Institute salutes a pioneer of investigative journalism

As interest surrounding the sinking of the Titanic reaches a crescendo point for the April centenary of the disaster, the Chartered Institute of Journalists will conduct its own ceremony of remembrance for one of the greatest journalists of all time who perished when the “unsinkable” ship sank.

William Thomas Stead, one-time editor of the Pall Mall Gazette, died as he sailed to answer a personal invitation from US President William Howard Taft to speak at a congress in New York’s Carnegie Hall on world peace and international arbitration. He decided to treat himself to a £26 11s (£25.55) first class ticket on the liner’s maiden voyage. He was 62 when he died.

The Institute, led by President Norman Bartlett, will lay a wreath at the Stead memorial on London’s Victoria Embankment, directly opposite the Temple tube station’s Embankment exit, at 10am on Sunday, April 15. This will be followed by a special service at St Bride’s Church, Fleet Street, at 11am. Drinks will be served afterwards.

All members of the Institute who can attend are being urged to do so because not only is this “our” event but the memorial is very much “our” memorial.

Three months after the sinking, the shock waves were still reverberating as the Institute organised a committee of the good and the great of British journalism to raise cash for a memorial. They appealed for “half-crowns and shillings” – and the cash poured into the Institute’s Hall, in Tudor Street.

So great was the response from journalists around the world who recognised Mr Stead’s achievements – which included him going to jail for “buying” a chimney-sweep’s daughter for £5 to expose child prostitution in Victorian London but resulted in the age of consent being raised from 13 to 16 – that the appeal committee had enough money to commission two identical head-and-shoulders plaques from Sir George Frampton, an eminent sculptor of the day.

The second memorial plaque was sent to the USA and is in New York’s Central Park.

We are hoping that some of the great-grandchildren of Mr Stead will be able to join with CIoj members at the commemorative wreath-laying. Prof Roger Luckhurst, of Birkbeck College, who is organising a special conference in April (in conjunction with the British Library) examining W.T. Stead’s life achievements, has indicated that he, too, will attend the ceremonies.

“The Titan of the Titanic”, our “Turning the Clock Back” special feature examines W T Stead’s life and achievements on pages 6, 7 and 8.
Editor’s Comment

It is entirely appropriate that the Chartered Institute of Journalists should be marking the centenary of the passing of W.T. Stead – a founding father of investigative, campaigning journalism in Britain – at the same time as we are celebrating the centenary of this publication.

Yes, The Journal came into being in the very same year that the British Press – and the Institute – lost one of its most influential, and at times controversial, figures.

W.T. Stead stood for a “New Journalism” which can be said to have paved the way for modern, mass-circulation, tabloid newspapers. But while we rightly condemn the ugly side of today’s tabloids, Stead’s approach was quite different from that of the phone-hackers and the long lens paparazzi. If he trod on toes and upset the Establishment, it was because he was an unflinching champion of the liberties of the people and a vigorous defender of the highest standards of investigative journalism.

From his early days on the Northern Echo to the high point of his career as crusading editor of the Pall Mall Gazette – where, in effect, he invented the celebrity interview (his first major interviewee was none other than General Charles G. Gordon – “Gordon of Khartoum”) – Stead broke new ground time and again. He campaigned relentlessly for strong national defence and was a great champion of the Royal Navy, believing that a powerful British navy was the best way to ensure peace in the world.

No cause motivated Stead more, however, than the plight of the unfortunate in Victorian London and the urgent need to bring about vital social reforms. At a time when Britain was at the zenith of its imperial power, he saw it as his mission to highlight the evils that lay just below the surface of the Empire’s capital city. He was a tireless crusader against injustice and corruption, and was not prepared to accept that a country as wealthy as Britain should be allowed to turn its back on the poor and weak.

It was Stead and the Pall Mall Gazette who uncovered the shocking extent of child prostitution in London, and it was their investigation that brought about a much-needed and long overdue change in the law to protect children from this iniquitous business. Yet it is regrettably typical of societies that are a long time “in denial” that, on a legal technicality, it was W.T. Stead who ended up in prison for his trouble!

I hope that many members of the CIoJ will join us at the memorial to W.T. Stead on the Victoria Embankment, on Sunday 15 April, and for the church service afterwards at St Brides, to salute the accomplishments and the crusading zeal of this great journalist and social reformer.

Andy Smith

[NOTE: A special Centenary issue of The Journal will appear this Autumn. More details in the Summer issue.]
House of Lords Committee reports on future of investigative journalism

By AMANDA BRODIE Chairman, Professional Practices Board

The House of Lords Select Committee on Communications has published its report on the future of investigative journalism.

The inquiry, which was attended by the Chartered Institute of Journalists (CIoJ) who gave evidence last November, was chaired by Lord Inglewood. Others giving evidence included editors of national newspapers and magazines as well as from the world of broadcasting and media advisory groups.

Summing up the conclusions and recommendations of the inquiry, Lord Inglewood said: “The purpose of our work has been, against the background of perhaps the greatest political media scandal of a generation, to look at the future of investigative journalism in the light of the problems currently facing the media and the technological revolution unfolding in this area. We hope that what we have done will enable those going into the issues in greater detail than us to come forward with proposals which will be relevant to and protect the responsible investigative journalism of tomorrow.

“Investigative journalism plays a vital role in the UK’s system of democratic governance and accountability. However, its role and practices have received unprecedented scrutiny over recent months and it faces a number of profound economic, legal and regulatory challenges.”

