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THE WAY WE ARE

If it feels like quite a while since the last edition of the *Newsletter*, you might be right: this issue has been slightly delayed, in the manner of, say, an InterCity train or a research report. Apologies for this and for the fact that this edition is a little slimmer than those of late, although the latter is for the best of reasons—namely that at the time of writing, there is not a single obituary to be included. This, surely, is a matter for some celebration. It also contains, by coincidence, at least two entirely independent references to Desert Island Discs.

The Network is under new management, at least to a limited extent: Nigel Spackman retired as Chairman at the end of 2013, having served for four years, and has been succeeded by Adam Phillips. Adam has been attending Steering Group meetings for several months and has, we hope, become accustomed to our strange ways. His succession to the role was confirmed at the AGM held on 3rd December at the offices of TNS in More London Place. The Steering Group would like to express its enormous thanks to Nigel for all his hard work over the last four years and it looks forward to continuing success under Adam's tutelage. There is a profile of Adam inside this edition of the *Newsletter*.

After what feels like a relentlessly wet and miserable winter, perhaps spring is finally arriving. A regular harbinger of the new season is the invitation to the Spring Lunch, which should have hit your mailboxes in the last few days (see also panel below). Looking forward to seeing many of you there!

SPRING LUNCH: 29TH APRIL AT AZZURRO

This year's Spring Lunch will be held at Azzurro, an Italian restaurant situated (as so many of our venues seem to be) underneath the railway arches close to Waterloo Station. The narrow entrance to the restaurant, on the corner of York Road and Sutton Walk, belies a spacious interior—several reviews comment on its Tardis-like nature.



The price, like the railway-arch environment, will be familiar to regular Network lunchers since it will once again be £25 (£30 for guests) to include a welcome drink, a two-course Italian buffet and wine with the meal.

As usual, the welcome drink will be available from 12:30 and lunch will be served at about 1 o'clock. If your bus, train, taxi or private chauffeur delivers you early, there are a number of bars and cafes in the South Bank complex but the closest is the aptly-named Hole in the Wall, a pub similarly built into a railway arch but in Mephram Street, immediately below the main Victory Arch exit from the station. Your

editor was a regular visitor to the Hole in the Wall whilst a young trainee at RBL and is planning to arrive early specifically in order to have an excuse to visit it again.

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THE WAY WE WERE

Peter Bartram's selections from MRS Newsletters of yesteryear

40 years ago (1973):

Maurice Kendall, an Honorary Member and past President of the MRS, was awarded a knighthood in the New Year's Honours.

When chosen to write a report on the Winter School, **Tony Scrivens** was cautioned that he "must not dwell upon the drinking into the early hours and the bopping at the local disco. You've got to say we did some work." On arrival in Eastbourne, which he said was widely described as an 'aeriated geriatric land' he asked "where are all the old people?" but quickly found some, "hobbling along the sea front, supposedly delegates from the previous year's Winter School—which clearly ages you before your time. It is definitely not somewhere for the lazy, the average delegate doing 80 hours of work over the six days."

In a course at the Lygon Arms in Broadway, **Jennifer Bowen** asserted that "husbands don't understand their wives, particularly when they are market research interviewers. Poorly paid, exploited by a pay rate which is less than that for charladies, interviewers work long hours which frequently necessitate leaving the old man at home to look after the kids—hence the lack of understanding."

This course also included a paper by its convenor, **John Swift**, in which he castigated those who present research results without indicating the sample size on which they are based. From his own survey on the issue, he showed the proportion of cases where this occurred—only to be stopped short by an audience member who pointed out that his own charts revealed a similar omission. "Touché" said John.

At the Annual Conference, Action Research set up a Limerick Competition for delegates, the winner being **Simon McCall** of General Foods:

At Bournemouth, a delegate faction
Suffered conference-paper reaction.
They resorted to jars
In casinos and bars
And solving limericks for Action.

And 35 years ago (1979):

In early December, a letter in the Financial Times from a reader: 'Answering my front door last night, I was confronted by two small boys asking me to name two favourite carols. "A bit early for carols isn't it?" I asked. "We're not going to sing now lady" they replied. "We're doing market research."

In an article on the formative years of the MR industry, **John Mason** described the year 1956-57 as an "annus mirabilis" in which various study groups were formed together with a meetings committee, and the style and content of the MRS Journal (then called 'Commentary') were shaped prior to its being finally launched in the following year. Leaders of the various meetings held in that period were **John Downham, Doug Brown, Bill Gregory, David Pickard, Tom Cauter, Mark Abrams, Olaf Ellefsen, Brian Copland, Louis Moss** and **Mike Lyster**. All of these are long gone, with the remarkable exception of John Downham—still an active and highly valued participant in the Research Network.

