



Harkness Report

The Newsletter of the Harkness Fellows Association

The first part of this year's newsletter is devoted to William Plowden, who died last year. William had a 50-year involvement with Harkness Fellows. It began in 1958/9 when he was awarded a fellowship on completing his Ph D at Cambridge to go to the University of California in Berkeley.

It was resurrected when he joined the national selection committee in the 1980s; reinforced by his appointment as Director of the UK Harkness programme based in New York from 1988/91; and continued as Senior Adviser to the programme in London from 1991-98. And for the last decade and a half, as Secretary of the HF Association, he was, as Timothy Hornsby, chair of the HFA noted in his tribute sent out on 30 June 2010: "a fount of knowledge about past members, had a enormous range of contacts which proved very useful to us in organising our events programme, and acted in effect as conscience to the old Fellowship as we fought to keep the flame alive."

Praise for William's contribution to the fellowships poured in to Harkness HQ, London, following the tribute from Timothy Hornsby. To pick out just two: "William and Harkness just always went hand in hand", from Naomi Kingsley. "He will be missed not only for what he did but also, like his mother, for what he was," Robert Houlton.

It was William's wife, Veronica, who started and edited the Harkness Report from 1990 to 1993, then William took over its successor, the Transatlantic Report, through to his death last year. Malcolm Dean has taken over this issue, but will jointly edit future editions with Veronica. We have restored the original title: Harkness Report.

William Plowden Fellowship in Good Governance

An imaginative new fellowship programme is being set up in William Plowden's memory.

It is being designed for people in mid career, who have a new idea on how public services or policy could be improved but need time and space away from their day job to develop it. Initially the fellows – there will be one a year – will be drawn from statutory and voluntary sectors, from the very local to the international level. Later applicants will be invited from the corporate sector. In keeping with William's career – see feature below – the over-arching theme for the seven years in which the programme will run will be the role of good governance in supporting innovation and achieving social impact. The choice of topics is intended to reflect William's wide range of interests and practical approach to public policy. Each year a different theme will be selected. The themes include: central government in the UK; issues around urban governance in the UK and abroad; governance in emerging countries; the voluntary charitable sector and its relations with government. The latter theme will be especially relevant given the new public service roles envisaged by the current government for charitable and private sector organisations.

Creating 'Nests'

The aim is to provide selected fellows with an appropriate 'nest' in which they can develop their idea along with a mentor if required. The organisers have



begun approaching think tanks, voluntary organisations, and academic institutions and already received a positive response with offers of research support, desk space and access to libraries. Appointments will be based on a submission by candidates and an interview.

Employers releasing staff to take part in the 3-month fellowship will be encouraged to be involved as active participants in the programme and be expected to release their staff member on a paid sabbatical basis. The fellowship will conclude with a high profile lecture delivered to an audience of policy-makers, opinion formers inside and outside government, and from across civil society and academia. The lecture and a final report will be published on line each year and the full series of seven lectures in printed form at the end of the last lecture. The National Council for Voluntary Organisations will provide the secretarial support to the scheme's advisory group, advertise the fellowship, provide where required accommodation and support to chosen fellows, manage and promote the lectures and organise their publication. The fellowship organisers will be launching an appeal to meet the above costs at the scheme's official launch this Christmas. The membership of the advisory group, which comprises a mixture of mandarins, managers, academics and senior policy-makers is: Baroness Tessa Blackstone, Nicholas Deakin, Sir Stuart Etherington, Timothy Hornsby, Kate Jenkins, George Jones, Paul McQuail, Sir Nicholas Monck, Veronica Plowden.

Quotes from obituaries and memorial addresses:

William the man:

"Conversation with him would always improve an idea or the thread of an argument. After a session in his kitchen in Stockwell, south London, with the cat, the seedlings, the coffee pot and the camellia outside the back door, problems were smoothed out and a better way forward agreed." [Names in bolder type please] Kate Jenkins, Guardian obituary, 5 July 2010, joint author with William on the damaging outcomes of many aid programmes on the governance of developing nations: "

Governance and Nationbuilding" 2006

"William obviously relished America... he liked the offbeat, the underbelly, the difficult to categorise, the amusing – and America had plenty of that."

Jennifer Dixon (HF 1990) memorial address.

"He loved walking because that meant talking, and the conversations were rich, covering films, theatre, books, music as well as politics, people and places. No-one could have wished for a better friend."

Tessa Blackstone, Independent obituary 9 July 2010. She was joint author with William of "Inside the Think Tank" 1983.

"We shared an interest in the cinema and advised each other on what was worth seeing. My only disagreement with him was over the role of the car. He had a down on cars, while I saw them as a liberating invention and an extension of our legs."

George Jones, Emeritus Professor of Government, LSE.

William the Director of Harkness Fellowships 1988-91:

"It was William's vision to take a quirky mix of mid career-ers and let us loose on public policy with some of America's finest minds as guides...unconventional perhaps. But the combination of the light touch, trust and freedom was devastating.... His idea for Harkness was to produce, not a goose-stepping set of tomorrow-belongs-to-us-leaders, but a more modest force of effective,

nuanced, and well rounded public servants, influential in policy who would enhance the common weal without fuss but always with concern for the worst off....He was rewarded, as by the end of the 1990's, 'his' Harkness fellows were littered around government, policy advisors to at least three Secretaries of States and the Prime Minister, and in valuable positions elsewhere in the public realm. Something I know he looked on with great personal satisfaction." **Jennifer Dixon.**

William, as one of the founding members of the 1971 Think Tank:

"The CPRS (Central Policy Review Staff) suited him well. He could work with the exhilarating sense that its staff were a band of irregulars, seeking to overcome what they saw as the narrowness, inertia and monopolistic tendencies of individual government departments, which were then strong."

