



THE WAY WE ARE

In this issue, we have a full range of Research Network activity updates with reviews of the Spring Lunch and Summer Party, both very popular this year. A range of photos capture the ambiance of those social events and we also have a preview of the Autumn Lunch in October this year.

We have an interesting range of general interest articles, including Liz Norman describing how her career has evolved over the years, and Neil McPhee's observations about AI in his personal and professional life. Peter Mouncey also gives an account of previous productive collaborations between UK research sector organisations, the MRDF and RDF.

Our enjoyable regular features include Peter Bartram's reminiscences and Jane Bain's Nature Diary.

Sadly, we also have four obituaries for a range of popular and celebrated industry alumni who have left us this year: Liz Nelson, Phil Barnard, Bryan Bates and Peter Greenwood.

Please make contact to submit your own entertaining and interesting articles on any topic which interests you, or a story of your career in our industry via editor@research-network.org.uk.



AUTUMN LUNCH: 14 OCTOBER AT BRASSERIE BLANC

Our Autumn Lunch this year sees a return to an excellent venue that we first visited in 2019 and to which we returned two years ago. Brasserie Blanc Southbank, at 9 Belvedere Road, Southbank, SE1 8YP is very close to Waterloo Station and the Royal Festival Hall.



group, with French and other European influences. As we all know, London's restaurant prices have risen sharply in recent years but Jane Bain and Jane Gwilliam have negotiated an excellent deal with the management: our three-course lunch with wine costs £60 for

members and £70 for non-members.

We will have private dining rooms and on previous visits, we have found the food and service to be excellent. There is also a bar at the restaurant for our optional use.

The venue is part of Raymond Blanc's restaurant

Bookings are now open and Gill Wareing sent out the official invitation by email in mid-August. She can be contacted by email at gill@research-network.org.uk in case of queries. We look forward to seeing you there!

THE WAY WE WERE

A collection of personal recollections by Peter Bartram

International Research

Two years ago in this column, I shared stories of mishaps in delivering UK-based research results, and I hope it will not seem self-indulgent if I now draw from my own experiences to illustrate the far *geographical* reach achieved by our industry:

Africa: In 1970, I was asked by Independent Television News to set up a survey of African opinions in Rhodesia during the time of the Smith regime. All went well, using teams of interviewers from the local Research International office who went off into the distant bush, needing to secure permission from each village headman. In at least one village, they offered the headman a BIC biro as an incentive, which he gratefully received. He then removed the long polished stick inserted through his nostrils and proudly paraded up and down the main street with the BIC biro shown in its place. Not a story to be seen or repeated nowadays. One week later, the shooting started and ITN decided to stop all work on the survey. And ten years later, Neil Higgs of Research International wrote that such polls there were still "fraught with hazard" with physical attacks on interviewers by rival political groups.

Japan: When setting up a survey of Price Waterhouse clients in Japan, I was taken out to dinner by the head of the research company we planned to use there. Halfway through the meal he stiffened, drew himself upright and apologetically said "There is something I must tell you. I am not Japanese." "Oh, that's no problem," I said. "Where are you from?" "My family are from China" he replied. "Fine" I said, "And when did they come over from China?" "It was four hundred years ago" he confessed: after 400 years, he was still "not Japanese".

India: When asked to set up a series of teach-in sessions for Indian research executives in Hyderabad, a state in central India with a Muslim group ruling a mainly Hindu population, I was warned on the phone by our intended host that one could not buy alcoholic drinks in that state. "Not a problem", I said, "I can do without alcohol for a week". At which point my more perceptive wife Mary kicked me under the table and whispered "No – what he means is, for heaven's sake bring some in!" Which I did, enjoying a welcome party on arrival, with the local police cruising by until paid off with a necessary bribe.

China: In 1987, Mary Goodyear gave her impressions of the third World Advertising Congress in Beijing: "Everything was on a mammoth scale, from the auditorium seating 1,500 to the banquet in a room resembling a football pitch ... One dish consisted of jellyfish and sea cucumber (not a vegetable but a very large marine slug). Sea slugs aside, there were lots of good moments in the five-day conference: for example, rent-a-delegate locals apparently brought in off the street at the last moment to compensate for a shortfall in numbers and the small group of Chinese who laughed their way through endless re-runs of the Benny Hill Show in preference to other programmes on offer at the Thames Television stall."

These tales, and about 40 others contributed by well-known researchers, are incorporated in the book 'The Life in Research' along with about 30 relevant cartoons by famous cartoonists. It has been very well reviewed and is obtainable from the website of The Archive of Market and Social Research (www.amsr.org.uk), with the £15 cost being donated to that Archive.

Surveys in the News

Closer to home, while leafing through the MRS Newsletters from 30 and 40 years ago, I was struck by the number of surveys and their main findings that are listed there. In just one issue, that of August 1995, the 'Diary' on the last page told us of:

- An 'Options' survey which revealed that 20% of women didn't rate any politician as a potential lover.
- Audience Selection research found that 27% would be less likely to buy a product advertised by Hugh Grant; and Hays Accountancy Personnel found that 78% of UK accountants regarded Liz Hurley as their ideal woman.
- An RSGB survey for Vogue magazine found that its readers on average spent £1,956 per annum on their wardrobe.
- A survey for the BBC demonstrated the (fairly obvious?) linkage between a rise in temperature and a decline in television audiences.
- And a report by One Plus One showed that those who are married live longer, are healthier, less stressed-out and better-off than those who are not.

Similarly, in the 'Surveys in the News' page of the October 1990 Newsletter issue, we find:

- A survey commissioned by Research 2000 found 30% of AB social grade consumers saying they have boycotted the products of a company they felt was damaging to the environment.

- In their report named '1990s Briton', MAI Information Group had drawn together findings from a range of currently available studies, including NOP's FRS Expenditure Survey, NOP's Annual Alcoholic Drinks Survey, and NOP's monthly Omnibus Survey, covering health, food scares and organic produce.
- The SRA monthly survey of ownership of key consumer durables.
- A survey conducted by Consensus Research found that being 'green' was seen by 25 major companies as bringing long-term commercial advantages, even though it may be costly to implement initially.

In that issue, there are four more such excerpts from current surveys, and many more are listed in other issues of the Newsletter over the years. One is bound to ask if any reader has any such report(s) stowed away in the attic? If so, please contact the AMSR (www.amsr.org.uk) so they may be transferred and thankfully included for posterity.

A final piece of trivia from John Bound's 1985 'Diary of a Jobbing Gardener': "Did you know that the woodlouse has only three reactions to an unfavourable change in the environment? It runs, curls up, or lets everything go and drops. Just like Product Managers. Both species survive."

SPRING LUNCH AT THE STOKE HOUSE

This year's Spring Lunch on 29th April was held in a new venue for us, which was a great success. This was The Stoke House, Sir Simon Milton Square, Nova Place, 81 Buckingham Palace Road, SW1W 0AJ, near Victoria Station.

The restaurant atmosphere and friendly service were excellent at this modern steak house, which specialises in food cooked over wood fires. Following welcome drinks, we enjoyed a two-course menu with a steak main dish (with chicken or vegetarian options) and dessert with wine provided. This was very good value at £45 for members, thanks to the kind sponsorship by InsightX Research Solutions.

Apart from the excellent food, we had exclusive use of the whole ground floor restaurant, which was just as well because the attendance level was very high at around 80 members and guests.

There are more photos on the [Gallery](#) page of the website. The buzzing social atmosphere and very positive feedback we have received from the attendees means we could well go back there for a future event.



