Journal celebrates one hundred years

Happy Birthday to the Journal - we are 100 years old.
Welcome to our centenary special edition. Just like all centenarians, we have received a letter from the Queen. And just like the first ever Journal in November 1912, we give our front page to an address by the President.

The presidential address that appeared in the inaugural edition of The Journal contained several observations that are still true of the Institute today.

George B. Hodgson welcomed the new publication as an aid for journalists working by themselves or, as he put it: “One of the difficulties of our organisation has always been that a considerable proportion of its members are isolated by the exigencies of their calling from... personal and friendly professional intercourse.”

He thought the lack of travelling facilities was a direct cause of this because virtually the only means of getting about the country in 1912 was the railway system. Now we know that even with an extensive road network and electronic communications, freelance journalists often feel out on a limb.

He commended the various support funds - Provident, Defence and Unemployment - that the Institute had then recently set up for members facing adversity. Modest contributions, payable by instalments would, as he put it, enable “…the poorest paid member of a poorly paid profession...” to benefit. Not much changed there, then?

It is when he writes about the Institute’s head office and the role of the general secretary that one’s jaw sags in astonishment at a scene so familiar to us a century later: “Demands on head office... loyally and zealously served by its officials... for all practical purposes Mr C has been the head office, advising and counselling our members.” The main difference is that the Mr C in 1912 was a Mr Cornish whilst in 2012 we have a Mr Cooper. Dominic, as we all know, carries that singular burden that his predecessor did many years previously.

It is also striking how dependent the Institute was on its honorary officers and other volunteers. The NUJ, by contrast, has relied on employed officials. The Institute has followed a route that is favoured by many other professional associations of relying largely on the enthusiasm of its own membership to carry the organisation forward.

The early editions carried the subtitle 'The Official Organ of the Institute of Journalists'. Since then a subtitle has been replaced by a tagline which says 'Serving professional journalists since 1912'. This difference indicates the changed function of the publication. Transactions and news have not disappeared from the publication but it is now more in the way of a features magazine with opinion pieces and analysis.

Hodgson wrote of connecting the “brethren of the pen in every quarter of the globe” on matters professional. Those connections are now quickly, cheaply and effectively achieved in ways that he could not have imagined. Our brethren (including sisterhood, naturally) also include photographers and others that he would not have counted as journalists. Other members like broadcasters and bloggers would have been beyond his comprehension. continued on page 2...
Centenary greetings from
the Journal’s Editor

Presidential address  from page 1...

The impact of on-line publishing as well as social media has changed things so remarkably that whilst the President in 1912 saw the promise and future for The Journal, your President in 2012 believes that the end of The Journal in printed form may be on the horizon. But not just yet.

The speed of change in the business of disseminating views, news and opinions has changed so drastically and fundamentally that it is beyond our ken to suggest how ‘unknown unknowns’ of which Donald Rumsfeld spoke might affect journalists.

Regardless of the format of The Journal, the Institute will use all methods to keep its members informed and to provide valuable support when adversity strikes. This article can be concluded quite confidently with the same words as George Hodgson: “Every working journalist will realise...in his [or her] own interests, he or she can no longer afford to remain outside the Institute.”

This is a golden

I am delighted to contribute to this special centenary celebration, and I wish the Chartered Institute of Journalists a healthy future and look forward to continuing to read The Journal.

The Chartered Institute performs a vital role and is, of course, the oldest professional body for journalists in the world. You have been strong supporters and upholders of the Editors’ Code of Practice and it is very much to your credit that you give such a clear lead to members on conduct which befits membership of a professional body.

I write now in the fervent hope that the Chartered Institute is going to recognise what a golden opportunity it now has before it.

As readers are probably well aware, I am a long-standing and passionate advocate for freedom of expression, as I also am for self-regulation of the press.

By Lord Hunt of Wirral Chairman, Press Complaints Commission

My presumption is and always will be instinctively in favour of the right to express views freely and robustly, the right to stir up debate, the right to offend and even the right to insult. Free expression is one of the greatest treasures a people can possess.

There is, however, a crucial distinction between freedom and licence, and I am a fervent believer in free and responsible journalism.

This an important point, because, if recent scandals have taught us anything, it is surely that, whenever journalists fail to exercise proper and effective restraint and allow ethical standards to slip, they damage the very cause they of all people...
Welcome to this special Centenary edition of The Journal which, as we proudly proclaim on our masthead, has been “Serving professional journalism since 1912”.

Even in my not-quite 10 years as Journal Editor, there have been some far-reaching changes within the journalistic profession – not least the greatly accelerated (and tragic) demise of the local press and the disappearance of all too many local newspaper titles. The same goes for local radio stations – and it is right and proper that the CIoJ has in recent years campaigned so vigorously to defend the local press and to promote wider diversity within the media.

At the national level the relentless ‘dumbing-down’ of the media continues. To the question “What makes a good story?” it is nowadays hard to see any clear answer. Titillation and ‘shock-horror’, once the preserves of the lower reaches of the tabloid press, are now the watchwords of the BBC and the broadsheets too.

Before readers of The Journal dismiss me as just another ‘Disgusted of Tunbridge Wells’, think on this: when our Institute was formed in 1884, as the National Association of Journalists (we became an ‘Institute’ when we gained our Royal Charter in 1890), our aim was stated as being “To promote and advance the common interests of the profession”. Here we are now, 128 years after our organisation’s formation and 100 years after the first issues of The Journal rolled off the presses, and the journalistic profession has probably never in all that time been held in lower esteem by the general public.

It falls to the CIoJ, through this Journal and all our communications to our membership and the wider journalistic community, to serve “the common interests of the profession” by helping to raise its standards – and its standing.

Failure to take on the demons of media modernisation, fearlessly and ferociously if needs be, would be a catastrophic mistake.

Lord Hunt: In favour of self-regulation

“I want to see the Chartered Institute of Journalists taking the message of professional standards vigorously into every newsroom.”

-Lord Hunt

The press has been subject to self-regulation for a very different reason, because of the importance of free expression, and because of the unique role the press can and must play in speaking truth unto power.

This is where I would draw a parallel with financial services, another sector where recent, isolated scandals have also undermined public confidence. No one would call financial services a profession, but it too, has a professional institute – the Chartered Insurance Institute. I served as President of the CII some years ago and I can vouch, on the basis of first-hand experience, for the excellent work it does to spread the credo and practices of professionalism within another industry that desperately needs to hear that message. Its increasing success and influence can be attributed, in large part, to the inspired leadership of a tireless director-general. The importance of energetic, ambitious and charismatic leadership is impossible to overstate.

I want to see the Chartered Institute of Journalists showing comparable ambition in the world of journalism. You should hold most dear of all, namely that of freedom of expression itself. It is precisely those who abuse our precious freedoms who most put them at risk. Self-regulation requires the industry to recognise that the still considerable freedoms it enjoys are a privilege, not an unassailable right, requiring journalists to behave responsibly, within certain, generally observed and accepted behavioural norms and precepts.

As I have considered how best to regulate the press, it has become clear to me that self-regulation can be effective only in an industry that possesses the structures and systems to ensure that an agreed level of standards is maintained. Whilst it may not be possible to make unethical people ethical, it certainly is possible to teach them how to behave ethically.

Publications must have internal checks and balances in place to ensure the material they handle and promulgate has been obtained in line with the Editors’ Code. As and when standards of journalistic conduct do fall below acceptable standards, publishers and publications must have responsive and efficient systems in place to provide suitable remedy.

This is all about systems – and systems do matter – but I am just as interested in hearts and minds and this is where the concept of professionalism is so important. We may not be able to make professional standards universally instinctive, but we can and must fight for every heart and mind and every scrap of territory.

The traditional professions have generally been self-regulating, but journalism, as we all know, is not a traditional profession. The press and journalism are more usually described as a “trade” and, in the internet age, I suppose pretty well anyone can claim to be a journalist. All they need is a blog.

opportunity for the CIoJ
Social media use is not a good way to report a war

Perhaps one of the most poignant moments of the so-called ‘Arab Spring’ was the interview of a confused and disheveled young female activist, newly off the streets of Cairo, where she had been jostled and abused for her ‘un-Islamic’ dress by post-election revellers. “This is not the revolution we fought for,” she observed plaintively.

Quite so. The ‘Arab Spring’ has rapidly soured, and what elections there have been have been scarcely produced encouraging results. In the absence of a broader civil society – a free and responsible press, property rights, and an impartial and effective justice system – ‘democracy’ becomes a mere mob headcount.

In Egypt, voters split more-or-less evenly between the victorious Islamist candidate and a representative of the supposedly discredited old regime. The naïve failure of Western governments to anticipate the likelihood of this outcome represents a major policy error that will come back to haunt us. They cannot even claim ignorance. Opinion polling in Egypt has always shown strong sentiment in favour of a stricter authoritarian regime. Everyone wanted that to be true. It may even have been true, but we were unwilling or unable to see the bigger picture - quite literally.

