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1960s Class notes

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Janet Beat (BMus Music, 1960)

Janet has been the first Scottish based composer to have a world premiere given by Italy's leading chamber orchestra, I Solisti Veneti conducted by Claudio Scimone. Her "Nocturne: The Cry of the Peacocks" for string orchestra was performed in Padua's Palladio Auditorium on 8th March to a full house. After the concert, the conductor wrote the following dedication in Janet's own copy of the score: "To the charming and wonderful composer, very glad to have conducted this beautiful piece, Claudio Scimone, 8/3/13."

Chris Tutt (BA Classics, 1960)

After a career as a secondary school teacher, I managed to get on to Sheffield City Council for 10 years altogether. During 1999-2002 I chaired several committees. Though fully retired now and not so fit as I was, I still take some part in political activity, including help in by-elections.

In my teens, I started to take an interest in classical music and enjoyed going to some of the concerts in Birmingham Town Hall. I developed a special interest in contemporaries of Beethoven, in particular Louis Spohr. For the last 30 years I have been Secretary of the Spohr Society of Great Britain (our President is Professor Clive Brown of Leeds University). I distribute newsletters and Journals and sometimes write pieces for them. Our members are pleased that after long neglect most of Spohr's instrumental music is available on CD, together with some of his operatic and choral works. His clarinet concertos, in particular, are far better known now.

I take an interest in heritage railways and am a member of the Severn Valley Railway.

Gillian Clarke [nee Acres] (BSocSc Social Study, 1961)

Since 1962, I have qualified as an Almoner (Medical Social Worker), working in many hospitals around the country, as my husband Stewart moved in his career. We settled eventually in London where he was a Consultant Physician at the Royal Free and Brompton hospitals, and brought up two lovely sons – one now an Orthopaedic Surgeon and the other a journalist. I took eight years out of professional work and then returned to my local hospital in Barnet and later worked for 16 years in a National charity – The Lady Hoare Trust – helping families with children disabled by limb deficiencies and juvenile arthritis. I was also a Magistrate for 20 years, dealing mainly with juveniles.

Sadly my husband on his retirement at the age of 60 contracted a long-term neurological illness and died seven years ago, but I managed to nurse him at home for eight years. I have just about adjusted to life after Stewart, with the help of my family, including five grandchildren, and wonderful friends. I travel a lot and still love meeting new friends in different countries.

Trevor Lloyd (MBChB Medicine, 1961)

I'm now enjoying retirement in my flat in the lovely town of Bridport, Dorset. I'm busy travelling and making trips to the London theatre.

I'm soon to go back to Africa for the second time. I seem to have lost contact with many of my student friends – anybody still out there, I would like to know how you are getting on. Regards to all.

Michel J Pettigrew (MSc Mechanical Engineering, 1963)

Michel J. Pettigrew (PEng, FASME, MSc) is currently the Adjunct Professor of Mechanical Engineering at the Ecole Polytechnique, Montreal; Principal Research Engineer (Emeritus), Atomic Energy of Canada, Chalk River, ON; and Specialist Consultant in Fluid-Structure Interaction.

Richard Flavell (BSc Microbiology, 1964)

I entered University in 1961 when the Department of Microbiology was just beginning and was occupying huts lent by the Chemistry Dept. There was an intake of just four undergraduates that year. Thus I gained a very privileged undergraduate training. My subsidiary subjects were chemistry, genetics and physics.

Following graduation (2(i)) I did a PhD at the John Innes Institute at Bayfordbury Hertfordshire. I registered with the University of East Anglia, which was under construction at the time. My research topic was the biochemical genetics of acetate utilisation in Neurospora crass – bread mould. At the beginning of my third year my supervisor relocated to a Chair at Leeds University (Dept of Genetics). I spent much of my third year at Leeds, making only the occasional trip to UEA to give a seminar or two. My PhD from UEA was one of the first awarded.