RESEARCH NETWORK: ACTIVITY UPDATE

Finances

Our finances are in balance overall and we really appreciate the annual sponsorship by **InsightX Research Solutions**, which gives us generous support. Please remember to pay your annual membership subscriptions, as we recognise that it is easy to forget when our lives are very busy. It is a very modest £35 a year but helps the finances collectively across our 200+ members.

Membership

This is being managed very efficiently by Jane A'Court with help from the current Champions who we hope will continue to build membership numbers and invite 2–3 non-members and guests to our social events, which are always the best catalyst to join. In fact, 4 new members did so from the Spring Lunch this year. As always, we need more Champions as they usually stay in the role for two years, or longer if they succeed in continuing to find new Network members. We are very pleased that Paul Russell is now on the Steering Group to help with membership development. We currently have only 4 active Champions and overall, 11 new members have joined the Network since January 2025, 6 of these via the Champions' contacts. Ideally, we need another 9 new members to meet our future target of 20 this year.

Events Programme

Following the successful Spring Lunch and Summer Party, reviewed elsewhere in this newsletter, the next face-to-face social event is the Autumn Lunch, to be held at Brasserie Blanc on 14th October 2025 (see front-page article). The AGM and Christmas Drinks will be held at the Ipsos Mori offices near Tower Hill Underground on 2nd December 2025, and full details will be sent out by Gill Wareing nearer the time. Adam Phillips is also planning a series of future NED Talks from September through to early 2026. Further details will also follow.

Website

Jane Bain is continuing to keep the website up to date and is assessing new design options. Most interest in the website, as measured by contact 'spikes', centres on photos from the social events and the following pages: Events, Membership and About Us.

Social Media

Andrew Smith is also doing a great job in increasing interest in the Research Network via social media, especially LinkedIn, from which we now have 260 followers showing interest in our events and following links to the RN website. LinkedIn posts work very well when we tag people, 'like' and comment on posts. Andrew very much encourages RN/LinkedIn members to actively follow and respond to our posts.

Oral History Project

We now have 50 live Oral History interviews on the AMSR website. We also currently have three Oral History moderators: Judith Wardle, Judy Taylor and Graham Woodham. The latest completed interview with Peter Hayes is now being edited by Paddy Costigan. The Oral History digital recordings can be accessed directly on the [AMSR website](#), and also via the link from the Research Network website. From the base of the [amsr.org.uk](#) home page, there is a direct link headed ORAL HISTORIES which takes you straight to a well designed section with access to all the archived interviews. We have been told that during May 2025, the Oral History page was the fifth most visited page on [amsr.org.uk](#), with 53 views. The website has now been updated, and during June 2025, it was the third most visited page, with 108 views.

SUMMER PARTY AT DOGETT'S

John Kelly writes:

The 2025 Summer Party was held at Doggett's Coat and Badge on 2nd July 2025; a return to one of the Network's regular venues.

The weather was overcast at the start, but very soon relented to reveal a near perfect sky and more equable temperatures, which complimented the resplendent Thames as it flowed past and the reassuring presence of St Paul's just across the river. Doggett's, as is usual, provided an excellent buffet lunch which

suited the occasion, the weather and the ambiance perfectly. The reasonable price of £35 for members was enabled by the generous sponsorship by **InsightX Research Solutions**.

The attendance, at over 60, was down on last year (which had a bumper attendance) but is clear evidence that the Network is still going strong. Perhaps, some 'regulars' understandably, may have been deterred by the prospect of travel in searing heat. The continuing strength of the Network was supported by Adam's announcement in his speech, that there were 6 new members present: Will Boyd, Neil Cattle, Richard Collins, Diego Correa, Irena Hempel and Faraz Zamyadi. In addition there were 2 guests: Duncan Dodds (Neil Cattle's guest) and Julian Pounds (Val Baker's guest).

Adam thanked **InsightX Research Solutions** for their sponsorship. He also, rightly, thanked the staff of the Doggett's for providing such a good lunch. In addition, he expressed special thanks, and not for the first time, to Jane Bain and Jane Gwilliam for their impeccable organisation.

However, it should be noted, with everything else going splendidly, that Doggett's and the Network continue to struggle with the sound system. This led to Adam Phillips emulating the feats of the Greek herald. But who hasn't suffered problems when giving a presentation!

When the clouds had rolled away and the lunch was cleared, people were able to mingle, either on the terrace or in the bar itself, with inevitable reflections on times past. However, thanks to the Network's growing list of new and younger members, the research world of today is also being well-represented and older members can learn how the current market research community has built upon and augmented their own past efforts.

I, among many others, will have had time to reflect on the contributions to market research from those who have recently passed away; surely a glass was raised, perhaps a tear shed and fond memories recalled.

As the afternoon progressed and the pleasant hum of conversation continued, it was a reminder that, despite the natural level of commercial competition, the MR world is very friendly, considerate and welcoming for those old and new, and the Research Network plays a key part in fostering this sense of community through these events, NED talks and other activities.

Can't wait for the next event – the Autumn Lunch – not to be missed! More photos on the Network's [Gallery](#).

The Research Network relies on sponsorship to keep prices low. We still need sponsors for the Autumn Lunch and next year's Spring Lunch. Sponsorship costs £500 or £1,000 depending on the event. If you are willing to sponsor an event, please let Adam Phillips know.



NATURE DIARY

Extracts from Jane Bain's Nature Diary: January–June 2025

Our erratic weather patterns are becoming the new normal. 2025 brings the warmest Spring on record, a bone-dry May and an early heatwave in June. The warm weather has been good news for butterflies. And wasps are apparently doing very well, as I painfully discover when I disturb a wasp nest under a flowerpot.

January: There is a cold snap at the start of the month and at the Wetland Centre even the larger lakes are frozen. A swan sits on the ice grooming, then cautiously stands and balances to do a final wing flap.



Walking in the cemetery I stop to watch a goldcrest, the UK's smallest bird, as it dangles from pine needles, hunting for tiny insects with its long thin beak.



February: Heavy rain at the start of the month saturates the ground. Green woodpeckers love ants and on wet days they feast on insects which have come up to the surface to escape their waterlogged homes.



There is a tiny deli near here which displays much of its produce outside. A magpie has its eye on a packet of truffled pecorino cheese. Happily the shopkeeper notices and chases the bird away before any damage is done.



March: Gulls get very aggressive during the nesting season and it is not unusual to see them chasing other birds, including much larger grey herons. Gulls are faster and more agile than herons and these big birds are quite afraid of them.



Parakeets usually nest early, but a few are still looking for suitable holes in which to raise a family. The female chooses, while the male watches on encouragingly, displaying occasionally to impress his mate.



April: Walking by the river, I see what looks like a small leaf moving up a tree trunk of its own accord. On closer inspection, the leaf is being carried by a wren, which is taking it up to a hole where it is building its nest.



Warmer weather arrives and with it more butterflies. Brimstones are one of my favourites and I am pleased to find this one feeding on cowslips at the Wetland Centre.



May: I notice an odd looking ladybird on a daisy. An internet search reveals it is a ladybird fly, a bug with a red spotted abdomen reminiscent of ladybird wings.



Loud cheeping signals the arrival in my garden of a family of great tits. The youngsters lurk in the camelia bush right outside my kitchen window, waiting for their parents to bring them food from the bird feeders.

June: Temperatures soar in the first heatwave of the year. A robin sunbathes by the reservoir, making the most of the warmth to clean and care for its feathers.



Dragonflies dart across the pools at the Wetland Centre. There is one which I haven't seen before, a Norfolk hawker, with astonishing green eyes and a brown body.

