The Journal
Spring 2017
Serving professional journalism since 1912
Magazine of the Chartered Institute of Journalists

Prison whistleblower fights on to Supreme Court

By Tim Crook

The Belmarsh prison whistleblower, Robert Norman, is appealing to the UK Supreme Court over his conviction under Operation Elveden for taking money for stories on Britain's prison crisis.

He lost at the Court of Appeal in November 2016, but his campaign for exoneration, which is supported by the Chartered Institute of Journalists, has been taken up by Press Gazette and the Guardian columnist and professor of Journalism at City University, Roy Greenslade.

Robert Norman told Press Gazette he was "arrested at 5.45 in the morning by 16 Metropolitan Police officers barging into my house – all that was missing were the helicopters and the napalm."

The trauma led to a catastrophic breakdown in his wife's health, the loss of his house to pay legal costs and imprisonment for leaking stories that he believed amounted to no more than staff employment misconduct and dismissal if found out.

His barrister, Keir Monteith, has submitted appeal papers which argue that upholding the conviction is having a chilling effect on freedom of speech by deterring sources from providing information to journalists.

Freedom of expression

Norman's case is that the Daily Mirror breached his Article 10 freedom of expression rights by volunteering his identity to the police instead of waiting for the police to make an application under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act.

Montieth says the effect of the case is that "potential sources will not contact or co-operate with the media and journalists will not contact those that are or might be public officials."

The Supreme Court appeal will question whether accepting money from Trinity Mirror for stories was "serious criminal conduct". His lawyers say that historically the payment of money to sources has been compensation for the risks of providing information and has operated as an established contractual method of investigative journalism.

The Supreme Court Justices have been informed that paying sources is on occasion the only method used to obtain information for many of the stories that appear in the press. Norman's legal team has cited the Daily Telegraph's scoop on MPs' expenses as one example, when the paper paid more than £100,000 for information which led to several successful criminal prosecutions.

Suicide rates

Since November's Appeal Court ruling the crisis in Britain's prison system – which Robert Norman predicted – has worsened considerably. There have been repeated reports of growing suicide rates among inmates, riots, murders and widespread drug-taking.

In February 2017, the BBC's Panorama programme broadcast footage gathered by an undercover reporter who spent two months in HMP Northumberland. He discovered widespread drug use, poor regimes, door alarms not working, a hole in a security fence and a failure by the staff to exercise proper control of the prison.

Norman told Press Gazette that all the stories he gave Daily Mirror reporter Stephen Moyes, who later went to work for the News of the World, were "true, in the public interest, highlighted dangers to the public and dangers to staff, and were later confirmed by the Prison Service press office."

The Lord Chief Justice was pre-occupied in his Court of Appeal ruling that Norman was paid £10,684 for sharing 40 pieces of information over five years. The judges said Trinity Mirror and News International revealed him as a source to the police because they voluntarily wanted to report serious crime.



The Supreme Court

News International was "keen to be able to portray its position to the Leveson Inquiry as one of full cooperation in the light of the widespread public concern at that time about the activities of the press and how they obtained their information."

Yet even the trial judge had conceded: "On all the available material I accept that there is a reasonable inference that they did so not for altruistic reasons but rather in the hope that by so assisting the police, there was a likelihood that any possibility of prosecutions at a higher level would be avoided."

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Andy Smith
Editor



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TheJournal

ISSN 1361-7656

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LinkedIn: http://www.linkedin.com/groups/Chartered-Institute-Journalists-63500

Printed by **Cool grey display & print Ltd**
Tel: +44 (0) 1444 474646

Editor's Comment

For journalists who felt relieved that the iniquitous Leveson process had come to an end, and hopeful that the threat to Press freedom in Britain had abated for the time being, the startling reality in 2017 is that the danger of suppression is greater than ever. Assorted celebrity political activists, through their front organisation Hacked-Off, and the misleadingly titled Campaign for Press & Broadcasting Freedom, are stepping up their attempts to muzzle the Press. Their tame, State-approved, regulatory body, Impress, is forcing the pace – even though, as yet, not a single national newspaper has signed up to it, and there is huge opposition to this semi-official quango being given any authority whatsoever. We should not underestimate the ability of Impress and its millionaire backers to get their way.

Financed chiefly by ex-Formula One boss Max Mosley, son of Fascist leader Sir Oswald Mosley, Impress is a bizarre rainbow coalition of far-left agitators and business tycoons. Its goal is to ensure that vested interests take precedence over the public interest. That is why we in the Chartered Institute of Journalists must redouble our own efforts to safeguard Press freedom and defend the rights of journalists. Thankfully, we are not alone. The opposition to Impress includes virtually anyone of any consequence in the Press: all major newspaper groups, The News Media Association (which represents most UK newspaper and magazine publishers), The Society of Editors, Index on Censorship, and the journalists' magazine Press Gazette. And we have an industry-financed Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO), run by the former High Court Judge Sir Alan Moses, enjoying the support of the entire industry and showing that we are well able to police ourselves and to tackle abuses.

We have enjoyed freedom of the Press in this country for over 300 years, since the reign of King William of Orange. In the 21st Century this freedom is being nibbled away at continually by a multitude of legal and legislative threats, and could so easily be snuffed out completely.

Under most intense pressure is the British tradition of fearless investigative journalism. Think of how many scoops might not have been possible if the sort of controls now being mooted, and to some extent already creeping in by the back door, had been in force at the time. Almost certainly there would have been no revelations about Thalidomide, and no MPs' expenses scandal. The failures of the Police over the murder of Stephen Lawrence would never have come to light, and the Rotherham sex-grooming cover-up would never have been exposed. And these are just the tip of the iceberg.

Appallingly, Max Mosley and his gang are being aided and abetted by the quisling National Union of Journalists. Whilst the NUJ has long been more concerned to pursue a political agenda than defend the rights of journalists, even I was surprised to see that the union had sunk so low as to be a willing accomplice in Hacked-Off's campaign to gag our free Press. But this is the reality in 2017 Britain – a trade union that is actively opposed to its own members' interests and a powerful political movement working to block our free Press and thwart the public interest.

Andy Smith

As we go to press, news has just come in that the former Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Osborne, has been appointed Editor of the London Evening Standard. For the Standard's proprietor, Evgeny Lebedev, to hire a politician (some might say "failed politician") as Editor, and to have passed over numerous professional journalists who would have been far better qualified and suited to this key editorial job, is a massive insult to our profession. Worse, for Osborne to tell us that he can easily edit our capital city's daily newspaper while remaining a Member of Parliament and also continuing his consultancy role with the American asset management company BlackRock (giving him combined earnings of well over £1m a year!) – plus, in all likelihood, his highly lucrative after-dinner speaking engagements – is a monstrous slap in the face to all of us!

CIoJ Council and PPB

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Jim Filbin
Andrew Kelly

Scotland's new BBC channel brings new opportunities

By Professor Nick Higgins

The recent announcement about the future of BBC Scotland is good news, both for Scottish television and for our film industry. For years the sector has been crying out to receive more back from the licence fee funds, so the additional £40 million that will now come back to us, whilst still less than the funds Scottish viewers pay into the licence fee, is a very welcome boost to the production sector.

It is encouraging to see a commitment to 80 new journalism jobs that clearly marks out an ambition to significantly increase news coverage, but this comes at a time when a dedicated national local news service is also about to launch in the form of STV2, the result of a combination of STV's successful bids to run local television licences in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen and Ayr. This is obviously good news for students of journalism and television at UWS but it does raise an interesting question for the broadcasters; how will these news services be distinct?

Where there is even less clarity is surrounding the new funds for drama and factual television. Ever since the demise of Waterloo Road, the network drama filmed out of Gourock, the quest to secure a returnable Scottish drama has been ongoing and given the nature of our new Netflix and Amazon Prime media landscape, this is a challenge that members of the film sector are also keenly interested to answer. Drama however, is notoriously expensive and commissioners are risk averse and it remains to be seen if the extra funds will lead to a new era of Scottish commissioning whereby some of our best film directors and screenwriters will at last be given the chance to work on the small screen.



photo: Brian Sweeney

Professor Nick Higgins

Equally, the commitment to more factual production is very positive news but raises questions as to what kind of documentaries will be commissioned. Will they all be in-house BBC? Will they need to be on Scottish subjects? Or could this be the moment when Scottish documentary filmmakers, at last, are able to make films about international stories and events that, whilst not featuring Scottish characters, would be of significant interest to Scottish audiences. Perhaps it will also help those audiences to see Scotland as a nation interested in the world and not just what is happening in its own backyard?

Nick Higgins is Professor of Media Practice at The University of the West of Scotland.

News at when?

The Chartered Institute of Journalists has expressed concerns over ITV's decision to move its iconic News At Ten programme to make way for "entertainment and trivial programming". This is the second time the programme has been moved within ITV's schedule. The first was in 1999. ITV claimed then that it would boost ratings but it had the opposite effect.

"The 1999 decision was a disaster and the same will happen again", said CIoJ President Mark Croucher. "All it will do is to further diminish the audience for high-quality television news. ITV lost millions of viewers to the BBC 18 years ago when they decided entertainment was more important than news at 10pm. There is a public interest in quality broadcast journalism and in the Institute's view the ITV network should be supporting investment and scheduling that promotes this."