Given the dangers of war zone reporting, it is entirely understandable that newsrooms would prefer to harvest on-the-spot news from sources that do not involve journalists getting shot or beaten up. And social media certainly has its own power – it is raw, immediate, passionate.

But it also creates its own hierarchy. Official pronouncements become tainted propaganda while activists’ real-time tweets carry an aura of authenticity. Secondly, in many war zones, social media remains largely an urban phenomenon. Cities such as Damascus, Tripoli or Aleppo have internet access and a concentration of activists armed with smart phones. Conflicts that do not have these advantages, for example in Burma, Sudan, or the eastern Congo, still struggle to make an equivalent impact, even though the scale of death and human misery is much greater.

Announcing his package of £5 million in ‘non-lethal’ aid to the Syrian opposition, Foreign Secretary William Hague specifically highlighted support to be given to Syrian ‘citizen journalists’ – bloggers and tweeters, in other words. Our Institute has in the past voiced its grave concerns over the ‘citizen journalist’ concept, posing as it does, severe risks to the accuracy, validity and impartiality of news gathered from such sources, as well as to the physical safety of the citizens themselves. These issues are hugely magnified in a civil war scenario. Estimating the size of a popular protest is an inexact science under ideal conditions, let alone when we are left to interpret a fragmentary video filmed while bullets are flying.

Newsgatherers

As ‘citizen journalism’, at least in Syria, now carries the official sanction of the UK government, it is absolutely essential that we see more discrimination, interpretation, and forensic work being done by newsgatherers on what may otherwise be unrepresentative incidents or simply creative propaganda.

To take just one example, the YouTube footage purports to show Syrian rebels seizing Bab al-Hawa, a border crossing with Turkey. This event was reported worldwide as having major significance. Yet the flag they are burning is a Palestinian one, which makes no sense at all. So what was really going on?

The most likely hypothesis is that the ‘rebels’ were not even Syrians, but foreign jihadists who did not know the difference between a Palestinian flag and a Syrian government one – an interpretation that places a dramatically different cast on the whole episode.

Sometimes it may also be necessary to drill more deeply into the reports of our fellow journalists, even those on the spot. When, in March 2012, a massacre of civilians was allegedly committed by the...
The Government has announced new laws on the publication of council-owned newspapers, following representations by the Chartered Institute of Journalists.

Local Government Minister Bob Neill MP has written to the CIoJ pledging to put compliance with the Publicity Code on a statutory basis. At present the code is only voluntary and many local authorities have been ignoring the guidelines and publishing more frequently than the allowed four times a year. When the changes come into force next year, councils will be obliged by law to comply with the code.

Mr Neill was responding to a report sent to him by the CIoJ about the effects of council newspapers on the local newspaper industry. The report formed part of the evidence submitted by the Institute to an all-party Parliamentary group looking into the crisis in local newspapers.

Amanda Brodie, Chairman of the Institute’s Professional Practices Board, who gave evidence to the group at Westminster in July, said: “We are delighted that the Government is to put the code on the statute book, which will mean that councils can no longer ignore it.

“The CIoJ has been campaigning on this issue for a long time. We have watched in anger as council after council has flouted the guidelines which were put forward to protect our flagging local newspaper industry from tax-payer subsidised attacks on their advertising revenue and circulation. Most of these so-called newspapers are full of council propaganda, and it is high time they were reined in.”

Mr Neill told the Institute in his letter: “The Government agrees that local newspapers have a vital role to play in providing the public with the information they need to hold their council to account.

“Last year we strengthened the code by restricting the frequency of publications to ensure local newspapers were not facing unfair competition from council newspapers.

“However, we are aware that a few councils continue to publish newspapers more frequently than this. We are therefore going to legislate to put compliance with the code on a statutory basis.”
Some have described it as the best insurance policy a young journalist could take out, others have said it is the big heart of journalism.

The Institute’s Orphan Fund is there to pick up the pieces within members’ shattered families when early death strikes down the wage-earner, and it ensures the best possible upbringing is provided for the orphaned children.

A hundred and more years ago, working life for a journalist was even more difficult than it is today. On some newspapers salaries could be less than £2 a week and while life could be lived on such a small amount, it was a pretty penurious experience.

This was recognised by the elders of the Institute as early as 1891 when a decision was taken to create an Orphan Fund to care for the children of members who, through illness or accident, had lost their lives. Emsley Carr, the then editor of the News of the World gave it an enormous kick-start by donating £5,000 of his own money.

Continuous fund raising by all parts of the Institute built up a kitty of almost £16,000 by the time the first Journal was published in November 1912.

Then, as now, the ups and downs of the stock market affected the value of those investments and in 1912 the fund was reporting a writing down of investment values of £552 because of stock market falls!

But the money was invested wisely in trust securities and produced returns sufficient for the fund to provide annual grants of between £15 and £25 to the 38 orphans the fund cared for 100 years ago. It may not seem a vast amount but in those pre-World War I days, when a British welfare state was almost non-existent, it meant the orphans would continue to be fed and clothed in a manner which, possibly, was better than the late low-earning member could probably have afforded during his or her working life.

The big plus of the fund was its dedication to ensuring the orphaned children received a good education. The fund’s trustees were hard task-masters in this respect, demanding regular reports from the beneficiaries’ headmasters, with a watchful eye being kept on their progress by Institute members living in their locality.

Over the last century the investments of the fund have soared to around £2m, which enables it to adopt an attitude of being a “generous parent” in its care for beneficiaries.

Monthly grants of about £350 per child are paid, along with generous cash birthday and Christmas presents.

Good education is still a top priority and if private education is required, the trustees will not shrink from meeting school fees, paying grants for extra courses or footing the bills for out-of-term school expeditions.

Assistance is provided to beneficiaries up to the age of 16 – or to the end of their full-time education, which means we continue to foot the bill through university.

If a journalist with a young family wanted commercially to insure for their care in the event of his or her early death to the level the Orphan Fund provides, the premiums would probably be unaffordable.

But the cover of the fund comes with membership of the Institute, plus all the other benefits provided, which at the present level is a subscription of under £200 a year.

No wonder the Orphan Fund has been described as the best insurance policy a journalist could take out.

By Michael Moriarty
Chairman, CioJ Orphan Fund

Quarterly Review
Established 1809

Congratulations and best wishes to the CioJ Journal in its centenary year

www.quarterly-review.org

Culture & Current Affairs
Labour MP Denis MacShane has quit after an inquiry found he had fiddled his expenses.

A detailed investigation into the conduct of Mr MacShane, a Past President of the National Union of Journalists (NUJ), by the Parliamentary Standards and Privileges Committee, led to his resignation as an MP in early November.

The committee’s report concluded that the former BBC reporter and longtime NUJ activist had been guilty of “a particularly serious violation” of the House of Commons code of conduct by claiming thousands of pounds in unjustified expenses and then compounding his wrongdoing by concocting bogus invoices in an effort to substantiate his expense claims.

Former NUJ boss quits as an MP after he admits fiddling his Parliament expenses

Sea Changes, by Derek Turner.


The East of England coastline is a blurred, secret landscape; a place of mysterious margins, waterways, and long beaches that fade into far horizons. The coast is inhabited by Englishmen such as farmer Dan Gowt who belong to their country and district; to a place that has barely changed in a hundred years. But without warning, a horrifying incident shatters the tranquility of Dan’s world and modern Britain is plunged into a maelstrom of political-correctness, soul-searching and fear...

In 2007, The Journal published a feature about a fellow-journalist by the name of Derek Turner, who had just resurrected a 19th-century magazine called The Quarterly Review. Five years later, and able to attract writers of the calibre of Taki, Alain de Benoist and Richard Body, the Review continues to delight, stimulate and provoke. But Mr Turner has also found time to pen his first novel, Sea Changes, a compelling, hypnotic, and even fear-inducing story of a country slowly succumbing to the siren-song of ‘human rights’ and excessive, heart-on-its-sleeve liberalism. We are led into a grotesque drama of hysterical television and media egotists, of politicians who care nothing for truth, but who rush to say the ‘correct’ thing in a country that seems to be one step away from insanity. But what has caused this implosion in the nation’s life? Whilst Dan Gowt has been ploughing his fields and watching the sun set over the ancient coastline, a group of asylum-seekers has been making its way to our shores, in search of a better life. Young Ibrahim is escaping the devastation of Iraq, and entrusts his future to an unscrupulous group who have promised to smuggle him into England. The Iraqi, though, has no idea of what is about to befall him, and his terrible fate sets off a chain-reaction that will chill the heart of any reader.

