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Media may be sitting on an AI bubble, but the technology isn't going away

By Hamish Monk

Some of the UK's biggest media organisations are investing in artificial intelligence (AI). In February this year, *The Guardian* announced a strategic partnership with leading US AI research and deployment firm, Open AI, to make its reporting and archive journalism available as a news source within ChatGPT. Two months later, *The Financial Times* made a similar move – unveiling an agreement to incorporate FT journalism into ChatGPT, and collaborate on developing new AI features for readers.

Appetite among media organisations for striking AI deals has been just as fierce across the pond, with *The Washington Post*, *The Atlantic*, and Vox Media – among others – also jumping onto the proverbial wagon. Their hope is that AI will be a means to supercharge audience reach, while at the same time razing inefficiencies in the back office.

But it is not yet clear how successful AI will prove on either count. Indeed, an undercurrent of concern is swirling among investors as to whether the technology can deliver on its promises of heightened productivity, product innovation, and new revenue streams. The AI delivery gap, in other words, is widening.

Despite being the breeding ground of some of the world's most prolific technology firms, the US has seen almost zero economic productivity growth from AI, claims *The Economist*. And, notwithstanding a global $7 trillion race to scale data centres, Gartner has predicted that over 40% of agentic AI projects (an increasingly popular use case) will be abandoned by end-2027.

With valuations soaring and "AI juggernauts like Nvidia and Palantir driving a tech-bloated S&P 500," Forbes characterises the under-performance as a bubble. So outweighed are profits by hype, in fact, that *The Guardian*'s own senior economics writer, Philip Inman, has questioned whether the AI bubble is "about to burst and send the stock market into freefall."



Hamish Monk

If any of this sounds like the infamous dot-com bubble – and its subsequent crash – of the late 1990s, that's because it is. Similar to today's AI bubble, the dot-com equivalent was generated by a period of speculative mania that sent the stocks of US internet-based technology firms sky-high. While the equity markets bloated exponentially, the speculation leaned solely on the promise of profitability, rather than actual earnings. At the turn of the millennium, the market inevitably imploded and countless dot-com stocks went bankrupt, while numerous high-profile tech companies waved goodbye to over 80% of their market value. So severe was this correction that the Nasdaq took 15 years to reclaim its previous high.

Speaking in August on today's AI bubble, the CEO of OpenAI himself, Sam Altman, opined: "Someone is going to lose a phenomenal amount of money."

But whether AI's stock prices crash soon or later, the technology itself is not going away. Though the dot-com bubble severely dented confidence, the technology and business models behind it still thrive today. In fact, thanks to increased smartphone and internet penetration, ecommerce is booming. In 2023 its global market was valued at $20 trillion – a figure which will swell to around $100 trillion by 2032, according to Statista.

Perhaps a similar trajectory will be followed by AI; its stocks imploding but its use cases staying the course. This is the hope of the media industry, at least, which continues to shake hands on eye-wateringly large content and licensing deals with AI firms.

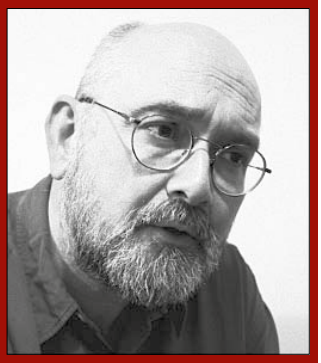
So, in light of this prognosis, how should the industry and journalists respond? Responsible AI development, supported by fit-for-purpose legislation, is key – focusing on the transparency and explainability of models' decisioning processes, with constant human oversight. Precise use cases are also critical, meaning newsrooms should identify high-quality solutions to specific, on-the-ground challenges, as opposed to simply diving headfirst into the AI goldrush. In general, investments should start small, with targeted proof-of-concepts – as opposed to big-bang migrations – which gradually broaden across the organisation.

Misinformation

Above all else, journalists must recognise that the genie is out of the bottle and get abreast of these trends. They can start by educating themselves about the potential challenges ahead – such as the erosion of human perspective and trust, the proliferation of misinformation, and the consolidation of media power – while putting in place strategies to exploit the opportunities, whether they be the automation of routine tasks, the enhancement of investigative tools, or the personalisation of news stories.

If the AI bubble proves anything, it is that human intelligence and ingenuity is exceedingly hard to simulate. That's cause for (momentary) celebration. As media organisations await the fate of the bubble on which they sit, they must use this window to ensure their deployments truly serve readers and – most importantly – champion human-made content.

