and changing behavior: The reasoned action approach. New York: Psychology Press (Taylor & Francis).

## ROBERT FLETCHER

**R**obert Fletcher died in September 2009, aged 71. He was born in Denmark in 1938 and educated in Scandinavia and South Africa.

Bob was an Associate Director of BMRB, having joined the Attitude and Motivation Division in 1960. He became heavily involved in the agency's Creative Workshop, which specialised in advertising pre-testing, as well as running the Psychological Laboratory, where perceptual research techniques were tested. In the early '70s the Lab experimented with a large range of technical 'toys'. These included equipment such as the psycho-galvanometer (to detect variations in heart rate and perspiration) and the tachistoscope—an electronic instrument which provides controlled exposures to a stimulus such as packaging (the respondent sees exposures which at first are too rapid for identification; the exposures are progressively lengthened in a precisely controlled way until the respondent is able to identify what is being shown).

Another important piece of equipment used experimentally by the Lab was DEMOS—the Direct Eye Movement Observation System, for which BMRB acquired exclusive rights in the UK. It involved a system of mirrors which allowed controlled observation, recorded on film, of an individual's reading behaviour. This eye tracking for measuring exposure to newspaper and magazine advertisements was the first functional system of the kind and a useful tool for experimental work on, for example, the meaning of reading and recall measurements collected by other methods.

BMRB encouraged its staff to do 'research about research' and to write papers for journals and

conferences; Bob wrote several ground-breaking papers for ESOMAR and the MRS. A joint paper with Timothy Joyce, 'Noting and page traffic scores for press ads', won the prestigious Thomas Medal for innovative media research in 1965.

Bob left BMRB in 1972 to join Thames Polytechnic, (later the University of Greenwich) lecturing and supervising on consumer behaviour and market research. Mike Dickson, who was Senior Lecturer in Marketing at Thames and formerly in ICI's Overseas Research Division, remembers how well they worked together on the Introduction to Market Research course, both using their considerable knowledge and experience to pass on to students understanding of data sources and good MR practice, as well as making them aware of the international dimension to market research. They were one of the first users of the SNAP program, a total MR package, and they encouraged students to conduct integrated research for actual clients, such as Network SE.

In his retirement Bob made metal sculptures and his artwork was exhibited in Bexhill, where he lived.

Sue Robson writes, "I worked for Robert as a graduate trainee in BMRB in the early 1970s. He was a charming man, very gentle and considerate. He was rather eccentric and very laid back which was a bit disconcerting to a new trainee, but as I got to know him I also got to understand that his apparent casualness was actually a bit of a front. He was a clever man and a good researcher. Our friendship carried on; after he left BMRB, he occasionally asked me to lecture his students on qualitative research".

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## PROFESSOR MICHAEL THOMAS

**M**ichael Thomas, marketing academic and past president of the Market Research Society, died at the end of January after a battle with cancer. He was president of the MRS from 1999 to 2004, and was made a fellow of the Society in 2003. On awarding the fellowship, the MRS described him as "an eminent academic who has contributed enormously to the theory and practice of marketing, and to the professions related to marketing".

Latterly Professor Emeritus within the marketing department of the University of Strathclyde, Michael Thomas began his career as a market research manager at Metal Box in London in 1957.



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He moved into academia in 1960 with his appointment as a research fellow, lecturer, assistant and associate professor at the University of Syracuse School of Management in New York, before returning to the UK in 1971 to head the School of Management at the University of Lancaster.

He joined the University of Strathclyde in 1987, where he listed his research interests as new paradigms in marketing, the ethics of professionalism in marketing and management, and marketing measurement.

Michael Thomas was awarded the Commander's Cross of the Polish Order of Merit in 1994 for his contribution to the economic transformation of Poland, and became an OBE in June 1999 for services to management education and training.

As well as MRS president, he had been Chair of the Chartered Institute of Marketing and a member of the Institute of Export's Professional Qualifications and Examination Board. He created overseas branches of the Chartered Institute of Marketing in Hong Kong, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Malaysia and Poland; he published textbooks and founded the journal *Marketing Intelligence and Planning*.

**David Barr**, MRS director general, said: "Michael Thomas made an immense contribution to MRS during his five-year presidency and indeed since then. He was a significant influence on re-building the MRS portfolio for professional development, particularly qualifications. He was very active on the 'learned society' dimension of MRS via chairmanship of the awards panel and membership of the editorial board of the International Journal of Market Research.

"Michael brought to many key debates not only his incisive intellect, knowledge, experience and

understanding but also a delightfully mischievous wit and great wisdom. I know personally that he was a great mentor, an admirable man who was generous with his time and his talents. He will be greatly missed by everyone at MRS who worked with him."

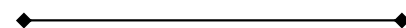
**Sally Ford-Hutchinson** was MRS chairman during Thomas's presidency and continued to work with him as an awards panel judge. She described him as "a tremendous colleague".

"I worked with him for two years when I was chairman and he was president of the MRS. He always gave the society and me his absolute support. He did it with great intelligence, great knowledge and most of all with a great sense of humour. The society will miss him and I will miss him even more."

Sally said she last saw Thomas in September, at an awards panel meeting. "He announced in a matter-of-fact, almost humorous way that he would not be able to continue as chairman of judges because he was living on borrowed time. In some ways that was Michael, very straightforward, very down to earth and always positive," she said.

"He was not just interesting to talk with about marketing and market research issues. His knowledge on diverse subjects was fascinating. He was an extremely experienced bird watcher and had published some very erudite works on birds in his beloved area of the Isle of Bute. I will regret that we never managed to arrange a planned weekend for him and his wife to visit us and watch our local peregrine falcons."

As **Ginny Valentine** wrote on the *Research* website: "We will all have much to miss in Michael, but any of us who had the chance to know him will always be so glad to have passed within the orbit of that fine, big mind."



## STEERING GROUP

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