



RFS

Journal of the RSM Retired Fellows Society

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Cover: Ring-tailed lemur, London Zoo, Jeffrey Rosenberg and colleagues

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Editorial

Catherine Sarraf

Here we are in the summer of 2022; what we've all been through to get here! Normal foreign travel is starting up again, but we are all sad to learn, *via* Pat Last, that Sue Weir's last guided tour has already occurred (see page 21). We will be bereft Sue! If we all promised to remain on our best behaviour, would we be able to squeeze another one out of you please? When you've had a good rest?

Apart from the great RFS tours, leaving the UK can still be hairy. At the time of writing Heathrow and Gatwick, using BA and EasyJet, seem to be up for disruptions and cancellations left, right and centre. Recently though, I went from Stansted to Germany on Ryanair. It was a bit of a refresher course on the means entailed to book Ryanair, but apart from that, leaving and returning were spankingly on time and efficient. Crowds at Stansted were no worse than at the other airports, and at least all passengers were actually getting somewhere.

Good weather smiled on us for a trip to the Isle of Wight, summer at home can also be good. The Isle of Wight, like many British locations, has a very great deal to offer retired types and there's certainly plenty of excitement about going to our wide arrays of historical sites, restaurants and activities.

Peter Bull and Alan Sprigg on Keith Levick

Towards the end of my Editorial in the April issue of the journal, I apologised to the author of the (much appreciated) obituary for Keith Levick, for not crediting him with the piece; the author's name had not appeared in the version of the obituary that had been submitted to me. Keen-eyed Sheila Duncan did some detective work and came to my aid.



She wrote to me saying '*I read with interest, the excellent obituary of Keith Levick, whom I knew well, and I also noted your editorial remarks that you lacked awareness of the author. It was obvious to me that it was a local colleague who knew him well and had accurate facts, so it wasn't a big job for me to track it down. The piece was written by Peter Bull an ENT surgeon at Sheffield Children's Hospital with input from Alan Sprigg a radiological colleague of Keith's also at the SCH*'.

Next, Sheila and I both contacted Peter Bull who then responded '*Thank you for your email about Keith Levick's obituary; it was written by me with additional help from Alan Sprigg. Alan was a consultant colleague of Keith's at the Children's Hospital in Sheffield, where I also worked as a paediatric ENT surgeon. I also lived very close to Keith in Hatheresage in Derbyshire and see his widow fairly frequently. I have to admit that I did not know the obituary had been sent to the RSM but of course am very pleased that you have published it*'.

So, most appreciative thanks to **Peter Bull** and **Alan Sprigg** for contributing the kind and a *propos* obituary for Keith Levick, and also to Sheila Duncan for making this credit possible.

Forthcoming Events

Programme: Intramural Meetings 2022 – 2023

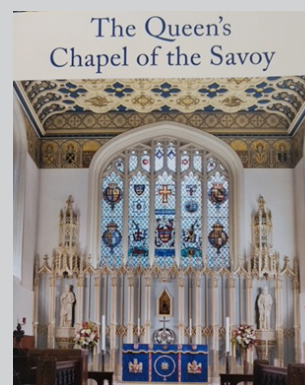
Jeffrey Rosenberg, Chair, RFS

I should like to remind members of our wonderful external events programme led by our accredited Blue Badge guides, Sue Weir and Rosalind Stanwell-Smith. Numbers are usually restricted for our walks and tours so you are encouraged to book ASAP once advertised. We recently enjoyed a walk around the Strand incorporating a visit to The Queen's Chapel of the Savoy, Chapel of The Royal Victorian Order. Our guided tour of The Foundling Museum highlighted social history, art and music through fascinating connections with Hogarth and Handel.



The Foundling Museum: An Illustrated Guide

By The Foundling Museum



The Queen's Chapel of the Savoy

By Peter Galloway

2022

October

20 | Architecture for people and the planet
Professor Derek Clements-Croome

November

17 | Self-driving cars: are we nearly there yet...?
Professor Nick Reed

December

01 | Recent advances in medicine and surgery
(Whole day event)

2023

February

16 | Historical roots of the war in Ukraine
Dr Shane O'Rourke

March

16 | The sea – ungoverned space
Rupert Wallace

April

13 | Best stained glass in London
Caroline Swash

May

18 | The Silk Road
Frances Wood

June

15 | TBA
Professor Robin Dunbar

Sue Weir's Walks

Autumn 2022

Please check website for full details

September

06 | Round and about in Southwark

October

05 | Further along the Embankment

Spring and summer 2023

Final dates to be confirmed

April

Around Holborn's Past

An opportunity to see a once very fashionable square, some elegant streets and the haunts of duellists and barristers, not forgetting hidden churches and a unique pub.

May

Further Along the Embankment

To continue our exploration of the gardens, statues, small streets, a Roman bath and the law, from Somerset House to Blackfriars

June

From Farmland to Fashionable Faubourg

Elegant Kensington was home to writers, composers and seafarers, come and discover where they lived.

July

King's Cross

Something old and something new, water and a wild life garden plus a university and 'The place to live' - it is not just a station!

Programme: Camera Club 2022 - 2023

Memo Spathis and Richard Lansdown

Camera Club Report

Meetings have continued *via* Zoom, kindly hosted by one of our members (usually in the UK but sometimes from abroad). The programme continued with talks from invited speakers (Andy Hooker Mountains and Photography, Ian Judson Sailing in the Hebrides – boats, ‘bonxies’ and other birds, and John Harcup on Misericords - a peep into the medieval mind).

There were also some presentation meetings, where members volunteered to talk for up to 45 minutes on any topic of their choice. At the most recent, Mark Buckley-Sharp presented some of his photographs of Turkey. Richard Lansdown spoke about the photography of Eugène Atget (see the ‘Articles’ section here) - an almost forgotten ‘famous’ photographer who is described on a photographic website as being ‘unique on two levels. He was the maker of a great visual catalogue of the fruits of French culture, as it survived in and near Paris in the first quarter of this century. He was in addition a photographer of such authority and originality that his work remains a benchmark against which much of the most sophisticated contemporary photography measures itself.’

It has not proved feasible to hold Members meetings over Zoom. The one held in-house had a very poor attendance – clearly members are still reluctant to travel and attend meetings, while there remains a high incidence of Covid infection, despite the government’s encouragement otherwise.

We hope to have a full programme this coming year.

Programme 2022-2023

All meetings are now planned to be in-house

2022

September

21 | Paul Sievers: Kew through the seasons

October

12 | To be announced

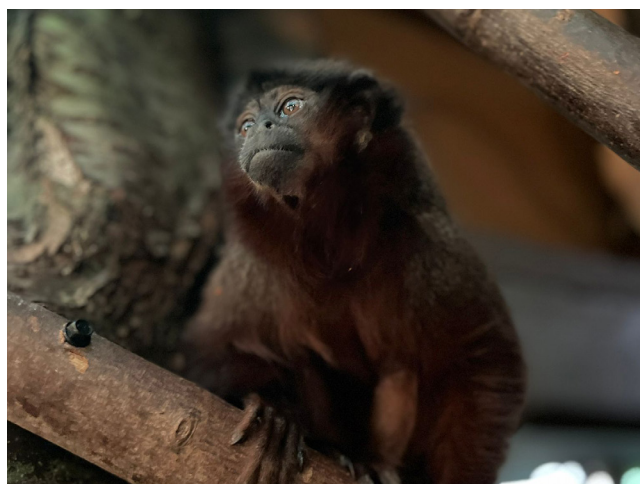
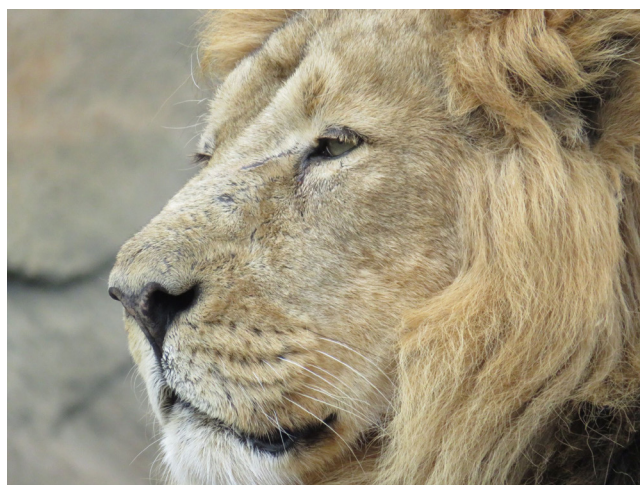
November

07 | To be announced

2023

January

11 | To be announced



Photographs: *Jeffrey Rosenberg and colleagues*

Biographies of forthcoming speakers



Prof. Derek Clements-Croome

Thursday 20th October 2022, *Architecture for people and the planet*

Derek Clements-Croome worked in the building design and contracting industry before entering university life. He has founded and directed courses including a BSc in *Building Environmental Engineering* at Loughborough University in 1970 and an interdisciplinary MSc in *Intelligent Buildings* at Reading University in 1996 covering design and management of intelligent buildings. He has also worked in architecture and building engineering at the University of Bath (1978-1988). His research is documented in his many publications.

Professor Clements-Croome now offers strategic advice to clients, designers and facilities managers on attaining and managing healthy and sustainable environments in buildings of all types. He researches, writes and lectures on these issues for companies and wider audiences nationally and internationally, in China, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Poland and Finland particularly.