Andy Smith
Editor



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Editor's Comment

The British Broadcasting Corporation is in a mess. Having only recently celebrated its centenary, and with its cherished Royal Charter up for renewal in 2027, the controversies currently swirling around the BBC, and the mounting evidence of "serious and systemic problems" in the Corporation's political coverage, could yet prove to represent an existential threat to the future of Britain's public service broadcaster.

According to the BBC's Editorial Guidelines: "Impartiality is fundamental to the BBC's purpose and is enshrined in the BBC's Charter. It means not favouring one side over another and reflecting all relevant sides of the debate. It means not taking sides, reflecting all relevant strands of public debate and challenging them with consistent rigour."

The Guidelines add: "Impartiality is key to a relationship of trust with audiences, that they know the BBC is not being influenced by any personal or other agenda in what it chooses to broadcast or publish or in how it covers stories and that it seeks to include a wide range of views on any given topic. The BBC is committed to achieving due impartiality in all its output."

This could not be clearer. But a leaked memorandum from Michael Prescott, former adviser to the BBC Editorial Standards Committee, revealed not just an outrageously doctored Trump speech – revelation of which led to a threat of legal action against the BBC by none other than the President of the United States himself – but a series of appalling examples of political bias in BBC news and current affairs coverage.

The political storm that followed the leak of the Prescott memo prompted the resignations of BBC Director-General Tim Davie and Head of News Deborah Turness, and led to the House of Commons Culture, Media & Sport Committee summoning Corporation Chairman Samir Shah to appear before the committee for a grilling.

As this issue of *The Journal* goes to press, the BBC Chairman is still refusing to follow Mr Davie and Ms Turness out of the Corporation. How long he can remain in post remains to be seen. There is also a large question mark over the BBC's current funding model – the licence fee – due to mounting criticisms both inside and outside Parliament.

Catalogue of bias

In addition to the Trump speech, Michael Prescott detailed a catalogue of other flagrant examples of biased reporting by the BBC, not least in its coverage of the Israel/Gaza conflict, and the apparent eagerness of the Corporation's management to promote an extreme "gender identity" ideology. Referring to one biased news report, Prescott wrote: "It is interesting to ask how the lunchtime news got this wrong. It may well speak to capture by a particular lobby, or a nervousness when reporting these subjects."

It seems that in its handling of some of the most contentious and divisive subjects, the BBC's default position in recent years has been to advance an ideological viewpoint while still claiming to be "balanced". The evidence base for what the Prescott memo called "systemic" bias at the BBC is substantial.

How should the BBC respond? For those of us who care about the national broadcaster, and have its best interests at heart, it is vital that the Corporation's Board of Governors recognise the seriousness of the situation and set out a realistic plan to return the BBC to its core values. And above all what we need now is transparency and accountability. Closing ranks and refusing to accept that anything is wrong is not going to work this time.

As the BBC Editorial Guidelines state: "Audiences expect the BBC's news and current affairs and factual journalism output to meet the highest levels of impartiality and accuracy."

The highest standards are what we expect from our national broadcaster. The role of the British Broadcasting Corporation is to serve the public interest – not to push ideologically-driven agendas, whether "progressive" or otherwise.

Andy Smith

Want to help the Institute grow?

Members of the Chartered Institute of Journalists are invited to stand for election to the Institute's governing Council. Any member may stand for election, so long as they are sponsored by two members who have been in good standing for two years or more.

Council members serve a two-year term, and meet approximately six times during each calendar year, mainly on-line via Zoom.

There are also vacancies on the Institute's Charity Committee. The Charity Committee meets four times a year, mostly via Zoom. It is charged with looking after the Institute's charitable funds: The Welfare Fund and the Oak Hill & T.P O'Connor Fund.

So, if you are interested in seeking election to the Council, or joining our Charity Committee, please speak to the Institute's Chief Executive, Dominic Cooper, for an exploratory discussion or to request a nomination form. He can be contacted by email at dc@cioj.org.

The future is in your hands

A special message from the President of the Chartered Institute of Journalists

First and foremost, I would like to thank those members who attended the Annual General Meeting on 14 October. We had the opportunity to discuss a range of issues affecting the Institute and the media sector. There was an extensive debate on the use of AI in the research and preparation of news and feature stories. A resolution tabled by the CIoJ Council was amended to reflect the feelings of members in the room, which received a unanimous vote in favour.

Chairing any meeting involves a large measure of balance, fairness, and the desire to reach a meaningful conclusion that will help to take the Institute forward. Speakers from the floor expressed their concern about recruitment of young journalists and how we could represent the interests of freelance journalists. Presenting the benefits of membership to students, at the point of their training, at university level, provided a robust and meaningful debate.

