



Pen & Palette Club Papers

SPRING 2016

Pen and Palette Club Papers
Spring 2016

Edited by The Recorder in Ordinary

Committee

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Master of the Musick	M.A.Borthwick
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Committee Members

J. Bell

J.Millard

Alan Sidney-Wilmot

**"Let no man take, beyond this threshold hence, words uttered here in
friendship's confidence."**

Music Night 12th January 2016 with the Prince Bishops Brass



The President greeted members and guests to the opening of the 2016 spring season. The club is now open to all and applications from ladies is welcome! This is the 'first' appearance for the new President who takes over from illustrious predecessors! John Charlewood sent his greetings and wanted a blow by blow account of the proceedings. The Prince Bishops Brass were welcomed to their second appearance at the Club.

The proceedings then got underway with the 2d toasting the new President by asking what is his potential in music? He said thank you for the googly question! At 6 he was offered either football boots or piano lessons and as he loved football and they didn't have a piano the answer was obvious. He therefore has no credentials whatsoever!

Peter Wallace was asked about his experience in learning a musical instrument - None was the reply but at 7 he thought he should sing and learnt a comic song by heart. After singing this ditty his Mother hauled him off and told him he would never sing again! He then gave voice to 'My uncle Dan McCann" to much applause.

John Anderson when he was 12 offered his services as a vacant flute player but was turned down! Reading ‘Grapes of Wrath’ there was a bit about a harmonica and he became a player seeking the dizzy heights of Larry Adler and Max Geldray! As an Auctioneer he often gets asked about Banjos and Mouth Organs. Unfortunately he didn't have his harmonica with him so the company was spared his playing! He then toasted Ingrid Kilner on her Birthday by singing Happy Birthday!

Alan Kerr had very limited experience of music, it ending at the age of 13. He, 50 years later took up choral singing with the Newcastle Choral Society and enjoys it very much. He then remembered a tale about a star tenor at La Scala who had umpteen encores and on the last one there was a cry from the audience ‘This time get it Right’!

David Kilner is considered a proper musician being the resident pianist. His career started shakily when there was a knock at the door and a Piano Tuner stood there and his mother told him ‘I haven't asked you to call’ He replied ‘No but your neighbour has’! Sadly David's Clarinet still resides at the bottom of his wardrobe but you never know one day he may get it out!

Roger Ward was a surprise toast and as he had not had much for Christmas this made up for it. He asked for Ron Scott to be remembered as a stalwart of the Club.

The Open Toast was delivered by Jeremy Bell and was a tribute to the late Davis Bowie who had died earlier that day:-

“I was given only 24 hours notice of this honour and was stumped for a while but eventually decided on David Bowie as the subject for the toast. Because he is topical and because he was both an artist and musician I had not really appreciated, until yesterday, just how much his act was as a performance artist, as it was as a musician.

I had always judged him by his music, some of which I liked and some of which I did not like. But I knew that he had attended art school - in Leeds I think, if memory serves.

In fact, he used his music and certainly his early and then later music as means by which to express his artistic ideas. Others copied him but did not really understand what he was doing and once they had adopted a certain costume style, stuck to it and rarely changed. Bowie re-invented himself every few years and glam rock, as it became called, was only ever a transitional period or a temporary style for him. He had no compunction about

killing off a style or, in the case of Ziggy Stardust, a very profitable character, once he felt it had run its course for his artistic expression.

In fact, if one listens carefully to his lyrics it becomes obvious that his music was in part, perhaps in large part at times, merely an addition to his artistic output. He innovated, never copied but was often shamelessly copied for profit or because others thought him fashionable. Bowie never returned to a former style or person .

Even his last album, issued on his birthday and just 3 days before his death was clearly performance art. The accompanying video is extraordinary and he obviously intended it as a swan-song, a death performance. In fact it for tells his death. That he could have concentrated enough to put it together is also extraordinary. He clearly intended it to be a legacy, long after he died.

What has amazed me more than anything, is the global nature of the tributes that have, and are still pouring in. The Vatican issued an official statement in praise of him and what he did for the world and peace. The German Government was even more fulsome in its tribute, saying that he helped to bring down the Berlin Wall.

I doubt there has ever been, or will ever be a popular musician (as this is what most see him as) who has had so much popular acclaim. Why?

A former music teacher at my old boarding school once told me that the true test of genius for any good musician, in any field of music, be it pop, jazz, classical or the ability to write tunes, memorable tunes (this teacher was once considered in the top five church organists in the UK and died last year).

Bowie penned many memorable and instantly hummable tunes. This is given to very few.

As a performance artist we can all remember his various guises but his accompanying videos are also memorable and none more so than his last. But part of his appeal had to do with his own persona. As a person he was something of a gentleman. He was polite, gentle, articulate and well spoken. He did not see the need to behave outrageously as many of his generation did. His gender ambiguity was also largely a front and he was something of a leader in raising gender awareness issues, issues that we all now consider to be more or less the norm. Not so at the time. And he was clearly setting out to deliberately shock and make us all think about these issues. Bowie seems to have had few enemies. He was not paranoid about success or fame. If you liked him, good. If you did not like him, fine.

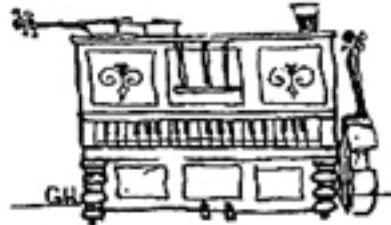
So, ladies and gentlemen I give you David Bowie. Like him or not, he was an artist and a musician, both of which fall within the interests of the Pen and Palette Club. He was an artist who was true unto himself. And one cannot say fairer than that. I give you David Bowie, admired around the world as no other

pop star has ever been. We should be proud that he was also an Englishman!" - **DAVID BOWIE**

The Prince Bishops Brass

Artistes:

Mike Walton - Trumpet
Derek Ruffell - Trumpet
Chris Senior - French Horn
Stuart Gray - Trombone
Stephen Boyd - Tuba



Programme:

Pastime with Good Company Attributed to Henry VIII

Chanson de Matin Edward Elgar

Music Hall Suite Joseph Horowitz

Three Gershwin Pieces George Gershwin

The Roaring Twenties

Four Episodes from West Side Story Leonard Bernstein

A stunning programme beautifully played and applause rang through the room!

The President brought the proceedings to a close by snuffing out the candles!

Pat Cooper Recorder in Ordinary

The First Lunchtime Meeting 24th February 2016

“Face to Face - Norman Cornish and Tom McGuiness - the doyens of Mining art”

The President asked members and guests to stand in remembrance of past President John Charlewood - A Loyal and appreciated club member since 1989.

A new innovation for this first lunchtime meeting was to have circular tables to create a more informal atmosphere. Once all were seated the guests were welcomed - Pat and Neville Myers, Ken Hylton, Therese Silva, Peter and Anne Olive, Barbara Davidson and the guest speaker Robert Mc Manners.

The 2d end chaired by Paul Hickey got into gear by toasting the President and asking him about contact with inspiring artists in his academic career? Not much chance as he spent a lot of time in meetings. This gave him the opportunity of sketching his way through the boring meetings!

Dr Robert McManus was at one time doctor to the Bishop of Durham but never drew him - just looked after his and the families health! - And they are still alive!

Ken Hylton whilst a guest was an old member and once on his feet (ably assisted by John Havis) he regaled us with the full rendition of the Nightmare song from Iolanthe! Word perfect!

David Kilner remembers the times before EU Directives but had forgotten the Ancient Mariner so members were left bereft!

Kelsey Thornton who paints anything that moves or doesn't was asked 'is there anything not worth painting'? Not much he replied and then recited an off the cuff poem which ended ' But I was looking for a corned beef pastie' (your recorder unfortunately missed the rest of it!!!!)

The 2d end proceedings ended by Paul reciting the only poem he knows which he wrote aged 13 -

Whilst lying in a field of corn
a lying in the sun
Protected by Max Factor
And then I was run over by the farmers Tractor— --!

John Havis sang the Loyal Toast accompanied by Anne.