He added: “News organisations, regulators and relevant legal bodies therefore need to make sure, as changes and new measures are introduced, that these are not rooted in the past but seek to enable responsible investigative journalism to flourish in the future.

“We heard much evidence which painted a pessimistic picture of the economic problems facing investigative journalism but we have heard no evidence that leads us to conclude that investigative journalism will disappear: we believe that it will continue.”

He said he was encouraged that new funding initiatives for investigative journalism have started to emerge, which crucially are independent of public subsidies or state support. He singled out the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, whose editor in chief Iain Overton, gave evidence at the inquiry on the same day as Dominic Cooper, General Secretary of the CIoJ.

Mr Cooper said: “We were pleased to take part in the inquiry and to note that many of the comments made by Lord Inglewood and the conclusions reached by the committee were matters on which the CIoJ has been campaigning for some time.

“These include the importance of local papers in training the journalists of tomorrow and their crucial role in investigative journalism. At the inquiry we were at pains to champion the cause of local papers and it seems the committee have taken this on board.”

Plurality

Other issues which the CIoJ have campaigned on and which are reflected in the report include the plurality of ownership among media groups – to ensure the local press’ watchdog role is given greater weight when assessing merger proposals; the importance of interns being paid a reasonable wage for their work and not being exploited; the danger of cutbacks at the BBC, and the importance of training.

The committee has made several recommendations, among them that an audit trail should be maintained by media organisations – a two-stage internal process to track and record decisions, firstly, to start an investigation and secondly, to publish a story. The aim is to provide two internal checks for testing whether a story falls within the public interest, and a record which could be used by regulators when evaluating individual cases.

The inquiry also asks for guidelines to be published by prosecuting authorities to help media decide whether conducting an investigation could lead to prosecution.

It further recommends that fines for misconduct levied by the Press Complaints Commission or its successor, be used to fund investigative journalism.

It concluded that the present system of newspapers being zero-rated for VAT should be maintained and that the Government should consider further the legality of limiting the receipt of zero-rated VAT only to those newspapers which are members of the PCC or its successor.

The committee was also concerned about the impact of the public relations industry on investigative journalism. It recommends that: “All PR practitioners should abide by a clear code of behaviour, potentially overseen by a third party. This should apply equally to those working in this area for both the Government and political parties, ensuring that they can set an example for communications which are universally transparent and straightforward.”

The full report of the inquiry can be downloaded at: www.parliament.uk then click on House of Lords/ select committees/ communications committee/ secure future for investigative journalism.
Sambrook heads for Wales

One of our country’s foremost figures in journalism, who led the BBC’s international news services across radio, television and new media, is to join Cardiff University.

Richard Sambrook has been appointed as Professor of Journalism and the new Director of the Centre for Journalism at the University’s School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies. He will replace Richard Tait who retires from the post in September.

Sambrook spent 30 years at the BBC, leading teams at the frontline of national and international journalism, and is now Global Vice Chairman at Edelman Public Relations.

As Director of the BBC’s Global News division, he led the corporation’s news-gathering operations around the world. He was also instrumental in establishing its 24-hour news channels and internet sites, its live satellite news-gathering and broadcasting.

Global reach

During his BBC years, Sambrook was senior producer and deputy editor of the Nine O’Clock News, working on location in the Far East, Middle East, Europe, Russia and the United States. He has produced coverage for three General Elections, the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and co-ordinated the BBC’s coverage of the war in Bosnia.

A new planet is discovered!

A euronews programme, produced in partnership with the DG Enterprise of the European Commission, is devoted to small and medium-sized enterprises. It is called Business Planet – and it certainly to be a star in its own right.

SMEs have been the driving force of the European economy these past five years, accounting for 80 per cent of all jobs created in Europe. A new international station, Business Planet, looks at the projects that help SMEs get started, develop their activity and sometimes bring new life to companies lacking in innovation.

The programme also explores the life and times of businesses with radically different experiences: from overnight success to years of patience before breaking even, or business models that had to be completely reinvented to save the company. The stories are all different and instructive.

A sudden Serge!

Business Planet invites you into the companies, explains how they began, expanded and perhaps started all over again. How do they hold onto a niche market, how do they find the funding they need, how do they distinguish themselves from the competition? What are the obstacles and challenges? Each edition of Business Planet, presented by 42-year-old French business journalist, Serge Rombi, will seek out entrepreneurs with the most surprising projects, always on the lookout for ideas and initiatives that will boost their business.

Don't get angry!

Just go BAAM!

When the British Association of Anger Management was formed 13 years ago, they had no way of knowing that a few years later they would be opening treatment centres in ten new destinations due to overwhelming demand.

In those days, the concept of anger management was something that very few people knew anything about – certainly within the profession of journalism! The new website received just 28 hits a day – startlingly low when compared with new figures which see over 300 people from across the country logging on each day to learn more about anger.

To you, anger management may be something that ‘other people’ have. To many, it’s a frightening reality that affects their home and work lives and their personal relationships. The following statistics really help to hammer home the UK’s growing problem with anger.

Personal relationships

More than half of attendees to BAAM’s programmes recognise that their anger stems from their personal relationships – either with partners or children. Some 20% directly relate their stress to professional relationships and 90% of those receiving treatment reported having been bullied at some stage and have gone on to victimise others. Nearly all of those in attendance suffer from shame disorders where they believe that something is wrong with themselves – or, in simpler terms, that they are broken.

Bleak statistics indeed, but with BAAM’s caring and compassionate approach, a great many people are emerging from this nightmare.

