

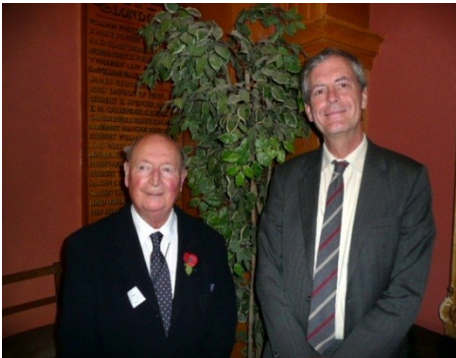


THE WILLIAM SHIPLEY GROUP FOR RSA HISTORY

Newsletter 35: November 2012

Conference on the 1862 International Exhibition held on 1st November 2012

Dr Nicholas Cambridge, WSG Chair read a message of greeting from the WSG Honorary Patron, Lord Asa Briggs before welcoming delegates to the WSG conference on the 1862 international exhibition held on 1st November. In the excellent venue provided by the Medical Society of London the audience heard a range of papers from Dr Dale Dishon on the exhibition building which had been the subject of her doctorate; Sir Mark Jones on the development of exhibition medal design; Susan Bennett presented a virtual tour and Dr David G.C. Allan (WSG Honorary President) spoke on the Society of Arts' dinner held at the 1862 exhibition. After lunch the meeting reconvened to hear Julius Bryant on the art galleries, which offer a rich resource for further research; Max Donnelly looked at the displays in the Medieval Court; Anthony Burton considered the education section and Prof John Davis discussed the history of exhibiting within the German states. Prof Stephen Wildman brought the meeting to a conclusion with some personal reminiscences of his earlier research into exhibitions and, in a delightful coda to the day, he played one of the songs from the last moments of the exhibition, *Partant pour la Syrie* which was the national anthem of Second French Empire, on a 19th century music box. A book of the papers is currently in preparation. The WSG would like to thank all the contributors for their time and expertise in making their conference a resounding success, and to the Royal Commission of the 1851 Exhibition for their special award.



Left to right: David G.C. Allan, Sir Mark Jones, Max Donnelly, Anthony Burton, Stephen Wildman, Nicholas Cambridge, Susan Bennett (seated), John Agnew, John Davis, Dale Dishon and Julius Bryant.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Monday 3 December 2012 at 6.00pm. *Thomas Bewick. Engraver and Naturalist* by Jenny Uglow. This free public talk is being held by the Linnean Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0BF. Tea is served in the library from 5.30pm. When the twenty three year old Thomas Bewick (1753-1826) was informed that he had won first prize of the Society of Arts for his wood engraving of 'The Hound and Huntsman' and could choose either a gold medal or seven guineas, he chose the money. Bewick wrote that 'I never in my life felt greater pleasure than in that of presenting it to my mother'.¹



¹ Jenny Uglow, *Nature's Engraver. A life of Thomas Bewick* (2006), p.93

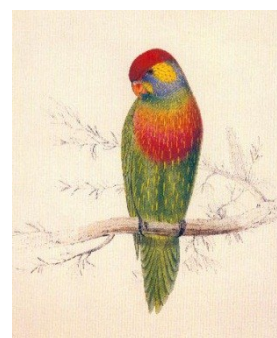
Saturday 9 February 2013 at 2.30pm. **“Papyrius Cursor” and “The Literary Dictator”**. **Some Links between Caleb Whitefoord (1734-1810) and Dr Johnson** by Dr David G.C. Allan. This meeting is being held by The Johnson Society of London at Wesley’s Chapel, City Road, London EC1Y 1AU. Whitefoord and Johnson were both active members of the Society of Arts. Free entry

13 May 2013. Long May They Reign. Jubilee Souvenirs from George III to Elizabeth II, by Dr David G.C. Allan. This talk follows the AGM of the Borough of Twickenham Local History Society will be held at St Mary’s, Church Hall, Twickenham at 8pm. £2.50 on door.

EXHIBITIONS

Happy Birthday Edward Lear. 200 Years of Nature and Nonsense. Ashmolean Museum 20 September 2012 – 6 January 2013. Tickets £4/£3 concession. This exhibition is being held as part of the celebrations to mark the bicentenary of the birth of Edward Lear. From early natural history illustrations and landscape sketches, to his nonsense drawings and verses 100 works of art from the Ashmolean’s own Lear collection as well as important loans from the Bodleian Library and private collections, many on display to the public for the first time.