Recruitment

The Institute is offering a referral fee to any member who can help recruit new members.

Every Full Member you sign up will earn you £50. The new member will need to be sponsored by you and will have to satisfy our accreditation procedures.

Contact our Chief Executive for more details - memberservices@cioj.co.uk .

UEA scholarships nurture creative writers

The University of East Anglia, in Norwich, which is home to a world-leading creative writing programme, is now offering eight postgraduate scholarships, meaning more than a quarter of the 30 available places in 2017 are funded.

"Our aim is to widen opportunity for the most talented writers, which is why scholarships in this field are so important," said co-director Henry Sutton. "Up to half of our students are from overseas and their average age is 30.

Many have had careers in different fields, which means they bring a wealth of experience in addition to their desire to hone their creative writing skills."

Competition for places is extremely tough, so the standard of students is high. Their background is also diverse. "Our aim is to nurture the greatest talent, not just from the UK but worldwide," said Sutton. "Some scholarships are aimed specifically at international students, one is directed at students from the Republic of Ireland, and others are open to anyone."

He added: "Creative writing is a powerful vehicle. The world revolves around empathy, and an appreciation of literature is culturally invaluable because it enriches us and gives us understanding."

The programme at UEA was founded in 1970 by novelists and former UEA professors Sir Malcolm Bradbury and Sir Angus Wilson, and well-known alumni who regularly return to speak to students include Kazuo Ishiguro and Ian McEwan. Leading UK literary trust the Booker Prize Foundation and London literary agency David Higham Associates are among those funding scholarships.

With well over a third of graduates going on to have their work accepted by leading publishers, the course has the highest success rate in the country, and the University's innovative approach contributes to keeping it that way. "Our courses are intense but it's also important to us that they're accessible, so we deliver our MA in Crime Fiction largely online," said Sutton. "It means there's even more opportunity for talented writers to follow their passion."

The deadline for course applications is May 1, 2017, and for a scholarship application May 15.

For further information go to:

https://www.uea.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/scholarships/arts-and-humanities/literature-drama-and-creative-writing

Shouting out for press freedom and the Rory Peck Trust



By Tina Carr, Director, Rory Peck Trust

A photographer is taking pictures of a crowd. For no reason, he's knocked to the ground and kicked by the police. Six journalists are covering an angry street demonstration when they're arrested, detained and charged with felony. Three of these journalists are freelancers. All have been exactly where they should be on this day and all have been doing their job – it is, after all, the inauguration of the President of the United States.

Elsewhere, a photographer accused of crossing a border illegally is beaten and arrested; a cameraman films a policeman letting his dog loose on an asylum seeker. Menaced by the same dog, he's forced to delete the tape. Journalists covering refugee camps and anti-refugee protests are detained, denied access, fined, and under attack. Where? Serbia, Hungary, Greece, Macedonia, France....

What's going on here? We've been talking about freelancers under attack in repressive societies for years – but have we been smug? Is this the future for independent journalism in our own democracies? In the face of increasingly permissible intolerance in the West, our worst fears are being realised – and press freedom is struggling – under its biggest threat at a time when it is most needed.

There are many frontlines all with their own stories: war and conflict, human rights, environmental stories, local politics, national politics, corruption, organised crime. Freelance journalists are crucial to the telling of these stories. Brave, dedicated, professional, they are the backbone of a free press and operate at the sharp end of news. Like their corporate colleagues, many of them are being targeted and threatened – by governments, by factions, by gangsters – by anyone who doesn't like what journalists do, anyone who wants to control the agenda.

The Rory Peck Trust works with and helps freelancers every day, and for them it's very tough – and getting tougher. We provide practical support that helps them to continue working, remain safe, become resilient and keep their families together. This is what we do. Quiet work that supports independent journalists in a very real and effective way.

Many of you will have seen Meryl Streep's shout out for press freedom at the Golden Globes recently. Well, we don't have a Meryl (yet), but if ever there was a time to shout out and support the work of the Rory Peck Trust, it's now! The Trust has spent its entire life – more than twenty one years – supporting freelance journalists who others try to silence – THIS IS NO TIME TO STOP.

The Rory Peck Trust will continue to give freelance journalists the support they need and deserve way, way into this oh-so uncertain future.

New Executive Editor for Associated Press

The Associated Press announced today that AP Vice President and Washington Bureau Chief Sally Buzbee has been appointed as the news agency's executive editor.

Buzbee, who joined AP in 1988 as a reporter, has spent the last six years in Washington D.C. as chief of bureau, where she has overseen AP's coverage of the last two U.S. presidential elections, the White House, Congress, the Pentagon, and polling and investigative units.

In her new role as senior vice president and executive editor, Buzbee will be responsible for leading AP's global news operations and overseeing news content in all formats from AP journalists based in more than 260 locations in 106 countries. She will relocate from Washington to AP headquarters in New York.

"Sally's leadership and extensive history with the AP make her the perfect candidate to take the helm as executive editor," said AP President and CEO Gary Pruitt. "Sally's focused vision will guide our news content in all formats well into the future."

"The AP's mission of strong, impartial, fact-based journalism has never been more important," Buzbee said. "My colleagues are the most talented and committed journalists in the world, rededicating themselves to that mission each day. It is a privilege to be a part of this team as we dive into the future."

Buzbee began her career with AP as a reporter in Kansas in 1988. During her tenure as a reporter, she covered immigration and border issues in San Diego, and foreign affairs and national security after the September 11 attacks. She holds a journalism degree from the University of Kansas and a Master of Business Administration from Georgetown University.

Her predecessor as Executive Editor, Kathleen Carroll, stepped down at the end of 2016 after serving as AP's top editor for 14 years.

Dates for your diary

26 April 2017
Bank of England visit

Event will include a tour of the bank's museum and an address by the bank press chief Mike Peacock.

To book contact Diane at head office - 020 7252 1187 or dianec@cioj.co.uk. we will need some idea of your outlets so that we may pass them on to the organisers .

27 July
Summer drinks at CIoJ Head Office

14 October
CIoJ AGM - Goldsmiths, London

What the snoopers' charter means for journalists

By Tim Crook

Few people have anything good to say about the Investigatory Powers Act 2016, otherwise known as the Snoopers' Charter. Not even the present government seems very enthusiastic about the Law Commission's consultation document for a new Espionage Act to protect official data.

This threatens to reform all the Official Secrets Acts 1911 to 1989 with no public interest defence for either journalists or whistle-blowers, and a criminal offence carrying a maximum jail sentence of 14 years. It would mean that any public official wanting to leak a story and the journalists receiving it would be treated in the same way as enemy spies.

It has attracted universal condemnation from the press, and media freedom NGOs such as Index on Censorship who say the proposed legislation is "a body blow to public interest journalism."

In the face of headlines such as "This assault on whistleblowers exceeds even the draconian 1911 act" from the Guardian, and "Britain's free Press has never been under threat like it is today" from the Sun, Theresa May and her ministers have tried to deflect blame for the move onto her predecessor David Cameron.

Official Secrets

The Official Secrets Act 1989 was introduced to abolish the notorious Section Two offence that criminalized any non-authorized leaking of official information and the journalists receiving it. That carried only a maximum sentence of two years. It criminalized describing the colour of the walls of civil service buildings, or the writing on government toilet paper.

It was discredited when juries refused to convict even when told to do so by trial judges. This is what happened in the case of Ministry of Defence official, Clive Ponting in 1985. He had leaked information on the sinking of the Argentine battleship, the Belgrano, during the Falklands War, to the Labour MP Tam Dalyell.

In recent years the state has cunningly used the common law offence of misconduct in public office to resurrect the old Section Two power under another name. The careers of at least three senior police officers were destroyed when they were arrested under Operation Elveden for simply briefing journalists without any suggestion of payment on criminal investigations.

The Investigatory Powers Act 2016 is now law. Journalists and everyone else will have to get used to the idea that 48 intelligence, police and investigatory bodies now have access to one year of anyone's online, web and communications data at any time. The bodies include the security and intelligence services but also NHS trusts, the Food Standards Agency and Information Commissioner.

The spooks at MI5, MI6 and GCHQ, and all of the country's police forces, now have the legal power to engage full content communications surveillance, and something known as electronic network exploitation. That is effectively turning an individual's computer, tablet or smartphone into a covert surveillance device.

Tracking devices

Intelligence experts have the ability to activate the microphone and camera on digital portable devices without the owner having any idea as well as using them as precise tracking mechanisms.

The UK and USA agreement on sharing intelligence information means that American spy agencies such as the NSA and CIA can check out everything stored and gathered on UK citizens. As Private Eye has observed: "Donald Trump now has access to more data on British citizens than he currently has on any of his own."

Applications for confidential journalistic or source data have to be approved by a Judicial Commissioner. But journalists have no right to be informed about the applications, or access to their information. Everything can be conducted in secret with no public scrutiny at all and absolutely no due process of legal representation.