Current (ie. 2014) arguments about obesity and the wickedness of sugar may be illuminated by a 1979 Gordon Simmons survey which found that 59% of all expenditure on confectionery was made by women, 27% by men, and only 13% by children under 16. However, children ate as much as 39% of the value of all confectionery sold, and rather more, 48%, of all sugar confectionery sold. (*Parents clearly to blame, then?*)

Another survey, sponsored by Braun UK, found that being hairless (presumably in appropriate parts of the body, not the head) was thought by women to be an important part of their femininity: they wanted to be likened to the pink and white silky English Rose type, and body hair was seen as 'ape-like', appealing to the primitive senses and associated with feelings of lust, not admiration.

And 30 years ago (1984):

Gerald Hahlo responded to the request that he should provide a report on the social side of the Annual Conference by complaining that **John Wigzell** had used all the available descriptive vocabulary in his reports on the previous two years: as proof, he culled from 'Wiggy in 1982' the words "marvellous ... difficulty in balancing ... sensational ... tired and emotional ..." ; and from 'Wiggy in 1983' "debauchery ... superb delivery ... late into the night ... beautiful girls ... strenuous activity ... titivating." Superficially, Gerald wrote, it could be argued that 1984 was much the same. But he firmly asserted that in reality that year's Conference produced some of the best entertainment and liveliest participation from yet another record attendance.

And 25 years ago (1989):

In a report on a Business Research Group meeting addressed by **Mary Goodyear**, **Linda Nathan** wrote that it was a thought-provoking evening with 50 members attending. Mary's talk was followed by lively questions and a discussion in which Mary's husband **John** could not resist contributing a suggestion that, to find the appropriate decision maker in any organisation the introductory letter should be addressed to 'The Manager' and then one should either go and see where the letter ended up, or interview the person who sorted the mail. John said he himself received a vast amount of mail in this way, at which Mary retorted that this was either because he was indeed a decision maker, or a dustbin.

Harry Henry was awarded the Society's Gold Medal (joining a very select group consisting only of Dr **Mark Abrams** and **Len England**). Harry was one of the original founding fathers of the MRS, with a distinguished and sometimes controversial career in research and marketing. He wrote to MRS Chairman **Alan Morris**: "It gave me especial pleasure to learn that both the Awards Panel and the Council were unanimous—but also some surprise, as I would not have thought that I was so short of enemies. Perhaps that is a reflection of my advancing years."



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

From Christine Eborall

I'm sure I wasn't the only member of the Research Network who was sad to hear the founder of Biba, Barbara Hulanicki, on Desert Island Discs (6 December 2013) saying that all her time at Biba had been taken up with problems and she's never heard anything good about the shop until she and her husband gave up their interest in it. Only then did she happen to meet a regular customer who'd loved the shop and didn't know where she was now going to buy her clothes from!

Who knows, if she and her husband had commissioned some customer research they might have made a different decision, and the "High Street revolution" might have taken a very different direction.

Yours faithfully

Christine Eborall

We are always pleased to receive letters and articles, of whatever length, for publication in the Research Network Newsletter. Please contact Nick Tanner at editor@research-network.org.uk .

AUTUMN LUNCH AT JAMIES

The 2013 Autumn Lunch was held at Jamies Bar & Dining, close to London Bridge station, on 22nd October. For those who were unable to make it, here are some photos of what you missed. For those who *did* make it, here are some reminders of what you got up to—none too embarrassing, we hope.



ORAL HISTORY PROJECT: A TALE OF THE UNEXPECTED

Lawrence Bailey describes how his interviews have led him in new directions

It all began with a conversation at a Research Network lunch. I'd joined the Network not long before, and was marvelling at the presence of so many super-nova luminaries, all enjoying each other's company and chatting away nineteen (or even twenty) to the dozen. I found myself talking to John Downham.

As many will no doubt know, John has the most extraordinary, deep and broad knowledge and appreciation of Market Research history. I was mentally open-mouthed (if such a thing is possible), as he was telling me, with warmth and clarity, how things were done around the time I was born. What historical riches! It seemed obvious that the Network must collectively have the best fund of research industry knowledge, experience and anecdote to be found anywhere. It had to be captured. I suggested an Oral Archive of recorded interviews and volunteered (as the immediately available quallie) to collect a set of 'Desert Island Discs'-style programmes, though without the music.