Derek will look at how the built environment impacts on our health and wellbeing. He was a co-author of the British Council for Offices

Report 2018 on *Wellness Matters* and as co-author edited the book *Creating the Productive Workplace 3rd Edition 2018*. His book *Designing Buildings for People: sustainable liveable architecture* was due in July 2020.



Prof. Nick Reed

Thursday 17th November 2022, *Self-driving cars: are we nearly there yet...?*

Prof. Nick Reed has worked consistently at the cutting edge of transportation research, initially researching driver behaviour and subsequently leading connected and automated vehicle projects in the UK, to the value of more than £50m. Nick was Academy Director at TRL (the UK's Transport Research Laboratory) before becoming Head of Mobility R&D at Bosch, the world's largest automotive supplier. He has since founded Reed Mobility – an independent expert consultancy on future mobility working across public, private and academic sectors to deliver transport systems that are safe, clean, efficient, ethical and equitable, and including projects for the European Commission, DfT, TfL, BSI and RSSB. In November 2021, he was appointed as the first ever Chief Road Safety Advisor to National Highways, providing a review and challenge to the organisation in its aim to deliver zero harm on the strategic road network, by 2040.



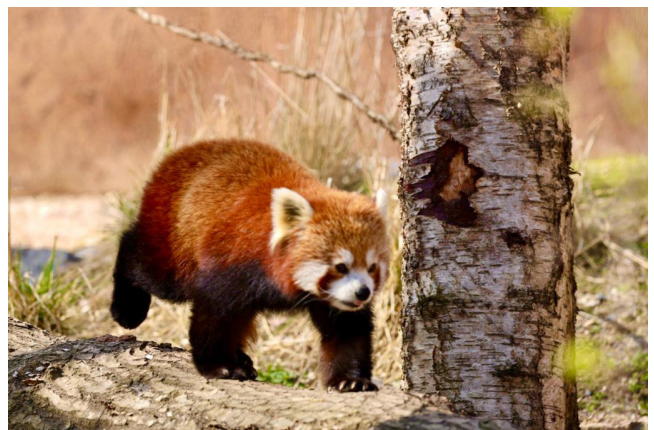
Rupert Wallace

Thursday 16th March 2023, *The sea – the ungoverned space*

Rupert Wallace retired from the Royal Navy in 2014 as a Commodore, after a career which included the Falklands War, three ship commands, heading a flotilla of destroyers and frigates, and strategic UK defence relations work throughout the Middle East and South Asia. He has worked in every Arab country, plus the Palestinian Territories, in addition to Iran, Turkey and Israel.

On retirement he completed a postgraduate degree in International Relations at the London School of Economics. He now talks widely in schools, institutions and on cruise ships, concentrating on the Middle East and US Politics. He is History Director on an outreach programme to inspire less advantaged pupils to apply to the top universities.

Rupert travels extensively, including riding a bicycle across America, independently travelling the Silk Road from Iran to central China, and is currently in the middle of a 10-year walk from the Atlantic to the Black Sea. To keep his feet wet, Rupert and his wife Kate also sail their boat in Greece.



Photographs: *Jeffrey Rosenberg and Sheila Smith*

Meetings reports

How can we make pandemic warnings work?

On the 17th March 2022 Dr Carina Fearnley delivered a fascinating lecture exploring warnings of pandemics, and what can be learnt from other hazards, to develop better health warnings. She discussed the history of pandemics as causes of environmental disasters of high mortality. She addressed the need for people to stay put, rather than to evacuate, as this obstructs escape routes. Sadly, a pandemic is often not identified until it is too late; in the past warnings have been ignored despite mounting evidence of imminence. In 2000 the World Health Organisation (WHO) initiated the Global Outbreak and Alert Outbreak Response Network (GOARN), a technical partnership to identify unusual agents and pathogens and to coordinate rapid responses. However, recent documents, including the WHO 2019 Novel Coronavirus Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan, have not often mentioned 'warning'. Concerning the recent Covid-19 outbreak, international warnings initially failed, as was seen in the timeline of WHO alerts on it. On January 10th 2020 WHO issued an advisory note on the novel coronavirus. On January 22nd the WHO emergency committee said the event did 'not constitute a public health emergency of international concern', but such a concern was later noted on January 30th. On

February 21st the WHO Director General stated that the window of opportunity to contain the outbreak was 'narrowing' and that the international community needed to ramp up efforts and finances. On February 29th WHO advised against the enforcement of travel or trade restrictions on countries grappling with Covid 19 outbreaks and WHO finally declared Covid-19 as a pandemic on March 11th. On March 16th WHO asked governments to make available all necessary resources to combat Covid-19 with minimum delay but by March 23rd the pandemic was noted to be accelerating. On March 26th the Director General of WHO urged G20 leaders to fight and unite against Covid-19.

Key questions on pandemic warnings include

- a) **WHAT** is happening with respect to the hazard?
- b) **WHEN** are impacts likely?
- c) **WHERE** are the locations which are at risk?
- d) **WHO** is at risk?
- e) **WHY** is there a threat? Why are there vulnerabilities?
- f) **HOW** can warnings be effective?

Key steps to make warnings effective include: forecasting (which involves statistics and modelling the likelihood of the hazard occurring); disseminating a warning by television, radio, internet and other media channels; taking action on the warning by believing in it; integrating warning systems across different government and local authorities, as well as public education programmes; and monitoring the effects of the warning to see if appropriate actions have been taken. Dr Fearnley discussed lessons from further natural hazard warnings. Herself, she has studied problems regarding warnings of potentially erupting volcanoes, earthquakes and tsunamis. An example of when no one acts on warnings was mentioned regarding the Nevado del Ruiz volcano in Columbia in 1985; there a warning map showing the likely hazards

of lava flow to local communities was rejected by the government as being ‘too alarmist’. This probably contributed to loss of life after the eruption occurred. Volcano Alert Level Systems have now been described for global use and hopefully, similar systems may be useful for considering warnings for prevention and control of future pandemics.

Concluding, Dr Fearnley pointed to the need for Anticipatory Warnings - since most pandemic warnings focus on the event after it has become too late. More attention is required to consider environmental and climatic conditions that increase health risks, such as deforestation, intensive livestock production, livestock markets and general climate change.

David Shanson



Guided missiles – a pictorial visit to the surface-to-air missile ‘zoo’

On 21st April 2022 Prof. Tony Davies, Emeritus Professor of King’s College London, delivered his third lecture within two years; this time on the historical development of surface to air missiles (SAMs). The word ‘zoo’ was included in the title as he would be showing a number of slides without going into too much detail, and the lecture would include history, control and propulsion of surface-to-air missiles, and potential targets. He initially reminded us of the difference between ballistic and guided missiles and mentioned the relatively new

hypersonic ones. Each type of SAM is given a military classification by NATO and also given a colloquial name. Missiles typically have either an acquisition radar mechanism to search for incoming threats or engagement radar mechanism to track a response missile. Initially, SAMs were developed by the USSR as a response to US and UK threats of dropping nuclear bombs on Moscow, using V-bombers based in East Anglia, and not having a suitable base within range of, say, New York or Washington DC. USSR’s first operational SAM in

1956 was a single-stage rocket (SA-1) powered by liquid fuel with a range of 35km, developed primarily to defend Moscow. However, the liquid fuel contained a propellant and oxidiser which were relatively unstable. The SA-2 was a two-stage rocket for greater range with a solid fuel booster – a more stable and powerful propellant – plus a liquid fuel upper stage; this missile was featured in the 1963 May Day Parade in Red Square, Moscow. The next SAM was the SA-3 which had two-stages, both using solid fuel, this was followed by the SA-4 which had four solid fuel side-booster rockets and a purpose-built transporter for maximum flexibility.

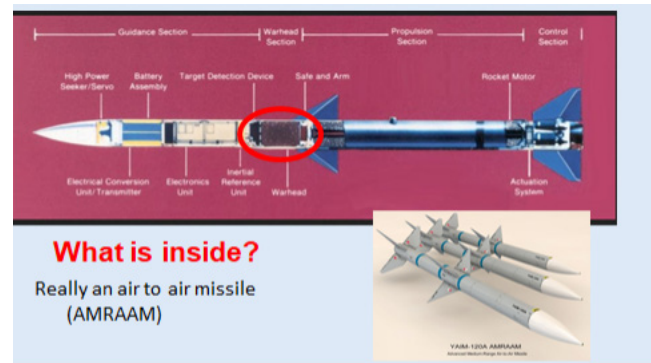


Annual May Day Parade in Red Square, Moscow.

This one in 1963

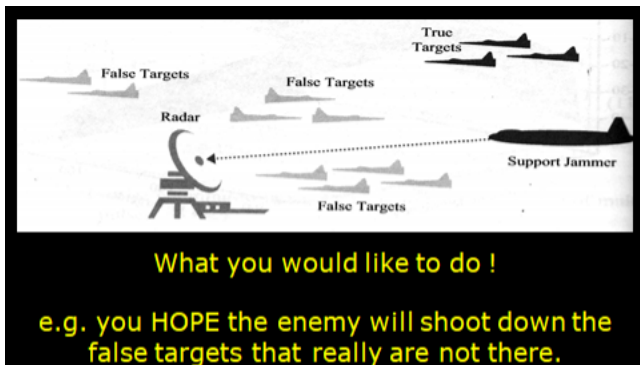
Probably SA-2 Guideline missiles

In the UK in September 1960 a false alarm from possible incoming missiles was detected – which could have started World War 3 - it turned out to be just the moon appearing above the horizon! The incident led to the development of more sophisticated radar detection equipment at Fylingdales, North Yorkshire. In 1962 an SA-2 shot down an American U-2 air-force plane flying at 60,000 ft over the USSR taking high resolution pictures; the pilot Gary Powers survived, and was eventually returned to the United States. Also in 1962, SA-2s were installed in Cuba to protect the newer USSR SS-3, and SS-4 SAMs capable of carrying nuclear warheads to reach any part of America. This incident also nearly provoked World War 3. 'Free Rocket Over Ground' (FROG) missiles – an unguided ballistic rocket capable of carrying a nuclear warhead – had also been located in Cuba. The SA-10 and SA-11 are more modern versions of Russian SAMs which can be deployed in less than five minutes. At the same time, the USSR continued to develop advanced transportable radar detection equipment as ongoing projects to match the technical developments of their SAMs.