Before I share with you how we can all help achieve these initiatives, I would like to set out what the Institute's team of volunteers, and our CEO, Dom Cooper, are already working hard to deliver. We achieved our aim, to create a shop front for young journalists to showcase their work, gain recognition, and an award. We have added several categories to the Young Journalist Awards and have secured funding to help support the 2026 Awards.

The Vice-President, Caroline Roddis, chairs the new Futures Group, to oversee how we engage with the young journalists, that enter the awards. Working alongside Caroline, another Council member, Jiji Ahn is overseeing the development and focus of events for young journalists.

Young Journalist of the Year entrant, and Council Member, Hamish Monk has already made a major contribution to the AI debate with his insightful article published in the Summer issue of *The Journal* which he followed up with a webinar in September (his paper "AI in the media industry – the challenges and opportunities for journalists" can also be viewed in the online Journal, available on the CIoJ website).

Sharing content

Institute Council member Josette Lesser has worked tirelessly to build a new membership LinkedIn page to support our activities and deliver news bytes quickly and direct to members. This is there for you to use too by sharing content with new audiences and potential new members. Please get involved and help promote what the CIoJ stands for – good journalism.

The biggest issue that concerns us all is the poor record of payments to freelance journalists. As the industry continues to downsize its in-house editorial teams, and depends increasingly on freelance contributors, the draconian terms and extended payment regime of media companies makes it impossible for many journalists to exist on freelance work alone.

The Government has launched a consultation with the aim of improving business-to-business practices. The main topics being late payments, long payment practices, and trying to exit the agreement with the freelancer, without payment at all (notification for submissions was circulated to members in early August). The Institute is currently talking to other industry membership groups to discuss the main focus of a campaign to address these issues.

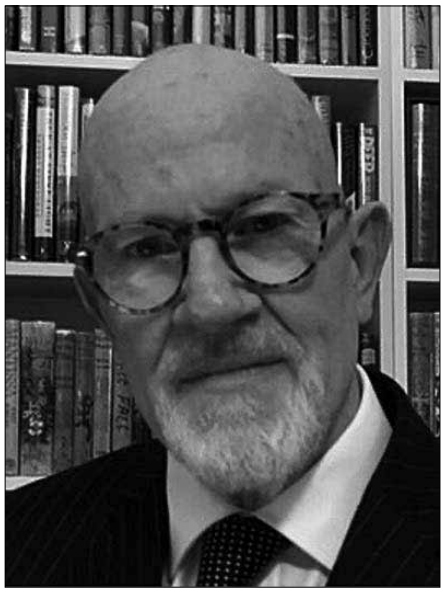
AI has been with us for ten years, or more, as an evolving technical development we have to live with it and meet the challenges it poses. Again, the Government's "opt out" copyright debate is making its way through Parliament, and grabbing the headlines.

The AGM discussion on the Council's resolution explored transparency on AI assisted editorial, and the potential for a kite mark on journalists work to flag-up, to the viewer, the use of AI in its preparation. The resolution was unanimously supported as was the recommendation from Council that we should work with other like-minded organisations on a campaign for "the reader's right to know."

Coming back to the AGM, a number of good suggestions came from members. One of the questions was: How can we engage with journalism faculties, and present the benefits of membership of the Institute? I challenged members to get involved and help to achieve this goal. I'm pleased to say that two members took up that challenge immediately, and they are now working on a plan to target students on journalism courses.

How can we attract younger journalists onto the Institute's Council? We have made a start with volunteers including Hamish Monk, who works on the AI working group with Tim Crook, and Jiji Ahn, who heads up the events group, both under the auspices of the Futures Group chaired by Vice-President Caroline Roddis. We are actively seeking additional younger Council members, and our Young Journalist Award winners could be one source of recruitment.

You, our members, are all valuable assets for the Institute, you have the potential to be a volunteer, just as your Council are volunteers. You can get involved by engaging with LinkedIn, promoting the Institute and expanding our reach to new audiences. The more you engage, the more value you will get out of your membership. It is only by working together and strengthening our membership base that we can work together to influence the debates on AI and the pay structure of freelance journalists, and other issues.



CIoJ President Gerald Bowey

The Institute is about to elect a new Council, for ratification in February 2026. As well as seeking new Council members, we also need the assistance of members to help administer the work of the charities. Or you can simply give us your views on the issues that bother or interest you. Please get involved. The future of the Chartered Institute of Journalists is in your hands.