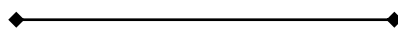


It has been utterly fascinating, and a huge pleasure, to interview Gerald De Groot, Gerald Goodhardt, Geoffrey Roughton, John Downham, John Barter, Marie Alexander, Valerie Farbridge, Martin Simmons, Liz Nelson, Ivor McGloughlin, Ted Whitley and Bill Schlackman. At each stage, I became increasingly curious to understand more about the way that market research became the business and practice that we know today.

It was the interview with Liz Nelson that nudged me over into desk research of my own. We discovered that we had both studied psychology and then done postgraduate research, psychotherapy training and qualitative market research. And Liz thought she had probably conducted the UK's first market research group discussions (on Spangles) in 1953. Amazing! I decided almost immediately that I had to find out how far back qualitative research as we know it really goes.

This unexpected diversion led me to 16 months of paper-chasing in three University libraries (Leeds, Sheffield and Leeds Met.) and in both branches of the British Library (St Pancras and Boston Spa); not to mention an interview with Emeritus Professor David Morrison, who once worked at Research International, and e-mail correspondence with Eva Balzer, a German 'quallie' who had been wondering about the same question. I'm pleased to report that it all got written up, and 'The Origin and Success of Qualitative Research' is due to appear in the March edition of the IJMR. (Reviewer: "a must-read for any researcher". Gosh! Whack me with the nearest feather.)

Thing is, this unexpected diversion, and pleasing outcome, would not have happened if the Research Network hadn't existed, so we owe ourselves collective thanks. But I especially need to thank John Downham for igniting my curiosity, Liz Nelson for pointing me to the books that started the research, and John Barter. Why the latter? Well—all our interviewees have been asked for a book recommendation, and to my surprise (which, I hope, was adequately disguised) John recommended Ernest Dichter's definitive work on motivational research, *The Strategy of Desire*. An irresistible lead!



AGM AND CHRISTMAS DRINKS

The Network AGM and Christmas Drink was held on 3rd December 2013 at TNS's offices in More London Place. Gill Wareing has already circulated minutes of the meeting to all members and a video recording of the formal proceedings is available on the Network website at <http://www.research-network.org.uk/8.html>. Photos of the event, including many of the social sessions before and afterwards, can also be found on the website.

MATCH THE MUGSHOT

From a quiz provided by Peter Bartram from 1989: match the photos below to the cherubic photos on the opposite page—answers at the foot of that page.



Peter Bartram



John Samuels



Justin Gutmann



Bob Worcester



Liz Nelson



Eric Adler



Phyllis Vangelder



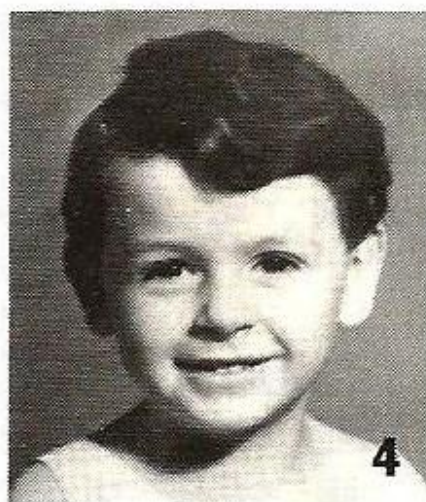
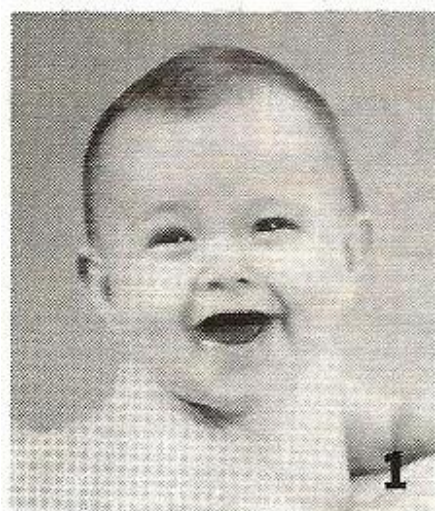
Nigel Spackman



Mary Goodyear



John Wigzell



1 C	2 E	3 J	4 F	5 A	6 K	7 D	8 G
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OUR NEW CHAIRMAN

Adam Phillips describes his background and interests

Like many people in market research, I found myself working in research by chance rather than by design. I completed a degree in Mechanical and Electronic Engineering at Cambridge in 1970 and discovered rather late that as a fully qualified rocket scientist, the only career on offer, apart from designing cars for Ford, was designing weapons. It was the height of the Vietnam War and that did not appeal as a career. A friend who had applied to Unilever to be a marketing trainee suggested I do the same. That was how I found myself working at RBL. I joined at the same time as Don Beverly. It was an interesting time and the basic research programme into research techniques, which was paid for by Unilever, meant that it was a good place to learn about researching brands.