Sir Nicholas Monck, Times obituary. 5 August 2010

"Plowden became a central figure in the work of the CPRS from 1971 until he left in 1977. He relished the opportunities it provided to promote evidence-based thinking in policy-making. He argued for better research

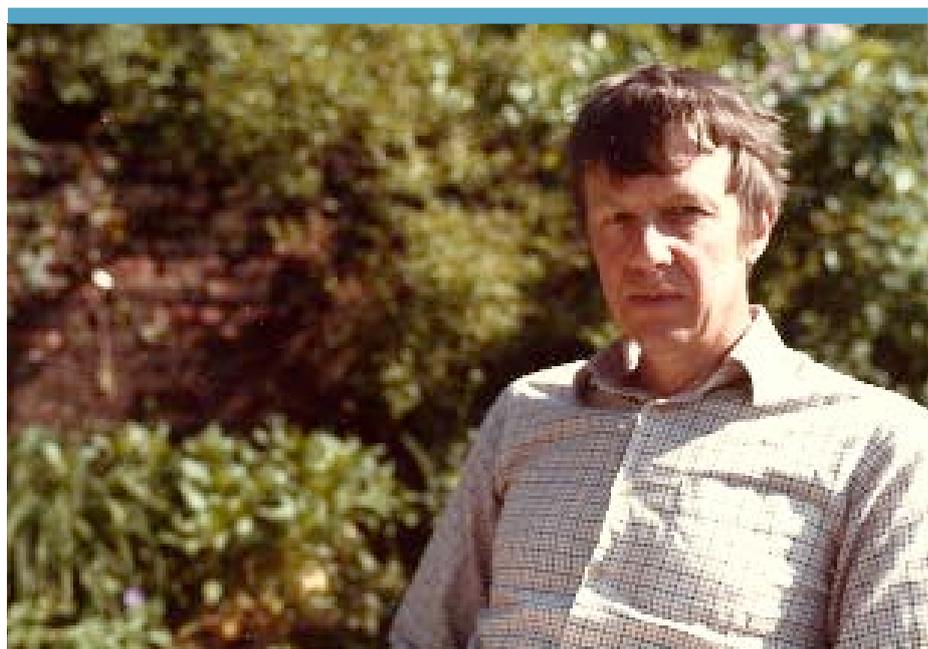
and improved statistical data within Whitehall and for drawing on sources from outside government. He saw the dangers of entrenched departmental cultures, impervious to what was happening in other departments. Even with greater openness and a more joined-up approach, he was convinced of co-ordination at the centre. This required clarity about strategy and a consistent approach to how policies across Whitehall could contribute to strategic goals, as well as more emphasis on the long term. No one understood this better than Plowden and he worked tirelessly to expose muddled thinking, short-termism, and departmental point-scoring."

Tessa Blackstone.

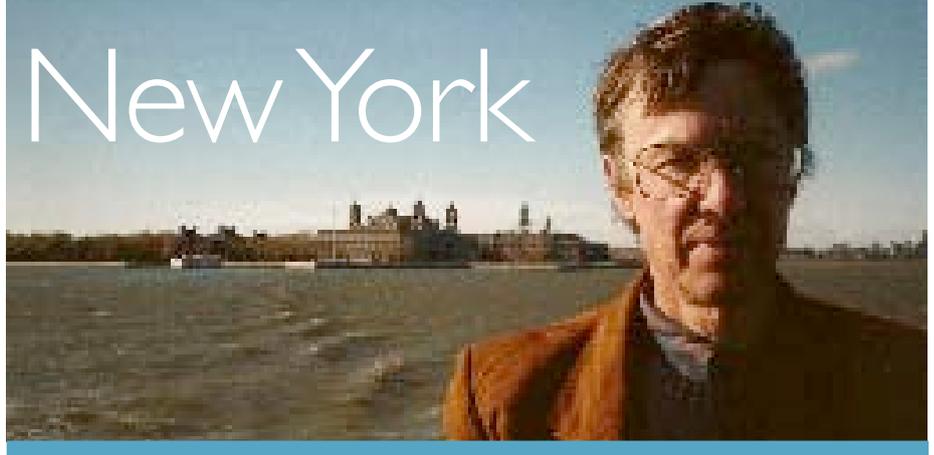
"Proposals in the 1975 CPRS report, A Joint Framework for Social Policies, were badly needed. It was greeted nervously by ministers and by the Treasury. Social scientists still refer to it. William's blunt central thesis repays reading now:

'Ministers need to ensure that their priorities are adequately reflected in policies, which are actually being carried out and that, in practice, these policies are having the effects intended.'

Kate Jenkins, ex senior civil servant and colleague.



Harkness and New York



As first Director General of the Royal Institute of Public Administration: 1978 - 88

This widened his focus. He was no longer just looking at the reforms needed to improve policy-making in Whitehall, but was also applying the same principles developed in Edward Heath's Think Tank to policy-making in local government and the NHS.

(He was also an invaluable guide and tutor on policy-making to Fleet Street leader-writers like myself – Malcolm Dean.)

In Tessa Blackstone's words:

"He was quick and analytical in developing alternative ideas and possible solutions. He was persuasive about the need to make clear choices and to study the impact of decisions on different client groups in the welfare system, rather than focusing on the providers."

William at the London School of Economics:

He was a lecturer between 1965-1971, visiting professor (1982-88), and again from 2002 through to his death in 2010. He was elected a Governor of LSE and served on the council from 1987 to 2006. It was where he wrote his first book, *The Motor Car and Politics in Britain*. A tribute by the Director of the Government Department at the college, noted that he had delivered a lecture there just three months before he died: "His latest teaching contribution was a remarkable lecture delivered to masters students in April 2010 comparing think tanks in Europe and the USA and offering a fresh perspective on their trajectories and development."

Looking back:

"As one fellow said to me about William 'they don't make them like that any more'. But then as I heard him say in response to someone asking what a model Harkness Fellow should be like, he said 'no one model, just the right ingredients'."

Jennifer Dixon, memorial tribute.