Protections for sensitive categories such "confidential journalistic material" and "sources of journalistic information" are invalidated where the "information is created or acquired for the purpose of furthering a criminal purpose." Criminal activity is defined as a situation where an accused "who has no previous convictions could reasonably be expected to be sentenced to imprisonment for a term of 3 years or more."

This means any public official trying to leak anything to a journalist will be furthering a criminal purpose because the maximum sentence is life imprisonment for misconduct in public office and will be 14 years for leaking info under the proposed Espionage Bill.

David Anderson QC, the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation says the Investigatory Powers Act is "a victory for democracy and the rule of law". Edward Snowden tweeted: "The UK has just legalised the most extreme surveillance in the history of western democracy. It goes further than many autocracies."



GCHQ Cheltenham

The legislation does nothing to preserve or encourage the free-flow of journalist source information to public interest publication. It is worse. It adds to an overwhelming chilling effect generated by the blatant and secret interception of journalists' metadata over many years. Public official journalist sources have no protection whatsoever.

The Judicial Commissioners will be operating as rubber stamps. They certainly have no opportunity, recourse, or method to be informed of the case for either journalists or their sources before sanctioning the worst kind of state snooping imaginable.

Whistleblower

Continued from 1

Robert Norman says being paid was not a driving factor in his whistle-blowing. He was more motivated in exposing problems undermining the safety of Belmarsh prison. This included high category prisoners being downgraded simply to ease overcrowding and the failure to properly search inmates.

Former Daily Mirror editor Roy Greenslade says the board of Trinity Mirror should resign. He expressed outrage that in sacrificing one of the cardinal principles of the profession, "it set in train events that have wrecked the life of a confidential journalistic source."

Freelances go nuclear



photo: © Ken Brookes

Organiser Ken Skehan (front left) with the CIoJ freelance group and hosts

At near-end 2016, newly appointed Freelance Division visits organiser Ken Skehan launched the new programme with a proverbial bang. The visit was to Harwell Campus, for many years headquarters of the UK Atomic Energy Research Establishment and currently a science park devoted to cutting-edge research, from super-energy laser radiation to advanced techniques for additive manufacturing.

Guided by some of the world's outstanding physicists, our group studied some mind-boggling apparatus and developments. Code-named DIAMOND and located in a vast circular building opened by the Queen in 2007, the most imposing is Britain's national synchrotron science facility. Producing intense beams of light like a conventional laser but incredibly more powerful, it can be used to investigate the structure and properties of an incredibly varied range of materials. The facility cost £260 million in a building 738m in circumference.

Speed of light

The particles used by Diamond are electrons travelling near to the speed of light. They travel not in a circle but in a 48-sided polygon equipped with magnetic accelerators or diverters at every corner. Each diversion facilitates the release of high-energy x-rays into beamlines, the experimental locations where the synchrotron radiation is employed for experimental purposes. We were able to see the internal structure of the accelerator ring as well as some of the beamlines. There are expected to be 32 of these by end 2017, and there are also an impressive collection of other laser apparatus, each with a catchy codename.

I'll just pick one more important area, called RAL Space (Rutherford-Appleton Laboratory Space) and opened in 2015. It's a Space Integration Facility based in a modern multistorey building, with lots of vacuum and environmental test chambers to support the national space programme.

Don't worry if you don't understand much of this. That applied to all of us before the visit, but I'd guess we could all pretend we understood at least part of it by the time we left. All due to the brilliance - and patience - of those who showed us around.



photo: © Ken Brookes

Electronic greetings to CIoJ visitors

Finally, I know the famous RAL (see above), which owns or runs many of these facilities, is based in Cambridge, where the Isis river runs, and I appreciate its part-ownership of the river name (applied to projects, buildings and locations), but I still find the sign illustrated in just a tiny amount disconcerting.

Look out for more and widely differing Freelance Division facility visits in the coming months.

Ken Brookes

Researchers get help with scientific publishing

BMJ, formerly British Medical Journal and now one of the world's leading medical knowledge providers, has launched the Author Hub, a new platform to assist researchers in every field at every stage of the publishing process.

The Author Hub is a comprehensive platform aimed at researchers who not only want to publish their work, but also understand how to design their study, promote their paper or identify the right journal for them. The platform is packed with interactive features, videos and "how to" guides to solve each problem individually.

The majority of the content has been written by established scientists, editors and publishers, who share their knowledge and expertise in an approachable style.

So, whether you are an experienced researcher wanting to create a video abstract for your paper, or a young scientist needing help with designing your study, you will find something to help you.

The platform has a clear and user-friendly structure, designed to allow users to easily jump from one topic to another, and instantly address the needs of their particular situation.

The site is fully mobile optimised, and is an excellent resource for authors who need answers on the go, providing comprehensive guides, tutorials, examples and tips.

Roberta Cucuzza, Strategic Marketing Manager at BMJ said: "We are committed to providing a first-class publishing experience for our authors. We are delighted to be making this exciting resource freely available to researchers across the globe to help them get published, discovered and cited with BMJ."

For more information, please visit authors.bmj.com

Did you know?

Your annual subscription to the Chartered Institute of Journalists is tax-deductible? This applies to any Institute member who is a UK taxpayer, whether you are a staff journalist or a freelance.

New project to support independent journalism in Ukraine



The two-year project will build the resilience of freelance journalists in Ukraine and their ability to work safely and responsibly. Image credit: Dmitry Serebryakov - freelance photographer/ former RPT beneficiary Volodymyr Shuvaev is pictured.

The Rory Peck Trust has started work on a new project, funded by the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF) to strengthen independent journalism in Ukraine. Entitled "Supporting independent journalism in Ukraine by building freelance journalists' resilience and ability to work safely and responsibly", it will help freelancers in Ukraine gain the skills and support they need to continue their vital contribution to an informed civil society. This is the second RPT initiative to be funded by UNDEF, following the recently completed "Strengthening skills and improving safety for independent journalism in Libya."

The project will be implemented by RPT alongside Ukrainian partner, the Institute of Mass Information (IMI). Freelancers will receive training through a series of workshops in digital and psychosocial safety, risk assessment and responsible journalism. An online resource based on the curriculum will then be launched, providing freelance journalists across the country with guidance and information to help them work safely and responsibly.

Freelance journalists in Ukraine are facing threats and violence from multiple sources and in multiple forms – both physical and online. Most freelancers lack the skills, support and resources to adequately protect themselves, making them especially vulnerable. As a result self-censorship is spreading and independent voices are being extinguished.

Safety

The Trust's experience and expertise supporting freelance journalists' safety and welfare makes it uniquely placed to address this issue through the UNDEF-funded project.

UNDEF has funded more than 500 projects in over 150 countries in the areas of rule of law, media, community development, women's empowerment, and youth participation. This project was signed in UNDEF's new Tenth Round of Funding.

Aiding grass-roots reporting in Africa

Katherine Kreuter has been appointed to the board of Media Matters for Women. MMW is a US-registered NGO founded by Sharon Bylenga. They have pioneered the use of Bluetooth technology and local journalists to address the unmet information needs of women and girls in rural Africa. Their team of female journalists produces original audio content in professional podcast format in multiple languages which is then delivered via Bluetooth to last-mile women and girls via mobile phones.

A journalist herself, Katherine Kreuter is keen to promote this type of grassroots reporting. While there is great need for better information among third world women and girls, there are also great challenges to overcome in providing traditional print or broadcast journalism. This projects takes advantage of leapfrog technology to meet those needs much more cost-effectively than previously possible. Educated in the US, Kreuter holds an MSJ from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism, and has worked in the US, Hong Kong, London, Brazil and South Africa. As a board member at MMW where MMW has begun a pilot project with a Millicom Foundation Grant in partnership with the Swiss NGO Women@ TheTable. For further information, go to www.mediamattersforwomen.org

E-mail address

If you are not receiving regular messages from us via e-mail it is likely we do not have your up-to-date details. Don't miss out. Update your details today - memberservices@cioj.co.uk .

Nobel Laureate joins exodus from Russian PEN



Svetlana Alexievich

Nobel Literature Prize winner Svetlana Alexievich is the latest writer to have quit the Russian PEN Centre as part of a widening split within the organization.

Alexievich, who won her Nobel Prize in 2015, said that she was leaving the organization to protest against the expulsion of journalist and activist Sergei Parkhomenko.

Her statement came a day after prominent Russian writer Boris Akunin, whose real name is Grigory Chkhartishvili, announced he was leaving the Russian PEN Centre, saying that the organization did not defend persecuted writers and so had "nothing in common" with the global PEN movement. The previous day, poet Lev Rubinshtein and writer Aleksandr Ilichevsky had quit the group in protest at the expulsion of prominent journalist and activist Sergei Parkhomenko.

Officially, Parkhomenko was expelled from the group for "provocative activity" but he wrote on the website of Ekho Moskvy radio that he was punished for criticizing the Russian PEN Centre for failing to support Ukrainian filmmaker Oleh Sentsov, who is serving 20 years in a Russian prison after being convicted of plotting terrorist attacks.

Sentsov, a native of Crimea, was a vocal opponent of Russia's annexation of the Black Sea peninsula. He denies the allegations of terrorist involvement. The European Union, Amnesty International and others in the West have all condemned his arrest and imprisonment.