The Open Toast was made by David Kilner

Recently I have been irritated with the falling of standards in English grammar. I am aware that the word “that” and its plural “those” can be used as a pronoun but can also be followed by another word. The same can be applied to the word “this” with its plural “these”. However, the word “them” is a plural word and stands alone. How often do we hear on the radio and television, people saying “them things” or “them events”. Increasingly, it would appear that not enough attention is being given to the proper usage of the language and there is great danger of this mis-usage being accepted as normal.

I remember as a youngster being reprimanded for describing any icy pavement as being slippy when I should have used the word slippery. I was reminded of this when I saw a notice recently pointing out that the path was slippy and was rather shocked when I looked up the Oxford dictionary to find the word “slippy” included.

Punctuation is another concern or lack of the correct procedure in using it. English grammar has a unique sign which nowadays is often abused. It is a wonderful sign. It can save using additional words of letters; it can immediately show the reader if the noun is singular or plural; and it can indicate a possessive. The finest letter, document or printed advertisement can be marred by the incorrect use or absence of this sign. Shopkeepers' boards are often spoilt by its misuse. Not long ago there was a move to abolish this sign altogether because it was so often not being treated properly, and fortunately this did not proceed.

So I give you my toast as a sign of the times - **The Apostrophe**

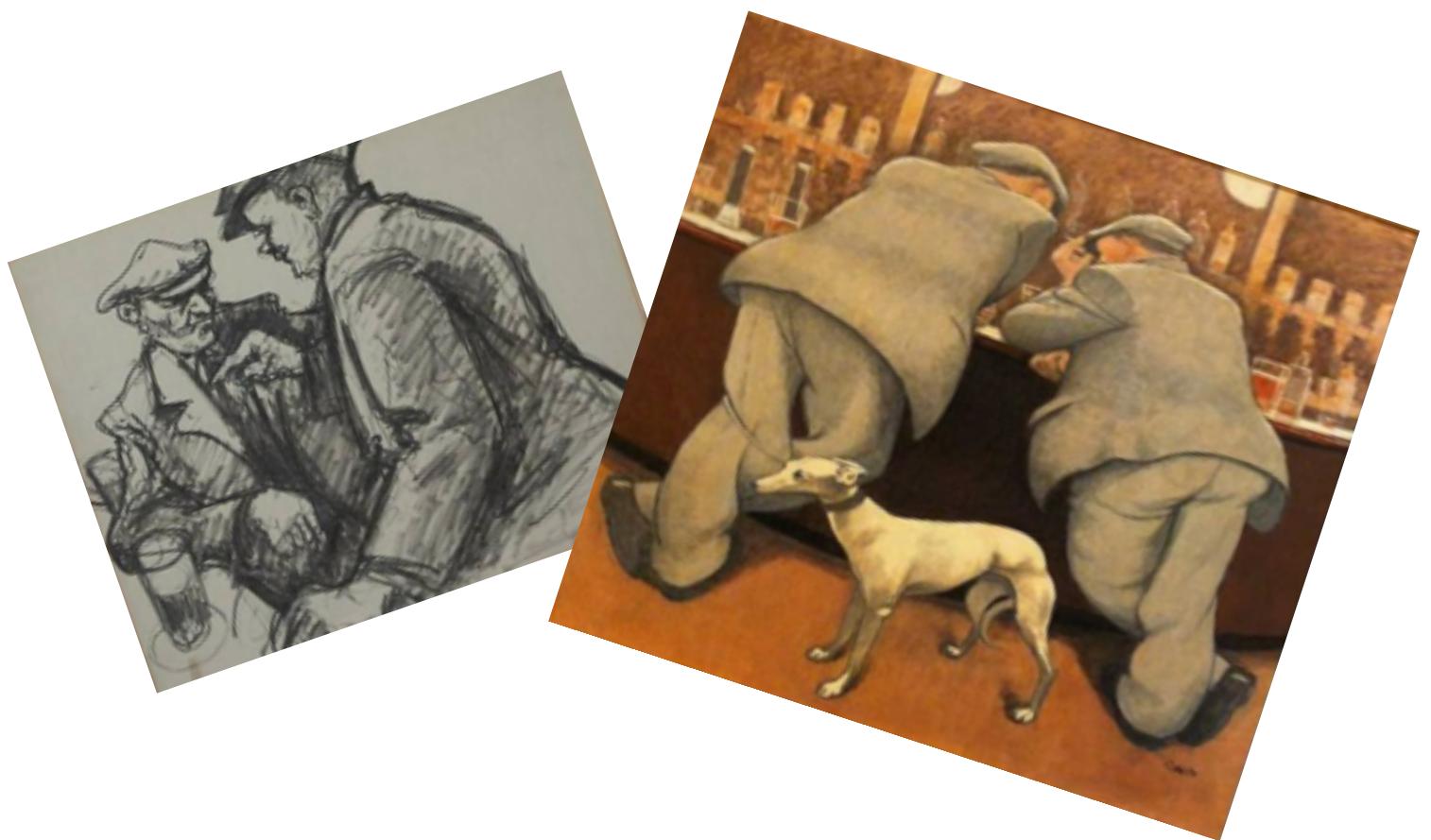
Before the talk the President announced that Alan Reed had a stunning picture on exhibition at the Royal Watercolour Society exhibition in London - Congratulations to Alan!

The President then introduced Dr Robert McManus who gave a talk on Mining Art as drawn and painted by Norman Cornish and Tom McGuiness. He has spent 25 years studying mining art in association with Gillian Wales and was involved in putting on an exhibition at Bowes museum on Mining Art - Shafts of Light in 2014.

Both Norman Cornish and Tom McGuiness produced art for arts sake. Norman showed a natural aptitude for painting and aged 12 he drew a

wonderful picture of his mother. He became a miner at 14 and became a dab hand at instant sketches both underground and in and around home, the pub and the road to the pit! Tom on the other hand latterly devoted his time to more religious paintings including stained glass.

A selection of their pictures are shown below.



Works by Norman Cornish



Works by Tom McGuiness

Dr McManners was greeted with loud applause at the end of his talk. The President then brought the proceedings to a close

Pat Cooper Recorder in Ordinary

Supper 16th March 2016 - Reivers and Borderers!

After the President had said Grace the Guests and new members were welcomed.

Peter Wallace chaired the 2d end which was occupied by old stalwarts of the Club! Once on his feet he toasted the President asking him how he came by the final 'e' to his name? He has researched the name and it appears that he comes from a bunch of peasants in South Yorkshire. Surnames came about by the necessity of raising taxes and having an identifiable moniker. The 'e' apparently means York of York. From there the family moved South ending up in Sheffield 6 centuries later----

John Sadler was toasted and congratulated on his range of weaponry on display. Norman Lees hasn't a weapon but offered to be a page!

Alan Kerr is a noble Borderer name and was asked whether his family had been of the 'right' side? He assured us they came over from Norway via Normandy and then degenerated to the leathery and shifty lot alongside all the other reivers and plunderers! He suggested that Cessford Castle was worth a visit but warned that there are 9 bulls in the approaching field!

Alan Sidney-Wilmot was asked about his interesting hyphen? Research from his parents and other relations revealed nothing untoward. 30 - 40 years ago he found out that his great grandmother was born in Cripplegate London. He then trawled through birth and death certificates (no Ancestry web site in those days!) and found that his great grandfather's surname was Goldsmith. After the wedding (at which neither parents were present) they settled down in Tunbridge wells and changed their name to Sidney-Wilmot. Further searching the area and Alan came across the name Sidney - a place near the town.. Wilmot he thinks comes from a Poet in Rochester- hence the Sidney and Wilmot, to be eternally joined by a hyphen! She then had 7 children and subsequently 3 further marriages! Clearly a fertile life from good mixed stock!