All seems lost in the distorted, imaginary Britain of Sea Changes. Or is it purely imaginary? The radical Left seems to be triumphant, but uncompromising English voices crackle into life; men who speak out against the politically-correct tide sweeping over us, such as Purcell-loving journalist Albert Norman, who articulates the frustrations of the silent majority.

Derek Turner’s enchanting, brilliant descriptions of rural England and old places give a poetical shading to this essentially political novel; and in the next breath, the author takes us into the desperate, claustrophic existence of the asylum-seeker, the shadowy corridors of Westminster double-dealing, the half-crazed existence of the campaigning zealots of a ‘race relations’ industry now out of control.

Sea Changes is not a comfortable book – but we ignore its message at our peril.

Stuart Millson
To say that Chris was a colourful character is an understatement: he was a kaleidoscope of colour! If you didn’t need dark glasses when you met him, the chances are that you required them afterwards! I’ve shared many a happy hangover headache with him!

Chris was a journalist’s journalist, a no-nonsense getter of news of the old school.

When the Institute hit a crisis following the dismissal of its then general secretary, Chris stepped in to take over the trade union aspects and it was his gregarious style that, without fail, won a better-than-expected settlement for each unfortunate member. His colourful personality and an uncanny ability to choose the right words for the right person in the right style for the occasion was as much the secret of his success as the BBC’s radio crime correspondent, as his journalistic skills.

When he was despatched to Leeds to spend three months preparing a background programme on the Yorkshire Ripper, he left the local men (and the nationals) standing and produced by far the best piece on the serial killer. We usually met each evening at my office ‘local’ to be put into stitches of laughter as Chris regaled his day’s experiences interviewing hookers or the local constabularies.

His love of cricket was legendary and as rivalry between Yorkshire and Surrey supporters is only second to that between the two Roses counties, vigorous discussions at the local pub were frequent. And it was the scene of the only time I ever saw Chris left speechless. The barmaid interjected with a cricketing observation, to which Chris scornfully asked: “What do you know about cricket?” “Well,” she replied hesitantly, “me brother opens for England.” Her brother was Yorkshire-born Lancashire batsman Barry Woods.

Past President Sangita Shah said: “He was a massive support to me and represented all that is colourful and contradictory in life.”

As our general secretary he was not unknown to have ‘up-and-downers’ with some members who may not have approved of his style but he served with a dedication that was admirable.

Great people and publications started life in 1912

Councillor James Bond MCJ congratulates The Journal on reaching the milestone of a 100th anniversary

The first Councillor James Bond MBE would have marked his 100th birthday on the 13th March 2012

Councillor James Bond was an Independent member of Harrow Council from 1984-1990

His son, Councillor James Bond was elected to Harrow Council as an Independent member in 2010
Chris Underwood, a Past President of the Institute and its former general secretary, died at his home in Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, on August 31 after a long illness. He was 74.

Chris began his career aged 16 as a reporter on the Surrey Herald, where he also wrote features and became sports editor, before moving to the Exchange Telegraph news agency, covering industry and Parliament.

From there he went to the TUC-backed Daily Herald as a feature writer, covering the Profumo scandal, and sharing a desk with the future playwright Dennis Potter, and then to the Daily Mail, covering crime as a special investigations reporter, including the Moors Murders and the notorious Kray twins.

He was ordered by his editor to infiltrate the East End gang and began training as a bookie’s settler to give as cover. He was relieved when the Krays were arrested before the plan could be put into operation.

As the Times obituary put it: “Underwood was of the old school and believed that no journalist was worth his salt unless he or she had spent an apprenticeship in a scruffy raincoat standing outside a police station or sniffing for stories and information.

“He became resentful of the graduates of journalism courses who increasingly populated newsrooms.”

In the 1970s he moved to the BBC, for which he served a stint in Ireland, where he was present at the Bloody Sunday killings in Londonderry in 1972, and had to be driven away from the Bogside in the boot of a car to escape anti-British retaliation.

He also served briefly as the BBC’s man in Moscow, and would later regale Cloj colleagues with the tale of how he was the target of a KGB honey-trap. When confronted with the evidence, he said, he told them to publish and be damned.

At the BBC he was best known as the Home Affairs Correspondent, essentially the crime reporter, which he became in 1973, covering many notorious cases, including the hunt for the Yorkshire Ripper and the case of serial killer Dennis Nielsen.

He was said to be on first-name terms with every chief constable and Met commissioner - as well as many figures in the criminal underworld.

The biggest scoop in which he played a part was discovering the whereabouts of the traitor Sir Anthony Blunt after he had been revealed as the “fourth man” in the Cambridge spy ring.

A BBC colleague interviewing Blunt’s friend Brian Sewell spotted a phone number written on his hand. Chris passed it to a police contact who traced the number to the home of historian Professor James Joll, also a friend of Blunt’s. Blunt climbed a fence and escaped as a BBC crew arrived at the front door.

In 1977 he led a revolt at the BBC against the NUJ which had called a national strike over a problem at a local radio station which he considered trivial, and he and many colleagues defected to the Institute. He helped establish its broadcasting division, which he later served as chairman.

In 1989, he joined the Institute’s staff as general secretary, running its trade union arm. He retired in 2003, but continued as a consultant to the Institute, specialising in legal and industrial tribunal cases.

By Charlie Harris

In retirement, Chris continued to work as a freelance journalist - but only as long as it didn’t interfere with watching cricket, for which he had a lifelong passion. When he stood down as general secretary, he said: “I have had a number of offers, some of which are of interest, which will enable me to continue exercising my brain while spending the summer months at Lords or the Oval.”

He was an active member of the Labour Party and once stood as a Labour candidate for Almbridge Borough Council in Surrey.

The Times said of Chris: “A colourful wit and raconteur, Underwood embodied the drinking culture prevalent in journalism at the time. A bottle of whisky was a permanent fixture in his office and he was a regular feature holding court, cigarette in hand, in the various pubs around Broadcasting House.”

“His advice to cub reporters was never to take a drink before 1pm, and on the annual journalists’ jolly to Boulogne never to drink before Herne Hill.”

These traits were shared by George Cragg, the BBC Radio 4 crime reporter in the satirical novels by former BBC administrator the late Mark Tavener, and for whom Chris was the inspiration.

The stories, the first of which was In the Red, were adapted for both Radio 4 and BBC TV, with Cragg/Underwood played by Michael Williams on radio and Warren Clarke on TV.

Many episodes from Chris’s BBC career found their way into the stories, including when he was none-too-polite to the owner of a Daimler who objected to his double-parking beside him outside Broadcasting House. The object of his vitriol was the chairman of the BBC, Sir Michael Swann, but a swift and grovelling apology saved Chris’ job.

The Institute’s Broadcasting Division chairman Paul Leighton, a former colleague of Chris’s at Broadcasting House, said: “Chris hugely enriched the lives of so many of us, especially me.

“I joined the Institute in 1976, but it was Chris who cajoled, pressed and bullied me into active service at Broadcasting House in London in the early ’80s, and every year thereafter that we worked at Portland Place.

“Chris Underwood, journalist, broadcaster, raconteur and thoroughly Good Egg. RIP.”

Cecile Cainghug, a former member of the Cloj’s staff who now lives in Chicago, added: “I had the privilege of knowing Mr Underwood when I worked at the Cloj’s Covent Gardens offices in the 80s. Here’s one for you Chris - CHEERS! ”

Chris’s funeral was held in Surrey on September 14, attended by the President, Norman Bartlett, general secretary Dominic Cooper, and many former BBC journalists.

Chris is survived by his partner Mary Honeyball, the Labour MEP for London, and his two children Mark and Becky.

Legend: Chris Underwood

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Our Journal - grandfather of today’s trade press

Made it...100 not out! The Journal is celebrating its centenary, which is more than a milestone for the Chartered Institute; it is a significant event in the world of journalism. ROBIN MORGAN reports.

The Journal's first appearance, on November 23, 1912, was the first time an Institute publication devoted to journalism, written by journalists for journalists, had appeared.

As such it was the grandfather of today’s trade press – such as Press Gazette or the British Journalism Review, the media sections in the national press and even the daily newspaper reviews that television and radio carry.

But such a heritage was not the intention of the Institute’s Council when it decided to create ‘The Institute Journal’ as a means of better informing our members of the workings of the organisation. It succeeded the “dry as dust” publication of The Proceedings, as our link to members was described by Institute leaders.

It was more down to the lively first editor of the project, George Springfield, that The Journal developed into a wide-ranging discourse on events affecting our profession.

The first edition was a hurriedly put-together affair. To be fair, it was a rather turgid publication but that soon changed into a lively read, as copy began to flow from all corners of the world.

Launched

The Journal was launched at the end of a hectic week of activity. The Council decided on November 16 to go ahead. George Springfield, a council member, was 'commandeered' as its first editor and he began working on the first edition on Monday the 18th.