Contact information: Mike Fisher, British Association of Anger Management, 4 The Bothy Cottage, Flawatch Hall, Flawatch Lane, Sharpthorne, RH19 4JL. Tel: 0345 1300 296. E-mail info@angermanage.co.uk

BAAM also operates a number of regional clinics and centres.
Tribunal fees plan “a charter for bad employers”

By Amanda Brodie

The trade union arm of the CIoJ has spoken out strongly against the Government’s planned introduction of up-front fees for claimants at employment tribunals, calling it “a charter for bad employers”.

The Ministry of Justice is consulting on the plans in a move aimed at reducing costs to the taxpayer associated with providing a tribunal service, which at present is free to claimants.

Amanda Brodie, chairman of the Institute’s Professional Practices Board, said the introduction of fees would have the effect of putting off genuine claimants, and of introducing a justice system “which will be used only by those who can afford to pay”.

She told the Ministry of Justice: “The system is already heavily weighted in favour of employers, who often have considerable resources to employ expensive lawyers to fight their case, while the complainant is either unrepresented, or relying on support from a trade union or similar body. The funds available for legal representation from such bodies are limited.”

“The idea of waiving the fee for those on low incomes goes nowhere in terms of making the proposals fairer. Many people in employment will by definition, not be on low incomes, and in any case it will not help the many middle-income claimants who may be looking at using their family savings in order to fund their claim.”

She added: “Like the health service, access to justice should be ‘free at the point of need.’ This is a fundamental right and should be safeguarded – it is not a waste of taxpayers’ money, but prudent use of it, as anyone could need the services of a tribunal at any time.”

The Government further claims that the increasing number of employees taking their employers to employment tribunals is weakening the desire of firms to take on more staff, and so stifling the expansion of business.

Ms Brodie said: “This document gives the impression of being a charter for bad employers. Any employer who treats its staff decently and fairly will have nothing to fear from the tribunal system, since it will not have to go there. Any spurious claims can be weeded out at the arbitration stage through ACAS, long before any serious costs are incurred, and any vexatious ones can be dealt with by the court under current rules.

“The fact that the service is used more, is in itself a good reason for retaining it in its present form – it is clearly much needed.”

She told the Ministry: “At the Institute of Journalists we have many years experience in representing our members at employment tribunals. In our experience it is highly unusual for anyone to put themselves through the stress and potential costs of taking an employer to tribunal, unless they feel they have a genuine grievance.

“If this consultation exercise really is about reducing the costs of Employment Tribunal (ET) claims, there should be more emphasis on conciliation and any party who does not genuinely enter this process should risk losing their case. If the case is weak, vexatious, or brought to the court without any great merit, courts should be firmer in striking out the claim – this can be achieved under the present rules.

“As for fees, the court already has the right to apply them. Let them exercise this right more often, but where they seek to do so all parties should be given plenty of warning so they may assess their position more carefully before proceeding.”

The IoJ(TU) has requested that the Ministry adopt option zero, which is to maintain the status quo. The options in detail are set out on this page.

Options

Option 0 – Do nothing. Charge no fee and continue to fund the Employment Tribunals (ET) and Employment Appeals Tribunals (EAT) through general taxation.

Option 1 – Introduce a fee-charging structure where:

- the person who brings proceedings or seeks an order initially pays the relevant fee;
- all types of appeals and all parts of the process are subject to fees payable in advance;
- a full or partial fee remission is available to those on low incomes;
- a power for the tribunal to order the unsuccessful party to reimburse the fees paid by the successful party; and
- fee levels are initially set at a level to recover less than the full costs of the ET and EAT taking into account fee remissions.

Option 2 (for ET only) – To introduce a fee-charging structure, which shares some of the same features as Option 1, but which also:

- requires the claimant to choose whether to seek an award value above or below £30,000;
- prevents the tribunal from making an award above £30,000 where the claimant has chosen to limit any award value to less than this amount through the payment of an appropriate fee; and
- provides guidance and support to ensure that claimants can assess whether to make a claim for more or less than £30,000.

Congratualtions to our Liz

By Norman Bartlett

At the Council meeting in February, Immediate Past President Liz Justice was awarded a Fellowship of the Institute.

The citation noted that she had been elected as Vice-President of the Institute to take her appointment in January 2009. She anticipated two years in that position, learning the ropes, before taking up her responsibilities as President two years later. Instead, for reasons entirely beyond her control, she was thrown in at the deep end as it were and became President without any preparation.

She rose to the task courageously, and managed her Council with firmness and determination. What the Institute found very valuable was her knowledge of the inner workings of several government departments. She led the way on the major campaigns the Institute handled during her tenure.

In the case of local authority newspapers the efforts saw action on the change of government. Liz carried the campaign to Scotland where discussions with the Scottish Parliament resulted in a reversal of an earlier decision that would have restricted statutory advertising in local media.

Interns were another issue on which Liz felt strongly. She arranged for a submission to a forum, Gateways to the Professions, which developed a code of conduct on the matter. It led to a Common Best Practice Code, adopted by the Department of Innovation, Business and Skills among others.
The Titan of the Titanic

“Turning Back the Clock” remembers the life of W.T. Stead, the pioneer of investigative journalism, who died a century ago, in April 1912. He met his end in the icy waters of the Atlantic, a victim of the sinking of the Titanic.

By Robin Morgan

William Thomas Stead was a power in the land. Governments acted when he spoke – even when his words came from a cell in Holloway Jail – as his campaigning journalism changed the way we thought and lived.