The RSA chose this print of a ‘Variegated Parakeet’ from their copy of Lear’s *Illustrations of the Family Psittacidae or Parrots* (1832), to which the Society of Arts had subscribed, for their Christmas card for 1994. On seeing the quality of Lear’s finished prints the Society wrote to Lear in 1833 to ask his opinion on a sheet of lithographic transfer paper which had been submitted for their consideration. However, Lear replied that as he did not understand ‘that part of the art of Lithography’, he had taken it to Charles Hullmandel, the printer of his *Illustrations*, for testing.² Hullmandel had been awarded the Society of Arts’ silver medal in 1819 ‘for a lithographic drawing’.



Hartnell to Amies: Couture by Royal Appointment. The Fashion and Textile Museum, 83 Bermondsey Street, London SE1 3XF. 16 November 2012 – 23 February 2013. £7 for adults, £5 for students and concessions. Exhibition ticket booking line: 020 7407 8664. This exhibition deals with London couture fashion by designers to H.M. The Queen: Norman Hartnell, Hardy Amies & Frederick Fox. Hardy Amies was elected to the RSA’s Faculty of Royal Designers for Industry in 1964, and in 1989 he spoke to the RSA on ‘A Century of Fashion’.

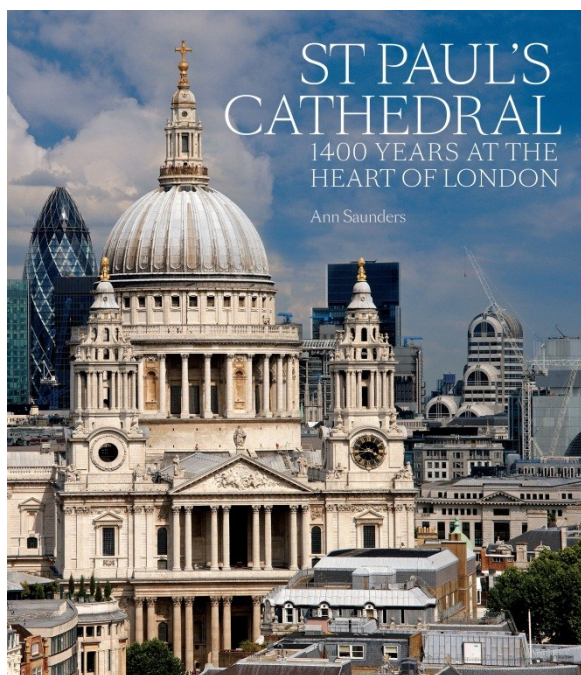


The Perfect Place to Grow: 175 Years of the Royal College of Art. Royal College of Art, Kensington Gore, London SW7 2EU. 16 November 2012 – 3 January 2013 (Closed 24 & 25 December. Late opening to 8pm on Fridays). As part of a year-long series of celebrations around its 175th anniversary this exhibition will illustrate the story of the world’s oldest art & design school in continuous operation, from the politics and polemics of how Britain should train artists and designers to the purpose of publicly funded art schools. Exhibits include historic and contemporary works

of art and design by leading RCA alumni and staff, past and present. The RSA has links with the RCA through its Fellowship, but more particularly through its annual student design awards and the Faculty of Royal Designers for Industry.

² Edward Lear to the Society of Arts, 13 March 1833 (RSA/PR/AR/103/10/196)

BOOKS



Ann Saunders, *St Paul's Cathedral. 1400 Years in the Heart of London*. London: Scala, 2012 ISBN: 9781857598025 (£25)

This book, which is in the form of an expensive 'Coffee Table' production is, in fact, a work of perceptive scholarship by an author whose extensive knowledge of London history has long been evident in her writings on the history of the Royal Exchange, the Merchant Taylor's Company, Regent's Park, and her numerous editorial contributions to the proceedings of the London Topographical Society. Dr Saunders' gives us a detailed account divided into nine sections: 1. The Medieval Cathedral; 2. Sir Christopher Wren; 3 The Great Fire of London; 4. Planning St Paul's; 5. Building St Paul's; 6. Draughtsmen and Craftsmen; 7. The Heroes move in; 8. The Victorian Cathedral; 9. Peril and Survival.