He had in mind a four-page edition but by Friday, the 22nd, he had sent a 16-page magazine to the printers, The St Clements Press, of Kingsway, Holborn, and the following day, the 23rd, members were receiving it. Phew!

George Springfield was a man used to working under pressure. His day job was at the Financial Times and The Journal was put together at his home in Cold Harbour Lane, Brixton.

As he explained in the first edition, the deluge of copy that week took him by surprise.

At first he thought he could only fill four pages, so he used the well-ledged pica typeface to spread it out. By Thursday he had sufficient for a “tight fit” eight pages, so changed to emerald and brevier fonts. “On Friday, with further floods of copy from London and the North, it was evident it would have to be 16.” So he had to resort to long primeur type to get it all in!

George was a man with an impish sense of humour. In the second edition he apologised for some missing copy: “Several other items of ‘District Doings’ were duly received but have been mislaid. A duel is to be fought between the Editor and the Printer to decide who did it.

Both are very sorry.”

They don’t print apologies like that these days!

In that edition he also sought to rid himself of the responsibility by advertising his own job -

“Must be patient, diplomatic, tireless and an artist in getting quarts into pint pots. Salary, part share of the profits.”

The Journal has never made a profit!

He subsequently handed over the editorship, but not before he had established The Journal as a lively and news-packed publication, and in 1920-21 he was the Institute’s president.

The Journal was not without its critics. The monthly black-and-white edition, with a circulation of several thousand, cost £30 to produce.

Extravagant

Some members thought this was an extravagant waste of money. By comparison, the cost of producing the full-colour Journal today is about £2,000 plus ancilliary costs.

To put another perspective on the cost, in 1912 the average journalist earned about £3 a week, a tenth of The Journal’s production cost.

Advances in technology and in-house production keeps down the present-day costs and the frequency is now reduced to quarterly, but the magazine is still a significant part of the Institute’s expenditure.

How 100 years have changed things...

Reporter was beaten up by crowd

Mr B Conway, representative of the Dungannon Democrat, a weekly Nationalist paper, while sitting at the reporters’ table at an Orange Demonstration at Castle Caulfield, was threatened by a section of the crowd, in spite of the protests of the Chairman, and compelled to leave the table. He was subsequently violently assaulted, his clothes torn to pieces, while papers, note-books, pencils, money and other things were taken from his pockets.

He was so badly beaten that he fainted under medical examination.
Big on talk, but he was a bit short on the shorthand

We’ve all met ‘em – the big talkers who can’t come up with the goods. It was no different in 1912 when one young hack was bragging about his 200-words-per-minute shorthand.

The Journal’s editor, George Springfield, wrote: “I had been pestered for a long time by a young fellow for a post as a reporter. He assured me he was a most efficient shorthand writer. In the stress of a General Election, I asked him to do a column report of an afternoon meeting in his own town.

“Both speakers were dead easy to report, but towards midnight the ‘thoroughly efficient’ one turned up with no copy, and the time-worn excuse that he had lost his notebook.

I told him to write 200-300 words from memory. He could not even do that.”

The punch line of George’s story was that a shorthand magazine he picked up that same night contained a testimonial from the hopeless hack that in three months he had learned a new system of shorthand so thoroughly that he was able to write at a rate of 200 words per minute!

Shorthand was a reporter’s best friend and was a useful means of earning extra cash. The Institute recommended we charge a guinea (£1.05) for taking the note and 8d (just over 3p) per sheet of transcribed notes.

It warned that a reporter not charging this fee was liable to be dealt with under our bye-law on discipline. Solicitors frequently asked for transcripts but were slow to pay those rates. “Do not be bluffed by a solicitor’s threat to bring his own shorthand clerks and ‘get the work done for nothing.’ There is a world of difference between shorthand writing from dictation and intelligent reporting of a speech or discussion.

“A ‘verbatim’ report of a speech, as transcribed by the average shorthand clerk, is a thing to make angels weep and sub-editors to commit suicide!

One solicitor who did use his own staff found they had failed. He had refused to pay the local reporter the recognised fee and had to go to his opponents in court and pay the inflated price they demanded.

“Why is it,” asked the editor, “that solicitors who are such sticklers for maintaining their own fee, are such constant sinners in the direction of trying to cut down the reporter’s recognised fee?

Have you ever had anything published?

A book perhaps, or an article in a journal like this one. If you have then the Authors’ Licensing & Collecting Society Ltd (ALCS) could be holding money owed to you.

The ALCS collects secondary royalties earned from a number of sources including the photocopying and scanning of books.

Unlock information about how you could benefit by visiting www.alcs.co.uk
Looking back on 30 years in newspapers I suppose the biggest change has been the introduction of new technology. When I started work as a trainee reporter on the Barnet and Finchley Press in North London, we were using typewriters to record the news. These were old rickety sit-up-and-beg machines that kept stalling and running out of ribbon ink. They required to be fed regularly with a piece of carbon paper sandwiched between two sheets of copy paper – one for the news editor and one for your own ‘records’ – in other words the vicious-looking spike that sat on all desks and would give health and safety officers several nightmares these days.

As indeed would the state of our dingy office – we called it the chicken shed – which was stacked high with old papers (fire hazard!) and sported a sad old charity-shop kettle with dodgy electrics (fire hazard!) and very many coffee cups, the dregs of which had been left to moulder for weeks (health hazard!) because no-one had the time or the inclination to do the washing up.

Freezing

The office was freezing cold in winter and boiling in summer, and so rickety that when the presses started up (we printed on the premises in those days) the whole building would shake. But I didn’t care – I was so happy to be doing the job I had always wanted to do – be a reporter.

Five of us were recruited straight from the journalism training course at Harlow and, as the news editor admitted, thrown in at the deep end. But it was the best way to learn.

We each had our own patch to work. Police and fire calls were a regular, and not over the phone – no bland press offices then, we spoke to the duty officers and got to know them well – but not in the sense that the Leveson inquiry is now alleging! It was a real privilege to train in London – I cut my teeth on armed robberies, kidnappings, fires, murders, great court stories and much other front-page-grabbing material. I had the splash in one edition or another most weeks.

It was a heady mix of thrills, challenges and hard work – I put in 12-hour days without a second thought.

And you worked hard for your stories. There were no mobile phones then – you always carried plenty of loose change so you could call in your story from a phone box, reading direct from your shorthand notebook to one of the copy-takers who would take the story over the phone – often tut-tutting and commenting on it all as they went along.

There was no internet to help you find facts and figures – it was leg-work, phone calls and contacts that brought you what you needed. And afterwards, those of us who didn’t have an evening job, went down the pub for a few beers to unwind and talk about – journalism of course!

There was no such thing as political correctness. The news editor smoked like a chimney in the office, the chief sub had wandering hands, and if you went for a job interview as a female, you were likely to be asked if it was worth employing you, since you might ‘go off and have babies soon.’ (This was said to me!)

But the real sources of terror were the printers. We feared and respected them in equal measure. They knew everything there was to know about printing presses, point sizes and fonts, and spoke in a language all of their own (‘Knock a nut space off that, will you mate?’)

Step onto the print floor at your peril. Teasing was the least of it. And if you went anywhere near any of their terrifying equipment (ever had a scalpel waved in your face?) then you could cause a walk-out and the paper just wouldn’t get printed.

Such was the power of the print union, the NGA. But that was soon to change. The 80s saw the rise of the woman who was to the unions what Beeching was to the railways – their nemesis – Margaret Thatcher.

There is no doubt that the ‘Honourable Member for Finchley’ (as the Labour group on Barnet Council insisted on calling her, despite her being Prime Minister) broke the unions. I met her once, but being very opposite in politics, we were never destined to be friends!

We all stood on picket lines, but there was no going back, and legislation paved the way for the demise of the strong bargaining power that both the NGA and the NUJ (and CIoJ!) had over newspaper managers.

It was the end of an era – and the start of the ‘brave new world’ of outsourcing, user-generated copy and new technology.

Female Suffragette reporters excluded from court

By Amanda Brodie

The 1980’s

By Amanda Brodie

Old tech: Reporters working on typewriters in the Barnet Press offices in North London in the early 1980s.

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Old tech: Reporters working on typewriters in the Barnet Press offices in North London in the early 1980s.
It's stone-age journalism!

By Robin Morgan

Golf was a (posh) school sport and we played, just across the road, at the Royal Lytham where the local hacks also hacked their way around the championship course.

I got to know them, liked their carefree lifestyle, and decided I wanted to be a journalist. That was in 1953.

That carefree lifestyle mitigated against them covering the local soccer clubs' games on wide-open, winter wind-swept grounds and I was invited to take over the coverage...at the age of 13!

Match coverage was daunting – 50 words and teams before the start, 75 words after 25 minutes, a further 100 words at half-time, another 50 words after 70 minutes with late scorers and result at full-time.