Veronica Plowden who travelled with William to New York for the three years he was based there as the Director of the Harkness programme, describes the two big changes that happened in the 1980s and 1990s.

The first in 1988, followed a review of the programme that began in 1985, was designed by William under the threat that the only alternative was a shutdown of the entire scheme. The second, in 1996, effectively ended the programme.

In 1985 Alfred J (Roy) Atherton Jr, then newly appointed Director of the Fellowships, was urging a review of the programme, on grounds of cost, and the dominance of East Coast placements, Oxbridge fellows, and MBAs. He also saw the need to evaluate aspects of the programme: how successfully were they selecting for excellence and potential leadership in such a broad and undefined range of fields? What was the impact of the Fellowships on individuals' lives, and the influence of the network of Fellows on their own countries and on the United States?

A background rumble of some former Fellows' disapproval of the changes that followed from these questions, and culminated in the new type of Fellowship William was appointed to develop from 1988, started then and continues now. Sometimes even the loss of the whole programme in 1996 is attributed to the 'Plowden' changes. This misunderstanding may have been partly a failure in marketing, but was equally a reluctance to accept any change to a cherished icon. William and others explained to everyone interested, including in an article in the Times Higher Education Supplement,

that the changes were required by the Commonwealth Fund Board as an alternative to closure, and had many positive aspects. The new system indeed produced an inspiring and influential set of Fellows who continue to interact within and between their professional fields as well as with the wider alumni network.

Key features of the new programme were that candidates were invited to focus on specified subject areas in which the Fund was already active, and of interest in both the US and UK: Education for the 21st Century, Promoting Good Health, and People in Cities. Even more broadly 'Cross-cutting' and generic issues such as innovation, inter-organisational working and accountability, long interests of William's, were highlighted. Candidates would be in 'mid-career' so slightly older than in the past, and they would be engaged in public policy, so less likely to be operating in a purely academic field. They would come together several times during their 6-9 months tenure, and the travel element was not lost. The original Harkness aims of increasing international understanding and developing leaders who could bring about change in both countries still held good, and would perhaps be even more clearly achieved. *Continued*

The range of Fellows' backgrounds and interests was in no way narrow. Between 1990 and 1994, in addition *Continued >*

to the expected doctors, nurses, educationists, local authority managers and civil servants, people from housing, police and prison services and the voluntary sector, there were still journalists and, yes, artists.

As before several Fellows had spouses with them who not only benefitted personally but often added ideas and knowledge to the mix, also children who now, twenty years on, remember it as a special and memorable time. One, Tabitha Schenck, now 29, is currently collating a visual and verbal record of the 1991 Fellows' time there for a July reunion

Living and working in New York from 1988-91 was an amazing experience for us, like a second Fellowship. As well as being involved with the Fellowships I had a job and voluntary activities which linked with the Fellows' areas of interest. Never having lived anywhere but London, we seriously considered staying on in New York into old age. William had been hesitant about leaving the Royal Institute for Public Administration, but was easily persuaded, partly by our children, to leave our emptying nest and 'go for it'. He never regretted the decision despite not getting what he called a 'proper job' on our return in 1991. Harkness and Atlantic Fellows have remained close friends with common interests, as has New York colleague Robert Kostrzewa. William and others were much saddened by the extreme limiting of the Fellowships in 1996, under the new Commonwealth Fund President Karen Davies, which effectively ended them.

His involvement with the Harkness Fellows' Association was one of William's main interests and pleasures until he died. And his lifelong belief in the Fellowship concept is one reason he would have been highly gratified by the proposed William Plowden Memorial Fellowships which we expect will get under way next year.



A New Chief Rabbi?

Baroness Julia Neuberger (HF?) hit the headlines in February 2011 following her decision to return to be a congregational rabbi after 22 years.

The Times led the way under the headline: 'Woman rabbi could become voice of British Jews'. It reported that her appointment "to the country's top 'cathedral synagogue', was move that "some

believe could challenge the position of the Chief Rabbi as de facto leader of all British Jewry." It went on: "By approving by an overwhelming majority Rabbi Baroness Neuberger, president



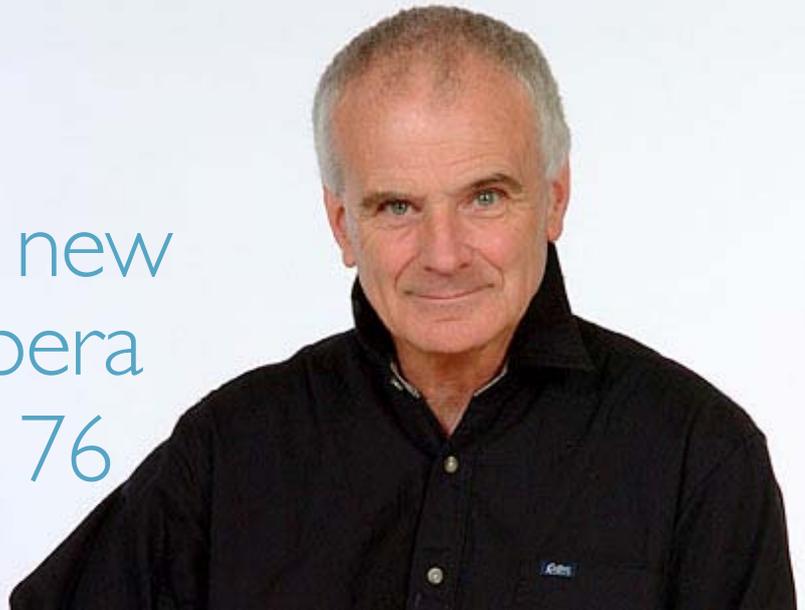
of Liberal Judaism as the new community rabbi at the West London Synagogue, the oldest and most venerable of the country's Reform Synagogues, the congregation has in effect created a new 'coalition', which raises the perceived status of Progressive Judaism to a level comparable with the United Synagogue. As leader of the United Synagogue, the Orthodox Chief Rabbi, currently Lord Sacks, has traditionally been regarded as spokesman for the entire 267,000-strong Jewish community. But the Liberal and Reform movements together represent about one third of British Jews and are growing at about the same rate that Orthodox Judaism is in decline."