American SAMs look very similar in size and design to the Russian ones. Both now have high performance electronics in the head of the missile for radar seeking and are relatively smaller than the original missiles. Present-day American and Russian air-to-air missiles have four sections: control at the tail end; propulsion; warhead; and guidance at the nose. Potential targets such as the US Air Force F16 Fighting Falcon emit protective pyrotechnic flares to interfere with radar detection, although there are four ways to guide a missile to its target: 1) visual line of sight, for example, 'man portable defence systems' (MANPADS) rocket launchers; 2) calculation of coordinates; 3) remote guidance by the launcher; and 4) proportional navigation requiring computer guidance to provide steering commands. More modern MANPADS use near-infra-red and ultra-violet seekers for guidance and interestingly use a very simple mechanism for protecting the person launching the missile, from the explosive force: following a low powered ejection a wire trails behind the missile which when becoming tight, fires the main rocket motor. In recent years these have, of course, been used too often by terrorists.





Professor Davies showed a number of modern early radar warning devices and mentioned the importance of having two – or even three – separate antennae and receivers to monitor targets and ensure greater accuracy. He finished his lecture with images of a number of modern stealth bombers and strike fighters

manufactured in different parts of the world, and included an aircraft fitted with jamming emitters to provide false data on targets. However, very high-powered military lasers may be the weapon of the future.

Questions included the history of the use of MANPADS from the Second World War to the present day in Ukraine; the terminology of hitile and missile; the two warhead anti-tank missile; the cost of developing modern missiles; and underground missile storage silos during the Cold War. Jeffrey Rosenberg warmly thanked Professor Davies for his wonderfully illustrated lecture and presented him with a gift from the Retired Fellows Society.

Julian Axe

Music on the brink of destruction

On the 19th of May, the Chair introduced Shirli Gilbert, Professor of Modern Jewish History at University College London. He reflected on the importance of music in the context of conflict and the current situation in Ukraine. He reminded the audience of British experience during WW2 with Myra Hess's lunchtime concerts at The National Gallery and the use of the opening motif of Beethoven's 5th symphony, synonymous with morse code 'V' for victory.

There were 48 people registered to attend in the auditorium, together with a further 30 by Zoom,

to listen to a most poignant lecture illustrated with many audio clips of original music written both during and before the holocaust. The period covered was from 1933 when the first camps were set up, until their liberation in 1945. Circumstances precluded recording in the camps so they were mainly recorded in the early post-war period. Reference was made to Latvian American psychologist, David Boder [1886-1961] who travelled to Europe in 1946 with an early portable tape recorder, specifically to capture the songs and oral testimonies of holocaust

survivors. In addition, there was also music generated within displaced persons' camps post-war. The purpose of the recordings was to chronicle the effects of the holocaust on the everyday population, the music being described as 'the soul of the people'. This differed from the Nuremberg trials which examined what the perpetrators actually did.



Dr David P Boder

There were thousands of such songs - the first recording shared with us was made in 1946, entitled 'Treblinka' (one of six camps specifically designed for extermination of mainly Jews also gypsies, homosexuals, Jehovah Witnesses and political prisoners). 'Treblinka' like so many of the songs, was written in Yiddish, then the everyday language of the majority of Eastern European Jews. Many compositions were communal endeavours rather than efforts and expression of specific individuals. Songs after the war were often sung by those who remembered them as many of the original composers and singers hadn't survived. The songs were often an attempt to make sense of the turmoil of existence or survival in the camps. We were shown photographs of musicians and orchestras within ghettos and camps. In the ghettos apart from orchestras there were also choirs and theatres all dependent on the

length of time before liquidation. In Auschwitz alone there were six orchestras, some of which created by the SS as a form of torture and humiliation. Music was played at morning roll calls and inmates forced to sing German marching songs. They also played as inmates went and returned from labour as well as at executions.

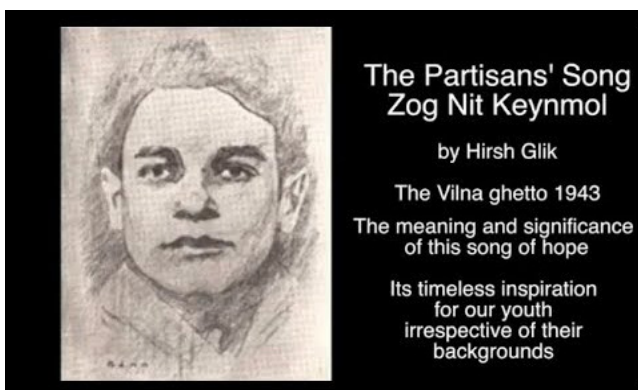
Music in the camps, notwithstanding the risks, often reflected what was popular in free society. Music created in the camps was not just by professional musicians but also by ordinary people - who were the exact focus of Professor Gilbert's research. We heard the moving contortion of the most famous of the Yiddish lullabies 'Raisins and Almonds' (Abraham Goldfaden, 1840-1908) rewritten as 'No raisins, no Almonds' in the Lodz ghetto near Warsaw. Many ghetto melodies were adapted from the original lyrics to reflect the horrors of the new reality. A further example played was the adaptation of Scott Joplin's Ragtime to 'Money, Money' to vocalise the tensions between the Jewish leadership and the mass of people in the Warsaw Ghetto. Money could buy food, clothing and delay selection for transportation to the East (a euphemism for the death camps). At its peak there were over 400,000 people in the ghetto but as a very diverse group which was again reflected in the musical output. Professor Gilbert felt it much too simplistic to state that the music demonstrated the strength of the human spirit in adversity. The music reflected a complex array of emotions from hope to despair whilst attempting to make sense of the situation people found themselves in.

Somewhat surprisingly the official Nazi proscription of music classified as degenerate or by Jewish composers such as Felix Mendelssohn wasn't necessarily strictly applied during internment. Interestingly music was also composed for those instruments which musicians brought with them. Of course, pianos, rare and high value instruments together with works of art were confiscated or looted prior to internment. We heard a song composed in 1933 by political prisoners. The song was so moving that even the SS guards joined in! It was banned shortly afterwards but spread from camp to camp and resurfaced after the war in the GDR as a popular anti-fascist refrain.



Dr David P Boder

One of the most famous Yiddish songs of the war was written by a young composer/poet, Hirsch Glick (1922-1944) in Vilnius, Lithuania, as a response to the uprising in the Warsaw ghetto in the spring of 1943. It was called 'The final road' but was also known as the Partisan's song. The theme of this and so many songs was of collective Jewish survival rather than that of any individual. The recordings made in the immediate post-war period were by those ordinary, often very young people who had experienced internment. Furthermore, these were raw recordings not by professional singers. These recordings reflected the reality of camp life with everyday people singing out of tune but with a considerable degree of camaraderie. The songs themselves would bear witness to future generations as to what had happened. Those which have endured and are often sung



at memorial events would nowadays be sung by professional singers. The final recording played was 'Different Trains' written in 1988 by the American composer, Steve Reich (1936-...). He took testimonies from three survivors of his own age to mix with his own experience of being a Jewish child in America during the war. The aim of his composition was to help future generations make sense of the holocaust.

Professor Gilbert took several questions from the audience. Musicians were given free reign within the camps and often played pieces requested by the SS. The orchestras often had a copyist to adapt music to the available instruments. She alluded to the cellist Anita Lasker-Wallfisch, Auschwitz survivor and a founding member of the English Chamber Orchestra. Another question considered that many Polish Jews who escaped did so by travelling to Russia where the regime wasn't implicitly genocidal towards them. Siberian exile was a very broad term and the stories of those who escaped *via* Russia and Central Asia was a recent area of research. There was a question about the music of slaves on plantations which was of interest in the context of different cultures but unlike the holocaust there was a dearth of written information. In response to a question about people being unaware of what was happening it was emphasised that this was completely implausible. It wasn't something that happened in secret and many ordinary people were involved. Professor Gilbert was concerned that films like *'The boy in the striped pyjamas'* gave a false impression to younger generations. Another question discussed the lack of writing materials which prevented much music and songs from being written down in the camps. The final question related to German composers, especially Wagner being played in Israel. This was a contentious topic but she felt it was difficult to distance the creativity of composers from their social and political backgrounds.

Unfortunately the Retired Fellows Society wasn't allowed to record the lecture due to the sensitive nature of material and copyright issues. However, many clips including some referred to above may be found on YouTube and other websites.