Challenge

Phoning copy was a challenge – the nearest phone was a quarter of a mile away and required hectic cycling ‘twixt ground and box, usually in the teeth of a Lancashire coastal gale, to catch up on missed play from the home-team trainer.

For a lad, the pay was great! Ten shillings and sixpence for the match report for the Saturday sports edition, five bob for the ‘inquest’ for the Monday evening, and a further five and a tanner (that was how ‘big’ money spoke in those days!) for the weekly paper’s retrospective.

It came to a guinea a week! I was the richest lad in school in days when half-a-crown was the usual pocket money.

Of course I needed a typewriter – five bob in a church jumble sale.

But the coiled spring that drove the platen was broken. No problem!

A rock was tied by a piece of string to the left-hand side of the platen, hung over the table edge and its weight pulled the mechanism along.

Truly stone-age journalism!

Today’s youngsters, with their smart phones and tablets, don’t know they’re born!

Legal pitfalls haven’t changed in a century

By Cleland Thom

The last time I did a media law update, the police had to come and let me out.

The session finished at 4.30pm on a Friday, and the editor and the staff, eager to get home, ran for the door as soon as I turned off my laptop.

Unfortunately, they locked me in the building and my only option was to call the police. The local nick kindly tracked down the editor, who sent his deputy back with the keys.

That training session covered libel, contempt of court, copyright, admission to courts, and the prospects of journalists being jailed.

Shortly afterwards, I was asked to write this article on media law in 1912, and was astonished to find the subjects were the same as those in my latest update! Journalists then seemed to have a tougher time with the law than they do now.

Libel was the main threat. In 1912, the landmark Artemus Jones libel case had fairly recently concluded, and editors were worried about the risk of libelling someone through wrong identification.

The Journal referred to a similar case – Elsie Ford Maddox Heuffer v The Throne – which made it potentially dangerous to state that someone was married. The editor made his views known. He said: “You cannot safely describe a person as ‘Mrs John Smith’ until you have seen her marriage certificate, and even then you must take the risk that the marriage may be bigamous. Even if you describe a couple as ‘Col Smith and his alleged wife’, the ‘alleged wife’ would undoubtedly have good ground for an action for damages.”

Subs in those days faced all the usual legal problems with readers’ letters. The Isle of Man Times was ordered to pay a Wesleyan minister £200 damages after publishing a letter criticising his campaign against granting singing licences to pubs. Of course, had the letter been published on ye paper’s olde website, the editor could have argued that he wasn’t responsible. At least a councillor on Sunderland Town Council had the decency to sue the writer of a letter to a local paper, who called him “the gingerbread Czar … a chartered bully … a man without a tincture of right or moral scruple”.

The Ludlow Advertiser lost a libel case after publishing a letter that accused a retired schoolmaster of ‘jobbery, robbery or snobbery’. I gather the letter writer went on to work as a headline writer on Ye Sun. Speaking of which, headlines weren’t safe, either.

The Liverpool Daily Post and Mercury ran a court case about MP Watson Rutherford’s share dealings, with the headings: ‘Liverpool MP’s share deals’ ‘Mr W Rutherford and the stockbrokers.’ The MP sued for the false implication that he’d dealings with a dodgy firm of stockbrokers. Even cartoons weren’t safe. The Sporting Times apologised to the conductor of Drury Lane Theatre’s orchestra for publishing a defamatory caricature of him.
It’s back to the future via
a forward-thinking boss

Mobile phones, news by broadband, 24-hour news channels and councils publishing their own newspapers because local papers do not cover debates...that’s the reality in 2012.

But a century ago, Institute President Robert Donald painted a picture of the future as he saw it.

Back in 1912 newspapers were turgid in their mainly broadsheet presentation, heavy on verbatim reporting, largely reliant on Morse code for transmitting stories and Linotype operators to set copy into print.

Crystal ball

But President Donald, editor of the Daily Chronicle, took to crystal ball gazing at the Institute’s annual conference, held in York in August 1913 and while his forecasts of changes to come in “the next 20 or more years hence” may have been off-target in the eventuality, he was not far off the ball when considered with 100 years of hindsight.

There would be fewer daily papers, with some merging and a publication with fewer than half a million readers would not be considered “a serious organ of the people” (True!)

Weak newspapers which could not spend huge sums on news, features and growing circulation would be squeezed out or run as a luxury or a mission by “millionaire idealists”. (True!)

Local papers would adopt national paper styles in presenting news and give more coverage to their areas. “The national papers will not contain less reading but the pages will be smaller. They will be printed better...and will include pictures in colour.” (True!)

To get papers to the public, said Mr Donald, “Airships and aeroplanes will be used for the most distant centres; electric trains and motorplanes, running in special tracks, will also be used.”

But his most spectacular forecasts, made, remember, at a time when telephones were few and far between, envisaged what today we call the Internet and broadband, radio and television (none of which had been invented a century ago).

“In all the chief centres of population newspapers will be distributed by electric or pneumatic tubes. The morning and evening papers will be merged, and editions will come out almost every hour, day and night.”

“News will be collected by wireless telephones, and the reporter will always have a portable telephone with him with which he can communicate with his paper without the trouble of going to a telegraph office, or writing out a message.

“At the other end the wireless telephone message will be delivered to the sub-editor printed in column form.”

He went on: “The chief competition to the national newspapers of the future will not be from other newspapers, but from other methods of disseminating news.

“At the people’s recreation halls, with the kinetograph and the gramophone, or some more agreeable instrument of mechanical speech, all the news of the day will be given hot from its source.

“People may become too lazy to read, and news will be laid on to the house or office just as gas and water is now.

“The occupiers will listen to an account of the news of the day read to them by much improved phonographs while sitting in their garden, or a householder will have his daily newspaper printed in column form by a printing machine in his hall, just as we have tape machines (teleprinters) in offices now.”

Newspapers

Mr Donald foresaw the extension of national and local government to such an extent that newspapers would not be able to report all the news from that quarter: “Municipalities will have to issue official gazettes, daily or weekly, as the case may be.”

Every public body would have its own publication, he said, “but the newspapers will act as watchdogs and critics of their proceedings and as a check to bureaucracy.

“It may be thought I am overdrawing the possibility of invention and progress, but no bounds can be put to progress and the future is full of great possibilities.”

Daddy of libels

Mr Rimmell, a Bedminster shopkeeper, has recovered £25 damages and costs at Bristol in an action for libel against the Bristol Times and Mirror in respect of a paragraph which stated that: “A Bedminster shopkeeper has had a rather novel experience. A woman entered his shop and deposited on the counter a healthy baby, subsequently driving off in a taxicab.” The judge stated that if the Bristol Evening Times and Echo knew that the Bedminster tradesman was not the father of the child, then it ought to have said so.

April, 1913

Moths of work

M. Jean Henri Fabre, the greatest living entomologist, maintains that journalism, rightly applied, may help people to keep their clothes in good condition.

He has discovered that newspapers afford a far more trustworthy protection against the ravages of moths than any of the old fashioned preservatives such as camphor.

M. Fabre advises housewives to pack any garments about to be stored away in newspapers, joining the edges with a double fold. If the joining is carefully effected and well-pinned, moths will never work their way inside.

November 1912

Dodgy English

One of the Siamese newspapers (that is, present day Thailand) recently published the following advertisement of the merits of its ware: –

“The news of English we tell the latest. Writ in perfectly style and most earliest.

Do a murder get commit, we hear and tell of it. Do a mighty chief die, we bublish. Staff has each one been college, and writ like the Kippling and the Dickens. We circulate every town and extortionate for advertisements. Buy it. By it.”

Journal Centenary edition Centenary Supplement
When the Institute spoke, the postmaster acted ...

When the Institute spoke, people listened and when the Postmaster-General ‘copped an earful’ in 1912 he acted - post haste!

A century ago getting copy to a paper’s head office in days when telephones were few and far between meant using trains to carry packages of the day’s output – usually handed to the guard who was slipped a few pence as a tip to ensure delivery – and if a late-breaking story was important, the telegram was the means of conveyance.

In those days telegrams were handled by the Post Office which then, as it is today, was forever seeking economies. Local head Post Offices were open from 7am to 10pm to handle telegram traffic – and in towns where daily newspapers were printed they remained open 24 hours a day to handle the telegram traffic.

However, in the North of England Institute members were scandalised when two Post Offices in unnamed towns decided to cut their opening hours from 8am to 9pm for general telegrams and imposed a charge of two shillings (10p) per item for anything after those hours. The charge was also made on delivery of telegrams outside of those opening hours.

To put that into a perspective, two shillings represented about five per cent of a district reporter’s wage at that time and while the reporter could no doubt reclaim the fee on expenses it would still be a considerable drain on the money in his pocket (or her purse!) if it became a regular occurrence.