Julia is expected to resign the Liberal Democratic whip in the Autumn and join Rabbi Lord Sachs on the cross benches. The Times quoted a senior insider who is close to both the leaders of Liberal and Reform Judaism as saying: "It has to be significant, the fact that a congregation like West London would be prepared to appoint some one so strongly identified with the Liberal cause means that the movements themselves no longer see any meaningful distinction between themselves."

Despite her long association with the Liberal movement – she remains president until December – Rabbi Neuberger does not see the switch to Reform as a big leap. She told the Jewish Chronicle: "My own view is that they are not very different. I think we should move more and more closely together because it's much more about where individual congregations sit than actually about the two movements."

One of her ambitions is to ensure the synagogue premises are "humming all the time" and not just for Jewish groups and interfaith activities. She told the Jewish Chronicle: "I think Jewish communities should be doing more to support asylum-seekers. We have a family charity in memory of both my parents for young refugees and asylum seekers. I feel very strongly about that."

A new opera at 76



HF Composer One: Sir Peter Maxwell Davies (HF 1962-64) has won widespread critical acclaim following the world premiere of his new opera, *Kommilitonen!* (Young Blood) in March 2011.

A joint commission between London's Royal Academy of Music and New York's Julliard School, it was written specifically to be performed by students. It focuses on three stories of 20th century student protests around the world: protests against the Nazis in 1940's Germany; against oppression during the Chinese Cultural Revolution; and against racial segregation in America's Deep South in the 1960s.

Both the librettist, David Pountney, who conducted the premiere and Sir Peter, were suffused in praise. The Guardian noted that "more than a decade after saying he had written his final theatre piece, the chance to compose for students had lured Peter Maxwell Davies back to opera."

The paper awarded the work a full five stars. The FT thought "the music worthy with exemplary skill". And the Telegraph added "an extraordinary testament to the fact that, at the age of 76, his creativity is radiantly alive but more judicious than it was when he was half this age."

There were similar plaudits in the Times, Observer and Sunday Times. It receives its US premiere by the Julliard School in November. Asked by the Times in April whether the work had whetted his appetite for further operas he replied: "Yes, but in the right circumstances where I can work with young people instead of old fogeys, and where a low budget stimulates the imagination instead of having daft frocks and silly scenery. The thought of working at Covent Garden again, after the experience (in 1972) I had with my opera *Taverner*, is not attractive. It was dire. The chorus couldn't sing it, the orchestra didn't like it, and I was treated very badly."

HF Composer two: Sir Harrison Birtwistle (HF 1966-68) His first violin concerto

There were similar rapturous reviews of Sir Harrison's violin concerto, commissioned by the Boston Symphony Orchestra, with Christian Tetzlaff, a champion of modern music, playing the violin. It was Sir Harrison's first concerto for a string instrument, having famously banished conventional strings from the pit for his opera *The Mask of Orpheus*. In an interview on the Boosey&Hawkes

website, he explained: "I'm a wind player, but I had some violin lessons at school so I have a memory of the physical feel of the instrument – in a sense. It's rather like remembering how to bowl a leg break at cricket, even if I couldn't do it now. In recent decades I've written quite a bit of music from strings, particularly with quartet in *Pulse*, *Shadows* and *The Tree of Springs*, and the players have told me it is idiomatic. Perhaps composing for instruments without the highest level of expertise removes some barriers, because you

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Sir Harrison Birtwistle (*right*) (HF 1966-68) His first violin concerto

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don't become over-concerned about the difficulty of the solo part."

Turning to talk about his concerto, he said: "What did concern me more than anything with this piece was the need for the violin to be heard. The orchestration is quite sparse...the soloist is in conversations with the orchestra in a number of guises. It is not an argument like in some concertos – the interchange is never angry. However it is rhythmic and there is a lot of to and fro, and immediate changes of mood rather like when the topic changes and the conversation heads off in a different direction...five instruments emerge for duets with the violin: flute, piccolo, cello, oboe and bassoon."

The premiere of the concerto was first performed for four nights in the Boston Symphony Hall, and then moved for one night at the Carnegie Hall in New York. The concerto was due to be given its UK premiere at this season's BBC Proms in London on September 7. The American premiere was given rave reviews in both British and US newspapers. The London Sunday Times described the concerto as "A work of true originality...a continuous 25-minute span that evokes traditional form while always keeping at a subtle remove from it. It is as though Birtwistle has to rediscover the concerto paradigm from scratch...Ideas flow forth, are 'discussed' by the soloists, the concertino-chorus, the tutti, but are not 'argued' over... the concerto seemed increasingly inevitable and substantial."

The New York Times was equally enthusiastic: "Mr Birtwistle, 76, is a towering figure in British music. His language, though complex and modernistic, is distinctive and exhilarating... throughout the piece the violin plays a stream of jagged chords, gnarly intervals and twisted thematic flights. Then something will happen in the orchestra – a pungent harmony, a twitch of sombre counterpoint – and the violin responds with a wafting melodic line in its shimmering high range." Readers may not realise that the two



composers share more than just a HF (at different dates), they also were both at the Royal Manchester College of Music in the 1950s, where with fellow students composer Alexander Goehr, pianist John Ogdon and conductor Elgar Howarth they created New Music Manchester, a group committed to modern music.

Diplomats move into the private sector

Peter Jenkins (HF 1971-73), who entered the Diplomatic Service on his return from the United States in 1973, has joined forces with other ex-diplomats to create an unusual partnership. They are drawing on their collective diplomatic experience to provide a range of services to international companies, and training to the staff of the UN and other international organisations. Between them the partners have experience of doing business in every corner of the globe. Among them are recent former British ambassadors to India, Brazil, Singapore and South Korea.