His death shook the world and prompted the Institute of Journalists to organise an appeal for “half-crowns or shillings” to create a memorial to what we described as “a brilliant journalist and a figure of commanding influence.”

W.T. Stead, as he was always known, launched his journalistic career in 1870 in almost evangelical style on the Northern Echo, at Darlington, where his pulpit-thumping style thundered against injustice and corruption while supporting the death penalty – “murderers must be disposed of” – and campaigning against extending the vote to the poor – “I fear that we shall yet suffer evil results from the extension of the franchise to ignorant men.”

His religious fervour had evolved into outright sensationalism and his exposure of slums that year resulted in new housing legislation, while a campaign to strengthen the Royal Navy resulted in a massively expensive refit of the fleet – and undoubtedly helped prepare the fleet for the trials and triumphs of the First World War.

He was the first to employ women journalists on equal pay.

But his major triumph came in 1885 when he uncovered a trade in child prostitution to which the government was turning a blind eye to protect its wealthy clientele. The story – curiously headlined “The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon” – opened respectable society’s eyes to the world of London’s “vice, stinking brothels, fiendish procures, drugs and padded rooms, where upper-class rakes could enjoy to the full the exclusive luxury of revelling in the cries of an immature child.”

The public outcry forced the government to enact the Criminal Law Amendment Bill which, among other things, raised the age of consent from 13 to 16, gave international impetus to the checking of the white slave trade, and raised the age of consent from 13 to 16.
trade... and led to Stead becoming its first victim!

As part of his exposé, he had staged the purchase, for £5, of a chimney sweep’s daughter, Elizabeth Armstrong (called Lily in the Pall Mall Gazette) to prove how easily impoverished children could be acquired for outrage. But he dropped a legal clanger by not telling her father it was a stunt and was subsequently sentenced to three months in Holloway for kidnapping.

Stead served three months in Holloway for “buying” a chimney sweep’s daughter without informing him it was a newspaper stunt. Ironically, it was later reported, the sweep turned out not to be the girl’s father!

His obituary in The Times recalled: “After a few days [in prison] he was made a first-class misdemeanant and he conducted his paper from a not incommodious cell in Holloway Gaol. He became a great friend of the Governor, who presented him, on liberation, with the suit of prison clothes he had worn at Coldbath Fields.”

For many years, The Times, noted, “Stead held a reception of his friends and admirers on the anniversary of his conviction, and on those occasions he wore his Order of the Broad Arrow” (as the obituary termed his prison uniform!).

Outspoken

While his reputation never really recovered and a growing fascination with spiritualism exposed him to ridicule from fellow reporters, Stead continued to be controversial and outspoken, particularly against war – and the Boer War in particular. Several times he was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize.

In 1890 he left the Gazette and created the highly successful Review of Reviews advocating the expansion of the Empire, home rule for Ireland and the maintenance of morality in government and politics.

He befriended the Suffragettes of the early 1900s.

Latter day retrospectives of Stead’s achievements include judgements that The Pall Mall Gazette, Review of Reviews and other journals were crucial in the emergence of the modern day broadsheet and tabloid press.

Stead tended to report Spiritualism favourably, as part of the non-conformist world of religion. He became active in the movement in the 1880s and tried to foster support for the Society for Psychical Research. He ran the journal Borderland from 1893-7, which reported on ghosts, psychical experiments, hypnotic rapport, astral doubles and messages from the dead.

He was brought to the brink of bankruptcy in 1904 when his attempt to launch a daily failed but his standing as a journalist continued to command international respect. His death came as he answered a personal invitation from US President William Howard Taft to speak at a congress on world peace and international arbitration in New York’s Carnegie Hall.

With the Titanic about to make its maiden voyage, Stead, then 62, decided to opt for the luxury of a first class £26 11s ticket for cabin C87 and set sail from Southampton on April 10, 1912.

On board he spent most of his time with the enormously wealthy John Jacob Astor IV, whose cousin, William Waldorf Astor, had owned the Pall Mall Gazette and who in 1911 bought The Observer. When the boat struck the iceberg, both men returned to their neighbouring cabins, dressed and returned to the deck. John Astor had seen his wife off in a lifeboat and as the Titanic sank, both men jumped into the sea and were last seen clinging to a raft, freezing until they both lost their grip and drowned. Stead’s body was never recovered.

Remarkably Stead seemed to have envisaged his death years earlier in articles he had written. In March 1886, in a piece headlined “How the mail steamer went down in mid-Atlantic”, he wrote of a large death toll: “This is exactly what might take place and will take place if liners are sent to sea short of (life) boats.” In 1892, he wrote a fictional story in which a vessel named Majestic (White Star liner names all ended in -ic) rescued survivors from another ship which had collided with an iceberg.

Three months later, still in shock over his death, the Institute organised a committee of the good and the great of British journalism to raise cash for a memorial.

The appeal sent to members observed that “while different views may be taken of Mr Stead as a crusader and reformer, there is only one opinion about his ability as a journalist. The brilliancy of his gifts, the fervour of his convictions, and the unswerving probity and courage with which he defended what he believed to be the right, are acknowledged on all hands.”

Memorial

The half-crowns and shillings poured in. A memorial plaque was sited opposite the Temple tube station on Victoria Embankment, in 1913, close to where Stead used to work at the Pall Mall Gazette offices in Catherine Street, off the Aldwych. The head-and-shoulders plaque was created by Sir George Frampton, an eminent sculptor of the day, and is inscribed: “W.T. Stead, 1849 – 1912. This memorial to a journalist of wide renown was erected near the spot where he worked for more than thirty years by journalists of many lands in recognition of his brilliant gifts fervent spirit & untiring devotion to the service of his fellow men.”