Walking early one morning while it is still cool I noticed a young fox cub, with improbably large ears, sitting on a patch of grass. It scratches, then stands up and furiously chases its tail for a few moments, before trotting back to its home in a nearby bramble patch.



UK RESEARCH SECTOR COLLABORATION: THE MRDF AND RDF

Peter Mouncey



I'm sure many members of the Research Network recall the Market Research Development Fund (MRDF), and its re-birth as the Research Development Foundation (RDF), which for nearly 20 years provided the market and social research sector with a collaborative body to investigate key methodological challenges facing the sector. The Archive of Market and Social Research (AMSR) contains 18 items that relate to projects undertaken by the MRDF/RDF (the Fund). However, these items do not tell the full story of the Fund, why it was formed and the contribution it made to providing evidence and guidance to the market and social research sector. For a complete picture you need to consult other Archive collections, including Ian Blythe's history of the MRS ('Forty Years On, The Market Research Society 1946-1986'). To make this easier, there is a comprehensive introduction on the AMSR website to the collection, including a detailed listing of where to find Fund mentions and material elsewhere within the Archive: <https://amsr.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p21050coll3/id/1240/rec/10SR>.

The Fund reports can be found at: <https://amsr.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p21050coll3>.

Why was the MRDF launched?

The concept of a new organisation came via discussions held by the MRS Research and Development Committee in 1978/1979. This Committee, first formed in 1958, investigated methodological issues, including instigating limited research projects. For example, Ian Blythe mentions an investigation into the use of hypnotism in research, leading to a ban in the UK.

So, why was the MRDF deemed necessary? In the November Newsletter for 1978 (No 152, P.8), the MRS asked members two questions: does the MRS need to do R&D; if so, what should be the topics? Members were asked to send their views to the MRS or attend an open meeting at the MRS, hosted by the R&D Committee, held on November 22nd. Unfortunately, there is no record of that meeting in the MRS Newsletter, but the aim of founding the Fund was a stated key objective of the 1979 R&D Committee in the MRS Annual Report for 1979-80, with the MRS having agreed to provide £10,000 to cover the initial year's work. This was because the need had been identified by the MRS R&D Committee to undertake projects '*beneficial to the research sector as a whole*', and to develop a mechanism for the research sector to jointly fund these projects.

In MRS Newsletter 170 (May 1980) Phyllis Vangelder interviewed Tim Bowles about the response of delegates at the 1980 MRS Annual Conference to the launch of the MRDF announced at that event. Firstly, the aim articulated by Tim Bowles was to '*harness the creativity of researchers to provide findings which increase the cost-effectiveness and relevance of research carried out*'. Conference delegates were all given cards to record their views on forming this new body and suggest topics for future projects. Nearly 100 delegates returned signed cards signifying support for the new Fund, but support was conditional for some who raised concerns about implied elitism; an academic, rather than practical orientation in projects, and whether the R&D Committee already had a list of projects. Some wanted operational evidence before committing funds. Tim Bowles countered these concerns but thought that the initial approach needed to be modest to demonstrate effectiveness and attract future financial support.

He alluded to a recent MRS survey on public attitudes towards market research as an example of a topic MRDF might cover. More on this later.

To address funding needs, Tim Bowles suggested a levy across the supply part of the sector, rather than a per project funding model - 0.5% from member companies of the Association of Market Research Organisations (AMSO) would raise £20,000 per annum. However, he envisaged an ad hoc approach as being more appropriate in initial years to convince the sector of its value. In reality, this, together with MRS financial support based on a £1 per MRS member subscription, became the funding model. He also envisaged that the MRDF would be overseen by a Board of Trustees, including representatives from sector bodies, with Prof John Treasure at City University having already agreed to be a founder member of such a Board. This Board was never formed, the MRDF becoming essentially a semi-independent working party with members primarily from the supply side, including SCPR (now NatCen) plus AURA representation, the remainder being linked to the MRS R/T&D Committee, as a member of which I first became involved in the MRDF in the 1980s.

Colin McDonald, then MRDF Chair, was interviewed by Phyllis Vangelder in March 1990 (MRS Newsletter March 1990) to commemorate the MRDF's tenth year. He felt that the MRDF should be looking more at new methodologies and their value in taking the sector forward, testing new methodologies, creating objective assessments and identifying strengths and weaknesses. He cited the MRDF experiment comparing face-to-face

and telephone approaches which demonstrated the pros and cons of both methods, and the experimental research on data fusion as past examples. The emphasis should be on '*development*'. Colin McDonald commented on how market research was good at borrowing and adapting methods developed by other 'ologies'; a further source of potential projects.

Unfortunately, the MRDF became a victim of the MRS financial crisis in the early 1990s, with the funds held by the MRS for the MRDF being used to help manage a cash flow deficit, one of several difficult decisions that the MRS Council had to make at that time. In early 1992, the Council decided to merge the MRDF with the T&D Committee and relaunch this new body as the Research Development Foundation (RDF).

Rebirth as the RDF and its final demise

So, the Fund was reborn, with a new Chair (Bill Blyth), retaining Phyllis Vangelder as the Secretary. The remit was to undertake activities of strategic value to the sector. A Plenary Committee was appointed to plan a programme of activities and oversee projects undertaken by working groups of relevant specialists, with a level of funding from the MRS. I became Chair of the RDF in 1995, outlining future plans and listing Plenary Committee members in Research (January 1996).

During this final period, the largest project ever managed by the MRDF/RDF was undertaken, a two-part study conducted 1993-98, firstly, exploring the attitudes of the public into cooperating in research (funded across the sector), and secondly, a similar investigation covering the business-to-business research sector (funded by research clients). The reports from these projects are in the MRDF/RDF collection. together with the 1997 MRS Conference paper 'Non-response and public perceptions of market research', (Richard Windle & Peter Mouncey) summarising the research among the public. This, in essence, updated the findings from the MRS sponsored survey conducted among the public in the late 1970s, details of which can be found in MRS Newsletters (October and December 1978 issues), cited by Tim Bowles in 1980 as an example of projects that the MRDF could deliver in the future. The Business Co-operation project was the first such investigation conducted within the business-to-business research sector.

The findings led to the MRS, in collaboration with other key sector bodies, setting up three task forces to identify actions that could improve satisfaction and levels of cooperation in market research:- recruitment and training of interviewers, respondent cooperation and satisfaction (general public) and increasing response levels in the B2B sector. The report prepared by the second task force ('Respondent Satisfaction Task Force: Report and Recommendations') is in the MRDF collection. The Respondent Interviewer Interface, to create a continuous cycle of improvement, is described in MRScene (March/April 2001 pages 1-3) plus a proposal to measure respondent satisfaction (Research September 2000, page 8), which got as far as an initial pilot phase undertaken by a small number of BMRA member companies.

Towards the end of the 1990s, the funding relationship with the MRS was being queried by their auditors, leading to discussions about:- where the RDF should fit in with other bodies in the UK research sector, the degree of independence it should have from MRS, how it should be funded, and the mechanism for the responsible management of these funds. These issues were never satisfactorily resolved at the time, leading to the demise of the RDF in late 1999. Latterly, the RDF had been developing a new project, applying the findings from the public/business cooperation projects, with the aim of encouraging a positive attitude towards research among younger people, working with schools and providing them with resources and materials to support existing teaching modules. This included an outline proposal for conducting a survey of schools to create a national database that schools could use as a teaching aid for questionnaire design, sampling and statistical analysis. The then 'new' internet was mentioned as a possible vehicle for conducting interviews. Gaining funding and support from across the research sector was obviously viewed as a key to success. However, times were changing. The sector was becoming more commercially competitive, with a much-reduced appetite for projects that were sector focused.