Speaking to the Interfax news agency on January 10, Russian PEN Centre President Yevgeny Popov denied claims of a split in the organization, saying there are more than 400 members of the organization and "only one Parkhomenko".

THE REORGANISATION OF THE INSTITUTE CHARITABLE FUNDS

It's hard to buy insurance

when the house is burning down - but the Institute can help

I often use the insurance comparison to help explain why all professional journalists should join the Chartered Institute. True, the Institute is non-political, so it devotes its efforts to the needs of members, rather than trying to change the world or organise strikes and marches for ideological reasons. Certainly, when it comes to the ID and press cards that every journalist needs at some time – and some journalists need all the time – the Institute provides the most prestigious, multilingual and widely recognised credentials. And true again, by virtue of its Royal Charter, for those who value such things, it is able to grant identifying letters after members' names to give added status to their choice of journalism as a career.

But there's more than that. The friendly, efficient staff and elected officers of the Chartered Institute will certainly look after you when you're prospering, but what happens when times are hard, titles closing, unexpected illness restricting your activities, the house metaphorically if not literally on fire and the proverbial wolf knocking at the door?

That's where the Institute charities come in. We currently have four of these, not fantastically well endowed by national and international standards, but certainly well enough to be helpful when really needed. Each has a devoted, hardworking and unpaid committee. The four are the Orphan Fund, the Benevolent Fund, the Pensions Fund and the Oak Hill & T P O'Connor Fund. Last year's Annual Conference agreed to investigate a merger of the first three of these, but not Oak Hill, for a reason I'll explain in a moment. I have the honour and privilege of chairing the Charities Committee, which in separate meetings looks after both Pensions and Oak Hill & T P O'Connor. I'd like to describe what we do, whilst leaving those who run the others to talk about their separate activities.

Pensions Fund

Institute pensions may not be as large as those you pay for all your working life, but they provide a worthwhile monthly supplement as well as birthday and Christmas presents.

The rules of the Pensions Fund are relatively simple. In summary, apart from being deserving, an applicant must be over 60 and a member of the Chartered Institute for not less than 10 years. The committee will choose the most deserving of all the applicants. And the good news: as I write this, there is at least one vacancy. If you think you qualify, ask HQ for an application form.

Oak Hill & T P O'Connor Fund

This is already an amalgamation of two long-standing Institute charities, and the only one open to all journalists, whether members of the Chartered Institute or not. Equally, there are no rules about length of membership.

Originally, well before the NHS was founded, Oak Hill was the name of a nursing home owned and operated by the Institute for its members. Eventually it was sold and the funds employed to assist members convalescing from illness or operations. Merging with T P O'Connor a few years ago expanded its potential to virtually any journalist in need of urgent financial support but with insufficient resources.

Most important

When life maltreats you, a professional journalist and Chartered Institute member, when you don't know where to turn, when you can't even afford the Institute subs, don't think of resignation, think of the Institute's legal, financial and professional advice that might get you out of the hole. And if things are really bad, don't neglect the CIoJ charities. Needless to say, their sympathetic help and related activities are always completely confidential.

Ken Brookes

Past-President CIoJ

Chairman, CIoJ Pensions Fund

Chairman, Oak Hill & T P O'Connor Fund

INSTITUTE CHARITIES – THE FACTS

The Chartered Institute of Journalists currently has four charitable funds from which it dispenses financial support to members and their families.

With combined investments totalling in excess of £3.1 million, support may be provided for varying needs including: short term financial hardship, interest-free loans to cover the replacement of lost or damaged equipment, support for funeral expenses, support for children of members who have died or been incapacitated in some way, monthly pensions for elderly claimants and support for members recovering from illness or operations. In all cases the claimant must be experiencing financial hardship.

Our Funds as they stand are:

The Orphan Fund: The object of the Fund is to maintain, educate, support and encourage qualifying children of Institute members, of any category, of the Institute of Journalists. To be eligible to receive assistance from the Fund, children must have lost the support, through death or total incapacity, of one or both parents. A surviving parent must be in such circumstances as to require financial assistance for the education and proper support of the children. A child may also be considered as an orphan, if the Orphan Fund Committee consider that a parent or parents are unable, temporarily or permanently, to provide proper support. Children shall be eligible for assistance from the Fund up to the age of 18 years but, at the Trustees' discretion, assistance may be given during any period of higher or further education beyond that age, or in any other special circumstances.

Currently the Fund supports three beneficiaries; two in statutory education and one in higher education. Monthly support is provided for subsistence and for costs of living (accommodation). In addition, beneficiaries also receive birthday, Christmas, holiday grants and, where necessary, costs of education.

The Orphan Fund is by far the biggest in terms of value, with investments totalling just under £2.5 million.

Benevolent (and Widows) Fund: The object of the Benevolent Fund shall be to relieve cases of indigence or distress among all classes of members of the Institute and dependants of deceased members of the Institute in whatever class.

Support is provided to members in financial hardship, and may be provided by way of a grant or a loan. Grants are made ad-hoc when applications are received from members or their dependants. Trustees may opt to provide a one-off grant, or to provide assistance spread over the course of a set number of months.

The Benevolent Fund has investments of just under £275k.

Pension Fund: The Fund provides a small monthly pension payment, and provides extra grants for birthdays and Christmas. To be considered for an Institute pension the applicant must be a member of the Institute, and have been

Let's develop a bolder and more effective Orphan Fund

At the Chartered Institute of Journalists' Annual Conference last year in Bournemouth, members agreed the next steps in the consolidation of three of the Institute's charities. Should the consolidation take place, it will be but the latest in a series of charity mergers that have taken place within the Institute over the last 80 or 90 years.

Conference accepted the benefits that would come from a merger of the charities but wished there to be examination of the issues and more discussion with the existing Trustees. Council has now considered the matter in some depth following meetings with the Trustees. The great majority are in favour of the development but a number of Orphan Fund Trustees are less enthusiastic.

This writer finds this difficult to understand as in any new structure it would inevitably be the Orphan Fund in the driving seat. It is not a merger of equals but of very unequals. The Orphan Fund has investments of almost £2.5 million. That generated income last year of around £104,000 while outgoings (of generous grants and expenses) were about £60,000. It left a surplus of around £40,000 for the year.

By contrast the Benevolent Fund has investments worth £274,000 while the Pensions Fund is somewhat less at £224,000, together only about one fifth of the size of the Orphan Fund. Icome and expenditure is proportionate. Benevolent and Pension Funds had income totalling £20,000, of which most was disbursed in modest grants and pensions. The combined surplus was less than £2,000. In some years there have been shortfalls on these funds – something that has never happened to the Orphan Fund in living memory.

There is a worrying aspect of the Orphan Fund's surplus. The Charity Commission takes a dim view of charities that build up large balances. By law, a charity exists to help its beneficiaries or promote the objectives for which it was founded. A charity is not there to generate large fund balances so the Commission has the power to direct a charity to run down its balances.

Charitable purposes

At present the Orphan Fund uses just 55% of its income for its charitable purposes. By contrast, the Pension and Benevolent Funds use 91% of their income for the purposes for which they were created.

If the Orphan Fund were to have access to the £498,000 of assets of the other two funds and to take on the responsibilities that go with them, the combined fund would use almost 60% of its income for the charitable purposes set out in the governing documents. That would be a far more satisfactory situation.

The Charity Commission has encouraged where possible the merging or acquisition of charities to make more viable and efficient organisations. Thus this proposal would go along with official thinking.

Trustees acting for what would, effectively, be an enlarged Orphan Fund would no longer be constrained in the way the Trustees of the two smaller charities are presently.

The Trustees would be able to review the whole range of welfare needs of members and their dependents not, as at present, looking at one kind of support then another. Investing and providing under the umbrella of a single Fund, the Institute would be in a far more logical and practical position to help its members should they get into situations where they need support.

Would the Fund need to be renamed? Possibly. Something like Orphans, Pensions and Benevolent Fund would probably get shortened over time to OPAB Fund.

Let your views be known either to Council in the coming months or at the 2017 Annual Conference on October 14.

Norman Bartlett

in membership for a period of not less than ten years immediately preceding the application. Applicants must be not less than 60 years of age or, without having reached that age, have through some infirmity, become incapacitated from earning a livelihood.

The Fund currently supports four pensioners, but it can support up to seven in total from the present value of fund.

The Pension Fund has investments of just under £225k.

Oak Hill and T P O'Connor Fund: This fund is slightly different from the other Institute charities because it may dispense assistance to members and non-members alike. Because of this, the Charity Commission sees it differently and it is not, therefore, part of the merger proposals.

This fund assists journalists who are recuperating after illness and to pay towards medical treatment, and assists with the maintenance of sick and aged journalists in poor and necessitous circumstances.

The Oak Hill and T P O'Connor Fund has investments totalling just over £200k.

Note: please contact CIoJ Head Office for a full copy of the rules regarding applications for assistance.

Charity merger – an alternative view

It is hard not to have some sympathy for those who believe that by merging three of the Institute's charity funds into one substantial, financially robust organisation, there are savings for the CIoJ as a whole and benefits for members in particular. Administration costs would be reduced and a larger fund would be available to disburse more to those seeking help from the Benevolent or Pension Funds, if ever required.