Jeffrey Rosenberg

Worth a thousand words: an introduction to the botanical art collections in the RHS Lindley Library

Charlotte Brooks is the Art Curator of the Royal Horticultural Society Library where she has been working for 18 years. She is the author of two books, the most recent being on the RHS orchid paintings, published this year. On the 16th of June she gave us a fascinating lecture about the botanical art collections in the Royal Horticultural Society's Lindley Library. The talk was a model of clarity and interest with some fascinating art displayed; above all there was the message - good paintings of plants have scientific and practical value but they are works of art in their own right. The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) was founded in 1804 to encourage horticulture in its different branches, bringing science and art together, The Library, situated in Vincent Square, dates from 1904 and is open to the public and tours can be arranged.

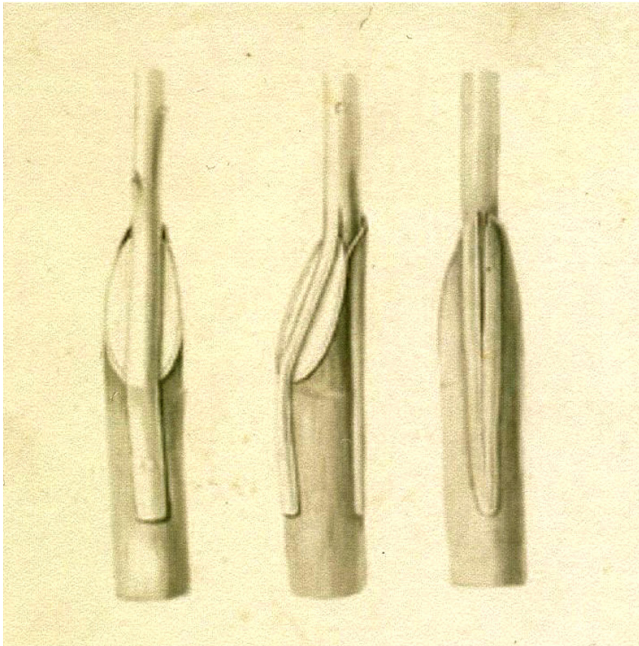
The 19th century saw a move to improve gardens and to increase the knowledge of plants, there was also a perceived need to encourage the identification of plants and improve practice. Horticulturists were thus invited to bring plants for identification and to learn more about them. Working between 1816 and 1822 William Hooker, a commissioned artist, produced a range of paintings to help all three aims. There are now some 200 of his paintings, all in albums, amply illustrating the notion that a picture is worth a thousand words. He was followed by Augusta Withers.

A major contribution came from John Reeves whose collection, given to the RHS, comprises



Example of Hooker's work - 'Jamaica Black Pine', 1815

eight volumes of botanical pictures of plants collected while he was in what was then called Canton. Bringing plants from far away was no easy task. A ship from China could take six months and plants had to be carefully nurtured; a sympathetic captain was an essential component of the exercise. An estimate is that each plant surviving did so at the cost of some £300. Many of the plants with which



Examples of Hooker's work - Grafting, 1811

we are familiar, peonies and camellias for example, came from overseas. Orchids received a good deal of attention. They are valuable and illustrations were in demand not only for identification purposes but also to assist people selling them. The RHS Orchid Awards date from 1897 and there are now 7,500 pictures in the Society's Collection. Nelly Roberts was the first official orchid artist.

The 1920s brought fewer purchases and a shift in artistic style E.A. Bowles was a plant enthusiast and painter rather more than an illustrator; the first exhibition of floral painting



Nelly Roberts at her desk

was more like a set of watercolours than images designed for identification, but 1936 brought another important bequest to the library, that of Reginald Corby. This vast collection has only recently been examined in detail, although the RHS had sold some of its paintings in 1859, Corby had bought some, so with the bequest they returned home. The 1950s saw another decline in plant painting, it was thought by some that photography could do as good a job much faster. The 1980s saw revival of enthusiasm, classes appeared in many parts of the country, but still very few new pictures were acquired, only one or two a year being common. Today there is great interest, with exhibitions, collections and commissions demonstrating



Roberts' orchids

a wide range of techniques and plants. While some follow traditional techniques, each artist today brings something personal to their work.

There are two RHS Botanical and Photography shows at the Saatchi Gallery, the second having been held earlier this year; they have provided much encouragement to artists who compete for an RHS medal. The final set of paintings shown was of Illustrated Royal Signatures, that is a signature surrounded by plants, each one painted on vellum, no easy task, keeping the RHS collection alive and vibrant.

There were several interesting questions, and the first was to ask what percentage of plants are native to this country. There is no reliable answer, as it is difficult to distinguish between the native and the naturalised plant and there are too many hybrids. There had been mention in the talk of the difficulty in painting green and a questioner asked if there are any records of the pigments being used in the past. There is some evidence, manuals may advise on watercolours, analysis has recently begun. A further question was related to the way RHS medals are awarded - judges come from a wide range of disciplines. Photography came up next, it has its place, artists often use photos as aids but the essential difference is that photographs are of a moment in time, whereas a painting can provide information on stages of a plant's growth and development. The links with Kew were aired, the answer being that they and the RHS are colleagues with much in common. The final question was on the actual size of the paintings, the answer being that before the advent of photography they were life size.

Along with this presentation there was a small exhibition in the RSM library of our books on botany, two examples of illustrations are given here.

Richard Lansdown



From Elizabeth Blackwell's *Curious Herbal*, 1734



From *The Universal Herbal* 1816-1820

Extramural reports

Twixt the Strand and the river

Sue Weir's walks around lesser-known parts of London are always full of surprising discoveries, on the 27th of April she took us around the area that lies between the busy road of the Strand and the river Thames, having met at Charing Cross underground station. Sadly, only seven fellows attended in the morning and four in the afternoon. The Strand itself used to be the bank of the Thames until tidal-affected land was reclaimed in the 19th century as The Embankment, to accommodate Bazalgette's sewers and underground railways, beneath. We saw the five roads named after each of the names of George Villiers Duke of Buckingham, although 'Of Alley' has since been renamed York Place. We walked down Buckingham Street seeing the two houses lived in by Samuel Pepys and we passed the York Watergate where the Duke of Buckingham parked his boat, but which is now 100 yards inland in Embankment Gardens. Cleopatra's needle on the Embankment languished in Egypt for 58 years after it was given to Britain, and then it took the surgeon and dermatologist Sir Erasmus Wilson's generosity to fund its transportation and erection in London in 1877. In the gardens are several interesting memorials to 19th century worthies, including Arthur Sullivan the composer of operas performed in the Savoy theatre built by Richard D'Oyly Carte.



York Place. Photograph: John Skipper



York watergate. Photograph: John Skipper

The 16th century Queen's Chapel of the Savoy belongs to the Savoy Estate, the principal London land holding of Queen in her right as the Duke of Lancaster. It is a Royal Peculiar and is the chapel for the Royal Victorian Order. As ever, Sue provided us with a full and interesting cornucopia of facts concerning all the historical artefacts we encountered. Thank you so much, Sue!

John Skipper



Arthur Sullivan. Photograph: John Skipper

Unknown St James

On the 17th of May Sue Weir took us on an exceptionally interesting walk around the area known as St James, after all having met up in Piccadilly Circus underground station. Happily, this time the event was soundly supported, having been well advertised, and booking up for it had run smoothly. We learnt that the whole St James area is Crown property and cannot be bought outright by anyone, leases held by (and funds paid to) the Crown. We started by visiting St James Church, which spans land between Piccadilly and Jermyn Street. It was designed and built by Christopher Wren and the barrel vaulted nave is supported by Corinthian columns. It has a carved marble font and fine reredos are typical examples of the work of Grinling Gibbons. There is a memorial to William Hunter in the church and John Hunter got married there. However, we heard that the brothers were not on good terms at the time of the wedding, and John sent notification to William of the time and date of the event, but told him to please not bother to attend! From the 'back door' we exited on to Jermyn Street, still smart in the highest conservative fashion, but not as extensive as previously. Always an area cherished by the aristocracy, in addition to clothing, Jermyn Street had previously supported superior food emporia supplying the local palazzi, the greatest remaining one being Fortnum & Mason, there, on the corner.



Green Park

Blessed with a lovely day we then progressed through St James encountering Gentlemen's Clubs and locations of famous art dealers and more. We passed small secret courtyards housing great mansions such as the Royal Overseas League (the Medical Music Society holds its concerts there now) and Spencer House. Sue knowing all the secret ways, we then passed through a tiny alley coming out into Green Park! Down Queen's walk and passing St James Palace then the London Library, we completed the afternoon by re-emergence towards Jermyn Street and time to say 'goodbye' near the Red Lion pub.

Catherine Sarraf



St James Church, Piccadilly



Interior, St James Church, Piccadilly

Royal Opera House tour and lunch

On the 20th of May we went to the Royal Opera House for a tour and lunch. One needs to stand on the Piazza restaurant balcony to understand the size of the Royal Opera House and why it is often known simply as 'Covent Garden'. The right-angled building stretches along two streets and its operatic tradition is nearly as old as Covent Garden, London's earliest square, which was the only one originally designed as an Italian piazza. The wide expanse was a touch windy for London's climate and was soon used as a market, later with the magnificent colonnaded market building we know today. The first theatre on the site was opened in 1732 with a mix of plays, opera and apparently the first *ballet d'action* ever presented on the stage, a kind of pantomime ballet originating in France. Two former theatres were destroyed by fire and the current building was opened in 1858, with recent extensive renovation. During World War II it served as a dance hall and the introduction of art subsidies after the war allowed establishment as a permanent home for The Royal Opera and The Royal Ballet. In particular we were shown one of the costumes from the performance of *Sleeping Beauty* in 1946, designed by the celebrated stage and film set designer Oliver Messel. Costumes from other productions are housed in glass cases around the building and illuminated models of stage sets can be viewed in the corridor at the back of the auditorium. These miniature tableaux form an essential part of set design as well as reviving memories of past productions. We had the opportunity to watch parts of a rehearsal for *Samson and Delilah*. Sets for opera are frequently heavy and unwieldy and the stage has clever sliding floors to allow rapid scene changes, for our glimpse of *Samson and Delilah*, a giant juke box and dauntingly wide staircase simply glided across the stage with seemingly little effort. The stage can also be raised and the orchestra pit extended. After a production, sets are archived in South Wales and a huge lift allows them to be moved for transport, only the British Museum has a larger lift! While lighting and other staging technology have been revolutionised, the auditorium itself

has its original Victorian décor, with the young Queen Victoria's head on the proscenium and a large royal box built to her specification.