Contributions made by the MRDF/RDF

I would personally cite four major contributions made over the overall life of the Fund, in date order rather than any order of importance:-

- **1985: Survey Data and the Law.** A special issue of the JMRS (Vol.27/3, July 1985), with Mike Cooke as Guest Editor. The papers in this issue were from two seminars held by the MRDF covering the growing challenge faced by researchers – acting as expert witnesses and designing research to use as evidence in court, there being little advice and guidance available following on from a judgement by the Royal Courts of Justice confirming the acceptability of surveys as evidence (Whitford judgement).
- **1987/88: The telephone study of voting intentions.** Whilst the MRDF investigated various aspects of

telephone-based research during its early years as this interview method gained ground, this paper published in JMRS Vol. 29/4, October 1987, (Christopher T Husbands, London School of Economics), based on data collected in the run-up to the 1987 UK General Election, describes an experiment that was instrumental in providing credibility to telephone based political opinion polling in the UK. This was a joint MRDF/MRS T&D project.

- **1989: Data fusion: an appraisal and experimental evaluation.** The MRDF experiment in data fusion is described in the MRS Conference paper presented by Ken Baker, John Harris and John O'Brien at the 1989 MRS Conference which was re-published in JMRS Vol.39/1, January 1997 as one of the seminal papers included in the two issues of the JMRS commemorating 50 years of the MRS.
- **1993-98: Public/Business Co-operation in Research** – described earlier.

What if the Fund had been able to continue functioning, and adhered to the 'McDonald model' for project topics described earlier? In 1999, a new dawn emerged for research methodologies in the internet age, along with data collection via mobile devices. We now have synthetic data and AI. Back in 1999, data science was more associated with direct and database marketing, but is now integral to market research. So, with the perfect vision of hindsight, these could all have provided fertile opportunities for RDF investigations to provide the sector with objective evidence on the value of these new methodologies, as was the case with the advent of fixed-line telephone-based interviewing in the 1980s.

Peter Mouncey FMRS: *ex member, and Chair of MRS T&D Committee; MRDF Member; RDF Chair 1995–2000; MRS Chair 1990–92*

AI IN OUR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIVES – ITS USE AND MISUSE

Neil McPhee

So if this were a proper article, I would use the structure I used to use for research documents:

- Background
- Objectives
- Method
- Etc

Well, I'm not even pretending, or attempting to offer a balanced and academic review of AI in our professional and/or personal lives. Not even close. People like Ray Poynter have done or can do that better. (Sorry Ray, you had better not read any further!)

I don't like it (AI that is). I don't want it in my personal life and while sadly my professional life is over, if I were still working, I wouldn't have much time for AI there either. Let me tell you why. But first allow me to set the scene so you know what I am on about here.

Yes, there may well be applications for repetitive and mechanical tasks about which I know very little. There may be some applications in the healthcare arena, for example, where keyhole surgery could be vastly improved by AI.

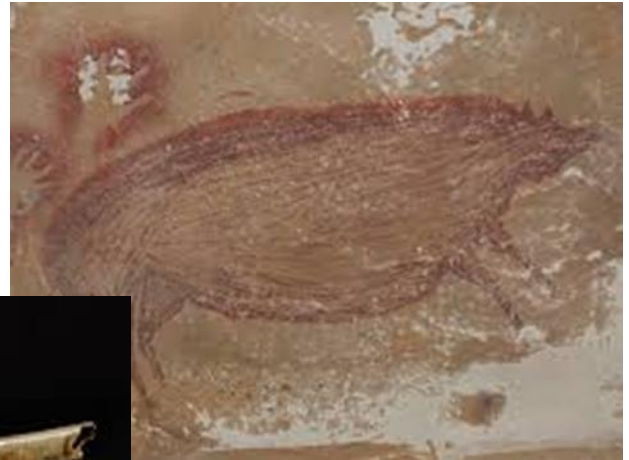
However, I have been asked to focus on my personal and professional context. Personal in my terms means primarily (as far as AI is concerned) music and music related things as well as the normal day-to-day aspects of my life. My professional life means (or meant, and I will focus on that) Qualitative Research, Ethnography and more general interface with people, all of which contextualise and inform the ways in which people behave, interact, feel and make decisions.

For the music context, many of you will know of my passion for listening, creating and playing music, along with my interest in musicology in general. This has been part of my life since I became a teenager at the turn of the early 1960's. Over the years, I have tried to study music worldwide, as well as learn about how it is made, used, transmitted and how it influences our lives, again worldwide. Some of you will have heard me speak on this during a couple of Research Network Talks or read my views and experiences in the Research Network Newsletter. I have watched or listened to 'local' musicians play in the UK, Europe, America, South Africa and India.

The Human Condition

The world's oldest known cave painting, a figurative depiction of a wild pig, has been discovered in Indonesia, dating back at least 51,200 years. The oldest known musical instruments are bone flutes, specifically those found in the Geissenkloosterle Cave in Germany, dating back 42,000 to 43,000 years.

These are the known ones that have been professionally dated. There may very well have been even older examples, yet to be uncovered and certainly, if musical instruments can be dated 42,000 years back, it is almost definite that music, whether recognisable singing, chanting or other vocalisations, goes back even further. This would pre-date instrumentation and is impossible to date since early instrumentation was mostly made from perishable materials and has long since disappeared.



Equally certain is that the tradition of verbal storytelling, involving an element of creativity just like music and paintings, is just as old or even older. Storytelling is inherent to

cultures worldwide. So, we can be confident that creativity in the form of visual and auditory communications has always been a major part of our 'human condition'.

The point of this is to emphasise that as humans, we are driven (some people more than others) to reach out to other people: to express some of our emotions, to tell other people things that we wish to share, all being simply to build a communications bridge with others...to empathise.

Because we can and we need to.

This is the essence of what I believe my professional and personal lives have been about. I make absolutely no claims to be a hidden musical genius, far from it, but from early on when I wrote my very first song, I felt the desire to play it to someone (probably the girl about whom I wrote it!). To share whatever emotion was involved and truthfully, to get their approval, interest or enjoyment.

I stood on stages or sat in parties, pubs and clubs as an amateur folkie in the latter 1960's doing just that. Likewise at school, where I wrote short stories and would bore friends with a summary! I just wanted to share these humble offerings.

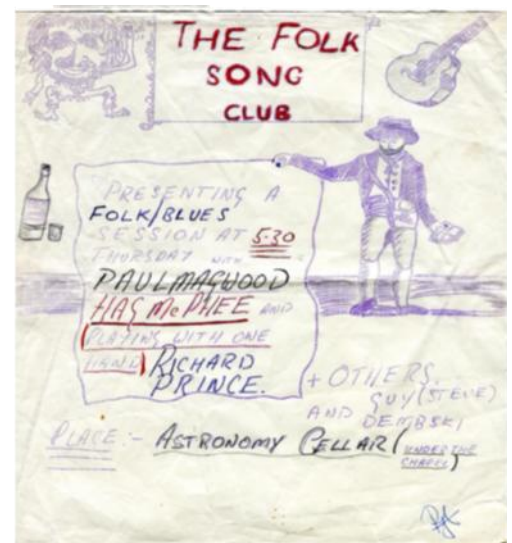
Throughout my teens, usually to be found carrying a guitar around like hundreds of thousands of others in the 1960s ferment of change, I had an uncountable number of random conversations with strangers on buses, in the street, at parties, wherever I was, often about music. But once outside a hospital in the countryside (to see a very ill girlfriend) I spoke about the behaviour of a field of pigs (this guaranteed me a free seat on the bus!). Did you know they can wag their tails? So cute! They wag their tails like puppies!