Conversely, it is worth pointing out that, at present, both of those funds meet all their commitments, without requiring financial back-up from any other source.

However, as a longstanding Trustee of the Orphan Fund, I share the reservations of some of my colleagues who fear that such a merger will shift the focus of Orphan Fund Trustees. While it is true that Orphan Fund trustees would probably form the backbone of a new Fund committee, they are concerned that the merger, inevitably, will dilute their commitment to our orphans. That commitment and knowledge of the recipients has been built up over a number of years through personal contact and beneficiaries being invited to Institute functions.

Obviously in the event of a merger of three funds, it would be necessary to reduce the number of Trustees from each individual fund to ensure that the revised fund committee remained manageable, reasonably lean, and, of course, limited trustee expenses. The downside is that some committed and loyal members would no longer play as full a part in Institute affairs.

Previous organisational changes, unhappily, have tended to reduce grass-roots involvement; for example, what happened to membership of the East and West Midlands Regions when a merger was proposed? Involvement and membership both slumped! The re-structuring of the Institute's Council, which cut the direct link ensuring that Institute Regions and Divisions were automatically represented on that body, had a similarly damaging effect.

My previous experience of "rationalisation" in the Institute – although always very well-intended – does not make me sanguine about the outcome this time. I believe we need to tread very carefully.

Paul Leighton,
Immediate Past President,
Trustee, Orphan Fund.

Launch of new Literary Trail

The Historic Houses Association has launched an exciting new online Literary Trail. The trail features over 40 HHA member houses around the UK which have links to literary figures, books and plays. Authors as diverse as D.H. Lawrence, Charlotte Brontë, Roald Dahl and George Eliot are all connected with HHA houses, each of which is independently owned and many of which have been in the same families for generations.

Ben Cowell, Director-General of the Association, said: "It's no surprise that so many HHA houses have links to literary heroes of the past – from William Shakespeare to Jane Austen. What is less well known is that some of our houses remain the lived-in homes of authors today, who draw inspiration from the beauty of their surroundings. Visiting these special places helps to preserve them for future generations. We hope you enjoy the many houses on our trail, and the literary masterpieces with which they are associated."

To find out more, access the trail at hha.org.uk/literary and click on the pins to uncover the stories. Please check opening dates and times before visiting.

Founded in 1973, the HHA is a not-for-profit organisation that represents more than 1,600 of Britain's independently-owned historic houses, castles and gardens. More than 500 of these properties open their doors to visitors for days out, special tours, school visits, film locations, weddings and events, or as memorable places to stay. HHA members range from iconic stately homes such as Blenheim Palace and Knebworth House, to more intimate houses such as Traquair in Scotland, Treowen in Wales and Belle Isle in Northern Ireland. Most are still family homes.

Properties on the Literary Trail include:

London
2 Temple Place
Fitzroy House
Strawberry Hill House
The Queen's House

South East
Beaulieu
Blenheim Palace
Chawton House Library
Goodnestone Park
Hever Castle
Restoration House
Saint Hill Manor
West Dean College

East of England
Holkham Hall
Knebworth House
The Manor Cambridgeshire

East Midlands
Boughton House
Cotesbach Hall
DH Lawrence Birthplace Museum
Grimsthorpe Castle
Lamport Estate
Renishaw Hall
Rockingham Castle

West Midands
Arbury Hall
Madresfield

South West
Athelhampton House
Berkeley Castle
Kelmscott Manor
Tiverton Castle
Trereife
Ugbrooke House
Wilton House
Woodchester Mansion

Yorkshire
Norton Conyers

North West
Combermere Abbey
Hoghton Tower
Hutton in the Forest
Lytham Hall
Mirehouse
Old Medicine House
Stonyhurst

Scotland
Abbotsford
Bowhill
Cawdor Castle
Craigenputtock
Glamis Castle
Gordon Castle

New Chair for the Crime Writers' Association

The Crime Writers' Association is pleased to announce that crime novelist Martin Edwards has been elected as its new Chair and takes over his duties in January.

Martin Edwards is the author of eighteen novels; the most recent is The Dungeon House. Last year, The Golden Age of Murder, his study of the genre between the wars, won the Edgar, Agatha, H.R.F. Keating and Macavity awards, and was shortlisted for the Anthony award and the CWA Gold Dagger for non-fiction. He is series consultant to the British Library's Crime Classics and is also President of the Detection Club. His other awards include a CWA Dagger and the CWA Margery Allingham Prize.

Martin said: "I'm delighted to become Chair of a thriving association, which now has more members, here and overseas, than ever before. It's an honour to follow in the footsteps of Len Tyler, who has worked tirelessly for the CWA, and many other distinguished writers including Dick Francis, Ian Rankin, and Peter James."

Len Tyler, outgoing Chair, says: "It's been a great honour to have been Chair of the CWA for almost two years. They have been interesting years, with much to celebrate in crime fiction, which remains a strong and innovative genre. They've also been years during which we faced problems with attacks on freedom of speech, library closures and increasing problems for writers in making a living. We've tried to support crime writers and speak out when we could. But there's still so much to be done. I very much regret that other commitments mean that I have had to stand down earlier than expected. I wish the new Chair, Martin Edwards, every success for his term of office and look forward to continuing to work with him and the committee as Past Chair.'



Martin Edwards, new Chair of the CWA

Donald J. Trump and the Fourth Estate



Donald Trump being interviewed on Fox News. Image: @realDonaldTrump

It is something of an understatement to say that the inauguration of Donald J. Trump has begun a new chapter in US Presidential and media relations.

The message from the new President is getting louder and clearer. He thinks many journalists are dishonest, and peddlers of "fake news".

He has his favourites. For example, Fox News gets his approval. But as for the American networks CNN, MSNBC, the New York Times and others, his Twitter account @realDonaldTrump leaves no room for misunderstanding:

"Journalist, Radical Centrist, and Public Policy Researcher", Simon Hedlin responded with some traditional US journalistic fact-checking:

Veteran Channel Four news-caster, Jon Snow, is arguing that Trump's bullying and menacing intimidation of mainstream news media is being toned down by BBC coverage. It is almost as if the accusation and denunciation is being meant as a joke. But Snow insists: "He didn't. He meant it. He really hates us."

What does this mean for journalists and publishers he "really hates"? Certainly, the protocols of courtesy and good manners that characterized White House media conferences under previous presidents have given way to sarcasm and put downs.

The BBC has been given the Trumpian sobriquet "another beauty", whenever the Corporation's North America Editor, Jon Sopel, asks critical questions of the President:

Trump: Where are you from?

Sopel: Ah. BBC.

Trump: Ok. Here's another beauty.

Sopel: It's a good line. Uh. "Impartial, free and fair."

Trump: Yeah, sure.

Sopel: Mr President?

Trump: Just like CNN, right?

Sopel: On the travel ban – We could banter back and forth – On the travel ban, would you accept that that was a good example of the smooth running of government?

The exchange has become rather iconic. But was the President really "bantering" when he compared the BBC to his "fake news" bête noire CNN?

When BBC Political Editor Laura Kuenssberg bombarded Trump with the long question: "Mr President, you've said before that torture works, you've praised Russia, you've said you want to ban some Muslims from coming to America, you've suggested there should be punishment for abortion. For many people in Britain those sound like alarming beliefs. What do you say to our viewers at home who are worried about some of your views and worried about you becoming the leader of the free world?" he joked with Prime Minister Theresa May, "There goes that relationship."

On the surface it all seems light-hearted. Sopel tweeted that his flinty exchanges with the President had earned him a new line in business cards.

Trump does, of course, have his admirers and supporters in Britain. They include former UKIP leader and now LBC broadcaster, Nigel Farage, and former Daily Mirror editor and television present Piers Morgan. Farage and Morgan both argue that Trump is being trivialised and demonised unfairly.

He has been in office barely a few months and difficult questions are being raised: the judicial thwarting of his policy on immigration from seven predominantly Muslim countries, the resignation of his National Security Advisor and the problem of leaks about Russian interference in US politics.

Trump is making it very clear how he is going to deal with this:







Following where Obama left off

Were there to be a heightened clampdown on leakers with federal prosecutions, Donald Trump would be simply following in the footsteps of Barack Obama. After Obama entered the White House in 2009, his administration waged a war against whistleblowers and official leakers. There were eight prosecutions under the 1917 Espionage Act on his watch, which was more than double those under all previous presidents combined.

Perhaps President Trump is going to do his best to break this record? Whereas President Obama pardoned Chelsea Manning from a 35-year-jail sentence for feeding Wikileaks, Trump ramped up the rhetoric on Edward Snowden to the extent of implying that he deserves the death penalty. There have been reports that Trump's friend in the Kremlin, Vladimir Putin, has been considering gifting the renegade CIA contractor, currently in self-imposed exile in Russia, to the US authorities, to promote future détente.

In the meantime, journalists – and this Institute – are watching closely to find out if the sulphurous rhetoric meted out by the new President on the fourth estate ever materialises into sticks and stones instead of words.