The base of the memorial consists of an armoured knight on the left and a woman in medieval dress on the right, symbolising Stead’s campaigning for women’s rights. A second casting was made and sent to admiring Americans who erected it in New York’s Central Park.

A much wider public appeal (not connected with the Institute) created the W.T. Stead Hostels for Women organisation which provided safe refuges. Queen Alexandra fervently supported the cause and the first hostels were opened in Westminster and Hoxton, in London, and at Leeds and

continued on 8
T he other journalist on the Titanic

A second, equally colourful, journalist, Francis Davis Millet, also died in the Titanic disaster – although it took the Institute almost a year to record his death by means of reporting that he left an estate of £4,474 gross (equal to about £250,000 at present day values) – net £1,341 (about £76,000).

Millet, an American, was perhaps better known as an artist than as a writer. He began his journalistic career on American local papers and the Boston Courier before moving into Europe’s art circles but during the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78 he was a war correspondent of the New York Herald, the London Daily News, and the London Graphic. He was decorated by Russia and Romania due to his bravery under fire and services to the wounded. In July, 1898, he was sent to Manilla by the London Times and Harper’s Weekly.

Footnote: Stead’s interest in the spirit world led to reports from Paris on May 14, 1912 that “Fermanagh Girrod, of the Psychic Research Society of France, an organisation of standing, today announced that after repeated efforts he has succeed in communicating with Stead. Girrod says that for four days Stead had been trying to communicate with him and that after the use of five different mediums he received the message, which said that Stead had died without suffering and in perfect calm.”

Another first for William Thomas Stead?

From the President’s Desk

By Norman Bartlett

Two topics have been occupying Presidential time since the last issue of The Journal, with a third looming up.

I hope most of you are regular visitors to the Institute’s website (www.cioj.co.uk). A great deal of work has been done on the site but we are not yet content with what we have. As someone with a background in text (like most of you) it is difficult to take account of the far more challenging environment in which our on-line presence is judged and rated.

In print, typos, incorrectly linked sections, inappropriate heads were not welcomed but accepted as a fact of life. On-line those rules no longer apply. A web page is read not only by human eyes but by automated spiders and bots. They do not have the ability to think, “Ho-ho, typo there but I know what the writer meant” or “Why does it say continued on page 5 when it’s actually on page 7?” The automatons that crawl over web pages to check content and links have no social awareness. They are simply programmed to check for accuracy.

So what does it matter if they find errors or failures? It does if one aspires to use the spiders and bots. They do not have the links that work, people or another search engine. If Google does not provide the links that work, people will not trust it and will use another. Google’s business model is constructed on developing algorithms that provide accurate, up-to-date directions. To deliver that quality, the spiders crawl and collect. If they find gaps, holes, misdirects and similar errors, the source is discarded.

The Institute wants its website to be a popular portal through which journalists and others can find all the information about journalism they need. We do not want to be a discarded source. To avoid that fate, requires expertise, dedication and resources.

We are working steadily on the challenge

The second area of recent focus has been charitable activity. As members will know we have four funds (all described on the website): Benevolent, Oakhill & T.P. O’Connor, Orphans and Pensions. These provide assistance to members who have financial difficulties or health problems or to their dependents in the case of deceased members.

The funds are well-endowed (about £2.3 million in total) but with the decline in the value of investments, not limitless. The Trustees of these funds therefore have a challenging task – to support those who are in necessitous circumstances while ensuring that the funds are not exhausted.

Applications are always dealt with in strict confidence and Trustees consider them sympathetically. But they are not unquestioning and in some recent cases extra information has been sought from the claimants resulting in debate. Happily the Trustees have felt it appropriate to assist in every recent case.

As I am personally involved in the preparation of the annual accounts, I can vouch for the fact that reduced activity in the economy has had marked effect on the returns provided on the Funds’ investments in 2011. But for those in genuine need, do not hesitate to get in contact with Head Office.

The third element that will take on a greater significance will be the preparation of the centenary edition of The Journal. Elsewhere in this issue, Robin Morgan describes the significance of the issue and the role that he hopes members will be able to play. I will only remark on one aspect of this year of centenaries: W.T. Stead. This campaigning Victorian journalist lost his life in the Titanic disaster of April 1912.

On two recent occasions I have been asked to step in at the last minute and deliver talks to organisations where the booked speaker had gone AWOL. I took the opportunity to talk about the great W.T. Stead. On both occasions the reception was most gratifying. This was not anything to do with my oratorical skills but simply due to the fascinating story I had to tell of this wonderful journalist: in the flesh a warm and generous human being; on the page a latter day Old Testament prophet, railing against the injustices of the day.

To my audiences, fed on recent stories of journalistic misfeasance, Stead’s commitment to noble aims reminded them, many told me, of the value of journalists.
BBC boosts business coverage

An international search has been launched by the BBC for a new Chief Business Correspondent.

The Corporation is keen to expand the breadth and depth of its worldwide business reporting, and – in recognition of the importance of China, India and Japan – the post will be based in East Asia.

Whilst their prime focus will be reporting for international outlets such as BBC World News, BBC World Service and BBC.com, the successful candidate will also bring major stories and reports to UK audiences across the BBC’s flagship UK news services. They will report across all platforms – TV, radio and online.

A BRIC in the wall

Last year, the BBC issued a Delivering Quality First report, and the creation of the new position is seen as an implementation of that strategy – to put new investment into news-gathering in global priority areas such as the BRIC countries and emerging markets such as Asia.