This still happens to this day. I have a compulsion to talk to people. Guess what...I got my first job in a market research agency which seemed happy to pay me to...yes, talk to strangers! And so, it went/ goes on.

My point is this...

The Emperor's New Clothes

To be a genuine (and therefore good) qualitative researcher, musician, poet, writer, artist...we all have the same qualities of wanting or needing to engage with others. This is to create a **communications bridge** with another human being. To feel and utilise that essence of our humanity and shared commonality of existence.



To make contact with another person at a deeper level.

There are plenty of examples in all these (and more) fields of the *ersatz* and that is at best, how I see AI. It might look the same, even sound the same, but the core essence is always going to be different. We actually care about making the connection, and about the genuine understanding we share or exchange. AI simply learns and parrots – or even parodies responses.

I want someone to listen to my songs and detect my emotions, and I once had the great pleasure of playing some songs to someone I didn't know well and who became a good friend after I had played some music... priceless.

I want to interview a respondent and gain a real insight into them, and for them to know in their hearts that I have heard them and understood what they tried to tell me. Like the lady who told me she felt as if she'd been to a therapist after an extended interview about her reasons for giving up smoking (very personal and emotional).

AI simply can't do this because it is not human. It may parody a human being, but it is the equivalent (WARNING, look away now if you are easily offended!) of the difference between making love with another human or with a life-like robot! (or so I have been told).

Maybe AI can process zillions of bits of data, offer word analysis stats, create a track that sounds like Roy Orbison or Buddy Holly, look like a Renoir but it won't be real. The essence of what the actual creators' emotions would have been, is simply not there. It can't be. It just can't. Many hugely well-known musical artists are now on record as opposing the absence of legal protection for their works by Government legislation protecting their copyrights from Generative AI usage, including Sir Paul McCartney and Sir Elton John.

It really has got to that stage. Furthermore, there is evidence that the increasing use of Generative AI is having a negative impact on our abilities for critical thinking, memory and decision-making. "The greatest worry in these times of generative AI is not that it may compromise human creativity or intelligence," said psychologist Robert Sternberg at Cornell University, who is known for his work on intelligence, "but that it already has."

AI also disrupts our reality by flooding social media et al with absolute rubbish, and often patently false rubbish, both visual and textual. Worse still, Mark Zuckerberg has recently said that the world's "loneliness epidemic" can be alleviated by people finding friendship with "a system that knows them well and that kind of understands them in the way that their feed algorithms do". In other words, we replace friendships with humans, with an AI system.

Oh, do come on. Get real. This is such patent nonsense. He wants more money, that's all.

We must guard against the pervasiveness of not wishing to be seen as out of step with progress. AI is very clever, but it is a set of learning algorithms. That's all. IT'S NOT HUMAN. Period.

"I'm Sorry Dave. I'm Afraid I Can't Do That"

We are humans. Our essence, our abilities and our needs are to reach out to others, to create sympathetic or empathic relationships, to exchange emotions, to feel and really understand how others are/were feeling and reacting. This is what makes us and our offerings in (my) professional and personal life unique. Likewise in Qualitative Research in general, our task is to meet with other human beings and explore how they think, feel, behave, and make decisions.

In short

I am happy for you to disagree, but it won't make me change my mind because my objections to its use go far beyond any developmental or potential benefits of AI. It's about being human. I am happy being human. I thoroughly enjoy and am compelled to have the series of random exchanges with total strangers that makes up my/our lives. I can't stop or help this need. And I am surely not the only one reading this article who feels this way.

I have just returned from a month's trip to South Africa, visiting family and exploring the coast from Pietermaritzburg to Cape Town, to the Wine Route and elsewhere. I lost count of the number of lovely people I spoke to in 4 weeks, but a couple in their 90's are high on my list. She was Irish and he was a South African, and I talked to them in a pub garden. Twenty minutes later I knew lots about their lives. She (Aileen) emigrated there in the early 60's. He was born in South Africa and so on.



(Photo: Table Top Mountain view ©Neil McPhee)

Our Airbnb hosts in another location, Anne was born and bred in Cape Town, has had 3 skin cancer operations and her husband hates gardening.

The Zimbabwean waiter (likely a Shona I am told, but I am not certain) in the Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens café who knew enough about the UK to ask if I wanted “builder’s tea” and had spent time in London...and so on.

I could and did repeat such random conversations for most days I was travelling.

(Photo: Giraffes on game drive on the TALA Reserve ©Neil McPhee)

The same applies to being here in the UK. Why? I like talking to people and they seem to feel able to tell me things about themselves. Just like being back at work! I absolutely need these aspects of my humanity to feel part of the human race.

I don’t want or need AI, clever or not, to replace any part of my professional life or my personal life. If I want to write a letter, I am perfectly capable of doing so without assistance from CoPilot. If I wanted to analyse an interview, I was and am, perfectly happy to do so without help.



Might it cost my client more or take longer? Conceivably, but it would be genuine human to human input/output, with whatever real insight I may be able to muster (which after all is what we based our skills pitch on), and not an *ersatz* version, which looks like, feels like but isn’t any more than a set of algorithms.

Thanks, but no thanks. Take me as I am, reject me and my offerings; that’s your choice, but I will opt to be human.

Live Long and Prosper. But remember, even Mr Spock had a human side.

© Neil McPhee, retired Quallie, semi-retired amateur muso and full-time over-talkative human being.



A JOURNEY THROUGH INSIGHT: 43 YEARS OF MARKET RESEARCH, RECRUITMENT AND THE IMPERATIVE OF DIVERSITY

Liz Norman

Introduction

Forty-three years ago, I began a career that has traversed the complex, ever-evolving landscape of Market Research, today commonly known as Insight. I have loved working with the many different individuals and personalities within the profession: curious, innovative, liberal and with integrity. Dyslexic right from the start, I was interested in recognising and championing diversity in all its forms, set against the backdrop of a profession that has itself transformed beyond recognition.

An early passion for creativity, an analytical mind and an instinctive curiosity about people and business have driven me on. From my foundational years as a young analyst, through the exhilarating challenge of building a recruitment agency, to watching the profession become ever more global and multifaceted, I have witnessed, and influenced the ways in which our sector values not only numbers, but the diversity of thought, background and experience that truly fuels insight.



Early Influences: Creativity Meets Commerce

Growing up, my heart was set on advertising. The roles of Planner or Account Executive lit my imagination, blending the artistic with the strategic in ways that felt endlessly exciting. With an A-level in Art, creativity was my natural medium, yet the commercial world beckoned. My family, a lineage of self-employed entrepreneurs, instilled in me a belief that creative energy could, and should find expression in business.

Encouraged by a marketing lecturer to do an MRS Diploma, I then did a placement year at IBM, within their Market Research department. The timing was fortuitous; IBM was debating entry into the PC market - a decision that as history shows, proved monumental. My tasks were a mix of desk research, competitive intelligence and a smattering of small-scale surveys, offering a window into how businesses gather and interpret information. IBM's culture left a lasting impression:- hierarchical and paternalistic, it was a world where junior staff existed at the periphery of big decisions. I recall wondering if my absence would even be noticed, until one day, I was entrusted to deliver top-secret PC launch news to regional offices, a rare brush with the company's inner workings.