Costume outside Piazza Restaurant (with Retired Fellows lunching beyond).
Photograph: Rosalind Stanwell-Smith

The Paul Hamlyn Hall, a stunning confection of wrought iron and glass, dates from 1860 when it was used as a flower market during the day and known as the Floral Hall. After fire damage, part of its frontage was moved to Borough Market in Southwark. In 2007 the redeveloped hall was named after publisher and philanthropist Paul Hamlyn, whose foundation had generously supported the Royal Opera House, now it serves as a restaurant, champagne bar and performance floor. On our visit a free live event was in progress with dancers from the Royal Ballet, and we were able to view it from a spectacular upper level. Other restaurants in this extraordinary building include a ground floor café, the Crush Room near the auditorium and the 5th floor piazza restaurant, which we had to ourselves for an excellent lunch. The terrace bar outside, from where we had that splendid view of Covent Garden, is used mainly for evening performances, but it is accessible



Backstage view of auditorium. From Royal Opera House photograph

during the day and a lovely secret space for Londoners who know about it, even in the heavy rain on the day of our visit.

Our knowledgeable guide Dan gave us a great tour, including pointing out interesting posters and photographs from the past that would be missed, perhaps, by those attending a performance. From David Garrick in the 18th century to Rudolf Nureyev and Margot Fonteyn in the 20th century, this theatre has seen many of the greatest actors, singers and dancers in its 260 years and it gave us a very enjoyable event.

Rosalind Stanwell-Smith

Sue's final trip; Normandy special

Fourth time lucky. We joined Sue Weir and our fellow travellers on the Seine for our postponed river trip, May 2020, September 2020, May 2021, and now at last May 2022. Our cruise was on the *Amalyra* one of the fleet of world-wide river cruisers run by the Austrian company *AMAWATERWAYS*. With just 62 passengers it was half full but fully staffed, although we had to wear masks whilst walking round the boat, as we spent most of our time on board eating or drinking it was no great problem. First, we travelled overnight and arrived next morning in the charming village of Les Andelys where we inspected the imposing remains of Chateau Gaillard, build by Richard the Lionheart in two short years, 1196-98. Not only was Richard King of England but also Duke of Normandy, the Normans not being French of course, originally being from the north lands - vikings no less.

In the village square stood the statue of Jean-Pierre Blanchard, born here, the first to cross the English Channel in a hot air balloon, in 1785, Onward to the coast, docking in Le Havre, a morning visit to Honfleur and an afternoon touring the town, filled the day all the while in sunshine. Many of you know these towns well and Honfleur was in full Saturday market mode.

A short trip down the river to Caudebec-en-Caux left us a coach trip away from the Normandy Beaches on 8th May. Whilst our guide told us it was Europe Day, we oldies knew it as VE Day and recalled our celebration on that day in 1945. The Americans of the party toured the Omaha and Utah beaches while we Brits and Canadians went to Gold and Juno. The first stop was Ranville Cemetery - the youngest soldier interred here being just 16 years of age. It was an added sadness to see these serried rows of beautifully kept graves of British, some American and Canadian soldiers, and a whole corner set aside for the German dead, wasted lives of young men, as now in another corner of Europe the same scenario is happening all over again. Close by was the Pegasus Bridge and the story of the glider attack, then onto Arromanches. Here we saw the remains of the enormous artificial harbour created by the invading army, the logistics of that operation beggar belief. In the afternoon we visited the impressive Canadian Museum at Juno beach and visited their cemetery, completing a very special day.

Next day we were in Rouen and did a walking tour of the old cobbled town centre ending in the square, where Joan of Arc was martyred



Monet's house by Neil Weir

and where a beautiful modern church has been built. Highlight of the next day was Giverny and a visit on the hottest day of the year to Monet's home and garden. The irises were just fading but looked great, the wisteria was well out and the pond was as yet without any lilies. The last tour was based in Conflans where we learnt about the last 70 days of Van Gogh's life where he created 80 paintings before his tragic death. Finally, we returned to Paris and had an evening trip to see the illuminated Eiffel Tower.

Thus, we briefly said a special farewell to Sue who has been leading RFS/RSM tours abroad for some 20 years. She has taken us all over Europe on boats buses and planes plus China, Cuba, Russia, Turkey, Israel and Egypt. She has been our guide and friend for well over 30 expeditions and many of us have made lasting friendships including at least one marriage (mine) with fellow travellers. We will miss her enormously although she will continue with her London Walks; we can only thank her for taking such good care of us. Perhaps an honorary membership of RSM and/or RFS would be a suitable farewell?

Pat Last



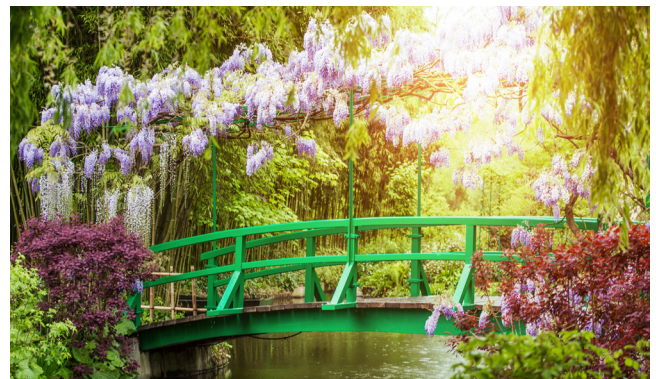
Le Petit Andely by Neil Weir



Remains of Chateau Gaillard



American soldiers on Pegasus Bridge June 1944



Giverny Garden

Articles

Eugène Atget (1857–1927) father of street photography, photographer of Paris

Richard Lansdown



‘The Atget prints are direct and emotionally clean records of a rare and subtle perception, and represent perhaps the earliest expression of true photographic art.’ *Ansel Adams*



Atget as a young man

19th century Paris

In the 18th century Voltaire had complained of the city’s narrow streets ‘showing off their filthiness, spreading infection and causing continuing disorders’. Plans for building of wide avenues were drawn up in 1794 and Napoleon I dreamt of building a new Paris. ‘If only Heaven had allowed me a twenty-year reign one would vainly search today for the Old Paris, nothing would remain of it but vestiges’. He did, at least, embark on the rue de Rivoli. Forty years later, Napoleon III, much influenced by his stay in London where he saw wide streets and large public parks, took steps to realise, in part at least, his uncle’s dream when, in 1853, he instructed Georges-Eugène Haussmann to connect and unify the different parts of Paris, to give it air and make it beautiful. Haussmann had a more or less a free hand and by March 1855 the rue de Rivoli was at last completed. Many buildings, medieval and modern, were pulled down, and any number of ancient, narrow streets destroyed. The work continued well after he had been dismissed in 1870, the second half of the 19th century seeing his plans for driving

large boulevards through much of the old city enacted (the boulevard named after him was not actually finished until 1927). The massive change was not without its critics. Jules Ferry wrote 'We weep with our eyes full of tears for the old Paris, when we see the grand and intolerable new buildings, the costly confusion, the triumphant vulgarity, the awful materialism, that we are going to pass on to our descendants'. The end of the 19th century saw the Commission Municipale du Vieux Paris encouraging the preservation of the city's historic aspects. Atget came just in time at the beginning of the 20th century, to record much of 19th century Paris as it was being transformed.

Atget's life

Little is known of Atget's early life. We do know that he was born in Lilbourne, near Bordeaux, that he was five when his father died, his mother dying soon after and he was brought up by his maternal grandparents. It has been said that he was destined by his family for the church, was well educated and on leaving school went to sea, but evidence on all three points is scant. It is known that in 1878 he began his studies in drama in Paris, however, never more than a mediocre actor, he had to give it up because of an infection on his vocal cords. A compensation was that during this time he met actress Valentine Delafosse Compagnon who became his companion until her death. As early as 1882 he showed an interest in graphic arts, evidenced by a cartoon published in the magazine *Le Flâneur*.



— Vieux-la-croix?
— Ah non ! J'ai habillé !

Atget: Dans le boudoir

He took up painting in 1887 but this too, was not of a high standard and in 1888, aged thirty, he took his first photograph. He moved to Paris two years later, making a modest living by selling prints (of flowers, animals, landscapes and monuments), to architects and artists who used them as source materials. The sign outside his studio read *Documents for Artists*. Several were attracted to his work, including Braque, Utrillo, Matisse and Picasso. Next came a series of images of Paris, including traders, in his series *Petits Métiers*. They can be compared to Francis Wheatley's 18th century *Cries of London* and to Henry Mayhew's *London's Labour and London's Poor* of 1865.