Peter Horrocks, Director of BBC Global News, commented: “There’s never been a time when the world has been so interconnected and we need to understand changes and trends on the other side of the planet. We want someone who can break big stories and bring first-rate analysis across our international platforms. This high-profile appointment is just one part of significant investment in global news gathering.”

SEEMO Human Rights Photo Award

A call for the submission of entries for one of the world’s most prestigious photographic competitions.

As part of the BETA Photograph of the Year competition, the Vienna-based South and East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO), an affiliate of the International Press Institute (IPI), calls for the submission of entries for its 2012 SEEMO Human Rights Photo Award. All professional photojournalists working and taking photographs in South East and Central Europe are eligible to participate. The closing date for submissions is 22 April 2012.

Professional achievements

This is the ninth consecutive photo competition organized by the Belgrade-based BETA news agency. SEEMO is participating for the fifth time, and the competition is designed to promote professional achievements in photojournalism in South East Europe. The winner of the BETA Photograph of the Year competition is awarded 1,000 EUR. The runner-up receives 750 EUR and the third spot wins 500.

The winner of the SEEMO Human Rights Photo Award, selected by a special panel of judges, receives a special plaque. The winning photograph, as well as other photos selected by the SEEMO jury, will be published on the SEEMO website and in its publications, De Scripto magazine and the South, East and Central Europe Media Handbook.

Belgrade to host ceremony

The main sponsor of the BETA photo competition, Telekom Srbija, will award the best sports photograph.

All awards will be presented during the inaugural exhibition of selected works, which will take place in the New Moment Gallery in Belgrade, Serbia, on 17 May 2012, at 6 p.m.

BETA will publish a catalogue of all exhibited works. The terms of the competition are posted at www.betafotokonkursinfo@gmail.com.

Previous winners have included:

2011: Janko Petkovic
2010: Mahir Vranac
2009: Nebojsa Radosavljevic-Raus
2008: Maja Zlatevksa
2008: Marko Djurica

The Sun will come out tomorrow!

Brand awareness was the first stage. Now, News International is switching to more targeted campaigns, having announced that it is seeking a consistent 38 per cent market share of circulation across the red tops and mid-market Sunday titles.

The Murdoch-owned newspaper publisher hopes that the Sun on Sunday will maintain a consistent circulation of around 3.2 million, the same share the News of the World had of the Sunday popular and mid-market sector in June, a month before its closure.

In its second and third editions, News International claims the Sun on Sunday attracted 39 per cent of Sunday newspaper sales in those segments, helped by its Alton Towers money-off promotion. Rob Painter, The Sun’s Marketing Director, told Marketing Week: “The Mirror, People and Star on Sunday still have volumes that we hope to recruit for ourselves; their circulations have not yet gone to pre-news of the World closure levels.”

He adds that the publisher will also be utilising its customer database and employing in-store marketing to recruit lapsed News of the World readers back to a News International title on a Sunday. The Group has also said that the campaign has “surpassed expectations” in raising brand awareness.

A public memorial service for Marie Colvin will be held at St Martin-in-the-Fields Church at 11am on May 9. All are welcome.
Regional paid-for newspaper ABCs released

Key facts on readership levels and online usage

- 1.3 million readers lost per week in physical papers, with increases of up to 30 per cent in online readership.
- Increases go as high as 3.3 fold (Ealing & Acton Gazette), decreases go to a maximum of 47 per cent (down to 15,000 in the case of the Lancs and Morecambe Reporter).
- Out of the 769 papers which we can compare with the same period in the previous year, 679 decreased in circulation.
- There was a drop, amongst those papers which had decreases, of 1,562,543, representing a 9 per cent drop, from 16.5 million to 15 million.
- Amongst those few papers with an increase, this produced an extra 215,894 readers.
- There has been, therefore, an overall loss of 1.3 million readers.

Online, the figures are very different.

- Trinity Mirror had average daily unique browsers in the period of 469,707 (up 12.2 per cent year on year).
- Johnston Press had 452,380 unique a day (up 13 per cent)
- Newsquest had 449,121 a day (up 13.6 per cent).
- Northcliffe had 302,463 (up 5.4 per cent).
- This gives a total of approx 1.6 million readers (daily). Compare this with the 1.3 million lost readers of physical papers, with increases of up to 30 per cent in online readership.

The newspaper industry could lose up to £20m a year under Government plans to scrap the legal obligation on councils to advertise traffic orders in local newspapers, writes Andrew Pugh.

The Department for Transport (DoT) wants to abolish what it describes as the “cost burden” on local authorities and believes they should be free to explore alternative means such as online-only advertising. The Government has acknowledged the likely impact on local newspaper revenues, but feels this concern is outweighed by the “substantial savings” for local authorities and the Highways Agency.

It believes present arrangements “can no longer be justified” and that local newspapers “cannot continue to expect to receive what is in effect, public sector subsidy”. The DoT estimates that 80 per cent of councils will stop advertising in local newspapers if the proposals get the green light, costing the industry around £16.5m a year.

DoT – short for dottie?

But if all advertising was to migrate away from the local press then revenue losses could rise to as much as much as £20m a year, according to the Government’s own figures. The DoT, however, said “economic theory” suggested advertising rates would adjust and “demand will rise to fill the space available in the newspapers”.

“Thus, the final change in revenue will be far less than this,” it said. “This impact on revenues is considered to be an indirect effect of this deregulatory change.” A spokesman added: “The Government strongly favours the use of online publication, and of other lower cost options to communicate with interested parties.” The DoT also claimed that by scrapping newspaper ads local people will become better informed because councils will have the “discretion to target the relevant audience in the most appropriate way”.