On December 3, 1912 an Institute delegation, led by its imposing secretary, Herbert Cornish, “waited upon the Postmaster-General (as The Journal so quaintly put it) to protest and as a result Mr Herbert Samuel (the said Postmaster-General) agreed that Post Offices should remain open until 10pm as before, but he declined to revert to 7am instead of 8am,” it reported.

The Journal counselled members: “Members in provincial towns where no morning newspaper is published will do well to keep an eye on the Post Office in this respect.

“It is understood that it is the intention of the Department to curtail the hours of business in the chief Post Offices in many towns.

“The result was that the first batch of copy was 24 hours later than it ought to have been in reaching the said editor.”

There’s nothing new when it comes to text speak - it’s 100 yrs old

Text-speak is 100 years old...developed by a Yorkshire journalist on his sick-bed to make transmitting news cheaper and quicker.

While teachers and grammarians despair at today’s use of abbreviated English to send mobile telephone texts, the practice was in widespread use by journalists to write and send copy when telegrams were the favoured means of transmission.

“In those days we called it ‘cable-eese’. But a lack of uniformity in accepted abbreviations among both journalists and General Post Office telegraphists who transmitted the telegrams, led to many misunderstandings.

The Post Office’s suggestions had not met with universal approval and the Institute President asked Mr Hammond, chief sub-editor of the Yorkshire Post, to create a dictionary of acceptable cable-eese. Mr Hammond was recovering from a serious illness at the time and devoted much of his recovery period to the work!

Some of the abbreviations became commonly used – for example, Beds, Berks, Bucks, Notts etc. still used today in postal addresses. Xmas, for Christmas, entered the language as did Dept, for department, or Nr for near.

Reporters

Reporters rapidly adopted the style and it was common practice right until the end of hot metal days for copy to be littered with ‘t’s (for ‘the’), It’s (for ‘that’), abt (for ‘about’) sd (for ‘said’) and hundreds more, which ran through sub hands and down to the linotype operators who substituted the proper words for the abbreviations.

The President was mindful that the new technology of the age – the typewriter – was still not in universal use:

“We must apply to each (abbreviated) word the test of hasty calligraphy, and not judge in its appearance in typewriting or print. Seen in that light, I think some of the proposals are questionable, and a slovenly writer would run some risk by adopting them too freely.

“Telegraphists, however, though at times extremely careless, usually write a tolerable good hand, and the typewriter is coming more and more into use for transcription,” he told Journal readers.
President John F Kennedy was a plagiarist.
Probably the most famous quote attributed to him – the ‘Ask not’ speech at his inauguration on January 20, 1961 – which dictionaries of quotations give him sole credit for – was not his original thought for, 49 years earlier, Institute President George B Hodgson had asked the same question of our members!

Mr Hodgson was exhorting members to play greater roles within the Institute and was lamenting those who paid their subscriptions and took “the full value of their membership out in criticism and grumbling. “Every district official is familiar with the everlasting query: ‘What has the Institute done for me?’ He never seems to consider the reverse of the proposition: ‘What have I done for the Institute?’

“He fails to recognise the fact that the Institute is a co-operative body, whose ability to assist its members is precisely proportionate to the readiness to assist the Institute and each other.”

Wise words, as true now as they were then.

Kennedy obviously thought so. But where did the US president get the inspiration? Certainly it was not one of his original thoughts. The speech was a joint effort between Kennedy and his speech writer Theodore C Sorensen, who steadfastly refused to divulge how that quote came about.

Some say Kennedy stole it from his headmaster at Choate School, Connecticut. US author Chris Matthews made the claim in Jack Kennedy: Elusive Hero. He unearthed notes written by George St John, the president’s former headmaster at Choate, which suggested he had been aware of the ‘ask not’ line for many years. Those papers quoted a Harvard College Dean’s refrain: “As has often been said, the youth who loves his Alma Mater will always ‘ask not what can she do for me?’ but ‘what can I do for her?’”

Others claim JFK was quoting Khalil Gibran from The New Frontier which Gibran had written 36 years earlier: “Are you a politician asking what your country can do for you or a zealous one asking what you can do for your country?” which takes us back to 1935 but in 1916 US President Warren G. Harding told the Republican convention: “We must have a citizenship less concerned about what the government can do for it and more anxious about what it can do for the nation.”

These days the attribution of the sentiment is firmly anchored on Kennedy but, as the Journal proves in hard print, our president was certainly years ahead of theirs in his exhortation in 1912. But was Mr Hodgson an original thinker? Probably not.

Some sources suggest that it first came from the brain of Cicero (106BC-43BC), the Roman philosopher.

Editor is fire hero

Mr. J. Carlill Savill, editor of the Northallerton News, has had good fortune and the requisite nerve to save the life of a young woman in that town the other day.

Employed in a bakery near his office, her clothes caught fire, and but for Mr Savill’s presence of mind she would certainly have lost her life.

He wrapped his own coat round her, getting his hands somewhat burnt in the process, but successfully putting out the flames.

At the moment he is suffering from deafness – it is to be hoped but temporarily – due to the resultant shock.

May 1913
So you thought that you were so badly paid?

Making do on a pittance was the norm back in 1912

S

o, you look at your present day pay slip and think you’re hard done by and how will you make ends meet this month? Our colleagues in 1912 shared exactly the same feelings – and in some cases had to make do on mere pittances.

Today we have got rid of Linotype operators and telegraphists who were the big hitters in the pay scales of 1912 – in the days of hot metal it was always a major grumble that the men who re-typed our words got more money than we did – but have journalists’ salaries really made any real advance over 100 years?

Institute President Robert Donald, who was editor of the Daily Chronicle, spent part of his year in office probing working conditions – and more particularly pay levels of the rank and file, as he put it – and found things lacking, particularly outside of London.

Newspapers

“Our daily newspapers were never better edited and better written than they are today,” he reported.

“At the same time there is no profession in which there is a greater diversity of pay than in journalism. The organisers and editorial men at the top, in some cases, command salaries equal to those of Cabinet Ministers, while their deputies receive the pay of Under-Secretaries of State; but the rank and file, and especially the men at the bottom, are no better off than they were 20 years ago,” he went on.

There were many reporters in country districts who did not receive more pay than unskilled labourers. He excluded London pay levels from his survey because, on the whole, London salaries were much higher than in 1882. “The new half-penny Press, led by the example of Lord Northcliffe, is chiefly responsible for the improved conditions,” he said.

Mr Donald continued: “It is not creditable to journalists or employers that reporters who write copy should be paid less – as is too often the case – than the compositors who set it up in type.”

Among the examples he quoted were: “In a town with a population of 120,000 there were experienced reporters who received less than £1 10s (£140 at present day values) a week. Linotype operators working on the same newspapers got £2 and case hands £1 12s. Postal telegraphists earned a maximum of £2 12s (£240) and their average pay was higher than that of reporters.

“Take another town of 170,000 population. Reporters there were paid from £1 5s to £2 10s (£232) and sub-editors £2 10s and a few rise to the Olympian heights suggested by £3 10s (£324) a week. On a bi-weekly the highest paid reporter gets £1 10s a week. In the same town Linotype operators’ earnings were £2 6s and those of case hands £1 16s a week and expert postal telegraphists were paid £2 8s a week.”

Important

The Journal said reporters in a manufacturing city, with a population of 360,000 were employed on one daily paper at £1 10s a week but Linotype operators earned £2 10s and senior postal telegraphists £2 15s a week. In a city with 250,000 people an “important” paper spent a total of £7 12s 6d (£706) a week on four sub-editors. The average wage of its reporters was under £2.

In one of the 20 largest towns in the country six out of eight sub-editors earned less than £160 (£14,824) a year. Few reporters received more than £3 a week.

Mr Donald said: “I could add other examples, but I have shown that reporting in some places comes within the sphere of sweated labour.”

Describing his examination of hundreds of applications for vacancies advertised, Mr Donald observed: “They are melancholy reading. “They are almost all from men in positions, and they show that journalists of great experience who have occupied responsible positions on daily newspapers are ready to give their services for less than £4 (£370) a week.”

He believed better training and practical tests were the answer to raising pay levels.

Centenary Briefs

• An illustration of a journalist’s devotion to duty is provided by the railway accident at Stamford, Connecticut. One of the victims was a reporter on the staff of the New York World. He was dragged out of the wreckage in a terribly injured condition but managed to say: “Ring up my paper and tell them there is a big story here. I am sorry I can’t work on it myself.” Then he died.

• M. Georges Aubry, President of the Parliamentary Journalists Association of Paris, has fought a duel with M. Pierre Leroy Beaulieu, a Deputy, who has stated that the French Press received subsidies from secret funds. Four shots were exchanged without effect, and the adversaries left the field unreconciled.

• Mr J R Scott, of the Manchester Guardian, at the joint newspaper dinner, described London as the place where evening papers came out in the morning and morning papers in the evening. The Hon Harry Lawson retorted that the London papers published early to give their provincial contemporaries the advantage of free ‘copy’!