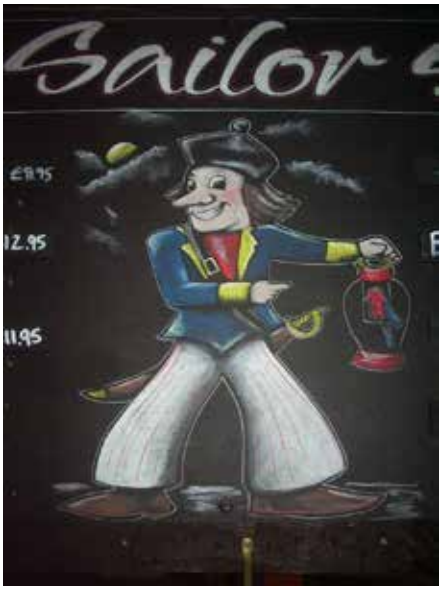
Tim Crook

The off-duty journalist…

In this new section we take to the highways and byways to locate the watering-holes and places of interest – likely to appeal to our membership!

East Suffolk is a land of farmland and fields, mediaeval churches (such as St. Bartholomew's at Orford) and lonely coastal scenery – but with towns and villages along the seaside, and by estuaries, which are pleasantly busy but never crowded. Orford is one such spot.

Famous for its Ness and its lighthouse (the latter featured in a famous railway poster series of the 1930s, "Sentinels of Britain's beauty"), Orford attracted the artist J.M.W. Turner, who painted a scene of ships at the town's quay in the days when such East Anglian coastal towns were important commercial ports. Jolly sailors, no doubt, crowded the quay, but today that spirit lives on in the form of one of the town's best-loved pubs… The Jolly Sailor!



Southwold, a few miles north of Orford, is the home of the Adnams brewery, and it is the local brew which draws locals and visitors alike to the cosy bar. Broadside bitter, commemorating a battle in the Anglo-Dutch wars fought off the Suffolk coast, is one of the best-known beers, but you may want to sample – especially if a sea-mist drifts in – an equally delightful pint: Ghost Ship. And on a warm summer's day, the soft fruity taste of 'Mosaic' quenches the thirst of the beer enthusiast. (In fact, this might be a good choice for those new to real ale: the light, delicious flavour complementing the Jolly Sailor's excellent fish dishes.)

The menu is very enticing indeed, and as you would expect in an area of the country which proclaims its local food and drink, Suffolk specialities – seafood (scallops, skate wing, cod), Suffolk ham, mature cheddar cheese, and locally-smoked fish – feature prominently. But you can also enjoy a pub snack, and there are many pub favourites, too, such as steak or a home-made burger, or breaded scampi and chips.

There is a good atmosphere at The Jolly Sailor – and the old-fashioned feel is enhanced by pictures of the inn in times gone by, prints of local scenes, old Adnams signs, and maritime notices from the times when you were likely to find yourself pressed into naval service! Some years ago, lost under several layers of wallpaper, the landlord discovered a beautifully-drawn and painted naval scene, depicting the Napoleonic and Nelsonian era of sail and warfare. (You can buy a postcard of this remarkable wall painting at the bar. The painting also features on the pub's website, so if you are on-line take a look at the work of a truly gifted, unknown artist: www.jollysailororford.co.uk)



Set in the heart of the village, on the square, The Butley Orford Oysterage is an establishment devoted to the finest local and British seafood. Fresh oysters, or oysters deliciously cooked in a creamy sauce; fresh cod, plaice, skate (and locally-smoked fish) – not to mention smoked salmon (from Scotland) – the Oysterage is refreshingly quiet, plain, simple and very Suffolk-minded in its atmosphere. Local ale is served, and there is a first-class wine list.

If you find yourself in Orford, you can't miss The Jolly Sailor and the Butley Oysterage. Just drive or amble down from the castle (which featured in the horror film, Witchfinder General!) past various mariners' cottages, toward the square and the old quay. A warm welcome awaits you.

Stuart Millson

Selling honours? Disgraceful!

A Personal View by Norman Bartlett

New applications for membership of the Chartered Institute of Journalists have stalled. This is not a new situation; it seems to come round every 12-15 years. This time it has been aggravated by the continuing financial problems of newspapers and other media. In general, things are particularly acute for the younger members of our profession, less so for the older and more established ones.

Why not a revolutionary approach to subscriptions to meet this challenge? Give a boost to recruitment despite the financial hardship that many younger journalists have to deal with today.

Here's the proposal. The subscription for all those under 50 years of age would be cut to £2/week, or £100 if paying for a full year. Those older than 50 would continue to pay £199/year but if they could show that they had been engaged in the industry for 10 years or more would be automatically promoted to Fellow of the Institute and be able to put the honorific FCIJ after their names. Those under the age of 50, who had been in the industry long enough and who wanted to become FCIJ, could do so by paying the full subscription.

So, what would the effects be? For those over the age of 50, there would be no difference. They would be in the same situation as now plus the dignity of becoming Fellows.

For those members under the age of 50, their subs would go down significantly. More to the point, many potential members out there in the industry would find it so much easier to get access to the benefits and privileges that come from Institute membership.

Cries of dismay

There may be distant cries of dismay from the Treasurer's department, but stay! Think for a moment. What happened when the Chancellor cut corporation tax? Revenue went up. What happens when Tesco reduces prices on cornflakes? Sales go up. What happens when Ryanair or Megabus launch £1 fares? Sales surge.

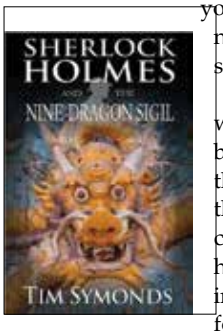
"A courageous decision, Minister" as Sir Humphrey might say. But is this not the time to take a bold step to transform and see the Institute reborn with a younger, more numerous, more vigorous and active membership?

Risks? Of course. Such a development would mean a greater recruiting activity by spreading the message of modest subscription plus unbeatable benefits. But there is plenty of time to work out more of the detail before 2018 when such a scheme could be implemented.

Sherlock Holmes and the Nine-Dragon Sigil

by Tim Symonds.

MX Publishing, 364 pages, paperback
ISBN 978-1-78705-035-8



"Sigil. Pronounced 'sijil'. An inscribed or painted symbol or occult sign considered to have magical power." So begins the very latest Sherlock Holmes mystery and adventure from the pen of Institute member, Tim Symonds: a writer who has immersed himself in the drama and legend of England and the Empire's greatest detective; and, through his brilliant, authentic re-creations of an era, honours the original work of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle – to the extent that one could almost believe that a miraculous, ageless Sir Arthur was still writing today.

With each new Sherlock adventure, Tim seems to find ever-more exciting and intriguing adventures for his heroes. From book to book, there is simply no lessening of either inspiration or tension. This time, the action moves to the closed, forbidden celestial world of the imperial Chinese court – to a China (of 1906) a year in which a progressive Ch'ing Emperor finds himself at odds with the old order, in the form of the Empress Dowager – guardian of tradition and an insularity that stretches back to a time out of mind, and where secret symbols – of mysticism and dragons – could mean life or death. But British interests are at stake, and the prospect of uprisings and assassinations could be catastrophic for His Majesty's Government, playing as it is, 'The Great Game.'

The Foreign and Colonial Office is treating the situation in the Far East with extreme caution, and so Dr. Watson – experienced in the privations of warfare in remote eastern climes – is sent into China, by long-forgotten, demon-haunted mountain passes from Kashgar and on to the famous Silk Road. The bold ex-army doctor is ready for anything as the adventure truly gets underway: "I have taken to carrying my Webley-Pryse revolver under my jacket. I regret not employing a half-dozen armed convoy bodyguards…" He pitches his tent in – "…a sheltered spot at 13,900 feet, some 1,700 feet below a knife-edge pass. A penetrating wind blew non-stop." Local colour abounds in the story, as Watson encounters passing tribesmen and (needing added protection from the elements) seems to take a leaf out of Holmes's book: "A mafoo on a shaggy pony sold me a Mongolian cap, a huge thing of red flannel, wadded and trimmed with fur, with ear-flaps which can be tied under the chin. The cap has already proved of great value."

Just earlier, Watson had experienced a bizarre encounter with an outlandish fortune-teller – a creature almost not of this world, with a smile displaying: "… four or five teeth running together in one piece, like a bone." I will not spoil the plot for you, dear reader, but suffice it to say that nothing in the adventure if quite what it seems…

Once in China, Watson is reunited with the great man of Baker Street, but so conspiratorial and dangerous is the situation that communication with the outside world cannot be through conventional means. Instead, messages have to be relayed via a Royal Navy cruiser in Hong Kong harbour – lest infamous forces discover Holmes's strategy. The threat of death at any moment – of pitiless power-struggles and mysterious poisons – hangs over the imperial court. But what could possibly be the connection between one of the leading players in this curious world, and a meeting earlier in England between Watson and an oriental fellow dressed in a "tailored hacking jacket and checked cravat" with a keen interest in the countryside and flora of Southern England?

All will be revealed in this, the most elusive and inscrutable of Tim Symonds's Sherlock series.