As was common in the days when RBL/RI was owned by Unilever, I spent some time as a research officer at Batchelors Foods and as a researcher working for SOCMAR/RI Nederland in Rotterdam. In those days people did not commute around Europe in the way we do now, so my wife came with me and we produced two little Dutch boys in the three years I worked there. On returning to RBL, I decided that if I wanted to pursue a long term career in market research, as I did, I needed to work somewhere with a different ethos, less concerned with using financial capital and fixed assets and more concerned with human capital and ideas. I was therefore tempted by John Goodyear in 1983 into joining the MRB Group and Mass-Observation as Managing Director. It was a considerable change from RI and something of a shock; it was losing money and there was not much time for managing ideas, it was more important to make sure the antediluvian IBM 1130 kept working and the head of data entry did not sell the punched cards, which we were still using, to a scrap paper merchant, rather than archiving them.

Mass-Observation eventually returned to profitability in 1987 and I was rewarded with a place on the MRB Group Board. MRB Group became a subsidiary of WPP soon afterwards. In due course Mass-Observation was merged, extremely painfully and expensively, with BMRB and MRB International to create a single organisation. At about that time I became Chairman of the MRS, in the days before David Barr. It was going through one of its periods of turmoil, which used to happen regularly in those days. Sue Stoessel had just been appointed the Director General when I was elected. She did some good things for the Society, including hiring Peter Fiddick to edit the Newsletter, later Research, and creating the professional media sales and publishing operation which stabilised the finances. She and I also had the experience of dealing with the worst failure of the pre-election polls since 1945. We successfully defended the image of research from collateral damage by ensuring that the MRS took control of the investigation of what went wrong.

In 1993 I resigned the chairmanship of the MRS, after only a year, as I had to move to Minneapolis in the USA to run Winona—a company with a 250-station telephone facility in Phoenix Arizona where the chief executive had fallen seriously ill. Winona had a similar client profile to Mass-Observation and losses comparable in percentage terms to those that Mass-Observation was making when I joined it, but considerably larger in absolute terms. I restructured the company and handed it over to Simon Chadwick, who merged it with the production division of RI USA.

I returned to the UK in 1994 and set up a European research network for BMRB called Euroquest, whose primary aim was to win a new survey for the Eurobarometer project which was designed to track the impact of the launch of the Euro. Having won the project, it was cancelled after three years because the news was so bad. It has recently been revived as a result of the continuing rise in dissatisfaction with the EU. I retired from BMRB in 2000 and was planning to set up an online access panel company called Real Research. However, I was almost immediately tempted back into running a research company by Alberto Colussi who had just won the BARB contract from TNS.

TV audience measurement is an interesting business and media research is the only kind of research which has tangible value. In those days almost £3bn of advertising money was traded using the research results

directly as a currency. The problems we had with delivering data when the service was launched made the Nine O'Clock News and caused considerable stress in the industry. Recently, when working with the FSA, I was discussing what could be done to stabilise LIBOR with the team working on the report, and was surprised to find how sophisticated and hard to manipulate media currencies are compared with regular money traded on exchanges.

I left ATR in 2003 and decided to try something other than research. I joined the Press Complaints Commission as a lay member with the idea that we could get research results better reported—foolish! And also a body called the Financial Services Consumer Panel, a statutory board which the FSA (and now the FCA) has to consult about the effectiveness of its regulatory activities and the impact of its work on consumers. I chaired the Panel for four years, retiring last summer. Now, I do some work as an expert witness and Chair the ESOMAR Professional Standards and Legal Affairs Committees.

I have always enjoyed sailing and took the opportunity of my family growing up, and retiring from full time work in 2003, to do some longer distance sailing. In the last ten years I have sailed across the Atlantic, round Iceland, starting from Scotland, up the West Coast of Greenland from Nova Scotia and back to Newfoundland, explored the channels of Patagonia and sailed round Cape Horn, as well as the eastern Mediterranean, the Black Sea and the Danube.

I now have two grandchildren, with one more on the way, and am looking forward to spending more time with the family in the future.