After my PhD awarded in July 1967, I went to Stanford University for a two-year Postdoctoral Fellowship. While there I was offered a job in Cambridge at the Plant Breeding Institute under the leadership of Sir Ralph Riley, a noted wheat geneticist. I took the job and so became committed to research on wheat and other crop plants.

In around 1975, genetic engineering was made possible and I took the opportunity to develop this topic for plants, creating many of the first adventures into plant molecular biology in the UK. I developed a large laboratory team in Cambridge creating what has turned out to be one of the most successful teams of plant scientists in the UK and the world. Many of its members have since become leading Professors and leaders in industry. I gained my FRS in 1998 and a CBE in 1999.

In 1987 the Government decided to sell the Plant Breeding Institute to the private sector (Unilever) and so I applied and was appointed to be Director of the John Innes

Institute at Norwich and to have a Chair at UEA in the School of Biological Sciences. While in post I oversaw the move of my former team from Cambridge to purpose built labs at John Innes and the setting up of the now world-famous Sainsbury Laboratory. Also I moved the Nitrogen Fixation Laboratory to the John Innes to create what I named the John Innes Centre. That Centre became a world-class centre for plants and microbial sciences.

After being Director for over 10 years I was challenged to move to California to join a fledgling plant genomics company, Ceres. This I did and became the founding Chief Scientific Officer. There I helped develop a leading plant start-up company, deploying the latest genomics and bioinformatics developments. After a few years we chose to focus on energy crops and since then we have focused on bringing world leading energy crops to the market place. This has not been easy because of the economic crisis of 2008 but now we are poised for success in bringing sweet sorghum hybrids to the sugarcane mills of Brazil.

Recently I resigned by CSO post in Ceres retaining a consultancy. I now spend half my time in London. I am now gradually developing my scientific links back in the UK taking advantage of the Royal Society and other connections with academia and industry and BBSRC. Amongst other things, I chair the Science and Impact Advisory Board of the BBSRC's Sustainable Bioenergy Centre. I also chair the External Advisory Board of the Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences of Aberystwyth University.

My career has been extraordinarily rewarding and much of this has to do with entering microbial genetics near the start of the subject, via the Dept of Microbiology in 1961 as an undergraduate.

Colin Stabler (BSc Geology, 1964)

I am currently president of a charity in Mexico that assists poor communities in health and education projects, called Amistad Britanico-Mexicana. As the name suggests, the organisation is made up of expat Brits and Anglophile Mexicans. I would like to reach out to any University of Birmingham alumnae who might be interested in joining our group (Brits in Mexico or Mexicans who studied at Birmingham).

If this catches your interest, please contact me at **amistadbm@gmail.com (mailto:amistadbm@gmail.com)** and I will send you an e-brochure with further information.

Richard T Smith (BSc Civil Engineering, 1965)

It's so long since I left Brum, but they were extremely happy days. I joined WS Atkins in September 1966, as it was then, as a Graduate Engineer and worked on Drax Power Station for three years. I was working mainly on the cooling water system. However, during that time, I started to use computers. I was one of the first to use the de la Rue Bull 265 time-sharing service with a 10cps computer terminal. We thought they were so fast!

I used it for reinforced concrete calculations mainly. That started on 1 July 1967. I began to get hooked on computing and programming and, in August 1969, transferred to the new computer section of Atkins. I still did some engineering, but it was mainly generic programming for our customers. I was originally seconded for six months, but after those six months was totally hooked on computers and stayed there until January 1982.

In that time I went from programming to client support. This meant a lot of ad-hoc computing, as well as understanding clients' needs and resolving their problems. I became quite an expert at this. Then, in January 1982, I was asked to transfer to the ASAS group. ASAS is Atkins Structural Analysis System, a finite element programme of massive size. It was involved in all aspects of engineering from the analysis of an offshore jacket (oil rig) to a Parker pen clip, and later to an airbag switch (for which I had to install nano-metres as units). I was back in engineering and really enjoyed the next 19 years, until July 2001.