Gerald Bowey

Authors quit Society

Several prominent writers have resigned from the Society of Authors (SoA) in protest at what they perceive as its failure to defend members who have been 'cancelled' due to their 'unwoke' views on gender identity. In particular, they are angry about the SoA's refusal to support 'cancelled' authors such as J K Rowling, Sir Philip Pullman and Kate Clanchy. Those resigning their membership include crime writer Helen Field, who said she was disappointed that the SoA had failed to stand up to cancel culture: "So many writers – people of backbone, purpose and voice – are scared to state their opinions right now...and if writers, including journalists, memoirists and academics do not feel safe to express opinions, then what have we become?"

To kitemark or not – that is the AI question

By Professor Tim Crook

When members of Britain's longest-established journalists' association (formed in 1884) gathered in October 2025 for their AGM in the genteel surroundings of the National Liberal Club, the key topic for debate revolved around machines that write. The Chartered Institute of Journalists suddenly found itself confronting the thorniest issue in modern media: how, and whether, to disclose the role of artificial intelligence in journalism.

Members debated a motion that would have seemed fantastical only a few years ago. This proposed that journalists should be ethically bound to declare any use of AI systems – specifically large language models such as ChatGPT – in producing news, commentary, or multimedia content.

The proposal went further still, urging UK regulators, including Ofcom, IPSO and IMPRESS, to establish a "*kitemark*" – a visible label indicating whether a piece of media content had been created or assisted by AI.

The case for a "mark of honour"

There was a consensus among members that such transparency is the natural extension of journalism's long-standing code of truthfulness. To pass off a machine's work as one's own risks eroding public trust already frayed by misinformation and "churnalism." One member said: "Readers have a right to know whether they are hearing from a human or a robot." Another member likened undisclosed AI use to unattributed press releases or manipulated imagery—forms of deception that the profession has long condemned.



Vice-President Caroline Roddis speaking at the CIoJ AGM at the National Liberal Club

Many advocated the wider public interest. If AI-generated content becomes indistinguishable from human reporting, the audience will struggle to assess its credibility, potentially undermining democratic discourse. A kitemark, they said, would act as a badge of accountability: a voluntary but visible signal that a publication upholds ethical disclosure.

The motion was unanimously passed without amendment and giving the Institute's Council the discretion to develop the proposals further.

The CIoJ media release following the meeting cast the issue in moral as well as professional terms. The deployment of AI without transparency, it argued, could "compromise journalistic integrity" and weaken the "bond of trust between reporters and the public."

The release called on regulators to develop a consistent national framework requiring news organisations to disclose AI involvement "in any kind of published material."

The release explained: "The Institute supports the use of the kite mark "AIA", standing for "Artificial Intelligence Assisted", when AI has been used in the creation of journalism in any of its forms. The mark would be rendered in three grades, reflecting the extent to which AI has been leveraged by the journalist.

Grade one: AI-assisted, would flag research and drafting support.

Grade two: AI-generated, would indicate that significant portions of the content were generated by AI, albeit with journalistic oversight and review.

Grade three: fully AI-created, reveals that the content, in its entirety, was produced by AI. "

CIoJ President Gerald Bowey commented: "The reader's, listener's and viewer's Right to Know is the cornerstone of well researched and balanced journalism. The general public are entitled to know the extent of machine and robotic involvement in the creation of journalistic multimedia."



CIoJ President, Gerald Bowey

The counter argument

The AGM debate properly considered the practicality and the philosophical premise of such labelling. Should a journalist who uses a spell-checker, translation or transcription tool also declare AI assistance? Where, precisely, does human authorship end and algorithmic input begin?

The well-intentioned proposal could slip into moral panic. It would be a mistake to risk fetishising the technology because AI tools are fast becoming as routine in newsrooms as search engines or video editing suites. To demand a special disclosure for every use of machine assistance could burden journalists with bureaucracy while offering the public little meaningful insight.

One CIoJ member put forward the analogy that for decades now cars manufactured using robotic technology in factories do not carry a kitemark stating this to be the case. This technology is, of course, Artificial Intelligence in itself.

CIoJ members who were BBC veterans referenced the use at the BBC of the widely-recognised environmental and sustainability initiative and certification system called "Albert." It was agreed that their internal labelling system for sustainability was effective in the professional journalism and media production workplace. The same could relate to a certification or labelling system for the use of Artificial Intelligence.

But does it need to be public? A visible kitemark might stigmatise AI-assisted outlets, implying diminished authenticity or quality. It could even invite commercial disadvantage in an industry already struggling with revenue decline. Better perhaps to focus on rigorous editorial oversight than on symbolic labels.