There are 122 superb colour illustrations some of which extend to double pages and reproduce a galaxy of early prints and drawings as well as well-chosen photographic views. The history of the Cathedral touches that of the Society at several points. First there are the statutes of John Howard and Samuel Johnson by John Bacon, which were the first free-standing monuments to be introduced into Wren's interior. Both Howard and Johnson had been members of the Society and Bacon, as Dr Saunders pointed out in her pioneer monograph, had received significant early encouragement from the Society.

James Barry painted a view of the dome of St Paul's in his fifth picture for the Society's 'Great Room' together with an image of his painting of 'The Fall of Lucifer', which he had intended for the interior of the Cathedral. In his written description of the picture Barry refers to the Royal Academy's abortive scheme to ornament the Cathedral, halted as Dr Saunders tells us the Rt Reverend Bishop Terrick who declared he would 'never suffer the doors of the Metropolitan Cathedral to be opened for the introduction of Popery.' In 1805 the doors would be opened to allow the body of the Roman Catholic Barry to be buried near to Wren's own grave in the crypt. A memorial bust of Barry was erected on an adjoining wall. Another scheme of the Society to contribute funds for a stained glass window commemorating the recovery from typhoid fever of the Society's President, Albert Edward, Prince of Wales (the future Edward VII) in 1872. A specific window was not installed but in 1882 money was handed over to the Dean and Chapter to use for the enrichment of the Cathedral's windows.

Dr Saunders' ends her stay with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations and she illustrates these with some superb colour photographs of the service held on 5 June 2012. A page or two before (fig.108) she shows us the Chapel of the Order of the British Empire beautifully ornamented in 1960 by Lord Mottistone and Brian Thomas, both associated with the Society.

The publishers quite rightly remind us that the author is a Member of the Order and we may add that she is also a Fellow of the Society and a valued and esteemed member of the William Shipley Group.

D.G.C. Allan



Elizabeth Darling, **Wells Coates**. London: RIBA Publishing, 2012
ISBN 9781859464373 (£20)

In this book Elizabeth Darling traces the life and work of the architect and industrial designer Wells Coates (1895-1958). From an engineering background and with no formal training in architecture Coates became a pioneer of the Modernist movement in Britain, and a founder member of the MARS (Modern Architectural Research) group. Rather than adopting a purely chronological format Darling has chosen to organise her book thematically in order to consider the influences which shaped his designs. From his earlier one-off projects, such as his interior for the actor Charles Laughton (1934), to his better known Isokon flats at Lawn Road (1934) and his reworking of Embassy Court, Brighton (1935), Darling offers a captivating account of this innovative and inventive man. The book is richly illustrated with many previously unpublished historical images and specially commissioned colour photography. Darling has also provided a gazetteer of his projects and she helpfully indicates whether they have been altered or demolished. In recognition of his work on fighter aircraft development during World War II Coates was awarded the OBE.

Coates served as Master of the RSA's Faculty of Royal Designers for Industry (RDI) from 1951-53, having been elected to this body in 1944. Like a number of RDIs Coates took part in designing the Festival of Britain in 1951. Coates' Telekinema, described as 'the first cinema in the world to be specially designed and built for the showing of both films and television', was one of the few buildings to escape demolition when the Festival closed. It became the home of the newly established British Film Institute until the National Film Theatre was relocated in 1957.

In the mid-1950s Coates taught at Harvard Graduate School of Design with Walter Gropius before returning to his native Vancouver where he worked on a monorail rapid transit system for the city.

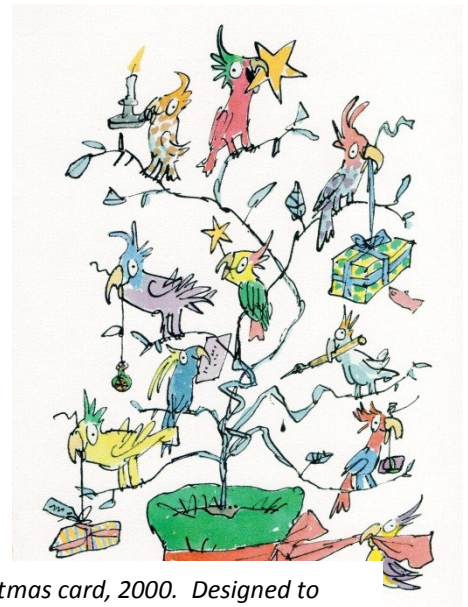


Interior view of the Telekinema

Chosen as part of their Twentieth-Century Architects series RIBA, The Twentieth Century Society and English Heritage have found a worthy champion of Coates' reputation in Darling's excellent book.