During this time I did programme development, support and management. I got my MBCS, CEng and CITP through this, as well as becoming a European Engineer (FEANI). Unfortunately, our income was from licences rather than fees and we did not fit into the accounting system, so we were sold off to a company in Horsham. Having walked to work basically since 1966, 35 years earlier, I did not fancy driving 25 miles to work every day. So I took early retirement at the age of 56. I have never looked back and now spend my time working voluntarily in the local church and the local theatre. I still programme for pleasure. I'm a bit of a workaholic. I used to look forward to Monday mornings because I so enjoyed my work and I still love getting into software. Since retirement, I have never woken up and wondered what to do. It's more a case of fitting everything into each day. So, that, in a nutshell, is me since 1965.

John B Davies (BSc Chemical Engineering, 1966)

John passed away on 26 January 2013. He was an extremely busy man to the end as Chairman of the Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital Trust, following a career firstly in the oil industry with Amoco in Chicago, followed by five years running a joint venture company in Spain. After his return to London he moved on to run Kemira Fertilizers in Cheshire for 10 years.

As he retired, he took on the hospital trust job. Pancreatic cancer gives no one time to think and John died within three months of accidentally finding out he had the horrid disease. He was a good man.

Carolyn Davies

Angelos Fanos (LLB Law, 1966)

I graduated with an LLB in 1966, after which I worked for a couple of years in the Estate Duty Office (as it was then known) in London. In 1968 I took up a senior tutorship in law at the University of Queensland Law School in Brisbane, Australia.

I returned to Birmingham in 1973 and qualified and practiced as a Solicitor for a number of years and then returned to Sydney, Australia where I worked as a Senior In-house Lawyer for Exxon in its oil and gas, mining and petrochemicals business until 1998, ending up as the Chief Lawyer of Exxon's Australian mining business. This was followed by a period of work in private practice and as a legal consultant in the mining industry. I am now more or less retired from legal practice.

I obtained an LLM from Sydney University recently and had toyed with the idea of returning to Birmingham Law School to enrol for a PhD. However, at my age, it would not lead anywhere career-wise and it would be too much of an effort just to gain some personal satisfaction for doing something that I ought to have done a lifetime ago. I often wonder what different roads my life and career would have taken had I put in the effort in those days to obtain postgraduate qualifications. I'm pleased, however, that the Law School has made such progress in offering courses that were not available in my undergraduate days.

All my siblings still live in Birmingham and I now visit the UK fairly regularly. I've considered returning to the UK permanently but it's more likely that from now on I'll divide

my time between the UK and Sydney. I've thought about visiting the Law School, but the fact that I know nobody there now except the ghosts of past students and staff keeps me away. I hope the Law School continues to prove itself worthy of remaining among the top law schools in the UK. One thing I regret is losing touch, due to my many address changes over the years, with the '65 Club' of law students. I don't even know if it still exists.

Robert Shekhdar (Bcom Industrial Economics & Business Studies, 1966)

I emigrated to the USA immediately after graduating and studied for an MBA at Purdue University. Professors John Samuels and Roger Groves arrived soon after to study for their PhDs. I currently live in Stamford, CT (close to New York City) and am active in the Brum alumni group run by David Drinkwater. This has ties to the British Consulate through a full-time alumni liaison officer. There must be quite literally thousands of British university graduates in New York with many on Wall Street. Some have tremendously successful careers over here.

Augusto Dall'Orto (MSc Highway & Traffic Engineering, 1967)

I am in the same place as always, working at my own engineering consulting firm, specialising in traffic and transportation planning, as learned at Birmingham.

Geoffrey Hillier (MSc Mechanical Engineering, 1967)

I was at the Graduate School of Thermodynamics, Birmingham, from 1965 to 1967. I lived in the Queen's College Old Hostel and wondered if there is a way of contacting students who also lived there at that time?

Bridget Shields [nee Rossi] (BSc Pure Mathematics, 1968; MSc, 1969; PhD, 1979)

I graduated and returned to the University to do research with Prof Nigel Corlett in Engineering Production leading to a PhD in 1979.