‘A serious threat to the public’s right to know’

The plans have been condemned by the Newspaper Society. Communications and Marketing Director, Lynne Anderson told the Press Gazette: “These proposals are driven by a desire for local authority cost saving with scant regard for the reason the regulations were established – to ensure that traffic orders are publicised to the widest number of people possible. They represent a serious threat to the public’s right to know.”

The Wreck Of The Margherita

by Bill Todd

Institute member Bill Todd has e-published the first in a series of books that follow the adventures of Danny Lancaster, an Afgan war veteran turned private investigator.

The first book, The Wreck Of The Margherita, sees Lancaster get more than he bargained for as he searches the containers of a ship wreck that have been washed up on a Sussex beach. Believing that anything he finds to be fair game, Lancaster soon finds himself in the underground world of dodgy politicians, gangsters and murder.

The second book in the series, Death Squad, is due to be published in the next few weeks. The Wreck of the Margherita is published as an e-book, more details may be found at http://www.smashwords.com/books/view/145251

The Author

Bill Todd is a journalist and travel writer who has visited more than 40 countries from Arctic Finland to the deserts of Namibia. He has a keen interest in Crete, maps, genealogy, military history, strong cheese and good beer. Bill is married with a daughter and lives in London and Hove. Visit him at www.billtodd.co.uk

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Voicemail hacking: Lessons from the 1990s

By Tom Caldwell

Watching an old episode (Series 2 episode 9) of CSI:Miami, my ears pricked up when a detective looked at a screen and said, “He’s been hacking her voicemails” in a rather matter-of-fact way.

The American experience goes back a long way and voicemail hacking is old – very old – news to them. The following report appeared in The New York Times on 23rd July… 1998!

“EARLIER this month, Chiquita Brands International [the World’s largest banana company] accused a reporter for The Cincinnati Enquirer of stealing 2,000 messages from its voice mail in the course of investigating the company for a series of articles. It is still not known exactly how the reporter, Michael Gallagher, got the messages – whether someone provided them to him or whether he broke into Chiquita’s voice-mail system.”

Chiquita officials accused Gallagher of stealing the messages himself. Gallagher was dismissed by the Cincinnati Enquirer on June 28. According to The New York Times, there seemed to be “no doubt that the voice-mail system was tampered with”… “this raises a question for anyone who uses voice mail: How secure is it?”

As the report went on, many older voice-mail systems, like the one used at Chiquita, were often installed with default passwords. “On many systems, users were told that they could set passwords of their own choosing. But employees often failed to change their passwords, leaving their voice-mail vulnerable to intruders. In the last 10 years, since voice mail has become common in the United States, most systems have been the target of hackers at one time or another.”

It happens to everybody

Shockingly, the NYT article quoted one John Corriss, director of “corporate integrity and risk management” at Colorado-based Internet service provider ICG Netcom, as saying, “It happens to everybody.”

A rash of voice-mail break-ins occurred in the early 1990s when hackers used voice-mail systems as a bridge to outside lines and even used unassigned voice-mail boxes as message centers. That prompted voice-mail manufacturers and telecommunications managers to strengthen security.

As the NYT advised its readers: “Voice mail for the home is also at risk. Increasingly, consumers are choosing computerized messaging services provided by phone companies. Those voice-mail boxes could also be vulnerable… The best advice to keep voice mail secure, and to protect computer connections and E-mail as well, is to change passwords regularly and to stay away from passwords that are easily guessed, like 1234 or 5555.”

The newspaper added: “If you hear a busy signal while trying to retrieve voice-mail messages, it could indicate that someone else is listening to your messages. Call the telecommunications department at your job or, for home voice mail, the telephone company.”

(For the full NYT article, go to http://nyti.ms/2UtYt8)

So anyone in government or employing a publicity agent since that time will have been made aware of the vulnerabilities of voicemail and should have taken the minimum security measure outlined.

Not to do so would imply ignorance, illiteracy or incompetence.

It’s a bit like leaving your doors and windows wide open and then complaining bitterly when someone looks in.

Incidentally, here “access” means being able to acquire communications contents, and “intercept” means actually doing so (by means of a device).

Leveson’s banana skin

The same questions asked at the Leveson enquiry were being asked in the 1990s. One hacking victim cited in the NYT said that the rifling of their voicemail by a reporter or someone acting on behalf of a reporter was “old-fashioned burglary… It doesn’t matter if you pick someone’s lock or if someone like a repair person, to whom you’ve given a key, comes to your house. It’s still an old-fashioned kind of crime. It’s burglary.”

But he also hoped the newspapers would continue to be “aggressive and vigorous in protecting the public’s right to know… If they draw a line for themselves that is too protective of the notions of property and too frightened of the notions of theft, they make it almost certain that very serious wrongdoing will not be uncovered.”

What is really interesting is that the underlying question has yet to be asked by anyone.

How did the suppliers of these systems not get sued for such sloppy security?

Unbelievably, a home phone set I bought only last month from Argos comes with the security code “0000”!

Just forcing customers to choose a password before they could begin using the system would have prevented much embarrassment – and a lot of lawyers’ fees.

Digital-first strategy

Johnston Press has signalled it will adopt a digital-first strategy.

Speaking at The Guardian’s Changing Media Summit, Ashley Highfield, who took over as CEO of Johnston Press, a well-known name in local publishing back in November, announced: “We will flip the model to digital first.”