From IBM, I joined Media Audits, a Media Analytics firm, at a time when jobs were scarce and opportunities precious. There, 'Market Researcher' was the job title, though the reality was more about collecting retail spend data by TV area than traditional research. It was a heady, sociable environment - long lunches, parties, client entertainment - and while the work was less engaging, the culture was unforgettable.

Navigating Dyslexia and the Challenges of Entry

My journey has always been shaped by the realities of dyslexia, first diagnosed at age twelve. In the early 1970s, it was rare for a state school to recognise such differences; rarer still to offer meaningful support. Despite coming top in my borough for the 11+ maths paper and excelling in further maths and economics, English language was an obstacle - I failed my O-level at the first attempt. The absence of spell checkers made the idea of a creative role in business feel daunting.

Still, I remained determined to find a commercial outlet for my creative strengths, and though I briefly considered art school, I knew that the security and entrepreneurial thrill of business called more strongly.

Serendipity and Career Pivots: From Analyst to Recruiter

While at Media Audits, I revisited the idea of a career in Planning, Qualitative Research or perhaps moving Client-side. An advertised opportunity with Birds Eye led me to a small Marketing Recruitment Agency called Mainstream. Although my background wasn't deemed suitable for the Client-side role, Mainstream gave me the opportunity to choose between an offer from AGB (now Numerator) as an Account Handler - a large respected firm, or train with them as a Recruitment Consultant - a leap into the unknown with a team of four.

My father's advice was pivotal: "Do what you think you will love. If you enjoy it, you'll be good at it and success will come." The logic resonated. Analysing people felt infinitely more interesting than crunching numbers and recruitment offered the tantalising prospect of helping others discover their ideal professional fit - perhaps even that elusive Planning role for myself.

I joined Mainstream in 1985, employed to support the founders John and Peter, in recruiting Junior Marketing and Sales Personnel. I learned by shadowing their interviews, initially terrified by the prospect of assessing candidates with more experience and confidence than I possessed. In the end, I didn't ever recruit for a conventional marketing role; instead, Mainstream handed me "odd marketing roles that involve numbers," unappealing to them but fascinating to me. With very little competition in this market, it quickly took off.

Building a Niche: Market Research Recruitment in the 1980s

Determined to prove myself as a 360 degree recruiter, I worked tirelessly to build my own Market Research desk. I leveraged Client side and a growing network of Advertising and Research Agencies that were realising the limits of their own contacts to recruit. The recruitment landscape was dramatically different then: Research News, the then-dominant job board, published monthly, and the fastest marketing publications still required weeks of lead time for advertising. There was no instant access to talent without the right connections.

My daily routine was a study in persistence: cold calling organisations, compiling a Rolodex, and maintaining a pile of meticulously annotated CVs. The recruitment process itself was glacial by today's standards - posting job ads, waiting weeks for magazine publication, then even longer for candidate responses and physical CVs, followed by handwritten notes and postal submissions to clients. Six weeks might pass before a candidate's application reached a client.

Speed was of the essence and so my strongest candidates often came not from ads, but from headhunting and word-of-mouth. In this analogue age, your network was your lifeline. I remember once, nervously calling a candidate's office, and when pressed for my surname by the receptionist, glancing out of the window of my Windsor office and giving 'Liz Windsor', a name clearly not believed and resulting in a hasty hang-up!

Seeing Beyond Traditional Career Progression

One thing struck me about Recruitment Agencies of that era:- their rigid focus on linear career progression. If you were an Account Developer, the goal was to find you a Senior Account Handler role; if a Research

Executive, then a Senior Research Executive position. This boxed candidates into silos, overlooking the breadth of skills and ambition within the Market Research world.

My own frustrations, having been pigeonholed as a 'numerate analyst' rather than someone fascinated by people, informed my conviction that recruitment should recognise and facilitate this diversity. Clients too, deserved access to a wider pool of talent than the industry's narrow focus allowed.

Entrepreneurship and the Birth of ENI

Driven by this vision, I resolved to establish an agency that saw the market differently - a firm that championed the diversity of skills and roles within the sector, rather than pursuing the obvious.

Location was key: I wanted to be based in London, making it easy for candidates from a wide range of backgrounds and employers to meet me.

To finance my venture, I sold my Chiswick flat, then as now, a bold move for someone early in their career, and borrowed £20,000 from Barclays. I still remember presenting my business plan, neatly packed in a plastic bag, to the Windsor branch manager. In the summer of 1989, after four years with Mainstream, I found myself waiting at a bus stop in Windsor, newly resigned and without a company car to take me home.

Start-up Realities: From Lounge to Office

The early days of entrepreneurship were solitary. I worked from my Shepherds Bush lounge for six weeks, but my unexpected enthusiasm for ironing and hoovering made it clear that I needed a more professional environment. Long before co-working spaces were commonplace, I moved into a vast serviced office in Hammersmith - overkill for a one-person operation. My setup was minimal:- a tiny home desk, a computer and a solitary second chair for interviews.

Yet these were formative times. The shared kitchen was a hotbed of advice and camaraderie, with fellow entrepreneurs offering programming tips and accounting guidance. The most notable tenant was Pamela Stephenson - at the time newly married to Billy Connolly - who was launching the charity 'Parents for Safe Food.' Her networks included a close friend of Prince Charles and Jenny Agutter, but it was Pamela's surprising shyness that left an impression.

Soon, I realised even this wasn't enough. The urge for collaboration led me to hire a part-time PA. By December 1989, the business had built sufficient momentum to break even, and I rewarded myself with a holiday to Kenya. The late 1980s were not an easy time to build a business, but I revelled in the challenge, spending mornings on the phone and afternoons cycling to Richmond for a swim.

The Expansion of Diversity: Market Research Goes Global

The 1990s ushered in seismic shifts. In the mid-80s, in-house research teams were almost exclusively UK-focused. That changed rapidly; by the early 90s, international responsibilities were the norm, alongside a dramatic increase in cross-border movement. Immigration rules were looser, enabling a vibrant two-way flow of talent. The UK welcomed professionals with analytical and data skills, especially from Asia, while UK researchers found opportunities abroad, valued for their brand and strategic expertise.

This new globalisation offered ENI the opportunity to recruit internationally, a new sort of 'diversity'. Research professionals in Asia weren't prepared to disclose their salaries until an offer had been made.

ENI opened its first office in Sydney in 2000, after a week's holiday highlighted the fact that there weren't strong specialist recruiters in the country. Within a couple of years, ENI had offices in Melbourne, Sydney, Beijing and Singapore. The opportunity to meet Researchers from very different cultures was fascinating, but 12 years later, I wanted to spend more time in the UK. Time zones were challenging and a recession in the UK meant that I decided to retrench and work just out of the UK. When I first visited the region, communication was limited to sending faxes by landline, but by 2012 it was easy to communicate internationally without staying up half the night. In addition, movement between countries to work was becoming harder as everyone tightened their immigration requirements.

Diversity as an Enduring Thread

Throughout my career, an interest in diversity has been the constant thread binding each chapter together. It has never been only about ethnicity or gender, although those are vital dimensions, but also diversity of thought, skill sets, outlook and experience. The profession's very strength lies in its mosaic of perspectives, enabling Research and Insight teams to see beyond their own horizons and deliver richer, more actionable understanding.

In Recruitment, this has meant advocating for candidates whose CVs might not fit the traditional mould, but

whose potential for creative problem-solving or cultural fluency was clear. It has meant working with clients to broaden their criteria, recognising that the best insight often comes from the unexpected, the outsider, or those with “non-traditional” career paths.