Quentin Blake, **Beyond the Page**. London: Tate Publishing, 2012 ISBN 9781849760836 (£19.99)

This personal account of the work of one of the world's best known illustrators, Quentin Blake, has been published to coincide with his 80th birthday, celebrating the past twelve years of his long career. The book contains previously unpublished material on his recent projects and commissions and is illustrated by over 300 full colour reproductions of his instantly recognisable illustrations. Quentin Blake was elected a member of the RSA's Faculty of Royal Designers for Industry (RDI) in 1981



Quentin Blake, Cockatoos at Christmas, RSA Christmas card, 2000. Designed to celebrate his first RSA Children's Lecture 'Ten Cockatoos and a Waverley Pen'

A DIAMOND JUBILEE PROJECT: MILTON'S COTTAGE MUSEUM, CHALFONT ST GILES

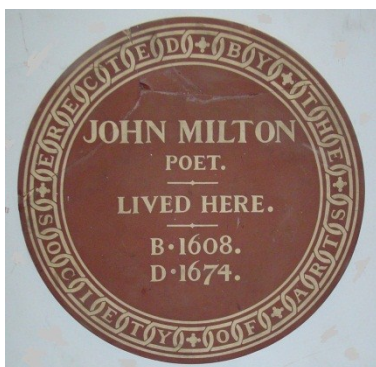
The only extant home of John Milton is a 16th-century cottage in Chalfont St Giles, Buckinghamshire where the poet completed *Paradise Lost*. Its importance was recognised in 1887 when the local community decided to mark Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee by setting up the Milton Memorial Fund for the purchase of the building in order to ensure its preservation for the public. The owner of the cottage, Mr A Thompson, refused several offers but kindly offered to sell it to the Trustees named by him in order that it might be preserved and used as he directed.

On hearing of the plan to buy the cottage as a memorial to the great poet, The Queen graciously contributed £20 to the project. Her secretary wrote from Windsor Castle on Dec 14 1887: "Sir, Having laid your letter before The Queen I am commanded by Her Majesty to inform you that The Queen will be happy to give £20 to the fund being raised for the purchase of the cottage in which Milton wrote *Paradise Lost*. I shall be glad to hear from you on the subject when progress has been made." The Queen headed the list of those supporting the fund along with The Duke of Westminster who also gave £20, the Duke of Bedford (£2-2s) and Viscount Curzon (£2-2s).



Milton lived in the cottage while the Great Plague of 1665 was raging in London. He had asked Thomas Elwood, a Quaker and former pupil to look out for some refuge in his own country neighbourhood and this "pretty box" was found for the poet and his family. Elwood writes that it was on one of his visits to the cottage that Milton gave him the completed poem *Paradise Lost* to read. Impressed, Elwood suggested Milton undertake a further complementary work – *Paradise Regained*.

Milton lived in the cottage while the Great Plague of 1665 was raging in London. He had asked Thomas Elwood, a Quaker and former pupil to look out for some refuge in his own country neighbourhood and this "pretty box" was found for the poet and his family. Elwood writes that it was on one of his visits to the cottage that Milton gave him the completed poem *Paradise Lost* to read. Impressed, Elwood suggested Milton undertake a further complementary work – *Paradise Regained*.



This memorial tablet was erected by the Society in 1901 on the site of Milton's former home in Bunhill Row.

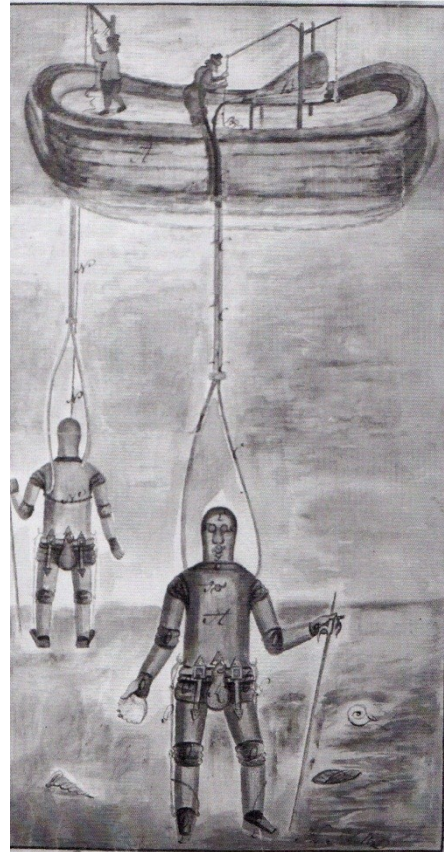
The cottage has been open to the public for over a hundred years and its ground floor rooms are now a museum which houses – along with pictures, 17th-century artifacts, translations of Milton's books, and memorabilia – the most extensive collection in the world on open display of 17th-century first editions and other important editions of John Milton's works, both poetry and prose. Even the cottage garden is listed by English Heritage as a Grade II Registered Historic Garden and features many of the plants mentioned in Milton's poetry.