Atget: Bread vendor

He then made his first foray to Versailles in the early 1900s and began the work for which he is now best known, his documentation of Old Paris. Institutions such as the Musée Carnavalet and the Bibliothèque historique de la ville de Paris bought his work; a degree of public recognition came around 1906 when the latter commissioned him systematically to photograph old buildings in the city. But, his love of the theatre had not dimmed. He frequented actors, continued to call himself an *Artiste Dramatique* until 1912, and gave many lectures and readings on theatrical topics.



Wheatley: Two bunches a penny



Atget: Boulevard de Strasbourg



Atget: Rue des Ursins

For unknown reasons World War One saw him more or less give up photography, with the resulting financial difficulties, but by 1920, having sold over 2,600 negatives to the government's National Historic Registry, he was at last financially secure. The following period saw some of his finest work: shop windows, street fairs and a wider remit including the still rural towns around Paris, notably in 1925, 66 plates of the derelict Parc de Sceaux. Sadly, his partner Valentine died in 1926, leaving him inconsolable. He continued to work but died himself the following year. A photo taken just ahead of that time by Berenice Abbott shows him 'slightly stooped...tired, sad, remote'.

His photography

In all, Atget created some 10,000 negatives and sold an estimated 25,000 prints. He produced thirteen separate series of photographs, including *Landscape Documents*, *Topography of Old Paris*, *Versailles* and *Interiors*. 158 images were reproduced in 29 publications and up to 1,000 pictures a year were sold to institutions. He rejected any artistic self-consciousness, never exhibited his work and stayed apart



Atget in 1926

from the Parisian clubs that flourished with the expansion of photography. It was his custom to spend almost every day photographing in the morning, printing in the afternoon, using a large format (8x10) wooden camera which, with tripod, weighed over 40lbs; he never used an enlarger and all his prints were the same size as the negatives, 18 x 24 cm. He continued with this apparatus even after lighter alternatives were available.

He described himself on his business card as 'Creator and Purveyor of a Collection of photographic views of Old Paris' and saw his task as documenting every facet of Paris, no more, no less. He was, indeed, the first photographer to portray a city in such detail, to such an extent, but he did not photograph every single facet of his beloved city. Although paying attention to Versailles, he ignored grand edifices such as the Eiffel Tower and Notre Dame, focussing on the older streets, objects one could find in them and people who lived and worked there. Despite his declaration of being no more than a document maker, there was an admission of beauty in his work, at least in the beauty of his subjects. In 1920 he



Camera of the type Atget used

wrote to Paul Léon, Minister of Fine Arts: 'For more than twenty years by my own work and personal initiative, I have gathered from all the old streets of Vieux Paris photographic plates, 18 x 24 format, artistic documents of the beautiful civil architecture of the 16th to 19th century, the old hôtels, historic or curious houses, beautiful facades, beautiful doors, beautiful woodwork, door knockers, old fountains this vast artistic and documentary collection is today complete. I can truthfully say that I possess all of Vieux Paris'. Atget's images of vanished Paris were understood by the Surrealists as more than the work of a competent professional, rather they were the spontaneous visions of an urban primitive - the Henri Rousseau of the camera. In Atget's photographs of the deserted streets of old Paris and of shop windows haunted by elegant mannequins, the Surrealists recognized their own vision of the city as a 'dream capital', an urban labyrinth of memory and desire. In the 1920s Man Ray published several of his prints in *La Révolution Surréaliste*, but when Man Ray told him that he was about to put one of his photos on the cover of the magazine, Atget retorted 'Don't put my name on it. These are simply documents that I make'.

He did not aim only at the beautiful, there is melancholy to be found. Neither did he look only at the old, there are glimpses of what was to come in his photos of cars, electric light bulbs and advertising boards. He did not ignore nature either, many images include trees, some are no more than trees.

Accolades

‘Suggesting presence in the midst of absence, he was attempting to reveal the character of the street as it inherited in the setting itself he wandered the streets with his camera, looking for what they would be called ‘photo opportunities’. He was like every other street photographer in his readiness to respond to errant details, chance juxtapositions, odd non sequiturs, peculiarities of scale, the quirkiness of life on the streets’. Colin Westerbeck and Joel Meyerowitz *Bystander: A History of Street Photography*.

‘Complexity, multiplicity, even contradiction – these themes at the heart of Atget’s work are not just intellectual ideas or artistic principles ... they were the stuff of experience itself’. Ben Lifson *Eugène Atget, Aperture Masters of Photography*.

‘Atget builds his epic like a novelist, but photographs each scene like a poet’. Ben Lifson

‘A very simple man, almost naive, like a Sunday painter, you might say, but he worked every day’. Man Ray

‘His Rembrandt-esque ability (was) to treat in exactly the same spirit the conventionally beautiful and the conventionally sordid’. John Fraser

‘We will remember him as an historian of urbanism, a true romantic, a lover of Paris, a Balzac of the camera, from whose work we can weave a large tapestry of the French civilisation’. Berenice Abbott.

‘In looking at the work of Eugène Atget, a new world is opened up in the world of creative expression’. Berenice Abbott.

Ensuring his legacy

Atget is a recognised figure now, but as he well knew, he and his work could have slipped into near oblivion. Towards the end of his life he wrote:

‘Now that I am approaching old age – that is to say, seventy years old – and have neither heir nor successor, I am worried and tormented about the future of this beautiful collection of negatives, which could fall into hands unaware of its import and ultimately disappear, without benefiting anyone’. His misgivings were

unfounded. Berenice Abbott, an American who was herself an urban documenter, acclaimed for her photographs of New York City, discovered Atget in 1925 and she wrote of her feelings on first seeing them:

‘The impact was immediate and tremendous. There was a sudden flash of recognition – the shock of reality unadorned, the subjects were sensational, but nevertheless shocking in their very familiarity. The real world, seen with wonderment and surprise, was mirrored in each print, whatever means Atget used to project the image did not intrude between subject and observer’. She visited him several times and it was she who introduced him to Man Ray. In 1928 she bought his residual collection of more than 1,000 glass plates and possibly up to 10,000 prints. She promoted Atget *via* her writing, holding exhibitions and selling her collection to New York’s Museum of Modern Art in 1968.

His prints can still be bought, they cost in the region of \$10,000.

Further reading

Atget, une rétrospective Bibliothèque nationale de France 2007

Eugène Atget, Aperture Masters of Photography/Konemann 1980

Eugène Atget, Masters of Photography Macdonald 1985

Gillian Tindall kindly commented on an early version of this article.



Atget: Rue de Valence



The Fighting Temeraire, Mr. Turner's 'Darling'

Ian Douglas Fraser

On the reverse of the current £20 banknote the self-portrait of a young JMW Turner is superimposed upon his painting of *The Fighting Temeraire tugged to her last berth to be broken up, 1838*. This painting (figure 1), voted the nation's favourite by Radio 4 *Today* listeners in 2005, was called 'my Darling' by Turner. This is the story behind *The Temeraire*, Turner's romanticised depiction of the ship and his life story.

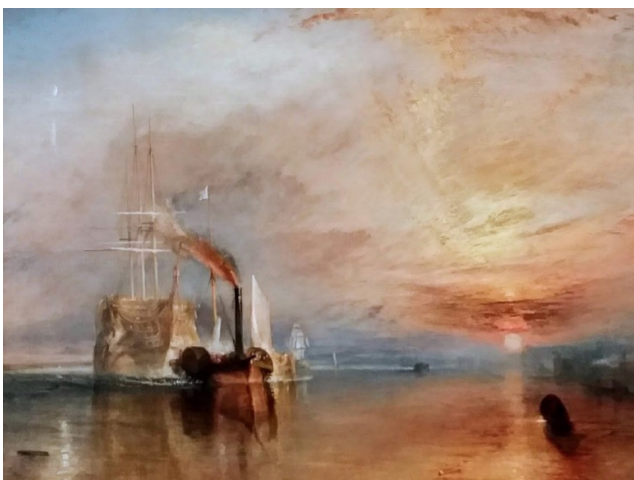


Figure 1 - *The Fighting Temeraire* by JMW Turner in room 34 of The National Gallery. Photograph: Ian Fraser

Le Téméraire and His Majesty's Ship Temeraire.

The French name *Téméraire*, from the Latin, *temeritas*, means reckless; the French navy launched twelve ships named *Le Téméraire*. It was the 74-gun frigate, captured as a prize at the Battle of Lagos (Portugal) in August 1759 by Captain John Bentley of Admiral Edward Boscawen's squadron that brought the name into the Royal Navy. Refitted to British specification *His Majesty's Ship Temeraire* fought with distinction until she was sold in 1784, her name, however, was retained for future use. In 1793 the keel of a new ship of the Neptune class was laid down in Chatham, the design being of a Second-Rate, oak, man-of-war sailing ship with 98 guns on three decks, a displacement of 2100 tons and, in size, slightly larger than HMS *Victory*. She was named *Temeraire* but to her seamen she was '*The Saucy Timera*'. Commissioned in 1799 the *Temeraire* went into blockading duties as part of the Channel Fleet, but she received notoriety during the Bantry Bay mutiny in December 1801 when her usually loyal crew refused to sail to the West Indies. In Portsmouth, guilty verdicts of the courts martial resulted in twelve being hanged on the fleet's ships; an example of Royal Navy justice. Then they sailed on to the Caribbean.