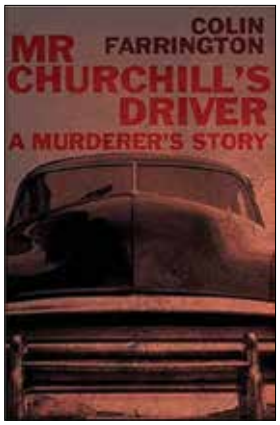
Stuart Millson

Mr Churchill's Driver - A murderer's story

by Colin Farrington

Matador Pubishing 2017

The cover notes for this intriguing novel compare the author, Colin Farrington, to Peter Ackroyd or Ian McEwan. This is unfair to all three. Farrington's talent is sufficiently distinctive to be judged on its own merits.



Like many subscribers to The Journal I am a fast reader. On holiday I can gallop through a paperback in a couple of days. Perhaps on the same vacation I may also enjoy a quick glass of wine. On the odd occasion I even stumble across something surprisingly enjoyable. That's when I force myself to take my time, stop glugging and start sipping, all the better to savour what has excited my palate and to anticipate eagerly what is yet to come. Similarly, with this book of mysteries within mysteries. After reading a chunk of three or four chapters, I had to take a breath, digest what I had read and imagine what lay on the horizon.

BOOKSHELF

The hero, William Gilbey, if one may employ this appellation for a psychotic murderer, is obsessed with solving a mystery, one which had been passed on to him by his father who had been a government driver. The older Gilbey was also the last person – claims the book – to be hanged in England.

During the early part of the Second World War Gilbey's father drives Churchill to Holyhead for a clandestine meeting with the Irish Taoiseach, Eamon de Valera. At the time Britain was on its knees. Some in the British government believed the country should sue for peace. Could the young republic act as a go-between with the Nazis? Might Ireland's price be a unified island? This question is set against a background of huge sums of money and valuables being despatched for safekeeping in England for fear of falling into Republican or Nazi hands. Upon his release from prison Gilbey sets about solving the mystery. But nothing or nobody is what it seems.

The principals in the author's cast are Gilbey's gang, Irish nationalists and MI5. Murder, betrayal and a frisson of lust seep through this polychromatic tale.

I met Colin Farrington several years ago. I recall he used to be a senior civil servant. This enables him to write with the smack of authority about the police and MI5's shenanigans, even on events which the reader might find out of the box. He captures the languid style of the Security Service's senior echelon with – and here the comparison is apt – the ease of another former civil servant, Le Carre. I loved the touch that masterpieces of stolen art might be hanging on the walls of that ugly building on London's Millbank.

Although I'm sure it was unintended by the author, some of the class hatred expressed in his book resonates with the current Zeitgeist of millions of little people who feel left behind by the Establishment, or Nobs, as the characters in this novel call them.

To continue my wine analogy, Mr Churchill's Driver builds towards a climatic maelstrom of some complexity which makes for a heady brew. This could be overpowering but the author, with skill and panache, carries the reader along until the last drop of a satisfying denouement.

Bravo, Farrington, I say. I look forward to your next book. In the meantime I shall start saving up for a decent claret to accompany it.

Jonathan Rush

Jonathan Rush's political thriller, My Persian Girl, set in Tehran during the Islamic Revolution, is available through book shops, Amazon and Amazon Kindle.

CLARE HOLLINGWORTH (1911-2017)

"The undisputed doyenne of war correspondents"

Institute member Clare Hollingworth achieved legendary status in her journalistic career. She lived to her 106th year – quite a remarkable achievement in a profession where minds and bodies tend to burn out early. She relished being in the line of fire. War was her mojo.

Her first scoop was arguably the biggest of the 20th century – the beginning of the Second World War, no less, for which she did not even get a by-line!

A later scoop could be described as the second biggest of that century – Kim Philby's defection to the Soviet Union on a ship from Beirut, which her editor sat on for three months because he was afraid of a libel writ.

Clare was born near Leicester on October 11, 1911, the year of King George V's coronation. She won a scholarship to the University of London School of Slavonic and East European Studies. By the late 1930s she was in Warsaw working with Czech refugees and helping people escape the Nazi onslaught by arranging British visas.

Her early forays into journalism for the New Statesman were quickly followed by being taken on as a foreign correspondent by the Daily Telegraph in August 1939. At the end of the month, she borrowed the British Consul-General's chauffeured car and toured the German-Polish border. A gust of wind blew up hessian screens and she was astonished to see the valley filled with massed ranks of German troops, tanks and armoured cars facing Poland.

This was her first story for the Telegraph and it made the front page the following morning: "1,000 tanks massed on Polish border. Ten divisions reported ready for swift stroke."

When she called the British Embassy to tell them that Germany was invading, they didn't believe her. She stuck the telephone receiver out of the window so a diplomat could hear the sound of war outside.

Pioneering generation

Clare was part of a pioneering generation of women war correspondents who included Martha Gellhorn, Sigrid Schultz, Helen Kirkpatrick, and Lee Miller who during the Second World War demonstrated that women were equal to men in this most dangerous and demanding of reporting specialisms.

She wrote four books which variously described and analysed her hugely impressive life of adventure and journalism: The Three Weeks' War in Poland (1940), There's a German Just Behind Me (1945), The Arabs and the West (1952), Mao and the Men Against Him (1984), and Front Line (memoirs) (1990). Her great nephew, Patrick Garrett, wrote her biography, Of Fortunes and War: Clare Hollingworth, First of the Female War Correspondents (2015).

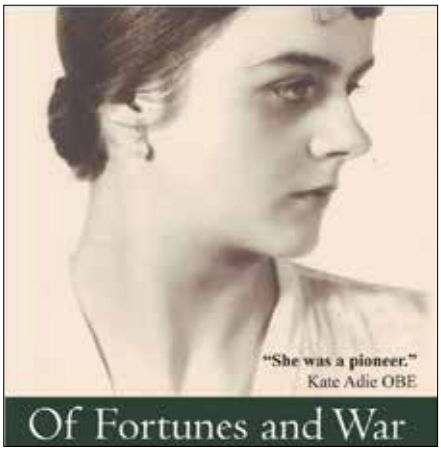
She was the Guardian's first woman defence correspondent and the paper recalled that: "..the hallmark of Hollingworth's journalism was her supreme professionalism and her ability to present facts objectively rather than promote a cause or write about personalities, least of all her own."

In work frontline danger was her home: "I don't feel frightened under machine-gun fire. The excitement of the job overcomes it."

In 1940 she had consistently evaded censorship while covering the chaos in Romania following King Carol's abdication. Her quick-thinking strategy of taking off all her clothes, ringing a friend at the British Legation, and declaring: "You can't possibly arrest me, I'm naked" when the notoriously vicious security police arrived, most likely saved her life.

She ignored and evaded restrictions on frontline women correspondents during Montgomery's North African campaign, often travelling behind enemy lines, and would insist: "I would never use my femininity to get a story that a man could not get."

She qualified as a pilot and became expert in aerial warfare. She was among the most active of 20th century war correspondents winning awards for her coverage of conflicts that included Palestine, Algeria, Vietnam, India, Aden, Pakistan and Bangladesh, and many other places.



Of her experiences in Vietnam she told the BBC: 'I'm not frightened of shot and shell quite frankly. Just happens I am not! You have an anti-flack jacket and I used to take mine and put it underneath my behind, double, because the shots would be from the ground most likely.'

She was made an OBE for services to journalism in 1982.

The current generation often payed her homage by visiting her at her home in Hong Kong and writing feature articles on her remarkable career. She told Robert Fisk that she always knew the Nazis would lose the Second World War because they did not care about people.

It is poetic justice that the person the New York Times described as "the undisputed doyenne of war correspondents" would live such a long, successful and celebrated life.

Right to the end her visas were up to date, her overnight bag packed, and her shoes by her bedside in readiness to be sent into action for her next assignment.

Tim Crook

IAN SUTHERLAND (1944 – 2016)

Ian Sutherland was an enthusiastic and supportive member of the Institute of Journalists, often working on behalf of members on trade union issues with the late Chris Underwood, as well as striving to recruit new members at every opportunity.

A life-changing stroke in 1999 ended Ian's career as publisher, journalist and photographer, together with his staff position as the Scottish press relations officer at Glasgow-based Scottish Motor Neurone Disease Association. His published titles include In Custody, They Belonged to Glasgow and The Bevvy.

Ian Sutherland entered the world of freelance photo journalism, based in Glasgow, in the early 1980s, having been a social worker and probation officer for many years, and had considerable success covering issues such as the miner's strike for publications such as New Society, becoming for a time their Scottish correspondent. In all, he contributed to more than 150 newspaper and magazines over the years.

His love of Scotland, its archaeology, history, and pressing social issues of the day, were the bedrock of a large body of work, including freelance features written for UK and Scottish newspapers, including the Glasgow Herald, Aberdeen Press and Journal, and the worldwide Scots Magazine.

He was therefore proud when elected to become a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, and was pleased to know that many of his Scots Magazine articles on the Granite City are still available to students online from Aberdeen Library, and his Glasgow social-history articles are featured on the Herald's educational CDs in Glasgow's Mitchell Library.

Gwyneth Buchan

LOIS HAINSWORTH (1927-2016)



Journalist and campaigner, Lois Hainsworth was the first-ever woman President of the Chartered Institute of Journalists. Her 89 years were full of grace, style, adventure and activism.