Charlie Wesencraft the final toastee - an oldish name and he went one year to the Ideal Homes Exhibition and they had a stall which would investigate

your name and give you a family history for £3. After half an hour he went back to be handed back his money with the news that he did not exist. This accords with Newcastle Libraries views on the subject! So no Clan Wesencraft———

The Loyal Toast was then sung by the Recorder in Ordinary accompanied by David Kilner

Open Toast was delivered by Malcolm Yorke



The Unicorn in the Garden

By James Thurber

Once upon a sunny morning a man who sat in a breakfast nook looked up from his scrambled eggs to see a white unicorn with a golden horn quietly cropping the roses in the garden. The man went up to the bedroom where his wife was still asleep and woke her. "There's a unicorn in the garden," he said. "Eating roses." She opened one unfriendly eye and looked at him.

"The unicorn is a mythical beast," she said, and turned her back on him. The man walked slowly downstairs and out into the garden. The unicorn was still there; now he was browsing among the tulips. "Here, unicorn," said the man, and he pulled up a lily and gave it to him. The unicorn ate it gravely. With a high heart, because there was a unicorn in his garden, the man went upstairs and roused his wife again. "The unicorn," he said, "ate a lily." His wife sat up in bed and looked at him coldly. "You are a booby," she said, "and I am going to have you put in the booby-hatch."

The man, who had never liked the words "booby" and "booby-hatch," and who liked them even less on a shining morning when there was a unicorn in the garden, thought for a moment. "We'll see about that," he said. He walked over to the door. "He has a golden horn in the middle of his forehead," he told

her. Then he went back to the garden to watch the unicorn; but the unicorn had gone away. The man sat down among the roses and went to sleep.

As soon as the husband had gone out of the house, the wife got up and dressed as fast as she could. She was very excited and there was a gloat in her eye. She telephoned the police and she telephoned a psychiatrist; she told them to hurry to her house and bring a strait-jacket. When the police and the psychiatrist arrived they sat down in chairs and looked at her, with great interest.

"My husband," she said, "saw a unicorn this morning." The police looked at the psychiatrist and the psychiatrist looked at the police. "He told me it ate a lily," she said. The psychiatrist looked at the police and the police looked at the psychiatrist. "He told me it had a golden horn in the middle of its forehead," she said. At a solemn signal from the psychiatrist, the police leaped from their chairs and seized the wife. They had a hard time subduing her, for she put up a terrific struggle, but they finally subdued her. Just as they got her into the strait-jacket, the husband came back into the house.

"Did you tell your wife you saw a unicorn?" asked the police. "Of course not," said the husband. "The unicorn is a mythical beast." "That's all I wanted to know," said the psychiatrist. "Take her away. I'm sorry, sir, but your wife is as crazy as a jaybird."

So they took her away, cursing and screaming, and shut her up in an institution. The husband lived happily ever after.

Moral: Don't count your boobies until they are hatched.

The toast was to the Unicorn and what it means--!

Alan Kerr then introduced the speaker John Sadler (who was appropriately dressed in Borderers costume) as a well established historian covering Vikings to the Gulf Wars and ongoing. He is a fellow of the Historic Society and also of Equity!

Names to the various Reivers commenced the talk - Armstrongs, Bells, Nixons, Grimonds, Maxwells, Kerrs, Dodds, Milbourne Ridleys, Turnbulls, Johnsons, Grahams and Elliots! These chaps were resilient and most of what we think we know comes from Walter Scott's works. It was not like that at all! They were very nasty people and possibly their deeds were worse than what is happening in the Middle East today. Words such as Blackmail and Bereaved come from the Reivers.

The Kings of England always reckoned that they ruled Scotland as they all paid homage to the King. Over the years with intermarrying of the royalty of Scotland, England and France it all became very messy and culminated in the battle of Berwick back in the 13c. So the Border regions became what could be described as 'disputed' with many incursions by the Scots over the border. To counter this the King of England Edward III created a border region staffed by as many ruffians as he could find (mostly from Yorkshire). They were given various valleys and given free range to do anything they liked to keep the border. It was a reign of mayhem for about 300 years - rape pillage, blackmail, thieving and the list goes on! It became a no go area!

This continued until James VI of Scotland became James I of England in 1603. He decided that all this malarky on the border must cease and without more ado he sent in forces to turn out the Reivers which was done mercilessly! They scattered and some went over to Ireland where they continued to wreak havoc! At long last the border region became peaceful and so we can enjoy the fantastic scenery and views in peace today!

Members were then shown the various weapons in use during this unsettled time on the Borders.

The President gave a vote of thanks and the evening was snuffed out after a very pleasant evening!

Pat Cooper
Recorder in Ordinary

Lunchtime Meeting 14th April 2016 - "Madness and Art"

A warm welcome was given to members and guests by the acting President Paul Hickey at this second lunchtime meeting. The guest speaker Mary Jane Tacchi was especially welcomed as the acting President was a bit of an artist and was anxious to discover how mad he was! Apologise were given for Eleanor Barron who unfortunately was in hospital undergoing tests! News of Lord Walton was that he was now recovering back in Newcastle and progressing well telling the staff what to do for his condition!

The 2d End was chaired by Charlie Wesencraft who had managed to avoid such eminence over the last 15 years. He toasted the acting President who

he thought was nearly an artist. The question seems to have been lost in time but the reply was on the lines that the artist who was most mad was actually sitting next to the 2d chairman who is of course the acting Presidents mother!

Next up was the guest speaker - Mary Jane Tacchi who was asked "why this subject?" "Tell you later" was the reply! The next victim was going to be Ingrid Kilner but in her absence DLK will have to do! What acts of insanity had he performed? 'None thanks but will ask Ingrid and get an answer ready for the next meeting'!

In answer to the question ' what sort of artist are you' Muriel Penn replied that she only lives with an artist but was a teacher. As she couldn't draw she asked the class members to draw on the blackboard. It was amazing how the classes went in fear of being asked to draw on the blackboard an animal or a person!

The loyal toast was sung by John Havis accompanied by Anne. This was followed by the Open Toast given by Alan Sidney-Wilmot -

I have been ruminating recently on the numerous foreign holidays that my wife Sheila and I have been fortunate to enjoy since the 1980's, possibly because we are now of ages where travel insurance fees are becoming more and more prohibitive. A friend in a similar situation to us went to the family doctor and said " Whenever I pass from one country to another, I have to get drunk". The doctor said " Your a borderline alcoholic ".

It seems strangely coincidental that places we visited have several years after experienced terroism acts. First it was Kusadi in Turkey,where we wanted to explore Ephesus, and car bombs were planted in the harbour area. Next we had a couple of holidays in Sharm-el Sheikh where there have been similar terrorist acts. Finally we stayed at the very same hotel in Tunis a few years before gunmen ran amok on their private beach. Whilst there we bought 2 attractive rugs in the market and they took them away from us to wrap and seal whilst giving us beverages. It wasn't until 3am the next morning that I awoke that thought that inside the sealed packages could be drugs or guns. Post haste we returned after breakfast and made them open the parcels up, and when we were satisfied nothing suspicious was inside, got them to rewrap them again in our full view.

One extremely interesting holiday was in Rome where we stayed at a hotel close to the Colosseum. At mealtimes you had to fill up partly occupied tables rather than go to an empty table. To help conversation along among guests of

many nationalities free bottles of wine were provided which was enjoyable and successful. Along the corridor from our bedroom an American opera singer would learn and practice the Italian libretto in the early evening with her magnificent voice. Another interesting companion at our table was a gentleman who was in Italy to translate the Bible into Madagascan. We took the opportunity to visit Pisa to see the famous leaning tower, which since then is being stabilised. We did hear that they might be installing a clock on the tower as its no good having the inclination if you haven't got the time!!

We were also some of the unfortunates in 1990 taking a package holiday to Oberammergau where a local hotelier took bookings and money for tickets and days before the passion play opened absconded with the money to Switzerland. However 10 years later we were successful in seeing this fabulous production.

Several holidays have been spent with our relations in Florida and we travelled widely with them in the USA. In 1998 we visited the National Parks plus Grand Canyon staying for one day on each side of this magnificent site. We also went to an Indian Navajo reservation which reminds me of the story of the three Red Indian squaws who when expecting their first children went to the tribes Medicine Man for a blessing. He said to the first squaw "You must obtain the hide of a buffalo and give birth lying on it". To the second squaw he said "You must obtain the hide of a bear and give birth lying on it". To the third squaw he said "You must obtain the hide of a hippopotamus and give birth lying on it". After they had had their papooses the first two squaws felt that the third squaw was most blessed because she had twins. They went to the Medicine Man to complain about the blessing and he said to them "I thought everybody knew that the squaw on the hippopotamus is equal to the sum of the squaw on the other two hides"!!