The vote and its aftermath

The passing of the motion and CIoJ's media release prompted coverage and commentary in trade journals and on social media. Advocates of transparency hailed the Institute for tackling a question most newsrooms have so far ducked. Critics warned of creeping regulation and the danger of conflating ethical virtue with administrative compliance which could impact on freedom of expression.

For regulators, the timing is important. Ofcom, already grappling with online safety and misinformation under the new Digital Markets Act, has signalled interest in AI governance but remains wary of overreach. IPSO and IMPRESS, the UK's two principal press regulators, are likewise watching developments. In April this year IMPRESS published a "Best Practice Note" on "The Use of Artificial Intelligence."

The briefing is only guidance on "the core principles of good journalistic practice" in relation to AI and significantly 'it is neither a binding part of the [IMPRESS] Code nor enforceable by IMPRESS.

The CIoJ debate reflects a broader anxiety rippling through global journalism. As generative AI systems become capable of producing convincing prose, images, and audio, the boundaries between creation, curation, and automation are blurring. Some news organisations have experimented with AI to summarise financial results or generate templated sports reports. Others use it to craft headlines or analyse data sets. Few, however, have been fully forthcoming about these practices.

The push for a kitemark thus taps into a growing public appetite for transparency in media production. A recent Reuters Institute survey found that 65% of UK respondents wanted news outlets to disclose when AI contributes to their reporting. Yet even among those supportive of transparency, most struggled to define what such disclosure should look like – a paragraph note, a badge, a byline supplement, or something else entirely.

Certainly, the use of an AI presenter, as in the recent Channel 4 Dispatches programme "Will AI take my job?" on 20 October, should be fully disclosed. Channel 4 claimed: "Channel 4 makes TV history with Britain's first AI presenter."

There remains though an argument that a static kitemark cannot capture the fluid, iterative nature of AI-assisted work. Algorithms evolve, prompts are rewritten, and outputs are human-edited – sometimes beyond recognition. The danger is that a symbol intended to clarify may instead mislead.

Ethics in an age of automation

The philosophical stakes are high. At issue is not merely the use of machines but the definition of authorship itself. Journalism has always relied on tools – from typewriters to telephoto lenses – but AI differs in kind, not degree. It generates content autonomously, blurring the line between instrument and collaborator. For the CIoJ, this raises a question as old as the profession: who, ultimately, bears responsibility for the words that reach the public? If a reporter edits an AI draft, are the errors the machine's or the human's? If bias emerges from a training dataset, can the journalist claim ignorance?

Ethicists suggest that responsibility must remain with humans, but transparency about AI use reinforces accountability. During the AGM debate the point that "disclosure is not a confession – it is context" resonated quite strongly.

The CIoJ motion has already achieved something significant: it has encouraged British journalism to articulate its unease. The technology is here to stay; what remains uncertain is how to domesticate it within the profession's moral framework.

A balance needs to be struck between a voluntary code akin to the "advertorial" disclaimer adopted decades ago to separate editorial from sponsored content and a developing and broader European initiative, linking AI transparency to data provenance standards and copyright law. For now, the Institute gives the issue close evaluation, particularly through the research and work of CIoJ Council member Hamish Monk. The Institute has clearly contributed to the shaping of the policy debate on this issue.

Professional working journalists in the 21st century are having to come to terms with a paradox familiar to their craft: the search for truth in an age of invention. The question is not simply whether machines can write, but whether the humans who use them will remain honest about it.






Winston Churchill, journalist and statesman

To mark the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War and the 60th anniversary of the death of Sir Winston Churchill, the wartime Prime Minister's granddaughter Emma Soames, broadcaster and columnist, was invited to give the keynote address to the Annual General Meeting of the Chartered Institute of Journalists, at the National Liberal Club, London, on 14 October 2025. Here is the full transcript of her speech to the Institute.



Emma Soames speaking at the CIoJ AGM, 14 October 2025.

I have to say that of all my grandfather's many, many talents, the one I wished a Good Fairy had left me at my crib was his amazing skill with words – both spoken and written. He wrote as he thought, as many do, but with huge intellectual capacity and lyrical fluency. And his words, witty and profound as they so often were, in his books and his speeches, his parliamentary interventions and above all, in the wartime speeches have lived on to take a place in the national psyche.