I am currently Professor of Acoustics at London South Bank University, where I have worked since 1986. However, you may be interested to know that, since last June, I have been President of the Institute of Acoustics (2012-14) – a great honour, especially as I am the first woman President.

Petr Zuman (DSc Chemistry, 1968)

I am still at Clarkson University in Potsdam, New York, USA. Formally, I was Distinguished Emeritus Research Professor, but I'm here, after retiring from teaching (28 different courses in 31 years).

I still have my lab and office. I am coming to the lab most days for afternoons, 2-6pm, but no graduate students now to have our five o'clock teas.

Occasionally I have some working visitors, but mostly contacts with collaborators and friends by email (I have just finished a chapter on Polarography in Pharmaceutics. Occasionally I give a set of discussions to graduate students, the last one was a series of five on 'The role of pH on kinetics of organic reactions in aqueous media'. Otherwise – I have written 450 research papers and 16 books, and a number of my students became professors – one of which was David Barnes in Sydney, Australia.

Peter Eldridge (BSc Physics, 1969)

I completed over 27 years in seven locations with IBM UK in systems engineering, sales, marketing management, briefing centre management (South of France), regional development management and e-business consultancy leadership.

I spent five years running my own small e-business consultancy company, Objective Reach Limited. Then 10 years' part-time commercial management at Lord Wandsworth College, while training for present career as self-employed Counsellor and Psychotherapist MBACP (Snr Accred), EMDR Therapist and now training as Supervisor of other therapists, which is meeting my need for lifelong learning.

I'm married to Irene, with three children and three stepchildren, all in their 20s. Living (thanks to a three-lead pacemaker) in Fleet, Hampshire, and still going to the gym at 66 (thanks to two new NHS knees last year). Still keenly interested in the latest developments in Physics and other sciences and I enjoy reading fiction (Game of Thrones series right now), theatre, opera, athletics (ex-junior coach), football (ex-junior coach), rowing and (doing and watching) cycling.

My best memory of Brum Uni was lying on my stomach on the grass between the library, old Joe and the Students' Union, having just finished my last finals exam, in bright sunshine under a blue sky and finally having all the time in the world to read *The Lord of The Rings*.

Mike (John) Innes (PhD Psychology, 1969)

I am a bit different from many of your alumni in that I completed my degree while a staff member. I did the PhD while a staff member in the newly created Department of Psychology which started in 1965 (coming up to the 50th anniversary!).

However, for myself, I left Birmingham in 1972 and went to the U of Edinburgh and then in 1975 to the U of Adelaide in Australia (all in Psychology Departments). I was there for 16 years before becoming Head of the new Department of Psychology and Sociology at James Cook University in Queensland, Australia. Before joining the Psychology department in Birmingham I had been an Assistant Lecturer in Sociology in the Faculty of Commerce and Social Science at Birmingham, so heading Sociology was not a big step.) I then became the Head of Psychology at Murdoch University in Perth, Western Australia. In the course of this I became a Fellow of the British and the Australian Psychological Societies and a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia and a Director of Science in the Australian Psychological Society. I moved again, back to the U of Adelaide, in 2002 as Executive Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, and being also a Professor of Psychology at that institution.

In 2008, I went to Dubai as inaugural Pro-Vice Chancellor of the Murdoch University International studies Centre. I moved back to Australia after one year and commenced a new career becoming a professor of Psychology again, but this time in a private college, the Australian College of Applied Psychology. While outside of the public university system, we offer a course accredited by the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council and so we are recognised as providing a level of education and training in undergraduate and postgraduate psychology commensurate with anything offered in the universities. As you may imagine, the provision of a private system, which is competing with the public sector is challenging and also controversial. But also fun.

It has been a long time since Birmingham, but that institution was the first place in which I held an academic job and I still remember the people and the facilities with great fondness. The library was really good and the staff were all supportive, even though the establishment of a Psychology Department in a Faculty of Science was a bit of a shock to the physicists.

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