Over the decades, I have seen the industry grow more inclusive, although as in all sectors, there is still work to be done in areas like age and disability. What is a concern is that the profession of Insight is diversifying rapidly and in danger of splitting into many different parts. This year, the ENI census of the profession had over 1000 respondents with over 350 different job titles, from a huge range of different employers. The challenge for the profession is the inclusion of multiple different approaches and techniques. This is to see the newer and innovative approaches as exciting new aids to work with, rather than competition and a threat to traditional research. If it doesn’t do that, the profession is in danger of losing its powerful voice, the ability of those within it to move into roles that best suit their skills, and for clients to access the best talent.

Lessons Learned and the Road Ahead

Looking back on forty-three years, the greatest lesson has been the value of curiosity; about people, business, about the world at large. Insight remains fundamentally about understanding:- not only what people do, but why they do it and how organisations can respond wisely.

Equally, the most rewarding aspect of recruiting for this profession has been helping others discover their own strengths, take risks and cross boundaries between roles, sectors and countries. The joy lies in seeing candidates thrive in unexpected places, along with clients benefiting from talents they might never have considered.

Conclusion

The journey from Analyst to Agency Founder and Recruiter has been rich with challenges and rewards, marked by a continual quest to expand the boundaries of opportunity for both clients and candidates. Diversity of background, of thought and experience remains the lifeblood of the Market Research profession. As the industry continues to evolve, its future will depend not only on what we know, but on whom we invite to join the conversation.

Forty-three years in, I remain as fascinated by people, as passionate about creativity in commerce, and as convinced of the power of diversity as I was on day one. The profession has changed beyond recognition, but at its heart, the search for insight and the belief that everyone has something unique to contribute beats stronger than ever.

PS. Running ENI has been an exciting and interesting challenge – we have been privy to three murders! For another different article...

PHILIP BARNARD 1941–2025



Adam Phillips writes:

Philip Barnard, or Phil as he was known to everyone who worked with him, was one of the most successful members of the generation of market research agency heads who built the emerging business of British commercial market research into the global enterprise it is today. He was less well-known outside the business than Tony Cowling or Bob Worcester, because the company in which he started working, and eventually led, was always owned by a larger organisation, initially Unilever, then briefly Ogilvy and Mather and finally, WPP.

Phil was born in County Antrim, Northern Ireland in August 1941, where his father was serving in the army during WW11. After the war, he grew up in Windsor where his father owned a small car repair business. He went to Windsor Grammar School for Boys, followed by 3 years at Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge University, studying Natural Sciences (Biology), followed by a further post graduate year studying Experimental Psychology. At Cambridge, he met and married his wife, Jeannie. Also, by chance, he met someone working at Unilever who suggested that the relatively new field of market research might interest him. He accordingly decided to join Research Bureau Ltd (RBL) as a graduate trainee instead of his other options of being an academic or medical doctor.

He became a senior manager at RBL after 9 years during this period when RBL built its non-Unilever business to a 40% level. The company expanded its RBL offices to France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and

Belgium. In 1973, Eileen Cole, Chairman of RBL, took on the task of establishing the European Market Research Group (EMRG), branded Research International (RI). Eileen and Phil moved to Rotterdam to run the RI head office and Phil lived in Scheveningen for 5 years with Jeannie and their two sons. During that time, he became involved with ESOMAR, helping to design and establish regular measurements of the size of the market research industry.

After 5 years in the Netherlands, the head office moved to London and Phil moved with it, but in 1984 he moved to Germany to become Chairman of IVE/Research International, returning three years later to take over as Chairman of Research International UK.

By 1985, RIUK had become a profitable and innovative set of self-sufficient agencies in the top five global research companies by revenue. In 1986, Research International was sold to the Ogilvy Group. Eileen Cole retired and Phil took over her role as global chairman.

Phil now embarked on an expansion programme, making acquisitions to fill the gaps in RI's global coverage, including USA. Meanwhile, Martin Sorrell, Chairman of WPP acquired the Ogilvy Group in 1989, including Research International. WPP already owned J Walter Thompson, acquired in 1987, along with its market research chain, the MRB Group, built around BMRB in the UK. Millward Brown was added to the research agency portfolio and eventually, the three research agencies were merged into a new company called Kantar, for which Phil was made Chairman and Chief Executive in 1993. This merger ran smoothly and was in the top three global research agencies by revenue when Phil retired in 1999.



He retired with Jeannie to a small village in Exmoor where he established the village store and settled down to enjoy their rural life for the next 25 years. Phil continued to work with the University of Arlington in Texas on their graduate research programme. The university has established funding to create the Philip Barnard Scholarship for students pursuing a Master of Science in Marketing Research (MSMR) degree.

Phil had an ideal management style; he had a good memory, was highly intelligent, personable, down to earth and approachable. He was always very fair even when making tough business decisions, and he believed in training and developing his staff in a culture of clear positive values. He actively enjoyed research, even when in very senior positions. Also, while in many ways, he was a 'classic Unilever manager', he was also very entrepreneurial and willing to take risks when he thought it was right to do so.

In building Kantar, he modelled ways of working which depended on 'human capital', and it is a tribute to his leadership that the organisation has held together and prospered, and that Research International has a thriving alumnus group with over 400 members who stay in contact and get together regularly, even though the company was discontinued when TNS joined the Kantar group in 2008. Many RI alumni have posted eulogies in praise of Phil, especially focusing on his personal likeability as well as his business expertise.

Philip Barnard died on 22 May 2025, leaving his wife Jeannie and two sons Ian and Scott.

BRYAN BATES 1931–2025

Content adapted with thanks to MRS Research Live (Peter Hutton and the AMSR):

Bryan Bates went to school at Wallington Grammar School and later attended the London School of Economics (LSE) where he gained a BSc and MSc. Following this, he did national service in the RAF and then joined the British Market Research Bureau (BMRB) in 1956, rising to director 10 years later.

He was appointed as director of a BMRB subsidiary specialising in international research in 1968, then becoming president of a further subsidiary which he set up in Milan, followed by another similar position in Bombay in 1971. In 1976, he became Managing Director of BMRB and was joint Chief Executive when it merged with MBL and Mass Observation to form MRB International.

He joined MORI as International Research Director, and 2 years later, the company was restructured, comprising three research sub-groups, with Bryan leading the International Group, becoming involved with ESOMAR at the same time as a council member from 1978. In 1991, he became Director General and in 1993, he founded the European Federation of Associations of Market Research Organisations (Efamro) which he led for 10 years until his retirement in 2004.



Bryan also co-founded the Market Research Benevolent Association (MRBA) in the UK in 1978, and was also a trustee until his retirement.

Bryan held senior roles in the UK Market Research Society (MRS) over many years, being elected as Chairman in 1975, having served on its council and been chairman of its meetings committee. He did a great deal to enhance the quality and standards of market research in the UK and beyond, via his European connections. He was also a very active member of the Archive of Market and Social Research (AMSR), serving as chairman of the contents committee.

Peter Hutton, among many others, remember Bryan as a kind, good humoured and modest man who, as his engagement in many overlapping careers and organisations indicates, was very generous with his time. He is remembered as "quietly getting on with organising things that made a significant and lasting impact on the market research industry in the UK, Europe and many other parts of the world."

Peter Hutton, the author of the original version of this obituary, was deputy managing director of Mori and then co-founder and MD of BrandEnergy Research Ltd.

PETER GREENWOOD

Linda Henshall writes:

Peter Greenwood, affectionately known to us all as PG, died on 12th May after a long illness. His funeral and service of thanksgiving was held in Great Missenden on 9th June, and our condolences go to his wife Susan, along with his sons John and Christopher and their families.