In the course of his life, he is estimated to have written some 10,000 articles for newspapers or magazines which represented a major source of much needed income to Churchill. He often said that he lived "from pen to mouth." Journalism was of course only one part of his massive literary output of books and speeches which includes 58 books, 260 pamphlets and thousands of speeches. Churchill was nominated many (21) times for a Nobel Literature Prize and finally won it in 1953. The citation mentioned his "mastery of historical and biographical description as well as for brilliant oratory in defending exalted human values." He did not travel to Oslo to collect it as he was meeting with President Eisenhower in Bermuda in the hope of setting up a Four Powers peace summit that would include the Soviet Union. I watched the Pathe Film of my grandmother Clementine receiving the prize on his behalf and was touched to see my mother, by her side.

Peacemaker

Of course, he would have preferred this to be a Peace Prize and was disappointed when it wasn't awarded. Anthony Montague Browne, his Private Secretary recalled the day in October 1953 when the news came through: "Churchill deeply wished to be remembered as a peacemaker…. I remember vividly his early and touching joy, which turned to indifference when he learned that it was for Literature and not for Peace." However as he was considered a 'man of war' and the War was won by military force, he didn't make it over Alfred Nobel's famously high bar –one and the same causing a few difficulties right now to someone who has made no secret of his wish for it.

In that same year, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to George C Marshall, founder of the highly successful Marshall Plan which had been set up to provide aid for the post war recovery of Europe. I think it safe to surmise that Churchill – whatever else his feelings – would have approved.

Let us return to Churchill's journalism – for what could be a better topic for this speaker and this audience? If we exclude the Harrovian which he peppered with submissions during his time there, his very first 'grown up' journalistic commissions came from the *Daily Graphic* a US magazine owned by a friend of his American mother Jennie. Having had an unknown young Englishman thrust upon him by his publisher, an understandably wary editor of the *Daily Graphic* was surprised and pleased with what Churchill filed in 1895 from the Cuban Civil War – which included a colourful description of coming under fire for the first time, so much so that he paid Winston a truly princely 25 guineas for these reports. The 20-year-old Englishman came good.

Less profitable were his first of a lifetime of dealings with the *Daily Telegraph*. The following year they paid him £5 each for his letters on the fighting on the North West Frontier, where his despatches included incidents of almost foolhardy bravery as Winston set out to prove his courage to his readers – and putative editors. At this stage Churchill didn't even have an agent – his mother Jennie who was famously hopeless about money acted as such. But these pieces then became his first published title, *The Malakand Field Force*, a book that was well received at the time and has recently enjoyed a new life. Con Coughlin, veteran defence correspondent of the *Telegraph* interviewed David Petraus and other US generals who served in Afghanistan. All had been inspired to look back at experiences of fighting in that alien and cruel land in the last century and landed on Churchill's *The Malakand Field Force* as a primer in counter insurgency. "It seemed remarkable that this neglected period of Churchillian history should have such a direct impact on the modern military campaign in Afghanistan," Con said in an interview about his book *Churchill's First War*.

The articles which really catapulted young Churchill to public notice were from South Africa when the Boer War was raging. The stars were aligned: firstly, he got the *Morning Post* to pay him a monthly retainer of £1,000 a month for the first four months. The fee went down to £200 a month thereafter, but since he was sitting in prison or hiding in a mine and not spending any money at all, the project was actually profitable – a rarity in Churchill's life. Then, after his capture, he managed to escape into the arms of the only friend in Boer country. His South African adventures later provided several chapters in his memoir *My Early Life*, first published in 1930, published in 19 countries and rarely out of print since. Most importantly to his future, the Boer War made him famous to a much wider domestic audience, and he had no trouble finding a parliamentary seat thereafter. His direction of travel was set.

It was not until 1948 that WSC made the famous statement to the House of Commons: "It will be found much better by all parties to leave the past to history, especially as I propose to write that history myself." But in *The Malakand Field Force* and *My Early Life* he was already putting that

maxim into practice.

Churchill was well aware of the importance of his words, be they written or spoken. At a dinner on his 80th birthday in 1954 he said in reply to a toast, "If I found the right words you must remember that I have always earned my living by my pen and by my tongue. It was the nation and the race dwelling all around the globe that had the lionheart, I had the luck to be called upon to give the roar."