• Mr Arthur H Cosford, sub-editor Lincolnshire Standard, Boston, has won the premium offered by the Newspaper Owner and World for the best paper on how to revive a country weekly newspaper which was languishing from supine and careless management. April 1913.

• Mr A A Milne, assistant editor of Punch, has married Dorothy, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Martin de Sélincourt, of Palace Court. W. - June 1913. (The couple’s only son, Christopher Robin, was born in 1920 for whom Mr Milne wrote poems and bedtime stories about a bear – Winnie the Pooh.)
Press facilities are a hard fought-for tool of the job

As 1913 dawned recognition of the importance of reporters at meetings began to be realised with better seating facilities for the scribes who had frequently found themselves assigned to remote corners of halls.

The difficulties of hearing speakers were raised by a Leeds member who blamed promoters of public meetings for rarely realising the fact that it was much more important to them than it was to the newspapers, that the meeting be reported.

"This is the line I think reporters should take in insisting upon proper accommodation being provided for them when they are confronted with such a difficulty. The reporters form by far the most important portion of the audience – a fact which the speakers realise if the organisers of the meeting do not," the Journal’s editor wrote.

‘The reporters form by far the most important part of the audience’

“There is the historic instance of Lord Beaconsfield (the elevated Benjamin Disraeli) declining to commence his speech at a great banquet at Aylesbury until the reporters had been transferred from a remote corner to the centre table, on the ground that ‘he had not come there merely to talk to a few score Buckinghamshire farmers.’

A similar rebuke was given by a famous bishop “to a bumptious vicar who had declined to allow ‘those reporter fellows’ to occupy seats within easy hearing of the pulpit.”

Complaints of poor facilities brought apologies from Derby’s Clerk of the Peace for the situation at its Quarter Sessions, while Glamorgan County Council also apologised for its treatment of journalists.

Glasgow reporters were looking forward to new courts with “more capacious writing benches, situated in the best positions...and the addition of an excellent writing room, comfortable and conveniently situated.” It had taken several years of agitation by the Institute to get better facilities included in the new Justiciary Courts buildings.

The Oakhill and TP O’Connor Fund

The Institute’s Oakhill and TP O’Connor Fund provides assistance to journalists who are recovering from an operation or illness.

If you, or a journalist colleague, needs financial assistance in these circumstances please download an application form from our website www.cioj.co.uk or contact head office and a form will be mailed to you.

Don’t sub for me Argentina

A GOOD many inquiries have been received at Head Office with regard to the following advertisement which appeared in The Times:

SUB-EDITOR WANTED for English Daily Paper in Argentina; also TEN REPORTERS. Must be virile, forceful, honest writers, with the news-collecting instinct strongly developed. Scotsmen, Irishmen, or Colonials preferred: must be single. No application will be entertained from any member of the Institute of Journalists.

Should members of the Institute know of anyone who has any idea of applying for one of these positions, they will do well to consult the Head Office, where the excommunication pronounced upon them is sufficiently well understood in its nature and its causes. They will find that the latter are entirely to the Institute’s credit.

Bermuda short

REPORTER wanted: (Bermuda); verbatim (Pitman’s); good clear writing; proficiency on Remington typewriter desirable but not necessary; should have two or three years’ experience gathering news; some knowledge of sport; good appearance; non-drinker; Conservative; Protestant; three years’ engagement; salary £150 pa.
How did journalists get about to cover stories in 1912? While there were cars by that time, the only person likely to have one on a newspaper or magazine was the proprietor. Ordinary hacks would be using public transport.  In all the cities and most of the main towns in Britain it would have meant the municipal tramway system. All were electrified by 1912 and the working journalist would have paid a penny or twopence (equivalent to around 40p/80p today) to the conductor. The journalist would, of course, be expected to keep the ticket as a receipt for when he or she claimed expenses.  In London it would have been similar. Trams never ran along Fleet Street itself but a stone’s throw away, along the Victoria Embankment, around 70 trams an hour went in each direction to and from all parts of South London.  The underground railway system was in its early days with only the Metropolitan District Railway, Central London Railway (the “Twopenny Tube”) and newly-opened City & South London line in operation. Those who took the bus could expect some excitement. Motor buses had been introduced about eight years previously when bus companies quickly switched away from horse buses to save the cost of the animals. But the replacement vehicles were unreliable and driving was awful. Competition meant that buses raced in the streets. Around that time there were 2,500 bus accidents a year in London. Enough material there for a few stories in the London evening papers. Travelling to cover stories further afield meant going by train. The network was far denser than today with all towns and many villages having their own station. There would have been some problems with train journeys in 1912 as a national coal strike had been called that year. It affected the South Wales area badly and this was of particular importance to railways as the coalfield was the source of what was known as ’steam coal’ or anthracite. Many trains were cancelled. The Great Northern Railway, for example, cancelled 600 services a day. Some lines were closed entirely like the Great Central route linking London and Manchester. The South Eastern Railway closed 14 stations in the London area. Disrupted travel arrangements are thus no recent phenomenon.

President Norman Bartlett looks at transport issues for journalists in 1912

Editorial team go for gold

Members of the sub-editorial and reporting staff of the Press Association had a “Brighton to London Stroll” last week, when, after having done duty throughout Saturday, they proceeded by train to Brighton, whence they started from the Aquarium at 9 o’clock at night. A crowd assembled and they were started by Mr Williams of the Daily Telegraph. The affair was arranged in no sense as a race, but as a test of staying power, and six of the number completed the 53 miles in about 18 hours. This allowed of two stoppages, at Redhill for breakfast and at Purley, shortly before noon, for lunch. At Redhill Mr Alec Basford had to leave the party on account of feet trouble, and his place was taken by Mr F J Pignon. At Westminster Bridge they were met by a number of friends, and were then conveyed to London Aerodrome at Hendon, where each was presented with a gold medal given by Sir Thomas Lipton, and a shield awarded by the Aerodrome authorities was presented.  

July 1913

THE CIoJ PENSION FUND

The Institute’s Pension Fund provides a small monthly payment to members who find themselves in financial difficulties following retirement from the industry.

The Fund is limited in size but Institute members who may wish to apply should contact the general secretary at head office - 020 7252 1187.

The Pension Fund is a registered charity; no. 208176.
Columbia Journalism School in New York now teaches computational journalism. And rightly so. I just wish I knew what it was.

They are following a new trend of slicing journalism up into ever-narrower niches. Everyone’s at it. If you write a story with statistics in it, it’s data journalism. And if you do a feature about immigrants, it’s immigration journalism.

In fact at Columbia, they also teach Argumentative journalism … though most journalists I know don’t need to go on a course for that!

I was bewildered by all these niches until I looked through a 1912 issue of the Journal and found an advert about Colonial journalism. Maybe niches are not so new after all!

Training certainly isn’t new to the CIoJ. The institute has been at the forefront longer than any other organisation or provider. In fact it’s the only body that has a requirement to provide training as part of its royal charter.

It’s perplexing, though, that 100 years ago, the Institute was grappling with the same training issues as the industry faces now.

One correspondent in the Journal’s January 1913 issue noted that accountants, architects, dentists, engineers, lawyers, pharmacists and physicians were all registered and tested. And he added: “We of the press are the educators of the public. We provide them with news, with information on every subject under the sun. What are our qualifications for these tremendous duties? “Educationally, they are not very considerable. Most of us are mere plodders, and some not even that.”

The writer, William Stewart, said Parliament should require journalists to pass an exam before entering the profession. CIoJ membership would only be granted to those who passed.

Another article in the same issue suggested setting up a central exam board in London, with 15 regional centres, where trainees would be regularly tested by ‘eminent journalists’ in shorthand, PA, subbing and reporting - the ability to ‘acquire information and transcribe it into simple form’.

Sadly, neither of those ideas ever got off the ground. What a pity. But just imagine if they had …

We’d have one journalism training body, not three. We’d have one national qualification, not hundreds. We’d have journalists who were part of an officially recognised and respected organisation that could hold them to account.

We’d have higher standards. And we probably wouldn’t have had phone hacking or the Leveson inquiry.

You don’t need to be a computational journalist to work it out that this must surely be better than the hotch-potch of training we have now.

By Cleland Thom

Long days are nothing new in our profession

Today’s political correspondents, with their sound-bites and ‘leaks,’ have an easy job compared to their 19th century counterparts.

Mr John Mackie, chairman of our Edinburgh and East Scotland district, speaking at its January, 1913 dinner, recalled from his earlier days (around 1860) in the profession: “I have known them (reporters) start from Edinburgh at five in the morning, spend five or six hours in the railway train for Aberdeen, take notes of a long political speech, return to the city at 10pm, and not get home to bed until they had single-handedly produced a six-column report.”