Born between the World Wars into an entrepreneurial family from Nottinghamshire, Lois was of the generation that endured the blitz in London and the privations of war. When asked what she remembered of that time, she said simply "I was scared." Yet it steeled her character and among other things, gave her a high pain threshold.

After leaving school in her teens after her matriculation, she did a secretarial course at the same time as studying to sing and at 16 left home and at 19, with help from an inheritance, went to Vienna to study opera. It was the time of post war partition and there are only glimpses of stories of her adventures at that time, perhaps best left to the imagination.

On her return to London she re-joined the chorus of Covent Garden opera but had to get a part-time job to augment the pay. At a job interview she was asked if she was temperamental. Lois said, "Depends what you mean by temperamental. If you threw a bottle of ink at me, I would pick it up and throw it back." She got the job. It was as PA to a Director of Rank Films. She lived a life of expense accounts, cocktail parties, haute couture clothes and talent spotting trips for Max Factor. She met a Baha'i at work and investigated this faith. She said she loved Jesus but not "churchianity" and recognized in Baha'u'llah the return of Christ and a way of life that encouraged individual development twinned with service to humanity.

Soon after becoming a Baha'i in 1956, she met Philip, on one month's R&R from Uganda. After a week they decided to get married, three weeks later they were married and after a month, Lois found herself walking down the steps of the plane at Entebbe airport, leaving behind a budding career singing at Glyndebourne. As Philip worked to eradicate malaria, sleeping sickness and other water borne diseases for the UK government, Lois was immediately involved with this work and spent her first nights in Uganda living in a newly-built hut in a village in the bush. While there she set up an opera company with expats and together they toured schools across Uganda sharing Mozart with students, many of whom had not met a white person before. All the time she was developing her interest in equality, and she joined the International Council of Women (ICW) in 1958.

In order to provide their children with better education without sending them away to boarding school, Lois returned to the UK in 1968, followed by Philip a year later. She began working with the Townswomen's Guild and was an active member in Leeds. Lois moved to London with Philip in 1976, continuing to work for women and girls, joining the National Council of Women (NCW) in 1981. She was an active member, organizing resolutions at national conferences, and holding a variety of posts from 1982 until 2013 at local, regional and national levels. She developed the work of the Foreign Affairs Committee and editing the NCW national magazine. Her day job, as Public Relations Officer for the Royal Academy of Dancing, led her to join the Chartered Institute of Journalists.

Continuing to travel widely, attending international conferences such as the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women – which she attended from the 1970s until 2005 – Lois joined UNFEEM UK, the UK branch of the then UN agency for women, in 1983, and was elected President in 2001. She raised its profile and ensured that the UK Government knew of its activities. Through these activities she was aware of the suffering of children and women through trafficking and became an active member of the Coalition Against Trafficking. Fired by her usual passion and desire for positive change, she was instrumental in helping Tony Colman MP to get the law changed on trafficking of persons (now incorporated in the Modern Slavery Bill) to ensure a higher penalty for those found guilty of trafficking.

Lois worked hard to develop the Women's Advisory Council to the United Nations Association of which she was a member from 1982 to 2001, serving as Treasurer, Vice-Chair and Chair. She was chair of the Westminster branch of UNA, with a strong belief in the value of the UN, she encouraged others to be active in work for universal peace and equality. Despite working in PR, writing and editing, bringing up three children, and her voluntary work, she taught herself Russian to add to the French, Italian, German, Spanish and Swahili she already spoke. In 2005 Lois set up the Women of Faith network bringing together feminists of faith. The following year she was awarded the MBE for her work for women, equalities, women of faith, and was recognised as doing this as a Baha'i.

In 2007, Lois did a parachute jump for her 80th birthday. When asked how it was, she said, "Very refreshing, I think I will do another one for my 90th birthday." In 2013 after organizing a successful conference on forced and early marriage, Lois fell and after a month in hospital was discharged into a care home, shortly moving to More Hall Convent. She gradually declined and whilst she kept her wicked sense of humour and feisty character, her body failed despite her regular drumming classes and hosting a monthly gathering of a devotional nature in the library.

Last October, in typical manner, she hosted a Baha'i gathering in her room, though she was too weak to be downstairs in a meeting room, in her new care home, Scarlet House. Two weeks later she passed away. She was popular with all the staff at the home, and renowned for her loving manner and thankfulness. She touched the hearts of many.

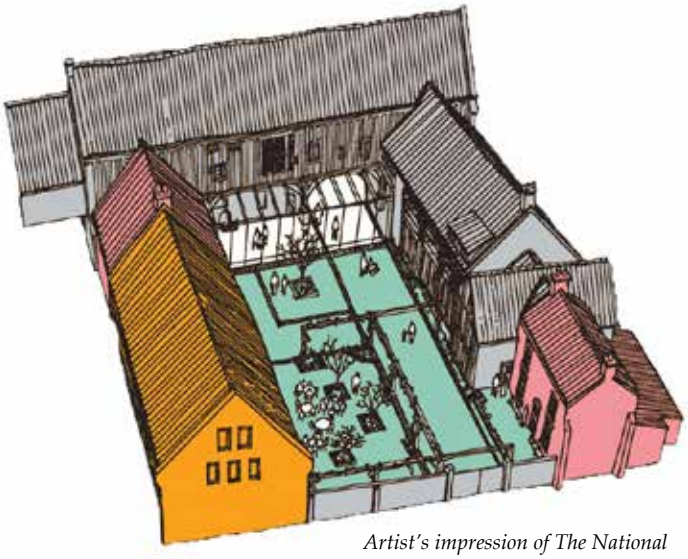


Green light for Writers' Centre

Writers' Centre Norwich has received the green light to develop the city's historic Dragon Hall into the National Centre for Writing.

It has been announced that Norwich's medieval Dragon Hall, which dates back to the 15th Century, will be developed into the National Centre for Writing, following Arts Council England's decision to award £789,434 from National Lottery sources to support the project's capital costs.

Opening its doors in April 2018, the centre will comprise educational and community spaces, enhanced office space and technical facilities, a refurbished public performance arena seating up to 120 people, and even residential space for visiting writers, in literary exchange in this city with its unparalleled literary heritage. The next chapter of Dragon Hall's history as The National Centre for Writing looks set to be an exciting one and we're looking forward to working with our funders, partners, neighbours and the wider world of literature to create something quite unique. In 2017, we will reveal ways in which individuals and companies can get involved in supporting the project, and receive lasting recognition for that support within the very fabric of the new building."



Artist's impression of The National Centre for Writing



The historic Dragon Hall in Norwich.

Prof Yvonne Tasker, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at the University of East Anglia added: "I am absolutely delighted with the success of the Arts Council bid for capital funding so that the magnificent medieval Dragon Hall can be developed into a National Centre for Writing. The collaboration between the Writers' Centre Norwich and the University of East Anglia continues to grow with a number of exciting projects involving creative writers and literary translators."

Her view was echoed by Cllr Alan Waters, Leader of Norwich City Council, who said: "It is only fitting that England's first UNESCO City of Literature should be home to the new National Centre for Writing. Norwich City Council is very proud to have worked with Writers' Centre Norwich on this ambitious project and delighted that the new centre will be housed in one of our most iconic buildings."

England's first UNESCO City of Literature.

Chris Gribble, Chief Executive of Writers' Centre Norwich, said: "We are delighted to have received this news. It is a ringing endorsement of our vision to create a centre of national and international

Dagger in the Library 2017 Longlist Announced

The longlist of the CWA 2017 Dagger in the Library was officially announced on the evening of February 6 at the First Monday crime writing meeting in London.

The Dagger in the Library is a prize for a body of work by a crime writer that users of libraries particularly admire. It is one of the most prestigious crime writing awards in the UK and previous winners include Elly Griffiths, Christopher Fowler, Sharon Bolton, Belinda Bauer, Mo Hayder, Colin Cotterill, Craig Russell, Stuart MacBride, Jake Arnott, Alexander McCall Smith, Stephen Booth, Peter Robinson and Lindsey Davis.

The CWA, in discussion with its 2017 partners, The Reading Agency, revised the 2017 Dagger in the Library format so that, uniquely among crime writing awards, only library staff were able to nominate authors. Nominations were received from 175 libraries across the UK and Ireland – with 110 authors suggested as worthy winners.

The Dagger in the Library is intended to promote crime fiction in general and, in particular, the longlisted authors. The CWA will work with The Reading Agency, local libraries and the Crime Readers' Association to promote novels from the longlisted authors to reading groups across the country during over the next few months – and in particular to the 175 libraries already engaged with the Dagger. We will be utilising The Reading Agency's website, Reading Groups for Everyone, and The CWA's Dagger Reads website to host reading group material for novels by the longlisted authors. Feedback received from reading groups via Reading Groups for Everyone feedback will be a major factor in the judges' decision as to who should proceed to the shortlist and the eventual winner.

Here is the longlist:

Alison Bruce
Andrew Taylor
Brian MacGilloway
Chris Ewan
C J Sansom
James Oswald
Kate Ellis
Mari Hannah
Nicola Upson
Tana French