Jane Gibney
Committee Member, Friends of Milton's Cottage
<http://www.friendsofmiltonscottage.org.uk>

THE SOCIETY OF ARTS' CONCERN WITH DIVING

In the latest issue of *The International Journal of Diving History* Peter Dick has provided an insight into the Society of Arts' interest in diving equipment. An experienced diver himself he has published transcripts of surviving letters in the RSA archive regarding what he terms 'the less successful ideas on diving equipment'.

There is a transcript of the proceedings of the Society's Committee of Mechanics which, in 1763-4, discussed the diving armour invented by Heinrich Schultze, Mechanician and Model Maker to the King of Denmark in 1760. He also reproduces the drawing of Schultz's design and its description. Other letters include Charles Spalding's improved diving bell, 1776; Thomas Wainwright's diving machine and Mr Cross's 'diving case' 1782; David Duncan on 'diving machine mechanics', 1791; Dr Laurence Holker Potts drawing of 'a new application of his pneumatic process', 1848. He has also included a transcript of Mr White's description of his diving apparatus published in vol.9 of the Society's *Journal* (1861), p.612. If you would like a copy of this paper please contact Peter Dick at hdtimes@talk21.com



Henrich Schultze, Diving apparatus, 1760

OBITUARY

BILL MOGGRIDGE, RDI (1943-2012)

Bill Moggridge will be remembered as one of the very best industrial designers Britain has produced in the past 50 years. His untimely death from cancer at 69 has robbed the international design community of one of its most important and influential figures.

This Royal Designer for Industry is best known by the public as the design visionary who created the world's first laptop computer for Grid Systems in 1982 – an invention which went into orbit on board the Space Shuttle three years later and whose folding configuration was still setting the archetype standard 30 years later. But behind the scenes Bill Moggridge was far more than just the sum of the design parts. He was never content to be just a designer of new objects. In fact he was fond of describing his career in three distinct phases – first as an industrial designer, second as a manager of interdisciplinary design teams, and third as a storyteller in design, active as both curator and writer. In each phase of his career, he brought something different and special to design.



A 'merry child' who shouted 'bang' as bombs fell during World War Two according to his elder brother Hal, a landscape architect, Bill Moggridge grew up in Kent in a happy and stable family and was influenced by his mother, an artist. He studied industrial design at the Central School of Art and Design and set up his own firm, Moggridge Associates, in 1969. One of his most memorable early commissions was to design a marine radio. He insisted that he and his design team go out into the North Sea in a storm at night to see how the device was used. For many, that project marked the end of industrial styling and the start of user-centred design. Moggridge was always fascinated by the interaction between products and people, and not simply by an object's form.

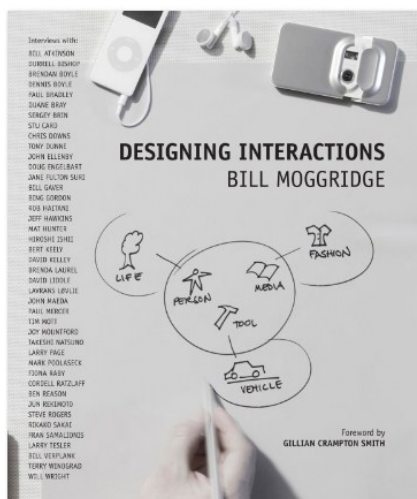


The world's first laptop computer designed by Bill Moggridge in 1982

In 1979, as Britain's industrial base crumbled, Moggridge decided to open a second office in Palo Alto in northern California. He reasoned that Silicon Valley, an area that made computer chips, would soon diversify into making products and would require industrial design. Things worked out just fine and his family headed out west too. By the early 1990s, ID Two, his American company, was subsumed into a larger design and engineering combine as Moggridge teamed up with Mike Nuttall and David Kelley to found IDEO. This new venture took design consultancy to new heights of sophistication and global reach. This was an era in which Moggridge formed and led large, interdisciplinary design teams to work on projects of increasingly complexity for such clients as Steelcase, BMW, Microsoft, Pepsi and T-Mobile.