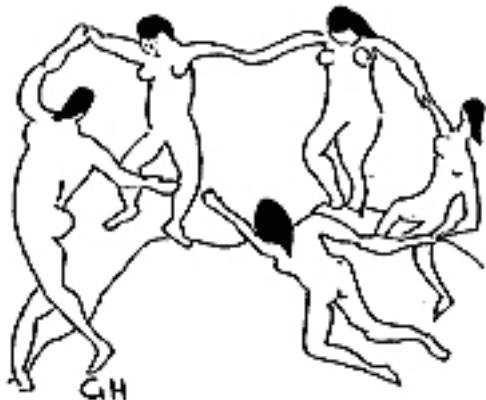
Well in this ramble I seem to have taken you to many different destinations but I would like you to drink a toast to "**HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS**"!

Alan Kerr then introduced the speaker Mary Jane Tacchi. She is a psychiatrist having worked with Alan for some time. She therefore knows a lot about madness and art!.

Mary Jane gave a history of the depiction of madness by artists over the years. A graphic picture of trepanning the skull to release the evil spirits looked decidedly dodgy but is nevertheless still done today! Bosch in 1494 shows the removal of stones of madness. We then moved on to the treatment by water - under icy cold showers, jets of cold water etc. Romans used their warm baths to some effect as some had lithium in the water.

The spinning chair was used in the USA but many participants were sick! The sleep temple was used in Roman times to report their dreams and have them interpreted - shades of Joseph and interpreting dreams in the Book of Exodus! Carpaccio in 1496 showed how the church removed the possession of evil! Next tried was the burning of witches but to little effect on the poor person. Hogarth in 1773 shows Bedlam and the different ways inmates were being treated for curing madness! And so we travelled through various artists from Durer to Picasso. All in all a most entertaining afternoon.

Pat Cooper
Recorder in Ordinary



The Viewing of the Pictures 1st June 2106

The President welcomed members and guests to the Annual Viewing of the Pictures. The assembly then stood in memory of Lord Walton Honorary Member appointed in 2000. He had attended a number of meetings and provided great entertainment. He shall be missed.

The Master of the Paintings sent his apologies as he had a severe bout of a virus which he did not want to spread around! He arranged for Charlie Wesencraft to deputise for him - a task not unknown to him as he had been Master of the Pictures some years ago!

The 2d end was chaired by John Anderson who got going by asking the President if he was on Desert Island Discs what luxury artwork would he take with him! The President hoped for a tropical island with lots of sun and warm sea and with him for relaxation he would have with him the Sistine Chapel! Gentlewoman Norma Hickey was drawn to a Rembrandt self portrait which hangs in the the Albert Hall in Kendal. She thought it was the perfect portrait but was now not so sure after looking at the paintings on view!

Mavis Yorke (who knows much more about art than Malcolm having been round so many galleries) would like to take a pastel by David Blackburn to remind her of Yorkshire. Ian Lavelle gave his memories of Leonard Evitts who was ruthless in his criticisms of all P & Members (apart from his own!) and commented on one members contribution that there was greatness here but only in a small corner of the picture.

The last toasting was a guest of David Kilner - Marshall Hall and he was asked which Northumbrian artist's work would he take with him. A picture by Joseph Crawhall who was from Newcastle. He was very talented and as well as painting he was also an illustrator of books - The Long Pack being one of his. Marshall's favourite was one of Clifton in Bristol.

The Loyal Toast was the sung with lusty accompaniment of the chorus and after a short break the company reassembled in the small dining room to view the pictures. Charlie Wesencraft invited all the artists in turn to talk about their paintings and sketches.

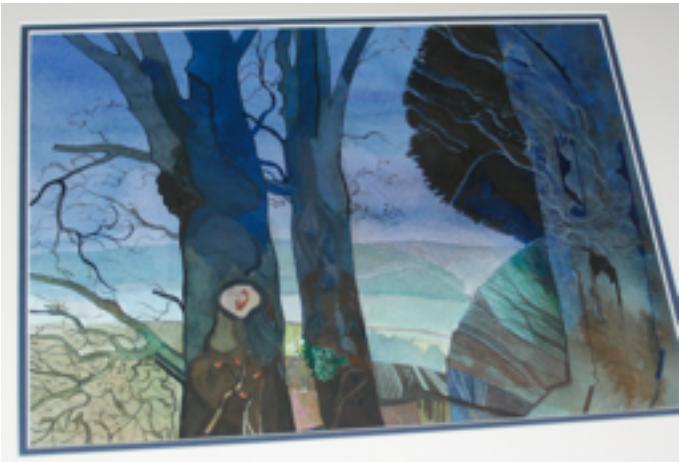


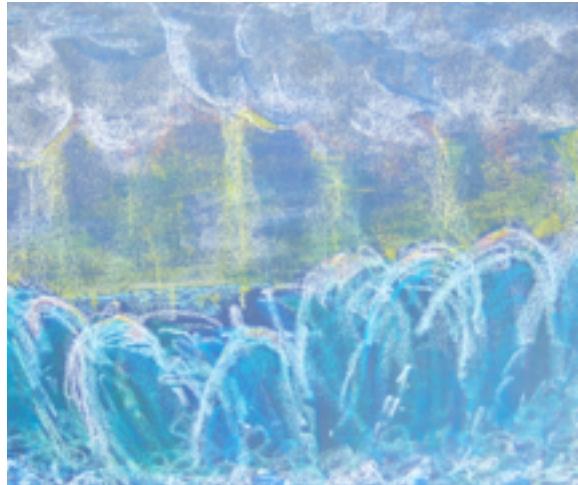


Douglas Johnson 2008



Thompson 2015





John Anderson is now painting castles but wait till next year! Dennis Robson showed his architectural background and commented that Leonard Evitts looked on architects as illustrators rather than artists! Bob Young was asked what was he doing during the artists outing to Tynemouth. He likes nothing more than to paint from his car and if he sees a squirrel or a deer passing by they go into the picture! Malcolm Yorke enjoys carving and took delight in showing his trout. Rachel Cundall likes to paint a card every day as its good therapy. Ford Castle was one from her. Alistair Sinton sent his pictures but could not attend in person. He sent along his panoramic view of Stamfordham. Kelsey Thornton had been at the Tynemouth day out and painted 'Contemplating the Internet with two couples looking out to sea!' Ian Lavelle had three pictures - Tuscany, Scotland and his back garden! Alan Reed had two stunning pictures - Mont Blanc and Newcastle from Waterstones. He also exhibited his sketchbooks from which he produces his fabulous pictures. Paul Hutchinson produces some fine portraits using his computer skills. George his ebullient father prefers the wild outdoors especially Muggleswick. John Penn rounded off the display with his 'Desperation' - an evocative study in blue and grey. Done to show he can still do it despite his poor eyes!

All contributors were thanks with much applause and the evening was brought to an end with the remark attributed to Van Gogh whilst at the bar was asked 'Can I get you a drink', replied 'No thanks I've got one ear!!!!'

Pat Cooper

Recorder in Ordinary

AGM and Poetry and Prose Luncheon 15th June 2016

26 members attended the AGM which was chaired by the President Malcolm Yorke fresh from a short stay in Finland. The usual proceedings were adhered to and we quickly went to the President's Report -

President's Report 2016

The year began on a sad note when President John Charlewood had to withdraw from active participation in the Club. As President elect I was able to take over but it was not long before we heard that John had died. He was a distinguished President and a true clubman as was his father before him. John was an accomplished painter, writer of light verse and a wonderful raconteur, he will be greatly missed. Later in the year we lost one of our long time honorary members, Lord Walton, a man of international renown in the medical field and an amusing companion when he was able to join us. Other valued members who have resigned due to increasing infirmity were Eric Wright, Ken Kay, Leslie Wake and Ron Bruce. We also received the resignations of Rodney Clark and David Crowe. We will miss them all.