Churchill's legacy

Having launched him on his career of pen and tongue, I am now going to jump to talk about a couple of different areas of his extensive legacy. One of these is the imaginative and extraordinarily successful Churchill Fellowship. It was created as the living legacy of Sir Winston Churchill for the nation, aiming to honour his memory by reflecting his unique contribution to national life. It was launched on his death in 1965 and almost entirely funded by public donations. If you are old enough to remember his death and the state funeral that followed, you like me will remember vividly the profound sense of sorrow and pride that filled the atmosphere across the nation in the weeks after his death. Everyone, yes everyone, felt a huge sense of gratitude – for peace, for his life – so when the collecting tins started rattling, £2.4m was raised. This was the equivalent of over £59m today, and set up a Fellowship in his memory. In keeping with Sir Winston's own spirit, it encourages UK citizens with passion and potential to be curious about the world, to explore new ideas and insights overseas, and to use those experiences to create change in British society. Since 1965, over 6,000 Churchill fellowships have been awarded.

The distinguishing feature of the Awards is that they prioritise applications from people from under-represented groups and projects who would not receive funding from other sources. On launching the national appeal 60 years ago, Field Marshal Earl Alexander of Tunis said: the awards will be available to any man or woman in any walk of life and will not be confined to students or scholars in accredited institutions but will be open equally to those whose contribution to the community, and also to their trade, industry, profession, business or calling would be increased through personal overseas travel and study.

They work as follows: applications are invited in a number of programmes that address a particular topical issue or challenge in UK society. The current list of 9 programmes includes climate change, carers, tech for all, supporting engagement in education and creating space for the arts.

Successful applicants are funded to spend 4 to 8 weeks discovering new ideas and best practice among leading practitioners across the world. The Fellowship then provides the support to help them share the insights and results with audiences in the UK. Here are just two examples of recent fellowships and their outcome: Adam Weymouth (Alaska) telling the human stories behind the rapidly changing Arctic; and Emmanuel Akpan-Inwang, pioneering a new type of children's home. I have long thought that the work done by all these wonderful Fellows constitutes a body of research that could be used much more by the media either as a source of quotes or as research. In using their work and taking it to a wider audience you could be one last chain in this virtuous circle.

The other element of his legacy that I would like to mention is Churchill College, Cambridge. This was a project that Churchill became absorbed in following his retirement from his second premiership in 1955. He was chair of the first Board of Trustees and, in what turned out to be his last public engagement planted a tree – now a mighty oak – when building started. The idea, nothing if not ambitious, came partly from his longtime interest in the sciences, and it was greatly influenced by his long friendship with Lord Cherwell, Frank Lindemann, always known as "the Prof," who was Churchill's scientific adviser during the War.

After the War, Churchill himself, and many in government, became increasingly concerned at how the country was slipping behind in the fields of science, a worry amplified by his visit to MIT in 1949 and the development in the US of what were then called lunar rockets. As Churchill said at the time in a quote that says much about his attitude to science: "Lunar rockets are manifestations of a formidable advance in technology. As with many vehicles of pure research, their immediate uses may not be apparent. But I do not doubt that they will ultimately reap a rich harvest for those who have the imagination and power to develop them, and to probe ever more deeply into the mysteries of the universe in which we live."

Scientific study

In 1960, the College admitted its first 25 advanced or postgraduate students. Today, it houses almost 500 undergraduates, nearly 400 postgraduates, and has an academic body of more than 250 Fellows. The College receives students in all subjects but, in accordance with Churchill's wishes, the statutes dictate that two-thirds of the Fellows and students at any one time must be engaged in scientific and technological study and research.

As well as the distinguished 33 Nobel Prize winners associated with the College, every year it welcomes 18 graduate students from universities all across America. Funded by the American Churchill Foundation, and all of them pursuing further studies or a Masters in the sciences, these young graduates spend a year living in college pursuing a project of their choice, before returning to the States for further post graduate study. They love their year in Cambridge, not just for the work in labs, but with all the social, sporting and travel opportunities. I have met many of these young students and I have learned not to ask them what they are studying as I never understand the answer so sophisticated and wildly new do their projects sound. They've come a long way from lunar rockets. When these scholarships were initially set up in 1959 most of the winning applicants had ever been abroad. Now this is not the case, but for many a full $75,000 dollars which is what the Foundation provides for a year's study at Cambridge would be beyond them.

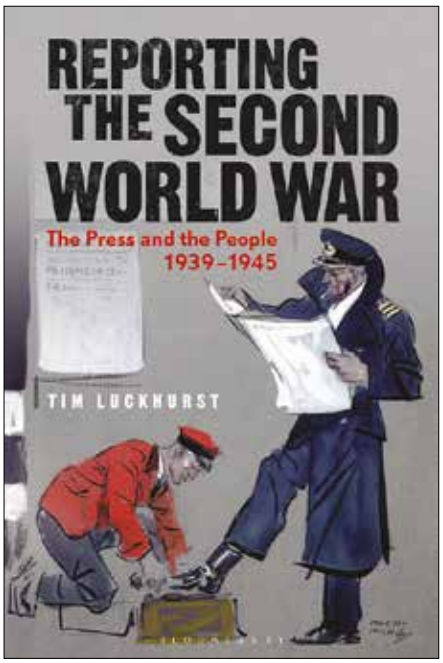


Emma Soames with CIoJ President Gerald Bowey.