Moggridge Associates 1978



Through his work with IDEO, Moggridge began to think conceptually beyond industrial design. He invented a new discipline, interaction design, and taught it at the RCA in London and the Ivrea Design Institute in Italy. In 2006 he published a book on the subject, *Designing Interactions* (The MIT Press), and followed it up with a companion volume, *Designing Media*, featuring interviews with 37 pioneers in the field. By now he was deep into the third, storytelling phase of his career and it led him to his final role in 2010 – as Director of the Smithsonian's Cooper Hewitt National Design Museum in New York, where he was immediately instrumental in upping the ante in terms of how the institution interpreted contemporary design.

Bill Moggridge was a personal friend and mentor for 30 years. He encouraged me as a writer on design and he encouraged me to lead research at the RCA. I enjoyed visiting him and his



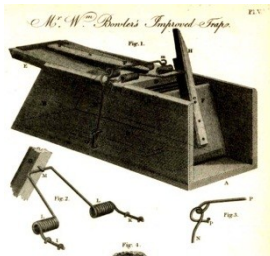
wife Karin in their spectacular self-built studio-home in the misty hills above San Francisco where, despite having his head literally in the clouds, Bill always kept his feet on the ground. He received many honours in later life, including a lifetime achievement award from Michelle Obama in 2009 and the Prize Philip Prize for Design in 2010, but he never lost his capacity for modest reflection and self-scrutiny as a designer, educator, writer and thinker.

We all owe Bill Moggridge a great deal – the RDIs more than most. A generous, humorous, amiable adventurer of a man, he will rank as one of British design's all-time, all-round greats.

Jeremy Myerson

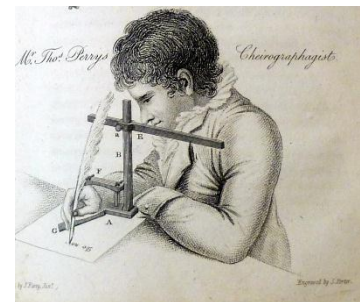
Helen Hamlyn Professor of Design, Royal College of Art

Anniversaries



2012 marks the **200th** anniversary of the Society's award of ten guineas to William Bowler for his mechanical mode of destroying vermin. The inventor said that his trap could take and retain any animal from a mouse to 'a lion'.

2012 marks the **200th** anniversary of the award of a Silver medal and 15 guineas by the Society to Thomas Perry of the Commercial Academy in Farnham, Surrey for his *Chirographist* instrument 'intended to form the hand in writing'. His covering letter, which stated that over three hundred of his own pupils had made use of this instrument, was written by one of his 14 year old students using this invention.



2012 marks the **100th** anniversary of the death of Henry Taylor Bovey LLD, DCL, FRS (1852-1912). An engineering academic Bovey took up the position of civil engineering and applied mechanics at McGill University in Montreal, Canada, where he created the Engineering Faculty. He founded the Liverpool Society of Civil Engineers and was one of the founders of the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers. In 1907 he was appointed the first Rector of Imperial College of Science and Technology in London and elected a Fellow of the RSA. Two years later he was elected on to the Council of the RSA, a position he held until his death in 1912.

Honorary Patron: Lord Asa Briggs of Lewes FRSA. *Honorary President:* Dr David Allan, FRSA; *Honorary Vice-Presidents:* Gerry Acher, CBE, LVO, FRSA; Sir Paul Judge, FRSA; Professor Franz Bosbach, Director, University of Duisburg-Essen. *Honorary Benefactor:* Ronald Gerard OBE, KStJ, FRSA. *Honorary Member:* Hermione Hobhouse MBE; *Committee:* Dr Nicholas Cambridge FRSA (Chair); Dr David Allan FRSA (Director of Studies); Prof John Davis FRSA (Deputy Chair); Anthony Burton, FRSA; Jonathan Rollason, FRSA; Mrs Susan Bennett, MA, FRSA (Honorary Secretary and Treasurer)