On the positive side we implemented the decision reached at last year's AGM to admit women as members which came into effect in January, a mere 60 years since women were first admitted as guests. Since January we have enrolled 10 new members of whom 9 are women so that our total membership has increased to 76. It is my view that the quality of our meetings has been greatly improved by this influx.

Our entertainment continues to be of high quality thanks to the efforts of the Komptroller of the Kalendar, Alan Kerr and the Master of the Music, Michael Borthwick. Paul Hickey as Master of the Pictures has been very active organising painting outings, which in my opinion deserve more support. David Kilner keeps our accounts while Pat Cooper earns our thanks for keeping everyone informed of everything at frequent intervals while continuing as Recorder in Ordinary. Peter Wallace exercises his immaculate secretarial skills to keep me, the committee and the club running smoothly.

We have been much occupied in committee discussing how to manage the increases in charges by Mansion House which came into effect in April. I look forward to hearing your opinions during the discussion which will follow later in the meeting as to how we should proceed.

We have made our final grant of three to the Samling Foundation as agreed last year plus the one-off contribution to the People's Theatre Development Fund.

The Pen & Palette Fund in the care of the Community Foundation made grants close to £5000 last November; a report on those grants is available for your perusal today. A similar amount will be donated to local arts groups this year.

My own project, Down Memory Lane, elicited many contributions last November and gave rise to a booklet which all members received last Christmas. We plan to repeat the exercise this year on the theme of "Schooldays" for which I anticipate a lively response within the strict 400 word confines!

Finally I give thanks to the committee for all their support during my first year as President and also to all those members who actually turn up to our meetings to contribute to the banter and good fellowship which is so much part of the pleasure of being a member of this venerable Club.

The Clubs finances were reviewed by David Kilner and adopted by the meeting much to DLK's relief! Officers were then re elected. Life Membership was proposed for our Treasurer David Kilner and this was approved to much applause. Next it was the meat of the AGM - meal prices and Subs! Due to the increase in Mansion House charges it was necessary to increase both the meal price and the subscriptions. Discussion took place and motions were put and the final agreements were to increase the meal price per person to £20.00 and this to be from September 2016 and for the Subs to be increased to £50.00 from January 2017. But for married member couples there would be a reduction on the joint fee to £80.00.

At this point the meeting adjourned for lunch before the real business of the day commenced - The Poetry and Prose which commenced with Alistair Sinton -

A Small Girl's Ideal

You may like to consider whether or not the little girl of eleven who wrote the following composition in her entrance examination should be given a place in a secondary school -

Should she be excluded because she has not been "clever" enough to learn how to write complete sentences, or included because of the litany-like ring of her phrases ? Should she be kept out because her knowledge of the sordid side of life might contaminate the little girls from nice homes ? Or should she be welcomed because of her sound judgements and high ideals ?

"What would you wish if you had a fairy godmother ? "

If I had a fairy godmother I would wish that when I am older to pick a man to marry that I may chose a good man.

A man that is always sober not a man who is always getting drunk as I have heard 'though I am only young.'

A man who never says a language that is very vulgar and rude before any children. A man who when he can avoid it very seldom ever tells untruths or lies of any kind.

A man who realises what love is and who knows how to be kind and gentle with any person he comes in contact with.

A man who works hard and saves ten shillings a month and who very seldom squanders money on bad women and who when he comes home it is like being in heaven.

A man who is so wise that if he wished to be a solicitor he could be one at any time.

This came out of a newspaper many years ago but I have always liked it and I would like to think that it has guided me in my own life just a little bit!

Alistair Sinton

Chris Bacon entertained us with a tune played on the Scottish Small Pipes and then told the tale of Autumn and Charming Peggy as penned by Robert Burns in 1783.

Now westlin winds and slaught'ring guns
Bring Autumn's pleasant weather;
The moorcock springs on whirring wings
Amang the blooming heather:
Now waving grain, wide o'er the plain,
Delights the weary farmer;
And the moon shines bright, when I rove at night,
To muse upon my charmer.

The partridge loves the fruitful fells,
The plover loves the mountains;
The woodcock haunts the lonely dells,
The soaring hern the fountains:
Thro' lofty groves the cushat roves,
The path of man to shun it;
The hazel bush o'erhangs the thrush,

The spreading thorn the linnet.

Thus ev'ry kind their pleasure find,
The savage and the tender;
Some social join, and leagues combine,
Some solitary wander:
Avaunt, away! the cruel sway,
Tyrannic man's dominion;
The sportsman's joy, the murd'ring cry,
The flutt'ring, gory pinion!

But, Peggy dear, the ev'ning's clear,
Thick flies the skimming swallow,
The sky is blue, the fields in view,
All fading-green and yellow:
Come let us stray our gladsome way,
And view the charms of Nature;
The rustling corn, the fruited thorn,
And ev'ry happy creature.

We'll gently walk, and sweetly talk,
Till the silent moon shine clearly;
I'll grasp thy waist, and, fondly prest,
Swear how I love thee dearly:
Not vernal show'rs to budding flow'rs,
Not Autumn to the farmer,
So dear can be as thou to me,
My fair, my lovely charmer!

Kelsey Thornton's Poems

Samuel Roger's Suit

Samuel Rogers, poet, after a life
Of longing to be laureate, lent his court suit
To Alfred Tennyson, who could not afford
The money for this regulation dress

When he was first commanded to the Palace
To be installed as Laureate by the Queen.
Not that she had much say; Prince Albert was
The one who knew the poet for the post
And she had yet to learn how fit he was
To tell her about the depths of love and loss.
Not for the first time was the suit so graced:
He'd lent it once before to Wordsworth, who
Had been selected as the Laureate
Before him.

On this new occasion
He had in fact been offered the post himself
But, being 85, had turned it down.
Tennyson, without the cash to buy
A suit, and being of quite some size
Was too big for the suit, but wore it still

Stanley Spenser
RESURRECTION
Graves gape, and the Cookham dead
Gossip back to life,
Neighbour, painter, parson, pimp,
The mistress and the wife,
Children tucked up for endless night
Blink in the resurrected light.

Christ speaks to Cookham, and the saints
Listen as in a dream
With village worthies, builders, kids,
And half the football team;
St Francis, in Pa's dressing gown
And slippers, leads the birds to town
(This image was not quite the thing
The RA had expected
And so, when he submitted it,
The picture was rejected; In turn, without a long delay
Spencer rejected the RA.)

And elsewhere in the quiet of
The chapel at Burghclere
The jumble of crosses resurrects

Those who died 'over there'.
While Spencer, who abhorred the war,
Falls to his knees and scrubs the floor.

In the gallery, the tombstones of
The picture-frames yawn wide
And from them step into new life
Things that we thought had died:
A blossom tree, a garden shed,
A geranium's fragile vital red.

His marriage to his second wife
Was never consummated,
Which left the painter, as I hardly
Need to say, frustrated.
Instead we have a joint of lamb
And pushing pictures in a pram.

The mutton features with the pair
Depicted in the nude,
One of those pictures Munnings found
Particularly rude ;
It's true; the flesh is raw and brings
Love down to the bare meat of things.

The pram, as Spencer knew, means life
And from among the weeds
Bosoms and bums climb from the earth
In patterned wools and tweeds
And saints and sinners, workers, wives
Emerge into eternal lives

VARCOE THE CLOWN
ARTHUR PEDLAR THE MAN
At the John Clare Festival 2012

At seventy-nine some of the skills have gone -
The unicycle's not now in the act
(At least the eight-foot one).
Still, it's a fact
That most of the material goes on -

The bald head, nose, moustache are all intact,
The doleful trademark face, saucy but wan,
The sort of outer shell that he could don
To be a mask for what in life he lacked-
As we too lack - self-confidence and face.
A stammer stumbling block stayed him some time
But his disguise revealed an inner grace
That took his audience to another place
Where life was simpler and the world sublime.
A stammer's not a problem for a mime.