As former diplomats they can help assess political risk, navigate regulatory frameworks and guide the development of corporate foreign policies. As well as serving as ambassadors for companies and negotiating for them,

they can demystify and interpret policy environments. One of the partnership's first corporate clients is a private security firm that is specialising in supplying armed guards to protect ships sailing through trade corridors such as the waters off Somalia. ADRg Ambassadors act as a foreign service for the company. They have negotiated landing rights for armed guards in several African and Arab ports; and they have worked through contacts at the International Maritime Organisation to encourage the development of IMO guidelines for the armed protection of commercial vessels.

Value for money

The CEO of this firm reckons that paying a retainer to ADRg Ambassadors makes good sense. "It's better value for money", he says "to have access to a panel of ten former diplomats than to appoint a lone ex-diplomat to the company board". Demand for the partnership's training courses has risen fast. Course contents are adjusted to the specific needs of each client; their core, though, consists of communication, dispute resolution, and negotiating skills. The UN Industrial Development Organisation, the International Telecommunications Union and the International Atomic Energy Agency are among the international

organisations that have engaged ADRg Ambassadors to impart the fruit of their experience to some of the international public servants who make up the secretariats of such bodies.

ADR stands for Alternative Dispute Resolution. All of the partners have acquired qualifications as commercial mediators. They are looking to mediate cross-border commercial disputes. "Mediation is often preferable to litigation," says Peter "and is increasingly encouraged by administrators of judicial systems."

A Security Minister resigns

Baroness Pauline Neville-Jones (HF 1961-63) resigned in May as the Government's Security Minister. A former diplomat and Chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee, which analyses material gathered by MI6, MI5 and GCHQ, she joined the Conservative team in Opposition and became Minister for Security and Counter Terrorism at the Home Office after the last election. She was brought into Westminster as the Conservative leader's first national security adviser to help overhaul the relationship between Downing Street, the Ministry of Defence and the intelligence services. The Times reported there had been "prickly relations with members of the Prime Minister's inner circle." But in her letter of resignation, Lady Neville-Jones said: "As I step down from the Home Office – and, as you know, I told you a few months ago that I thought the time was approaching to do this – I look back on my time in the coalition with some satisfaction. It has been a particular privilege to have participated in the work of the National Security Council." In his reply the Prime Minister thanked her for her service to the Government adding: "I asked a lot when I invited you to step into the world of active politics, and you responded with typical dedication and tenacity."

We are keen to hear from former fellows of new events in their lives – promotions, new jobs, new charitable positions, writings, books, works of art, exhibitions. Please forward these contributions to: malcolm.dean@nuffield.ox.ac.uk



Anthony Howard (HF 1960-61) a widely respected veteran Fleet Street figure, who died on 19 December 2010 aged 76, won tributes from both Labour and Conservative leaders.

Roy Hattersley, Labour's former Deputy Leader, with whom Howard had enjoyed regular fortnightly lunches over 40 years, told the Times: "He knew more about everything than everyone else I know, or knew. He was a great journalist." Michael Heseltine, former Conservative Deputy Prime Minister, a friend from Oxford days, observed: "The characteristic that showed through all his work was his encyclopaedic knowledge of contemporary British political history and the characters that have made it up. He wrote extremely well."

A former Editor of the New Statesman and the Listener, a Deputy Editor of the Observer, and Obituary Editor of the Times, Howard had earlier tried to become the UK's first Whitehall correspondent reporting on the hidden world of departmental disputes and senior civil servants preferences for the Sunday Times. The experiment was thwarted by Prime Minister Harold Wilson, who issued an edict that no civil servants or ministers should talk to the correspondent. His period as Obituary Editor of the Times was well summed up by an obituary on his old pages: "It was a job which gave scope to his interest in the minutiae of political history; to his curiosity about humanity and its weaknesses; to his fascination with the way society works; and to his not inconsiderable delight in making mischief."

Among the many names he helped break into national journalism are James Fenton, Christopher Hitchens and Robert Harris. He wrote two well received political biographies on R.A. Butler in 1987, and Richard Crossman in 1990. He wrote a third, on Cardinal Basil Hume in 2005. Although a son of a Church of England clergyman, Anthony was an agnostic, who retained an interest in religion. He gave the annual HFA lecture at the founder's dinner, where he spoke warmly of his time in the US on his fellowship. It was awarded a year after he had joined the Guardian in 1959 and undoubtedly helped him become the Observer's Chief Washington Correspondent between 1966-69.

The best read man in Britain John Gross (HF 1958-59) an eminent literary critic, author and anthologist died on 10 January 2011 aged 75.

He was Editor of the Times Literary Supplement from 1974-81, senior book editor of the New York Times 1983-89, and theatre critic at the Sunday Telegraph 1989-2006. He was described by Bevis Hillier in the Spectator and Victoria Glendinning in the Guardian as "the best read man in Britain". A child prodigy who gained entrance to Oxford at barely 17, he won a Harkness Fellowship in 1958 to pursue post graduate literary studies at Princeton. He was Literary Editor of both the New Statesman and Spectator.

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He boldly broke the TLS tradition of anonymous reviewing when he became Editor, rightly believing the practice was a cloak for assassins. His definition of a literary critic was as unpretentious as his prose: "The first qualification for being a good critic will always be an interest in literature for what it is, rather than for the ends which it can be made to serve."

As many have noted, the title of his first book, *The Rise and Fall of the Man of Letters*, epitomised his career that followed. The book received rave reviews. Normal Shrapnel in the *Guardian* observed: "Mr Gross is one good argument for the survival of the species."