The *Temeraire* gained the affection of the British public following the Battle of Trafalgar (21st October 1805). Vice Admiral Horatio Nelson chose the *Temeraire* and her commander, Captain Eliab Harvey, to spearhead the windward column to intercept the French and Spanish line. Harvey, a descendent of Dr. William Harvey (of *The Circulation* fame, 1628) was a wealthy eccentric gambler who combined a naval career with politics, as MP for Essex. In the battle, he manoeuvred *Temeraire* skilfully to cover *Victory* and shared the punishment received by both vessels from the French fleet, taking two of them as prizes. Nelson died from his injuries but Harvey and the *Temeraire* were singled out by Vice Admiral Cuthbert Collinson with praise for their bravery. Harvey was promoted to Rear Admiral and honoured to be a pall bearer at Nelson's funeral.

Extensive repairs in 1806 were followed by escort and fighting duties in the Baltic Campaign. For two years from 1810 she returned to blockade duties off Cadiz and into the Mediterranean off Toulon and in Menorca. *Temeraire's* fighting days ended in Plymouth in 1813 when she was refitted as a prison hulk to help relieve pressure on the new Dartmoor prison. In the refit the masts were amputated and her guns removed. The visual lines of the beautiful ship depicted in Turner's painting of 1838 were lost at this point. Hostilities lessened after 1815 and the ship was fitted out as a receiving ship in 1819, then towed to Sheerness, she acted as a victualling ship, a guardship and finally as the Superintendent's ship. In 1838 she was prepared for auction when salvageable items were removed. The *Temeraire* was sold by Dutch auction on the 16th August 1838 to John Beatson of Rotherhithe on the River Thames. Beatson had the challenging task of moving *Temeraire* from Sheerness to his breakers yard, she was the largest vessel to be taken this far up the Thames. With no means of self-propulsion, preparation for this voyage required expert seamanship skills. Pilot, William Scott, used two 60 horse-power tugs (*Samson* and *London*) in coordination with a spring flood tide on the morning of 5th September, completing the voyage the following day. *Temeraire* attracted huge interest and it was sketched there by Beatson's younger brother, William (figure 2).

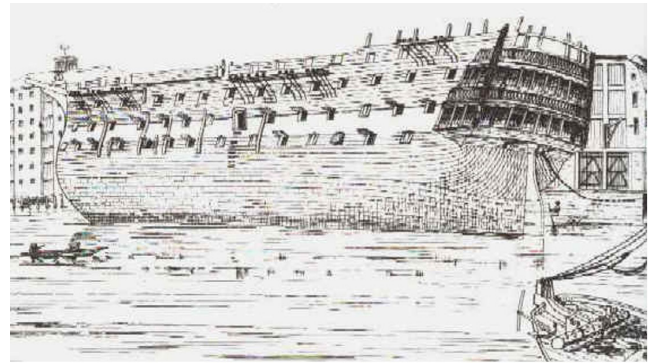


Figure 2 - Detail from William Beatson's sketch of the *Temeraire* at Rotherhithe, 1838.

JMW Turner's painting.

There is no reliable evidence that Turner witnessed that final voyage of the *Temeraire*. Aged 63 (not the 23-year-old on the banknote) he painted '*The Fighting Temeraire*' which was exhibited first at the Royal Academy in 1839. The painting measures approximately four feet wide and three feet high. The scene is set in the evening with the sun going down in the west (to the right) and the crescent of the moon rising in the east. Between the two available tugs, the *Temeraire* is being towed behind a single tug towards a red buoy. There are buildings on the shore line to the south-west. The water appears still and the reflections of the boats, sunset and moon convey a tranquil spectacle; this author places the scene possibly in the River Thames where it sweeps up North past the Isle of Dogs. It was a part of the river familiar to Turner when he travelled to and from Margate.

On closer inspection (figure 3) the *Temeraire* appears almost ghostly and fully rigged with sails. The tug, depicted boldly in sombre colours, like a hearse, is fully stoked-up for the task of towing the ship. She belches smoke and flame which obscure the foremast of the *Temeraire* where the Union ensign usually flies. It is in this surreal view that we witness Turner's talent for converting reality into imagination. We know that the ship was dimasted earlier from William Beatson's sketch. Additionally, Turner works some cosmetic reconstruction by moving the funnel of the tug forward and the mast backward to carry the white flag of surrender. He makes his statement; this noble ship is no longer under the command of the nation and is surrendering, being taken to her final destination, the breaker's yard. It is all in Turner's title.



Figure 3 - Detail from *The Fighting Temeraire* by JMW Turner. Photograph: Ian Fraser

At the first showing he added an abstract from Thomas Campbell's poem, *Ye Mariners of England...* 'The flag which braved the battle and the breeze / No longer owns her'. Turner suggests that in a nostalgic age of magnificent sailing ships a new source of power, that of the steam engine, was taking over.

JMW Turner, 1775-1851

Joseph Mallord William Turner was born on the 23rd April 1775 in Maiden Lane, Covent Garden, London. His father was William Turner a barber and wig maker hailing from Devon. His mother, Mary, had emotional problems for many years resulting in admission to asylums and finally dying in Bedlam. A sister, Mary, died aged 5 when JMWT was eight years old. He was educated mainly at home by his father. Although it was not a happy home environment, father and son developed a lasting and good relationship. JMWT showed an early talent for colouring prints and for drawing - which his father encouraged. William entered his son at the Royal Academy Schools, aged 14, which was subsidised by the income derived from JMWT's colouring enterprise. He progressed in the Schools, attended Life Classes and produced drawings which found a ready market. This income funded tours which produced more prints to be sold for engraving. In 1799, aged 24, he was elected an Associate of the Royal

Academy. His work attracted commissions sufficient for him to purchase 64 Harley Street in 1800. Then in 1802, aged 27, he was elected a Royal Academician (RA) which necessitated the purchase 47 Queen Anne Street to house his studio.

The Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars until 1815 limited Turner's opportunity to travel abroad. When restrictions were lifted, he toured Europe which broadened his portfolio and his profile as an important artist. He found professional criticism from influential figures such as Benjamin West (President of the RA) and even King William IV who was displeased with his portrayal of *The Battle of Trafalgar* (1822). However, his admirers supported him strongly, none more than John Ruskin in his five volumes on *Modern Painters*. Turner kept his cockney accent throughout and led a solitary and secretive lifestyle, reclusive. Suspicions arose that he fathered two daughters with Sarah Danby and kept Hannah Danby as his housekeeper until his death. Covertly, aged 55 in 1830, he developed a relationship with Mrs. Sofia Caroline Booth, the widow of his friend in Margate. Later in 1846 and unknown to his London associates they rented a house in Chelsea where Turner died in 1851, aged 76. JMW Turner's legacy included 30,000 works on paper, 2,000 water colour paintings and 550 oil paintings. The value of his estate in today's terms would total £11.2 million. An equivalent of £1.6 million was bequeathed to the RA and all his works to the Nation (The Turner Bequest). His statue was erected in St. Paul's Cathedral where he was interred next to Sir Joshua Reynolds and Sir Thomas Lawrence who he described as 'his brothers in art'.

Concluding comment

Perhaps JMW Turner's gift was to tell a story, his story, of the events that surrounded and interested him in the best way that he was able. *The Fighting Temeraire*, his 'Darling', bears testament to that.

Ian Douglas Fraser



The Crossness Pumping Station

Richard Lansdown

Photograph: Peter Scrimshaw

On the 8th June some thirty members of the RSM's History of Medicine Society, visited this site, still working 157 years after it opened, several RFS Fellows were among the group. It was a very successful excursion, thanks to Catriona Head from the History of Medicine Society and Petra Cox, our guide at the Station.

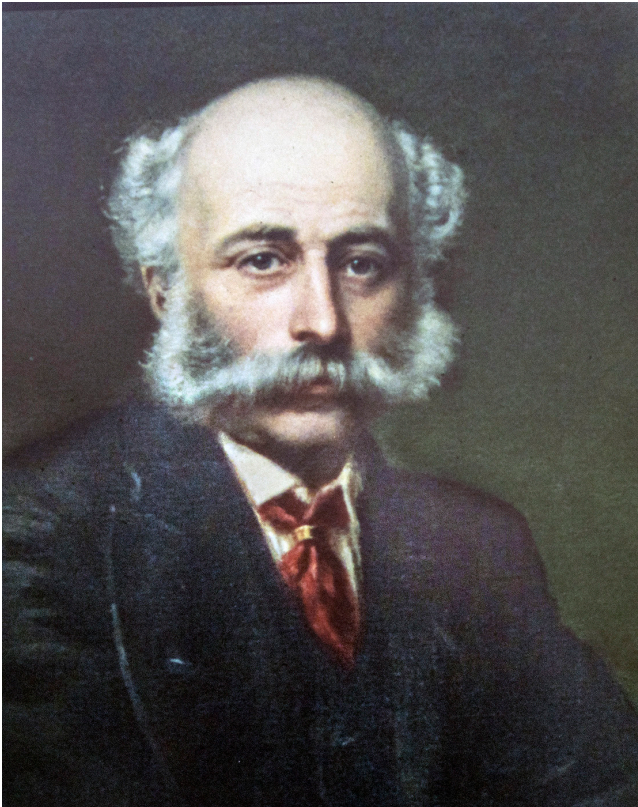


The 19th century building

The River Thames, which had fish and other wildlife in it well into the 18th century, by the early 19th had become the repository of industrial effluent and of Londoners waste matter – much of the latter caused by the installation of new, supposedly hygienic water closets, which in fact discharged directly into

the river. Since the 17th century lower sections of the Fleet and Walbrook rivers had been covered over to make brick sewers, and others were constructed. By the mid 19th century there were some 360 of these, often in poor repair. These unsatisfactory conduits, along with the growth in London's population to three million, led to a significant increase in the flow of contaminated liquid into the Thames. Otherwise waste-disposal depended on around 200,000 cesspits, some of which leaked methane and other gases, these from time to time caught fire and exploded. Unsurprisingly, the problems built up. There were three outbreaks of cholera in London between 1832 and 1853.