MADNESS

I've spent a lifetime with the so-called mad; John Clare
and Ivor Gurney both were put into asylums and the
doors were shut
On all the natural scenery that had,
Until that time, created what they were,
Their whole idea of everything that's fair --
Northamptonshire (as it was then) for Clare
And for Ivor Gurney his loved Gloucestershire.
Hopkins's madness was another kind:
He thought his god would think his poems a waste.
They all pushed past the world where they were placed,
And stepped out of the known ruts of our minds
To find the places which we recognise
But only see with those mad borrowed eyes.

In case you think there's something I have missed,
I'm married to a psychotherapist

THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE

No need to say the whole idea was mad.
They never should have ordered it, of course;
Indeed, perhaps they didn't, and the source
Of the command was just a case of bad
Lines of communication; if they had
Given the order, surely in the force
They knew you don't charge cannon on a horse.
The whole confusion was just very sad.
Losses sustained in that one foolish charge
(Still, two men out of three remained alive -

Though only half the horses would survive)
Were, as you know, ridiculously large.
As was expected they got death or fame.
The war continued very much the same

THE ZEBRA

The zebra would be quite delighted
To play for Newcastle United.
He's worn the strip from night to mom
Right from the day that he was born,
And ever since he was a foal
He's tried to master ball control,
Modelling him self on famous names
In lots and lots of practice games.
Though sometimes these were not much fun,
As in the game the lions won,
Who should have been, it seems to me,
Red-carded by the referee,
Who was an elephant, a fool
Who didn't know the simple rule
That, as a rough and ready guide,
You shouldn't eat the other side.
But train and practice as he may,
He never ever got to play,
And so he's probably dejected
Because he's never been selected

LAST POEM

I can't put down
Exactly
The delight
That's given by
The dove-gray clouds
Blown across the sky
On a windy
November day;
A dove
Sitting easily
On the dead branch
Eager
To be gone.

Cushy Butterfield

Frank Evans

“Cushy Butterfield” was the last song written by George “Geordie” Ridley, who died, aged thirty, in 1864 and it was composed shortly before his death. It appeared in collections of Tyneside songs in 1872 and 1873 in volumes published in Newcastle by Thomas Allan. But a subsequent edition in 1891 omitted “Cushy Butterfield” although it had numerous other compositions by Ridley. Perhaps by that time the song had fallen out of favour although nowadays it is among the two or three most popular songs of the region.

In the manner of the time it would have appeared first in sheet music form, probably before the author’s death. And Ridley must first have sung it on the stage of a music hall from whence people in the audience would have attempted to memorise and copy both the words and the music. Even as recently as the nineteen thirties people could be found emerging from an evening’s entertainment and passing along the street earnestly humming catches in order to retain them and popularise them.

Following a works accident Geordie Ridley made an early appearance on the boards in the Grainger Music Hall in Nelson Street, Newcastle. The hall frontage may still be seen there with its stone engraving “Music Hall 1838”. At the time his life had suffered a serious setback. Beginning as a trapper-boy in a pit at the age of eight he had worked in darkness underground, opening doors for the coal waggons. Then as a young man we find him working for an engineering firm as a waggon-rider. However, after three years there he was severely crushed by an overturning waggon, leaving him with leg injuries which incapacitated him from physical work and which probably led to his early death.

Deprived of a living Ridley took to the stage and became an entertainer. In the short five year period before his death he found success which culminated in perhaps his most famous song, “Blaydon Races”. In it is mentioned Balmbra’s Music Hall where he certainly appeared in 1862. This pub in the Cloth Market offered a short but fondly remembered centenary revival in 1962.

“Cushy Butterfield” itself is a parody of another famous music hall song written almost at the same time in London and entitled “Pretty little Polly Perkins of Paddington Green”. The author was Harry Clifton, another music hall performer. The two pieces have a remarkable resemblance. The first verse of each opens with broken-hearted suiters, a milkman and a keelman.

The second verse praises the ladies' beauty, Polly Perkins with an ankle like an antelope and Cushy Butterfield with eyes like two holes in a blanket burnt through. Each girl spurns the singer's proposal of marriage (the phrase, "When I asked her to marry me" opens verse four of both songs). A division appears, however, in their ideal husbands. Polly, a common housemaid, demands silver and gold while Cushy, the independent proprietor of a small business selling yellow clay for the whitening of domestic doorsteps, requires her prospective partner to join her in the venture. Eventually both girls marry elsewhere; Cushy finds a hewer from Shipcote, where he would be the highest-paid labouring man in the pit, while Polly must make do with the best verse in her song:

In six months she married, this hard-hearted girl
But it was not a Wi-count, and it was not a Nearl
It was not a Baronite, but a shade or two wuss
It was the bow-legged conductor of a tuppenny bus.

"Pretty little Polly Perkins of Paddington Green" was possibly written by Clifton in 1863. It may have travelled north via the coal trade, which gave a regular link between London and Newcastle. Most likely Clifton was also responsible for the accompanying music. However, the melody he produced was probably not original but an earlier folk tune. Clifton was renowned for picking up and appropriating tunes. On one occasion, it was related, hearing a man with a concertina play a tune he had never heard before, Harry remarked "I wish I'd written that". "You will Harry, you will" rejoined a friend.

The "Polly Perkins" tune was carried over unchanged to "Cushy Butterfield", which suggests that Ridley possessed a copy of the sheet music. And, although a shared melody, the lyrics have conveyed the tune forward to Tyneside glory and "Cushy Butterfield", both words and music, are now securely part of the tradition of the "Coaly Tyne".

David Kilner's Trip to South Shields

It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. I would add after recent experience that this verse should be extended to include women.
A few weeks ago, I had the pleasure of a trip from Blyth to Jarrow. I did not take the scenic route through Whitley Bay, Cullercoats and Tynemouth but elected to get on the A19 and drive straight down to the Tyne Tunnel.

My wife, who was with me and a native of Jarrow had been exhorted by her friend who we were visiting, to keep to the left hand lane through the Tunnel in readiness of a quick exit on the south side of the Tyne.

The last time I had been through the Tunnel the toll was £1 which one had to throw into a bucket. There were no attendants so you had to have the correct money. Thus I was prepared with plenty of change as I knew the cost would have risen.

Noting that the toll had increased to £1.60, I was thankful for my preparation. Into the bucket went the money, the barrier lifted and I was away. I'm not sure if it was the "new tunnel" or the "old tunnel" - but as instructed I kept very closely to the left hand lane. On reaching daylight, I was confronted by a large sign advertising an even larger roundabout. "Turn left now" came the authoritative words of my wife, so I did . . . and found myself heading back into the tunnel....the other one! There was no escape as I drove northwards towards North Shields, with another £1.60 to pay at the other end.

It was a quiet journey through the tunnel and after a circuitous tour of North Shields and its surrounding area I eventually got back on the A19, dipped into the pot and extracted yet another £1.60 toll fare and re-entered the tunnel yet again.

I decided this time to follow the instructions on the road sign rather than those of my wife when I came out of the tunnel and eventually safely arrived at our destination.

Safe to say that after our visit, we returned home via the Felling By-Pass. However, this story has a happy ending. It transpired that if I had delayed my visit for one day - this whole exercise would have been more costly. The toll fare had increased to £1.70!

France Revisited - John Crook

Because of the time constraints today, I will give you just a few staccato points about France and the French that occurred to me following a wonderful cruise from Arles to Lyon on the Rhone.

I will leave it to you to judge how their change or progress compares with our own.

Let's start with wine, and I have to admit to enjoying good but expensive French wine, but the market is so full of every-day product. We had a week enjoying other less familiar things. It may be age, but one "factory" is very much like any other!

How about sanitation and personal hygiene? Leaving out the explicit, I can't imagine that they've moved up the scale of soap sales per person, but they seem to produce more and more attractive perfumes and other smellies. It was good to be reminded that public toilets have vastly improved since my

first experience of the two foot pads over a bottomless pit, that I encountered as an impressionable young English boy at the Lycée Michelet in late forties Paris.

Some might say that the French have been pretty backward when it comes to hygiene, but it's good to remember that where toilet paper is almost universal now, in the 16th Century, Francois Rabelais recommended 'the softly feathered neck of a live goose.'