Leading literary figures were inspired by his works. A.N.Wilson read Gross's *The Rise and Fall of the Man of Letters* (1969) as a teenager and set his compass to follow suit. John Gielgud was not just enthused by Gross's *Shylock: four hundred years in the life of a legend* but read the book "straight through twice and enjoyed it more than I can say." Harold Pinter, who grew up in the same East End of London where Gross spent his childhood, described the Gross memoir *A Double Thread* as "a most rich, immensely readable and very moving book." Gross also edited a series of well received Oxford anthologies including the *Oxford Book of Aphorisms* (1983); *Essays* (1991); *Comic Verse* (1994); *English Prose* (1998); *Literary Anecdotes* (2006); and *Paradies* (2010).

Writing in the *Independent* obituary columns, Anthony Bailey concluded: "Many child prodigies burn out, some grow into narrowly smart adults. John Gross remained a widely ranging prodigy to the last. Rosy-cheeked, twinkly-eyed, schoolboy-faced, the writer and editor with the most claim to be Britain's foremost man of letters was, despite many years of bad health, still enriching and astonishing friends with his conversational prowess, springing on them obscure but absolutely relevant references and quotations which (he proffered gently) 'you might find useful or – possibly – be amused by'."



A pioneer of corporate responsibility
Sir Geoffrey Chandler (HF 1953-54) received widespread tributes on his death on 7 April 2011 aged 88, for his unrelenting campaign to persuade business of its moral responsibility towards human rights and environmental issues.

He was one of the earliest pioneers in pushing corporate responsibility. As the *guardian* obituary noted: "As a senior Shell executive in 1976, he swam against the corporate tide to instigate and introduce the company's first Statement of General Business Principles. This was well ahead of anything other multi-nationals were then contemplating at the time and – despite Shell's misdemeanours since then – represented a cutting edge acknowledgment that companies have a moral duty to behave responsibly on social and environmental issues. From the creation of the principles onwards, Chandler became an eloquent proponent of the idea that there is more to business than just making a profit." In 1991 after leaving Shell, he founded Amnesty International's UK Business group and chaired it until 2001. It sought to work with companies to improve their performance in such areas as supply-chain ethics and human rights. Shell was among the companies he harried for not doing enough around the world in countries such as Nigeria. The *Guardian* observed: "His influence was particularly important because he came from within the Establishment. His achievements at Shell and elsewhere gave him the licence and credibility to talk to high-powered business audiences." He was well known internationally. Professor John Ruggie of Harvard University, who was in charge of developing the UN framework on business and human rights, credited

Chandler "more than any other single individual" with bringing that task to the UN's attention.

Sir Geoffrey had already logged several achievements before being awarded his Harkness Fellowship. He served in the Second World War with the Special Operations Executive, parachuting into Greece to work largely on his own with local resistance groups to the German occupation. After Cambridge – where he captained the university tennis team – he joined the BBC foreign news service and went on to become a leader-writer and then features editor of the *Financial Times*. It was from that post he was awarded his HF, which took him to Columbia University, New York, where he studied US foreign economic policy.

A Harkness administrator
Sheila Widra, who retired as the Assistant Director of Harkness Fellowships in September 1991, died on July 17, 2011 following a long illness.

Sheila ran the Harkness London office from 1979 to 1991, and in that capacity staffed the UK Harkness Fellows Selection Committee, advised fellowship candidates, and played a significant role in vetting applications for fellowships. She was a Commonwealth Fund employee for 34 years. A spokesman in the Commonwealth Fund's New York Office noted: "She exercised great judgment and total loyalty in running an overseas office for the Fund, promoted ongoing communication among Harkness Fellows and alumni, and was a trusted colleague among Fund staff, both during her many years of employment and in retirement."

Indeed in her retirement she was an invaluable aide to this editor and former editors of this report, with her close monitoring of the activities of former fellows. Regular reports of those activities were clipped from the *Times* and forwarded to Harkness HQ in London. Her eagle eye rarely missed an event in which an HF was involved. No-one was more familiar with the long list of former fellows. She will be remembered by many older fellows, familiar with the period when Harkness House held receptions, for the warmth of her smile and her amazing memory of one's fellowship programme.



Recent Presidents and recurrent problems

By Hugh Brogan in address to the Harkness Fellows Association

It is easier to identify “recurrent problems” than “recent presidents”. For what do we understand by “recent”? The Watergate affair, which I remember vividly, marked a decisive epoch in the history of the presidency, but it happened nearly forty years ago.

Jimmy Carter, of whom, I must confess, my memory is blurred, does not seem to be a ‘recent’ President, let alone Gerald Ford. Ronald Reagan, for good or ill, revived and reshaped presidential leadership: perhaps ‘recent’ means all

the Presidents since he retired. What is much clearer, however, is that the three latest presidencies of Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama are closely entangled with each other. Besides, I am sure that most of us are preoccupied with current affairs. So in practice these are the ones I shall consider.

Consideration entails judgement, but I am not asking you to listen to a handful of necessarily premature appraisals (though I am bound to say that there is something bizarre about the Clinton and Bush presidencies – a point to which I

shall return). To discuss presidents is to discuss the Presidency as an institution, and that is my main theme. But this in turn entails a look at all the other public institutions with which the Presidency is involved, so that finally we are confronted with the great question, how well is the government of the United States performing? – government in the broadest sense, including the political parties, the states, Wall Street, and the media (a word I detest, but cannot do without) as well as the great departments of Washington
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Recent Presidents and

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– the Pentagon, the Treasury, the State Department, and so on. This is an agenda quite large enough for the time available to us.

What are the salient features, for our discussion, of the three presidencies? Crudely, I think we must reckon Clinton's as a success – a success won, as we all know, in the teeth of tremendous, and partly self-begotten, difficulties. Bush was a failure, possibly the worst failure, in the most numerous respects, in US history (to my mind his only competitor is James Buchanan).