Then, in the unusually dry summer of 1858, came the famous Great Stink of the river, especially noticeable and remarked upon from the Thames-side windows of the Houses of Parliament. The smell was dreadful, and this in itself (combined with the generally-held belief that such an evil miasma was in itself the source of infection), convinced those in charge that something had to be done. The person they turned to was Joseph Bazalgette, a civil engineer, who, following the plan put forward by John Martin 30 years earlier, proposed moving the effluent down-river along a series of interconnecting sewers opening out beyond the metropolitan area.



Joseph Bazalgette

Bazalgette's network consisted of 82 miles of enclosed, underground brick main sewers and 1,100 miles of minor sewers to intercept the raw sewage. These were constructed, by hand, using the cut and cover technique. Pumping stations, sited to lift the sewage from lower levels to higher pipes, were part of the plan. Sewage from the south side of the Thames had been collected in balancing tanks at Crossness and then dumped, untreated, into the river at high tide. The system was opened in 1865, to be completed 10 years later.

It is no coincidence cholera was eliminated in those areas enjoying the new system, with a reduction in typhus and typhoid epidemics. Bazalgette's London sewerage system was one of the great engineering systems of the Victorian age.



The Crossness beam engine house



Prince Consort fly wheel.
Photograph: *Ethan Doyle White*



Interior original paintwork.
Photograph: *Ethan Doyle White*



WWII POWs – in the UK!

Catherine Sarraf

What a great film was *The Great Escape* of 1963! It was based on Paul Brickhill's 1950 book, an account of the true life event, starring Steve McQueen, James Garner and Richard Attenborough plus a host of other famous faces. In 1944 seventy-six (largely UK and Commonwealth) airmen prisoners of war, by dint of great courage and human endeavour managed to tunnel their way out of German POW camp Stalag Luft III in Sagan (geographically, now in Poland), a high security camp specifically for recalcitrant recaptured escapees. A classic film with a violent ending. But do we all remember *The One That Got Away*? The 1957 film based on Kendal Burt and James Leasor's book of 1956, again, an account of a true life event. This film starred Hardy Krüger and others (I was 12 years old when I saw it, but I don't feel I've ever witnessed a more handsome man than Hardy Krüger in this film!). Hardy Krüger played the part of German fighter pilot Franz von Werra, captured after being shot down during the Battle of Britain. Initially he was sent to POW camp Grizedale Hall in Lancashire, from which he escaped, then was re-captured and sent to a more secure environment at Swanwick, in Derbyshire. He escaped from this one too, and recaptured he was, with others, transported to a POW camp in Canada. He also escaped from that one, and *via* the USA and Mexico found his way back to Germany by 1941 – but that's another story.

Apart from Captain von Werra's tale, we tend not to dwell on POW camps in the UK in WWII. However, not all lasting the whole six years and not all of similar sizes to each other, there were significantly more than a hundred POW camps here. They were spread all over the country, North (including Scotland) to South, East to West (including Ireland), and others in Wales and across central counties of England.

Between 1939 and 1946 the maximum number of German prisoners of war, at any one time, to be held in the UK was 400,000 and Italian prisoners were also brought here. Bearing in mind that the war ended in 1945, repatriation was not particularly rapid (not complete until 1948. Captain Gerhard Glattes, of the 1939-sunk submarine U-39, was the longest held, being released in 1947 after seven-and-a-half years captivity). After the end of the war some high ranking German officers were actually *brought* to the UK and held here, awaiting trial at Nuremberg. Not all were found guilty of anything. However, on the other hand, numbers of German POWs remained in the United Kingdom voluntarily after being released after the war.

By our (and USA) documented records, great attention was given to our POWs health and dental care during their captivity. The aim was that they should have the same standards as they would as serving soldiers in their own

ranks. The first level of care was provided by qualified doctors and dentists (and I dare say other paramedics) who were fellow captives. This was surveyed by our own medical facilities in operation in the locality, at the time.

With reference to POW activity during their incarceration, 'men' were required to work – often in agriculture, but officers were not. However, many of the 'men' settled without reluctance to farm work – it was probably what they would have been doing at home anyway, and their help was often kindly and gratefully accepted by hard-pressed land-girls – their own men being absent. Officers frequently (out of boredom probably) volunteered to work, preferably at tasks they were qualified to do. There was not always animosity between local people and working POWs, and by 1946 not yet-repatriated prisoners were permitted to be welcomed into the homes of local people. By this time (permitted or not) many liaisons had become established between former POWs and girls. In 1946 there were 796 marriages of German ex-POWs and further ones between Italians and locals.



Survivors of the sunken German battleship *Scharnhorst* arriving in the United Kingdom

In my 1950s Welsh childhood, there was mention of there having been a POW camp at Bridgend in Glamorganshire (but I didn't ever meet anyone who had ever been there). Island Farm, also called Camp 198 or also Special Camp XI, became a POW camp in 1943.



German soldiers captured in Normandy disembarking in Southampton, 1944

Entering the UK after D-Day, there were large numbers of POWs to be accommodated, and Island Farm (previously a transit barracks for American servicemen) had some barbed wire strung up around it and became a temporary home to both German and Italian POWs. Initially 'men' were held there, but it was decided to be too comfortable for them, so they were sent elsewhere and officers were brought to replace them. Even at Island Farm, in 1945, there was a German attempt at a great escape, and a book was written about this too (*The German Great Escape*, Peter Phillips). Exact numbers of who got out are disputed, but it's around 80, the vast majority of whom were recaptured.

On both sides, families must have been in extreme levels of distress at the end of the Second World War, to be waiting for their menfolk to return home, but it taking so long. The Red Cross was respected and doing all it could to alleviate worry. Hopefully, at that time they had numbers of surviving prisoners and were able to inform the families, that soon their loved one would be repatriated.

Book Review

Florence Nightingale, the woman and her legend

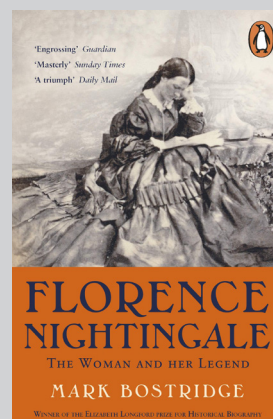
by Mark Bostridge

I was interested to read the abstract from Michael Hinton's book *'Victory over Disease'*, in the April 2022 Journal of the RSM Retired Fellows Society. He postulated that Florence Nightingale wasn't as pivotal a figure leading to improvements in the health of the British Army as the popular image of 'The Lady with the Lamp' would suggest.

I recently read Mark Bostridge's classic biography of Florence Nightingale and should very much like to commend it to our readers. Five hundred and forty-six pages crammed with facts and accompanied by 72 pages of biography and notes. A monumental work from which I learnt so much about this remarkable woman with huge political influence, at a time when women, even of high social status, had little role in public life. Florence Nightingale was an administrator, statistician and linguist who overshadowed others such as Mary Seacole who was first and foremost a nurse.

Bostridge suggests that Florence Nightingale might have suffered from chronic brucellosis, rather than some psychological disorder, to account for the long periods of recurrent debility suffered throughout her adult life. The book explores her complex relationships with her family, in particular with her older sister Parthenope, and the great and good of her time such as Lord Palmerstone and Sidney Herbert. Of course, there is also much of interest about the evolution of nursing in England.

Jeffrey Rosenberg



Florence Nightingale, the woman and her legend

By Mark Bostridge

Blue-footed booby (*Sula nebouxii*)Masked booby (*Sula dactylatra*)
and chickRed-footed booby (*Sula sula*)Frigatebirds (*Fregata*)

Photography: Harold Ludman

Information for Authors

There are three issues per year of the Journal of the RSM Retired Fellows Society, which appear in April, August and December. Articles may be submitted at any time, and accepted ones are compiled into the next available issue space.

Each manuscript should bear the title of the article, name, address and email address of the author. Please write in Arial Narrow, 12 point, 1.5 spaced and do not justify the text. Spelling needs to conform to the Oxford English Dictionary.

Text **MUST** be submitted electronically, as a fully editable Word document.

Authors also please be sure to complete your submission with your name on it.

Accepted articles for the *Journal*:

- Solicited articles, on a topic agreed with the editor, and should be 1,500 to 2,000 words in length.
- Articles submitted by readers - 500 to 1,500 words.
- Reports of presentations at meetings of the Retired Fellows Society - 500 to 1,500 words, the author invited by the Chair of the corresponding day.
- Reports of extramural events of the Retired Fellows Society - 500 to 1,000 words, the author invited by the leader of the event.
- Reports of Retired Fellows Society tours - 1,000 to 2,000 words, the author invited by the leader of the tour.
- Reports of walks 200 - 500 words.
- Short 'fillers', text and/or photographs. Poems, quotes, amusing items; brief - under 200 words.

Imagery:

With reference to submission of images (which is encouraged), it is important that each image is accompanied with a title, description and photographer acknowledgement.

Photographs should be uploaded digitally and be as high resolution as possible.