Truffles? Now that's a more savoury subject, not that they are a favourite of mine. We visited a charming truffle farm that produces an enormous volume of the delicacy and sends thousands of Euros worth each week to New York and Los Angeles restaurants. The biggest surprise to me was that nobody uses pigs anymore, but dogs. In this case Golden Labs, A mother and son, is all it takes - and beautiful to watch in action.

You may think I'm being cynical, but for example, my admiration of the French extends to such as their Chic. There is still, every-day and haute - couture, but this has been seriously extended to very expensive, but well-designed and beautiful culinary and domestic knick knacks available in all small towns. What about restaurants and French cuisine? I suspect that it's a bit of a struggle these days because of Supermarkets and Fast Food. MacDonald's are everywhere as are the inevitable people, eating on hoof. I mean the people, not the food! - very sad, and the same retail trends have impacted on provincial markets also.

As always, if you want to see wild-life you need to get right out into the country - At the Pont du Gard though, I saw feral cats in a tree but the only bird I got near enough to, to photograph, was a sparrow that allowed me to stand beside it on a Pont parapet!

Power generation is where they can really show us the way. There are nuclear stations and wind generators, which I hate, everywhere. The latter are very efficient because the French Government don't pay you to have them on your land. They also generate on the huge Rhone Locks. Better not tell Nicola Sturgeon Alan!

Metrication? they've had it since 1799 and we can't tell them much about that either, so what about the love/hate relationship between us and the French? I once asked this question of an old French friend, Jean - Marie, so I will leave the answer to him, which, typically is another question. "Oui, c'existe, mais, Why should we be surprised? the French do not like the French!"

No change there then, and I suspect that the same goes for us, But I still love France, the French and their culture. I also admire their marketing skills.

Thank you!

Alan Share then gave us -

From Alice In Blunderland

The Mad Hatter's Committee Meeting

The Mad Hatter was in the Chair. "Order, Order" he cried, and
Disorder clumped noisily out of the room.

"The Minutes of the last meeting" he said imperiously.

The White Knight asked which Minutes he wanted.

"The Minutes that go on for days and days, the Minutes that go on for hours,
or the Minutes that go on only for seconds?"

"That's a difficult one" said the Mad Hatter. "Shall we take the
Minutes as read?"

"I can't read." said Dormouse.

"Pretend to." said the Mad Hatter.

"How do you pretend o?" said Dormouse still reluctant to agree.

"Like you always do." said the Mad Hatter, getting just a little bit
irritated.

Alice looked around the table. It was a well attended meeting.

The March Hare, the Cheshire Cat, the White Rabbit, the White Queen,
The Knave of Hearts, Caterpillar, Tweedledum and Tweedledee were all in
their place. Dormouse was under his.

The two professional members looked down on the lay members.

Their chairs were six inches higher. Accordingly the lay members looked up
to the professionals

And a very small black fly had settled on the wall behind the Mad Hatter's
Chair.

"The Minutes are agreed." said the Mad Hatter. "Apologies for
absence?" asked the Mad Hatter

Humpty Dumpty" said the White Knight. "He had a serious accident since we
last met."

"Any Correspondence?" asked the Mad Hatter.

"Yes, two matters" replied the White Knight. "we have just had a new
Plan from the Ogre Queen. It's on the table. It is an all singing and dancing
Plan."

Alice noticed that an attractive book on the table suddenly started dancing a highland jig and at the same time sang the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's Messiah.

"What's in the Plan?" asked the Cheshire Cat.

"There's meetings". "Great." said the Cheshire Cat. "New partnerships.". "Wonderful." said Caterpillar. "And there much more delusion." said the Mad Hatter. "Don't you mean Inclusion?" said the WhiteKnight. "A Freudian slip" said the MadHatter with a wry smile. "More Inclusion at a rate of 20 percent per annum."

"Don't you mean per annum?" Interjected the March Hare. "Well it definitely says per annum" replied the MadHatter.

"It's a bit of an enema " said Tweedledum. "Enigma" said Tweedledee.

"Either way I move we buy it" said the MadHatter with some finality.

"Can we afford it?" asked Dormouse suddenly waking up.

"We get paid to buy it, twice the actual cost" said the White Knight helpfully.

"I am still not sure we can afford it " said Dormouse.

"Go back to sleep" said the Mad Hatter. And Dormouse did as he was told,

Then that's agreed?" Nods all round, including Dormouse who was nodding away with the rest of them.

"We don't need to consult anyone do we?" Asked the Cheshire Cat, almost rhetorically. "Roundabout midnight any day next week would be suitable" replied the White Knight. "I just don't understand" said Alice, looking very bemused by all this.

The Mad Hatter turned to the Knave of Hearts "Would you explain to Alice our consultative procedures?"

The Knave of Hearts was something of a magician. One of his favourite tricks was to make people completely vanish. Another was to make people appear who didn't exist at all. He quite liked to don his pointy wizard's hat on these occasions.

This time however he conjured from thin air a mortarboard and a somewhat tattered black gown. There was no limit to the things that he could conjure out of thin air. Most usually it was facts, figures and concept papers that bore no great relation to reality Ever since he came across the Latin tag De minimis non curat Lex, he had called these his tiny mini mice. He much preferred this to his small porkies.

The Knave of Hearts, in a somewhat didactic mode, then conducted a short tutorial. "To understand our consultative procedures you must understand the meaning of consultation. The word consultation derives from the two words 'con' and 'salutation'. I am sure you know the meaning of both. All you have to do is to put the two together. "

"We have actually written to the Ogre Queen respectfully suggesting that Christmas Day should be designated an Annual Consultation Day when all the year's consultation can take place. Is there another day in the calendar with more salutations than that one?" Alice felt that she had to agree. "No there isn't" she said. "And it is a day of goodwill" chipped in the MarchHare "and we need as much of that as we can get."

"But we have not reached that eminently sensible state of affairs." continued the Knave of Hearts, " So the next best time is when people say goodnight to each other. I suggest that we consult next Sunday night. "

"Agreed" said the Mad Hatter.

"What's the other letter?" asked the Mad Hatter.

"We are going to be inspected by the two blind mice." Said White Knight.

"My God" said the March Hare. "No, by two blind mice" said the White Knight. "I thought there were three of them" said Caterpillar, suddenly getting a word in edgeways. "One of them has just had a successful cataract operation" said the White Knight.

"Why isn't he here then?" asked Caterpillar. "He's back in hospital with post traumatic shock. . . seeing things for the first time knocked him gaga."

Alice noticed that that the visit from the two blind mice caused no great concern. "Aren't you worried?" She asked.

"We've just bought the Plan," said the Mad Hatter.

"Off with our heads if we hadn't" observed the March Hare. Alice saw that everyone was laughing hilariously.

"Let's get down to the main business of the meeting," said the Mad Hatter.

"There is a resolution on the table, moved by the Knave of Hearts and seconded by the March Hare

"The Moon is made of cheese' Knave of Hearts over to you."

"I like cheese and I can't do without it" started the Knave of Hearts.

"Not totally relevant" said Caterpillar. "Not relevant maybe, but important" replied the Knave of Hearts, just a trifle aggressively.

"Anyway" he continued, "you can see for yourself it's made of cheese. It's round."

At this point the March Hare intervened. "I second the motion." he said firmly.

"I have the evidence. I've been given a piece." "Where is it then?" asked Alice unable to contain her curiosity. "I've swallowed it , " replied the March Hare.

"And I've swallowed the hook, the line and the sinker that came with it."

Alice's curiosity turned to incredulity. "You swallowed the sinker?

Wasn't it a bit indigestible?" "It was the very first time I swallowed it," replied the MarchHare, "but you get used to it. It is now a part of my regular diet."

Tweedledum interposed "That's my experience too." And Tweedledee agreed.

"Me too"he said.

"Well" said the Mad Hatter "two people have said that the Moon is made of cheese, one has actually eaten some. Can there be any reasonable doubt here? I frankly will go further. I think that the Moon is made of the best English Cheddar."