Highfield, who has held senior roles at the BBC and Microsoft, said the group was “not in a panic situation” over digital transformation, but admitted that the local press has not been particularly good in the development of the digital arena.

He said there is a huge difference in the traffic of the different JP local news sites: “Web far exceeds print circulation [for some publications] and in other cases web is a single digit of a percentage of newspaper sales.”

Tweets and digital

The CEO also revealed that newspaper sites that have not embraced Twitter generally receive around one tenth the number of hits of those sites with a focus on social media. He also said that the launch of 140 regional newspaper phone apps before Christmas has added two million unique users. The “whole new audience is a younger, male, more up-market demography”, he explained.

Highfield also suggested that other Johnston Press titles will follow The Scotsman, in launching paid-for iPadapps, and concluded: “Most of our dailies will have iPad and mobile apps over next few months. For regional newspapers you have to keep close to your local audience, and to do so you have got to move in to digital.”

Supreme Court to “tweet” its judgments

The UK Supreme Court has launched a Twitter account so that it can “tweet” news of its judgments.

Its first tweet was about Lord Reed being sworn in as a Supreme Court judge and its PR people have also tweeted about how the Supreme Court works - but the aim is to be able to instantly send out news of its judgments to the media and public as soon as they are given.

It is believed to be the first supreme court in the world to use Twitter in this way.
Archant to sponsor new award

Archant, the UK’s largest independently-owned community media business, is to sponsor a new award from the NCTJ for the best performance in the Videojournalism online exam.

The Videojournalism option was introduced fully during the last academic year and is designed to enable trainees to produce short, focused video reports for use online on news websites. Creativity is encouraged but students need to work to industry standards. Upon completion of the module, candidates sit a two hour video-editing examination which assesses their basic editing and reporting skills and produce one video news package created entirely on their own.

Archant Chief Executive, Adrian Jeakings, said: “We are delighted to be able to sponsor this new award as it highlights an important element of what we can offer readers of our news websites. Rich content, such as video and audio adds to readers’ experience online and, when produced to the right standards, provides an engaging new element to our news coverage.”

Exceptional students

Speaking about the announcement, NCTJ chief executive Joanne Butcher said: “The NCTJ awards recognise exceptional students and it is wonderful that the largest independent regional media group in the UK is supporting young talent and the development of new skills through the sponsorship of this exciting new award.”

Archant is a community media company active in the fields of regional newspaper and magazine publishing, contract printing and internet communications.

The company’s different divisions produce four regional daily newspapers and around 60 weekly titles with a combined circulation of 2.25 million copies each week, plus around 80 magazines and 180 websites.

Archant is a private company that can trace its roots back over 160 years. Its head office is in Norwich, as is its main printing facility and it has an annual turnover of £142 million.

The winning NCTJ student will receive a certificate and cheque for £250 from Archant.

Balancing human rights and privacy

What constitutes “in the public interest” and how can this be balanced against someone’s human right to privacy as defined under the Human Rights Act?

Entitled Media intrusion and human rights: striking the balance, an important lecture was delivered at the Cardiff Law School in March by The Rt. Hon. Lady Justice Arden DBE. Lady Arden outlined the important jurisprudence from the European Court of Human Rights on this subject and discussed two recent cases in some detail.

She described the role European human rights jurisprudence has played in the development of our domestic law in the last ten years, and discussed the process of balancing the rights of the individual against the rights of the public at large. Some problem areas were also identified, such as the lack of statutory regulation and the limitations of the present law, recently highlighted by the growth of social media.

Currently, Head of International Judicial Relations for England and Wales, The Rt. Hon. Lady Justice Arden DBE was called to the bar in 1971 and became a QC in 1986. She was appointed a Lady Justice of Appeal in 2000. She has written and contributed to various books and articles and given lectures on a range of subjects including human rights.

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Guardian returns to Thatcher era for strapline

Remainder “the whole picture” campaign, run by The Guardian way back in the 1980s? It featured a rather menacing-looking skinhead rushing, as if to attack someone...

Fortunately, he was actually trying to save the person’s life. You see – you need to see the whole picture, as the new and exciting take on the fairytale of the three little pigs and an apparently nasty wolf clearly demonstrates!

Television, cinema, outdoor, press and digital activity, created by Bartle Bogle Hegarty, resurrects the strapline “the whole picture” last used by the paper in 1986. The new ads highlight what the newspaper describes as its “open journalism” approach - encouraging different perspectives from several journalists on the same story and inviting comment and contribution from readers online.

This is The Guardian’s biggest brand campaign in 26 years to trumpet its multiplatform approach to journalism, as it steps up efforts to double online revenue by growing its digital audiences.

Set apart from rivals

Andrew Miller, Chief Executive Officer of parent Guardian Media Group, says the “open” approach sets it apart from UK rivals and matches the strategy employed by the New York Times and The Huffington Post in targeting “progressive audiences” - those that embrace change, new technology and “form their view of the world in the digital space”. He adds that these “progressives” are also attractive to advertisers.

The Guardian, which attracts 30 million unique users each month according to ComScore, wants to double the current £45m it earns in digital revenue over the next five years to offset declining print circulation and related advertising revenue.

The paper is exploring further opportunities to develop its Facebook application, as well as the possibility of Facebook games “relevant to journalism”.

The opportunity to launch on connected televisions is also being explored. Andrew Miller added: “We want to be seen as more than just a newspaper. We are a partner that advertisers can work with across a whole host of platforms and offer a creative range of revenue generating opportunities.”