The jury is still out on Obama: it is not yet clear whether he is a Bush trying to be a Clinton or a Clinton trying not to be a Bush. Yet we cannot leave it at that. It's not just that verdicts have to be justified. The issues and problems with which each of these Presidents has had to grapple in turn are largely identical – not surprisingly in view of the short period under discussion (barely twenty years). We have to ask why Clinton succeeded and Bush failed, and if it can be put down exclusively to personal characteristics: to Clinton's eel-like persistence and Bush's wilful stupidity. I would go further: it seems to me that both success and failure, and for that matter the current successes and failures of President Obama, can largely be explained by the same factors. We see how differently the three Presidents have responded to their circumstances; but surely the really important point is that the circumstances remain the same; and the moral seems to be (I anticipate my argument) that if Clinton succeeded, then Obama can; and likewise, he may fail, for Bush did so, spectacularly. So, what are the circumstances?

A Conservative nation

It seems to me inevitable that we begin with the conservative movement. This phenomenon presents a particular challenge to historians of my generation. We were brought up to believe that the work of the New Deal would never be undone; more than that, it was presented as the fulfilment of the central tradition of American history. The curve of that history ran from Thomas Jefferson,



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through Andrew Jackson and Abraham Lincoln, to Progressivism and Franklin Roosevelt. One sage of my youth even wrote a book about conservatism in America called *The Thankless Persuasion*, and at the time he had good reason. But in retrospect it seems clear that there was always something paradoxical about the victories of the New Deal. For one thing, they rested in part on the strength of the Solid South, the most extravagantly illiberal region of the United States; nor were they as complete as we supposed. It remained true that, as Calvin Coolidge had remarked in the 1920s, "The business of America is business", and after the demands of the Second World War came to the rescue of what Roosevelt frankly called "the profit system" business (capitalism, if you like) resumed its forward march and increasingly dominated every aspect of American life. So it is not surprising that eventually its supporters felt the need for a new ideology to justify business and themselves more convincingly than the musty principles of old-style Republicanism could do (there, the victory of the New Deal had indeed been crushing). This vacuum began to be filled in the late 1950s.



Manifestations such as the John Birch Society, the National Review, and the presidential candidacy of Barry Goldwater, were in many respects ridiculous, but they laid bare a vein of resentment in American society that could only grow, for sweeping historical change continued, and many were the interests and individuals who hated it. Among them were many racists and bigots, and old-fashioned Republicans who still did not accept that William McKinley was dead, but the movement would never have grown so strong as it did if that were all. Ronald Reagan, for instance, was not racist or a bigot or old-fashioned: once a liberal, he moved to the Right after his experience of Communist intrigue in the labour movement in Hollywood. And there was undoubtedly widespread resentment of the defeat in Vietnam. The antics of the neo-conservatives, still less those of the Tea Party, should not deceive us. The strength of conservatism since 1980 mostly reflects the fact that the Americans are in many respects a conservative people; and how should they not be, considering how much they have to lose?

But why the hysteria?

What is not so clear is why the conservative movement took the form that it did. Conservatism does not have to be hysterical, paranoid and pseudo-literate. Mass American conservatism is too frequently all these things, so that by contrast Reagan in retrospect appears, almost, as a sort of shrewd moderate (he never renounced his youthful admiration for Franklin Roosevelt, for example). This

recurrent problems

needs explanation, which can I think be found in the cultures and structures of the American political system. Thus, there has always been a carnival aspect to American politics, and in the age of Walt Disney (a strongly conservative man) it is hardly surprising that the carnival has now been taken over by Hollywood and its paymasters. There are, of course, many stars in the movie world who are strong liberals, and put their money where their mouths are, but so do conservative actors, and the mark of an actor is that when necessary he can believe anything if the script calls for it. Hollywood provides a megaphone for nonsense, and so do such institutions as Fox News and other agencies controlled by Rupert Murdoch. When we compute how much propaganda American citizens are subjected to it is not surprising that they think they believe a vast amount of rubbish, but when the test comes they show their true colours. A well-known journalist, Jonathan Raban, last year went so far in his investigations as to join the Tea Party and attend one of its conferences. He found himself getting friendly with a nice middle-aged couple who were made uneasy by the distinctly racist terms in which one of the speakers attacked Barack Obama. Finally the woman remarked, "I'm a conservative all right, but I guess I'm a liberal conservative." There speaks the true voice of Middle America. And what is clearest about the congressional elections last autumn is that the "shellacking" which, as President Obama rightly remarked, the electorate administered to his party was motivated overwhelmingly by straightforward economic issues. With business slow and unemployment high and the Democrats having had more than eighteen months to show what they could do about these problems (it didn't seem to be very much) the voters turned against the government, as they would have done if the Tea Party had never been heard of or Fox News never established. And I expect that the same considerations will determine the presidential election next year. So does the Republican leadership in Congress. The party now has a big majority in the House of Representatives, but the leaders will do what they can to stop it

from running wild. If prosperity returns, the Republicans and the Democrats can happily fight over the question of who deserves the credit; if it does not, the incumbents will be blamed as usual – and many of those incumbents are now Republicans. A big test is at hand for all concerned. Unless both parties in Congress can agree on the federal budget by 8 April the government will run out of money and shut down. If that crisis is avoided Congress will next have to authorise an extension of the public debt limit before the end of April or the US will not be able to meet its obligations to its creditors. And even if that matter is resolved there remains the question of the federal deficit. These are not imaginary problems; unless they are resolved the crisis will be felt by every American citizen, not to mention the rest of the world.

The Democrats, and President Obama, bear some of the blame for this emergency, but the Republicans bear more, and it is up to them help meet it by making concessions. If they don't they will have failed the test.