"An amendment" intervened Caterpillar. "I believe it's Wensleydale." "Cheddar" replied the Mad Hatter firmly, and Caterpillar crawled under a leaf on the table.

Alice was still unconvinced. "What about the moon-rock brought back from the moon landing?" She asked. "American propaganda against the Russians" replied the Knave of Hearts. "The landing was filmed in the Nevada desert and that's where the rock came from."

"Well I'll eat my hat" said the MadHatter and promptly did so. There was a respectful silence while this was going on

When he finished, he asked whether the motion was agreed.

"Nemine contradicente" said the White Knight. And with nobody quite knowing what that meant, they all nodded their heads including Dormouse who was still nodding away quietly under his seat.

At this point a very strange thing happened. The small black fly on the wall, behind the MadHatter's chair suddenly took off, whizzed three times round the room at great speed, buzzing all the way.

Then, Alice noticed, it suddenly turned into a wasp and stung the Mad Hatter right on the tip of his nose..... The meeting was then adjourned.

Inspired by Lewis Carroll

Malcolm Yorke's 50 word 'novelettes'

The old man gasped, then died in Lola's arms. Madam came and put his pants back on and phoned the police (she knew the Chief). No means of identification – except the banknotes all had his picture on.

He got a State funeral, Lola a large donation to her retirement fund.

"Mummy! Mummy! Come! There's a live alligator under my bed!"

"Don't be silly Oliver, there are no alligators in Gosforth."

But I know it is Mummy, I saw one on David Attenborough's programme about reptiles."

"Alright, I'm coming! Oh you silly silly boy, that's not an alligator it's a crocodile."

I'm Wilfred Butt, 45, spectacle-wearing, short, fat and unemployed, living on red biddy, take-away kebabs and boil-in-the-bag curries. I sleep in the park
Do you think love will blossom for : Mature, misty-eyed, Romantic, sturdy, gentleman of leisure with an interest in fine wine and exotic cuisine? Outdoor type. GSOH

Yvonne Scroddy was a Goth. She dressed in black boots, black tights, black leather jacket and dyed her hair black with a white streak. Her make-up was pancake white.

One day walking in the woods she was dragged down a hole.
Nine months later she gave birth to twin badgers.

The woman stood, buffeted by the wind, on the topmost arch of the Tyne Bridge.

Below the crowds gathered and the traffic came to a halt. Then a single man began to swarm up the girders towards her.

"Stay back! I'll jump!" she screeched.

"That's OK," he said, "I'll push."

THEM OLD AGE BLUES

Getting' thin on the top and wide at the bottom
Aches and pains well Lawd I got 'em
Names go missin' in the attic o' my brains
Could knit you a sweater from my varicose veins
Oh this old age is slowly killin' me

Now life's a blur without my specs
Clean forgotten what they mean by 'sex'
Tuckered out, and in bed by nine
With hot water bottle and my Oval-tine
Yup this old age is slowly killin' me

Kids are sniffy 'bout my body hygiene
They doused my pants in gasoline
Cold in my head and chill in my bones
Caint hear what's said on them new phones
Sure this old age is slowly killin' me

Doctor's orders not to touch any liquor
My liver's shot and I've a dicky ticker

Teeth in a glass, belly in a truss
Travel's free but cain't climb on the bus
Well this old age is slowly killin' me

Grinds in my hips, creaks in my knees
Half up the stairs I stop for a wheeze
All-a my meals now gotta be tinned
So I cause social gaffes by breaking wind
Darn this old age is slowly killin' me

Boils on my arse, corns on my feet
Plenty of food I'd better not eat
Got me piles, and I don't mean money
Bladder sprung a leak and that ain't funny
Jeez this old age is slowly killin' me

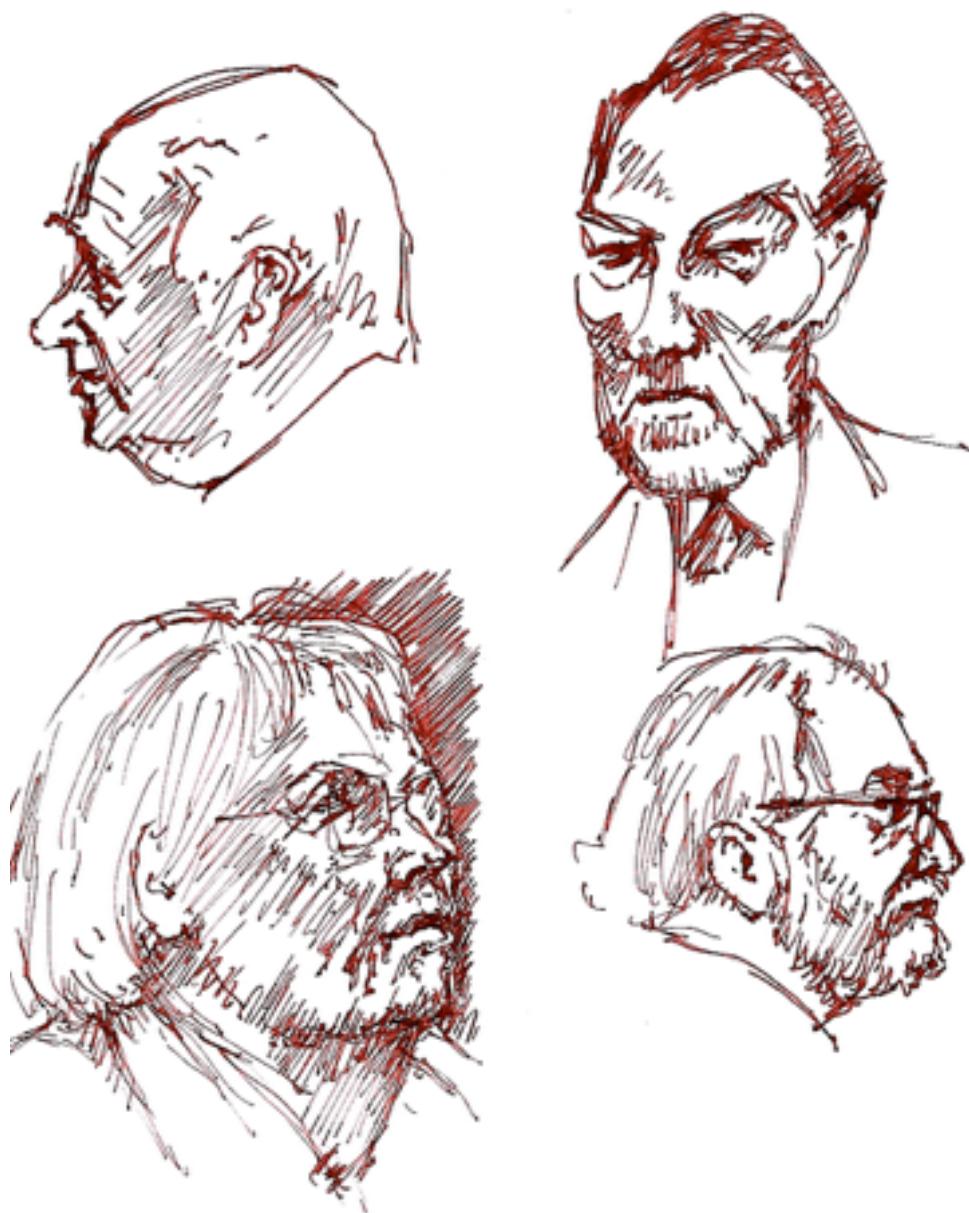
Kids are all flown over the hill
But keep on 'phonin' about my will
Guess I'll be missin' from the family brawl
When they find I've left 'em bugger all'
'Fraid this old age is slowly ki.....

Wild Willie

The President then wound the afternoon off by wishing everyone a good summer and that the next meeting would be The President's Evening on 8th Sept 2016.

Pat Cooper
Recorder in Ordinary

Kelsey Thornton's doodling during the afternoon!
Charlie Wesencraft, Jeremy Bell, Norma Hickey, George Hutchinson.



END.
Two small circular objects, possibly stamps or coins, featuring a building and some text, are positioned below the word "END."