Adam Phillips

Also promoted within M-O is **Adam Phillips** – who takes over from John Obree as Managing Director of the company. Adam joined M-O as Research Director in the early part of 1983 from the Unilever-owned Research International Group, where he had accumulated some 12 years experience post-University. While working within the Unilever Group, he spent time as a client research buyer/user with the Batchelors Foods company, as well as spending a period of time with the RI subsidiary in the Netherlands. However, the largest period of his time pre-MRBI was spent with Research Bureau Ltd.

MRS Newsletter, 1984



NATURE DIARY

Extracts from Jane Bain's Nature Diary: July-December 2013

My Picture Diary begins just as the relentlessly cold, wet winter and spring finally draw to a close. Readers who attended the Summer Party at Doggett's Coat & Badge will recall one of the first hot summer days.

July: London is gripped in a heatwave. Blackbirds dustbathe in the baked earth of the tow path and two young herons which have yet to fledge exercise their wings and pant in the hot sun in their treetop nest.

We leave the UK for a change of scene in rural France. The nearby fields are full of sunflowers and a secluded pond is home to a family of coypu (ragondins). These aliens are now very well established in France and, as with London's parakeets, local opinion about them is divided, but I enjoy watching these large rodents swimming, nibbling pond weed.



August: France is hot too, so I walk early in the day. Hares play and feed in the fields, often so preoccupied with their own activities that they come quite close before realising they are being observed.

The meadows and riverbank are home to a huge variety of butterflies, some familiar and others less so. One day I notice a spectacular 'scarce swallowtail' drifting across a patch of nettles. I discover later that, despite its name, this large butterfly is actually fairly common in southern France, but this is the first time I have seen one in the Loire Valley.



September: Back in London, the balmy weather continues and brings some surprises as far as the bird-life is concerned. Over at the Wetland Centre a pair of great crested grebes have produced a late brood of chicks and I catch a distance glimpse of the two tiny tots snuggled on their mother's back.

The summer heat has left the water level in the Leg o' Mutton reservoir very low and the carp are gasping for air. Two beautiful little egrets arrive and spend several days strutting about in the shallow water, leaping and darting at all the tiny fish and water creatures which they disturb with their bright yellow feet.





October: A family of green woodpeckers live in Chiswick Cemetery and this year's brood are just growing their adult plumage. These scruffy looking youngsters have not yet learnt to be wary of people and I quite often come across them searching for insects among the gravestones.

The yew trees in the cemetery are laden with red berries, which appear to be a particular squirrel delicacy. There is feverish activity as a host of squirrels scramble through the trees gorging themselves on the tasty morsels until eventually not a berry remains.

November: One of the great crested grebe chicks has survived and grown to adulthood. I have been following its progress closely, watching it catching fish for itself and learning to fly. At first its test flights were rather short, but now it can fly the length of its lake and is ready to leave home.



The winter storms begin and the river is lashed by ferocious winds and rain. After each storm large fallen trees sail majestically down the river, like ocean liners out of control. The PLA have secured one fallen poplar out of harm's way by the riverbank with ropes and it becomes a welcome perch for a sleepy heron.



December: The mild autumn has meant an abundance of winter food for the birds. Parakeets feast on crab apples in the park, blackbirds have a winter store of hawthorn and ivy berries and magpies use their sharp beaks to prise open the dried seed pods of ash and other trees.

There is a quiet Quaker Memorial Garden in our local park which, despite its close proximity to the busy Great West Road, is a haven for many small birds. To our delight, we discover there are tiny goldcrests spending the winter there and we occasionally manage to spot one flitting through branches of the pine trees.



RI REUNION PICNIC

Back in May 2009, a few months after it was announced that Research International and TNS were to merge, Jane Gwilliam organised a reunion picnic in Hyde Park for anyone who had ever worked at RBL, RI or any of its sister companies. On a gloriously sunny day, an estimated 300 people turned up with their picnic hampers and a jolly good time was had by all.

To celebrate the fifth anniversary of that event, another picnic is planned for Sunday 1st June 2014. The event has been publicised among RI Pensioners and on the Facebook page 'RI Memories' but if you are interested and have not seen details, please contact Jane for more information.



OBITUARIES

For the first time in this editor's memory (which, let's face it, isn't all that it was), and at the risk of tempting Providence, we are unaware of the deaths of any Network members or prominent researchers in the past six months. There are therefore no obituaries in the current edition. Let's hope it develops into a trend...



STEERING GROUP

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