Peter served as the Publishing Director at the Market Research Society until his retirement at the end of 2006. During his tenure, he was instrumental in the success of the monthly print magazine, *Research*, and its associated quarterly supplements, such as *Research in Business*.



Peter's leadership saw the MRS portfolio thrive, and he became a well-known figure in the research industry, engaging with numerous business owners and advertisers. His contributions extended beyond his professional role. He was a beloved member of the MRS staff, known for leading social activities, including many memorable Christmas events. Peter's legacy at the MRS is marked by his dedication, charisma and the positive impact he had on both the organisation and its people. He will be deeply missed by all who had the pleasure of working with him.

A former work colleague said, "What can I say about PG that has not already been said or thought? To me, PG was much more than a boss or mentor; he was a dear and close friend. He lit up the room, kept people entertained with his stories, had effortless charm that could put you at ease in a split second, and he knew more about red wine than anyone else on the planet. The world certainly seems emptier without him, lost but for ever loved".

Another of his friends said "Peter gave selflessly, never seeking recognition, but always leaving a profound impact on those proud to call him a friend. As we say goodbye, let us all thank you for your friendship, your laughter and your love. Thank you for the countless ways you shaped the lives of so many. Rest peacefully, dear friend, as your memory remains a part of so many; cherished and celebrated for the beautiful soul you will always be. Let us not dwell solely on the sorrow of your passing, but instead embrace our gratitude for having shared a part of your journey".

Another friend writes: "PG came into market research after having a long career in Fleet Street, where he honed his skills in advertising and much more."

On joining the MRS, PG changed the focus of the advertising function with notable success. He developed a friendly and efficient team around him and that legacy lived on for many years after his retirement. He was an excellent ambassador for the MRS and was at ease with everyone and in any environment. It was here that he excelled and where I came to know him.

It soon became clear that we shared a love of cricket, but his was more passionate than mine. He was kind enough, through his MCC membership, to source tickets for me and a motley crew to attend the 2nd day of the Lords Test (almost every year of the last 30!) and was happy to join us for an 'Executive' glass at tea and more besides. In 2003, PG and I attended all five days of the Sydney Test vs Australia. Needless to say, at the

end of each day we were suffering from 'Executive Stress'! It was in a good cause that year, as England won!

PG was unfailingly charming, compassionate and mindful of others. He was excellent company and above all, a true gentleman.

Peter was born in Palmerston North, New Zealand, where his father Brigadier Jack Greenwood was serving and stationed with his wife Diana. After the war, they moved back to England when Peter was aged 4 and he went to boarding school at Seaford College.

After leaving school, Peter joined the army, where in a moment of questionable judgement by his superiors, he was taught to drive a tank. It was a skill he never forgot.

As many of us know, PG also had a deep love of rugby, and he especially cherished his trips to Paris to support England, and of course, large glasses of red wine, which Peter always called an 'executive'.

Because he loved his cricket, 15 years after first joining the club, Peter was named 'Captain of Pelicans', a role he carried out with pride, humility and a dry, reassuring sense of humour. So important was the club to him that the family home was named 'Pelicans'. He once played alongside Ted Dexter, the England cricket captain in 1972.

He also loved his bi-annual holidays in Cyprus. There, you would find him lounging by the pool in the quiet zone, working on a deep tan.

Peter touched so many of our lives; I can't hear his name without thinking how immaculately dressed he always was, with his suits, matching tie and pocket handkerchief.

DR ELIZABETH NELSON OBE 1931–2025

The following draws on obituaries published on Research Live and in the AMSR Newsletter. Nick Tanner writes:

Liz Nelson, who co-founded Taylor Nelson & Associates (later TNS and ultimately merged into Kantar), has died at the age of 94. She was also a founding patron of the Archive of Market and Social Research (AMSR) and a long-standing member of the Research Network.

Liz was born and educated in the USA but came to England to take a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology at Maudsley Hospital, University of London. She is credited with having conducted the first group discussion to be held in this country and in 1965 co-founded Taylor Nelson. As the company expanded, she became Chair of the Taylor Nelson Group, working alongside Group MD Tony Cowling. She had a particular interest in the social values of consumers and developed the Monitor service that measured changes in consumer values and specialised in social value segmentation. Liz remained a central figure in the company until 1992.



She was honoured for her work by the MRS, of which she was a Founder Member. In 1993 she was awarded its prestigious Gold Medal for exceptional services to the market research profession, and in 2019 the Society established The Liz Nelson Award for Social Impact, a prize given in recognition of projects that have benefited deserving causes, had a positive impact on society and demonstrated the use of market and social research outside the commercial sphere.

Together with John Downham and Geoffrey Roughton, Liz was a co-founder of the Archive of Market and Social Research (AMSR) and a designated Founder Patron. She was Chair of the Archive's Board of Trustees until her retirement in March 2022, when she was appointed as an Honorary Trustee. She was immensely influential in the development of the Archive and prescient in her understanding of its effect. She advised from the very beginning that the Archive should be fully digital.

Liz's achievements in the public sphere, both within the industry and in the wider social arena, were formidable. She was, inter alia, CEO of the Princess Royal Trust for Carers, Chair of the Marketing Group of Great Britain, Chair of the South London NHS Trust, Non-Executive Director of the Royal Bank of Scotland and Vice-Chair of the Open University. She received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Women Who Make a Difference International Women's Forum in 2011. She was awarded honorary doctorates from City University and the Open University, and honorary fellowships from City and Guilds and the University of Roehampton. In 1997, she received an OBE for services to eco-labelling.

Jane Frost, chief executive of the MRS, said: "Liz was one of the greats of the research sector, not only a successful business woman in the partnership that built TNS, but an indefatigable supporter of the MRS as a fellow and being elected to the main board again just a few years ago.

"She was that rare person – absolutely nice through and through, she always had a smile for MRS staff and never failed to say thank you or drop a line of praise about things she saw. I will miss her smiles and enthusiasm."

Some personal memories from Phyllis Vangelder (first published in the AMSR Newsletter):

"I am overwhelmed by Liz's achievements and her outstanding contribution to the market and social research profession, but when I think of her, it is as a cherished friend. It is a cliché to talk of someone 'lighting up a room', but Liz did infect everybody who heard her unique laugh/chuckle with joy. When you met Liz, you knew it was going to be a fun, happy time.

Even when her short-term memory had declined, we would have lunches lasting several hours when we laughed and reminisced about 'life in research'. Her long-term memory remained amazing. When I couldn't recall the author of a ground-breaking paper from the 1950s on women and careers, she came out with 'Rena Bartos' without a moment's hesitation.

I have never known anyone so positive and enthusiastic as Liz. She never said anything negative about a person, an event or even an academic paper. When I worked with Jim Rothman on the Journal of the Market Research Society, he expressed his reluctance to send a paper to Liz for review, because she would always find something good to say about it! This is not to negate her academic rigour – she was passionate about good quality research and deplored the current fashion for 'do-it-yourself' surveys – but she would always try to see the best in everything.

I had known Liz for many years, as one does in a closely-knit industry, but we became close friends when I went with her to Goa on a yoga retreat. We shared a tree house; she was downstairs and I was upstairs and I came down one morning to find her on the veranda making notes on the back of an envelope (she always made notes on the back of envelopes, and I never knew if they were simply aides-memoire or would later be transcribed into documents). Her notes that morning were about the possible formation of an archive of market and social research. Was I interested? What a question! It was because of Liz that I am now so involved in the Archive.

She will be remembered by her friends and colleagues for her charm, warmth and joie de vivre. We shall all miss the inimitable laugh that meant Liz was around."



STEERING GROUP

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