In those days newspapers were broadsheet and type sizes were small, so six columns then meant a lot of writing!
ORPHAN FUND

117 YEARS
THE CIOJ HAS BEEN LOOKING AFTER THE ORPHANS OF ITS MEMBERS SINCE 1891

£50,000
THE AVERAGE ANNUAL SPEND OF THE INSTITUTE’S ORPHAN FUND ON ITS DEPENDANTS OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS

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WWW.CIOJ.CO.UK/ASSISTANCE/ORPHAN-FUND.HTML
Reports of the committees

Professional Practices Board, Amanda Brodie, Chairman

For a long time the CIoJ has been fighting the cause of local newspapers on several different fronts.

Among these has been the systemic assault on circulation and advertising revenue that has been carried out by so-called local government newspapers.

These propaganda sheets are produced by local councils at council tax payers’ expense. They often ape the look and feel of a local newspaper, and some are even produced weekly, in direct contravention of Government guidelines. This Publicity Code was set out by central Government in a bid to help protect our flagging local newspaper industry. But because they are guidelines and not the law, they are being widely flouted by councils up and down the country.

This issue is one which we raised last November when I arranged for Dominic and myself to attend a House of Lords select committee, where we gave evidence on the future of investigative journalism.

We told the inquiry: “The Government’s changed Publicity Code has had an impact, but there is still evidence of local government newspapers flouting the Code, which we are campaigning on still. That campaign was to bear fruit, just months later. We were invited to give evidence to an all-party parliamentary group of MPs at Westminster in July. The group was looking into the crisis in local newspapers.

We subsequently sent a copy of our submission to the then local government minister Bob Neill MP. In August he wrote back, pledging that the Publicity Code relating to local council newspapers would be strengthened by adding it to the statute book. This means from next year it will be illegal for local authorities to flout the guidelines on frequency of publication for their in-house titles.

This is a major victory for our local newspapers campaign and I am proud that your Professional Practices Board has been at the forefront of this change.

Our appearance at the July APPG led to favourable comments from MPs and publicity in the UKPG, helping to raise the CIoJ’s profile in the community.

The PPB has also been busy on other matters:
- Responded to the Filkin report into police/press relations
- Reacted to a Government decision to charge applicants for employment tribunals. It was part of a consultation we had taken part in earlier this year which also saw us speak out against the extension of the time limit for bringing tribunal cases from one to two years of employment
- Took part in a consultation on guidelines on what should be taken into account when the CPS is considering prosecuting journalists who may have contravened the law in the course of their work.

CIOJ funds provide more than £70,000 in support

More than £70,000 of support was provided to members, or members’ immediate family, during 2011.

The Trustees of the Institute Charitable Funds reported that support could be dispensed quickly when disaster strikes. Often, the support that is made available makes a significant difference to those members affected by dealing quickly, fairly and sympathetically during what is often a very traumatic time.

Benevolent Fund in 2012

Dominic reported that The Benevolent Fund, which is there to support members in times of hardship, had given grants or loans to a total of £9,000 so far during 2012.

Support was given to replace equipment, to help with funeral costs and to alleviate financial distress.

Orphan Fund in 2012

Mike Moriarty, Chairman of the Orphan Fund, spoke of his appreciation for Cyril Bainbridge, who has completed 35 years as a trustee of the Orphan Fund and had recently decided to stand down.

Extra support had been provided for tuition fees and schooling equipment.

Oak Hill and TP O’Connor Fund in 2012

Ken Brookes, Chairman of the Oak Hill and TP O’Connor Fund reported that the fund is there to support members who have been ill and help them through convalescence.

He said that following the resignation of the Pension Fund’s chairman, it had been decided that the existing committee of the Oak Hill Fund would act as the committee for the Pension Fund also. Meetings will take place consecutively, but the two funds will still operate separately.

One grant had been made so far during the year.

Pension Fund in 2012

A vacancy for a pensioner had recently become available and members will be asked to apply if they feel in need of support. The monthly pension is modest, but could be enough to provide essentials.
The President’s address

I n his address to the delegates, Institute President Norman Bartlett, started off on an upbeat note.

He reminded conference that 2011 had produced satisfactory financial results, encouraging stories from the well-funded charities, maintained membership strength and a recognised position as a body that upholds journalistic standards.

“You are not members of a loss-making, declining or moribund organisation,” he declared. “You are members of an elite professional body that looks after its membership and does its best to maintain standards of probity across the industry.”

He went on to talk about the three overriding issues that he saw facing the Institute and its members.

He spoke first about the economy, not as an economist but as an intelligent observer, unswayed by the rhetoric that the politicians bring to bear on the matter.

“I don’t think we shall see much difference in the economy for another decade or more,” was his judgement. No boom and no bust but just more of the same. He thought the country’s rising population would protect the economy to some degree. “More people mean more jobs”, was his assessment.

He gave examples of the way that the Institute has to cut its cloth to suit its finances and the less ambitious hopes of its members. Instead of three-day conferences abroad, we had one-day AGMs. But then big companies do the same as his experience with major corporations showed. Instead of all-expenses paid trips to corporate festivities in Las Vegas, the companies have made economies and have found cheaper just as effective means of delivering their corporate messages to the press online.

He went on to talk about our industry: “When we look at our industry it is easy to wring our hands in despair. We see long-established and well-loved titles being closed or merged. We witness new technology shattering business models that have been in place for years. We see lay-offs by the hundreds.”

Yet he saw hope in the way new opportunities are arising from the ruins of the old: “The volume of reading matter, the masses of images both still and video, the multitudinous radio, TV and Internet broadcast channels….Yes, there is an enormous amount of journalistic effort going on.”

Journalists had to identify the opportunities, to capture them and then work out how to get the revenue out of them. It was difficult for many members steeped in the traditional areas of journalistic activity. But on the future market for print newspapers and magazines and books he cautioned: “The ground is moving under your feet quicker than may be comfortable.”

He referred to the iPad, the Kindle, the new Chromebook and the next generation of mobile, handheld devices that will change the way people get their news and information. He said that all the content for those myriad mobile devices would have to be created, researched, packaged and delivered not just by blogs and citizen journalists and other amateurs, but by professionals.

His third concern and possibly the most difficult was the changed social attitude to joining formal organisations. Not just professional bodies but trade unions, established churches, political parties and other groups all faced the lack of interest in joining them.

People are still happy to volunteer like they did for Olympics but they don’t have the urge to sign up to or get involved in formal organisations. He contrasted that with the millions who have signed up to Facebook and Twitter. Tesco, Sainsbury’s and Marks & Spencer have their many loyal followers. Hundreds of thousands of professionals have put themselves and their lives on LinkedIn.

He thought the reasons for their popularity was being free to join, easy to join and with clearly identified benefits. As far as possible the Institute would keep plugging away at those areas, but he could not think free membership was on the cards.

He said that these issues are not just raised at the AGM but constantly being discussed by the officers and staff. He praised general secretary, Dominic Cooper for the efforts he put into making the Institute more accessible.

“I hope,” he concluded, “That these few words will reinforce your dedication to the Institute and remind you how worthwhile it is, both for you and yours and for the wider industry of which you are part.”

Debates and resolutions

Conference debated on three subjects, these were the phone-hacking saga, Google facing off against the publishers in the new copyright bill and local broadcast licences. The latter was facilitated by Dave McCormack of Made Television who gave a talk to members on the subject of local broadcast television.

A motion was also brought by Chairman of the Broadcasting Division, Paul Leighton, in support of our BBC colleagues. The motion read: “This conference has full confidence in the news-gathering activity and journalists of the BBC.”

Mr Leighton, a former BBC newsreader, said that the actions of BBC management in blocking the Newsnight investigation into Savile should not reflect on the journalists working on the programme, who, he said, would have been frustrated by the bosses’ actions. The motion was passed by conference.

There were three other motions that were passed at the AGM. The first honoured members who have been in continuous membership for 20 or more years. They may apply to Council to become a Distinguished Member of the CIoJ and use the post-nominal letters DCIJ instead of MCIJ.

The second recommended to Council that a registration fee for student members be charged at a rate of £10 for the first year of membership, and the third agreed to amend standing order 7.2 regarding reduced rates of subscription to remove superfluous wording which related to fund benefits.
leavers applying for apprenticeships with the company last year were all "unfit for work."

"The state-sponsored babysitting never had more holes in it," the man said, "and the youth unemployment crisis is little more than an inheritance of more than £2 billion, last night, the minister for education and skills said the country's education system must start a revolution to solve youth employment."

"In Scotland, the Minister for Education, said he would seek a revolution to make the situation of the country's education system," the man said. "The Minister for Education said he would seek a revolution to solve the problem of youth employment."

"We are increasingly concerned at the nature of some college programmes that are so bad they amount to a complete shambles there is within government over policy-making at the moment," the minister for education said. "I want to encourage growth."

Continued on Page 4.