Partisan rancour

So we have identified at least one of the Presidency's recurrent problems – that of working with Congress: but it is not a problem peculiar to recent Presidents. In every generation economic issues are of first-rate importance, and ultimately instil a certain realism, even in Republicans, though I must remark that they are slow learners. All 47 Republican Senators have declared their support for a constitutional amendment requiring the federal government to balance its budget at all times. This is probably mere grandstanding, and it is most unlikely that such an amendment will ever be adopted; the economic consequences of such a measure would be devastating. This very fact, however, draws our attention to another feature of the current Right: its inability to acknowledge that ideology, words, ideas, grandstanding can have actual consequences, like the preacher who refuses to see that burning the Koran in Florida, at his instigation, has led directly to a massacre in Afghanistan. This has a bearing on what we may identify as a second recurrent problem: the strong partisan rancour that

nowadays poisons relations between the parties, and has done so at least since Bill Clinton became President in 1993. It is worth reminding ourselves that he only won the election in 1992 because the American Right split: Ross Perot, an opinionated billionaire, ran as an independent. Not surprisingly, therefore, if dishonestly, the Republicans regarded Clinton as an interloper, and spent the next eight years trying in vain to persuade the American people to share this view of him, sticking at nothing in the process, not even a frivolous impeachment. But their passion had, I think, another root. Americans, on the whole, are friendly, generous and hospitable; but they have a religious tradition which can make them unrelenting and unforgiving. It is worth remembering that the decades before the Civil War were characterised by much the same rancour that we see nowadays, and it too had a religious basis. To the abolitionists the slaveholders were damned in the eyes of God, and likely to drag all other Americans down to Hell with them; and they said so, often in language of extreme violence. They were the Tea Party of their day, and they provoked a violent reaction from the Slave Power, which also had roots in Calvinism. So it is nowadays. No doubt there is racism and reaction, selfishness and nationalism, on the Right; but their bitter passion seems always to arise initially, to be aroused most fiercely, by religious and cultural issues: abortion, homosexuality, the question of Church and State. Until these issues fade away (and homosexuality, at least, is far more generally accepted than it was a generation ago) we must expect the rancour and self-righteousness to persist. But whatever the excitement over economic and cultural politics, it remains true, I think, that, as Leopold von Ranke taught us long ago, foreign policy comes first.

***Hugh Brogan, (HF1962-64 Brookings Institute and Yale) is a distinguished historian (The Penguin History of the United States of America, 1990) and biographer (Alex de Tocqueville, 2006) both of which received rave reviews.**

Back Stage Staff



Who are the people who have kept the association ticking over in the last decade?

For the last five years the HFA office in London has been kept going by Elizabeth (Lizzie) Martin, our cheerful part-time administrator. Her other part-time job is also under the same roof at Woburn House, working as an administrative assistant to the Marshall Aid Commemoration Commission. The Commission manages 40 postgraduate scholarships for American students with potential to excel in their chosen field, with a range of partners in outstanding UK universities. Timothy Hornsby, chairman of the HFA, has just been made a trustee of the Commission. As he says, it has some affinities with the old Harkness programme, but obviously the other way round. Lizzie has had a busy year. In April

she ran in the 2011 Virgin London marathon. She started training for the run in November 2010, running three or four times a week, with longer runs on Sundays. She signed up for the Sidcup10, a 10-mile road race which took place in February, to give her an idea of what to expect on the 26.2 mile April run.

She confessed: "I had been given one piece of advice over and over again in the preceding months: 'Whatever you do, don't start off too quickly!' I kept this in mind for the first few miles and had no idea that in fact I was going a lot faster than I should have been. The atmosphere and the cheering crowds, the drums beating rhythm, and the hundreds of other runners streaming past was phenomenal. I did not envy the man with a life-sized tiger on his back, the soldiers weighed down by packs, or the man carrying a washing machine, but I loved every minute of it.

"The pain set in at mile 10 when my right knee started to complain and I realised that it was rather too warm a

day to be running so far. My parents were an enormous boost as they followed me around the course and provided much needed support as I spotted them at several points. Crossing Tower Bridge was a particularly delightful moment as I knew that was half way. From then on the race was a real roller-coaster of pain, determination, exhilaration, near defeat, anger at the heat, and a surreal madness." Just the sort of emotions that dealing with HFA committee members must prompt. But she finished in 5 hours and 40 minutes, which is averaging over four miles an hour. Together with a friend she raised £3,000 for United Response, a charity supporting people with learning difficulties, mental health needs, and physical disabilities. All this preceded her marriage in the Summer and a two week honeymoon driving across France with a tent for a home. She has bounced back still full of energy.

Do not become confused when Elizabeth Martin is replaced by Mrs Elizabeth Clark.

Forthcoming Events:

Wednesday 21 September

Ambassador Barbara J Stephenson
American foreign policy in a turbulent world
Athenaeum Club, Pall Mall
Tickets £20 for members; £23 for non-members

Wednesday 12 October

Bruno Weymuller
Can technology save us from climate change?
Brooks's Club, 60 St James's Street 6.30 for 7pm
Tickets £18 for members; £20 for non-members

Monday 31 October

Mark Damazer
Harkness Annual Lecture
BBC and Oxford University: Public Institutions and Pressure
Athenaeum Club, Pall Mall
Tickets £20 for members; £23 for non-members

Award winning TV producer and novelist, Daisy Goodwin, responsible for life-style programmes such as Jamie's Kitchen and Grand Designs, will speak at **the annual Edward Harkness Birthday Dinner on the 18th January 2012**. This is to be held at Browns Restaurant in St Martin's Lane. Flyers will be sent out.

Calling HFs in the South West

Peter Jenkins (HF 1971-73) who is based in Bath is already organising occasional regional gatherings of Fellows in the South West.

The first took place on Saturday 25 June in the form of a picnic lunch. Nicholas Stephens (HF 1963-65), who is the curator of Hellens, a fascinating

manor in Much Marcle near Ledbury, kindly allowed Fellows to use its Tudor and Jacobean gardens with the kind permission of Adam Munthe and the manor's trustees. There was then a conducted tour. The many attractions of the manor, which dates back to 1096, include haunted rooms prepared

for Bloody Mary Tudor and her tutor Fetherstone; its Stone Hall with its great fireplace bearing the Black Prince's crest, and its minstrel gallery. The next gathering is planned to take place in Bath in the Autumn.

All those interested should drop an email to Peter at jenkins.prj@gmail.com