Sitting in a self-contained purpose-built building in the grounds of Churchill College is the Churchill Archive Centre which holds 2,000 boxes of Sir Winston's personal papers, his speeches including fascinating early annotated drafts. But it is also home to the papers of Contemporaries of Winston Churchill, including friends and family which sit alongside other former PMs, military and scientific figures like Margaret Thatcher, Ernest Bevin, John Major, Gordon Brown, Field Marshal Slim and Frank Whittle. In all the papers of some 750 individuals are stored in the Archives Centre. It is heavily protected from every form of disaster – which is essential since it represents Churchill, his time and hundreds of individuals since then. It is the jewel in the crown of remembrance.

History Reclaimed: British Journalism and the Second World War

Professor Tim Luckhurst's Seminar for the Chartered Institute of Journalists, 21 August 2025



In an age when the media is sometimes accused of bias, timidity, or subservience to power, Professor Tim Luckhurst invited the Chartered Institute of Journalists to look back eight decades – to a time of national peril when British newspapers were neither meek nor manipulated. His online seminar, "Reporting the Second World War – The Press and the People 1939–45," offered a compelling re-evaluation of wartime journalism.

For two hours on 21 August 2025, Luckhurst, a veteran BBC journalist, former editor of *The Scotsman* and now Principal of South College, Durham University, inspired the audience of CIoJ professional members with a presentation that had so much pride in the achievements of our predecessors from the past. His argument, drawn from his acclaimed 2023 Bloomsbury book *Reporting the Second World War*, was both rigorous and exhilarating: Britain's press, far from being a mere instrument of propaganda, "acted as guardian of democracy and as a forum for dissenting opinion when dissent was most needed."

Since the 1960s, the professor contended, the history of journalism has been written largely by its detractors. He opened with a characteristically brisk challenge: "Newspaper history has been a target for culture warriors," he said. "I start from a different position. I believe privately owned, commercial newspapers, free of regulation by the state, serve the public interest."

The academic establishment, he noted, has long preferred to dwell on the BBC's wartime achievement, giving scant credit to Fleet Street. "Historians have explored extensively the BBC's journalism during the Second World War," he observed, "but newspapers mattered greatly throughout the war." Mass Observation's *Report on the Press* in 1940 found that "almost everybody reads newspapers, whether regularly or irregularly, thoroughly or cursorily." The press, in short, was "a social necessity."

Luckhurst's central purpose is to restore the press to its rightful place in the national story. "In a country without a written constitution," he reminded his audience, "checks and balances on power are exercised in the public interest by the courts and the press. State regulation would create a constitutional absurdity: ministerial scrutiny of titles the electorate depends upon for their scrutiny of ministers."

Six democratic duties

To test wartime journalism, Luckhurst applied what he called "Professor Schudson's six things news can do for democracy" – informing citizens, investigating power, analysing complexity, portraying social realities, hosting debate, and advocating reform – plus one crucial addition: the duty of eyewitness reporting. As war correspondent Allan Little once said, eyewitness journalism "has the power to close down propaganda."

The professor illustrated those principles through four vivid case studies: the Blitz and shelter policy; the coverage of the Beveridge Report; reporting on the Holocaust; and the press response to the atomic bomb. Each, he argued, revealed a free press confronting power and conscience amid crisis.

The first example, the battle over air-raid shelters during the Blitz, showed newspapers performing their watchdog role with courage. "While the government clung to surface shelters," Luckhurst said, "the popular press exposed the gulf between official reassurance and civilian experience."

When Home Secretary Sir John Anderson insisted that surface shelters "offered the same protection" as the Tube, papers across the political spectrum disagreed. *The Daily Mirror* led the charge, documenting how East End families, their homes destroyed, flooded into Underground stations despite official bans. On 14 September 1940 the Mirror reported hundreds "sleeping peacefully on the platforms of London Underground stations."

Luckhurst relished recounting the *Sunday Pictorial*'s undercover test of class prejudice. Reporter Bernard Gray and a colleague, dressed as working-class Londoners, were denied entry to hotel shelters at Claridge's, the Berkeley and the Ritz even as bombs fell. "We, refused shelter like any other people dressed like us would be, might have been killed on the doorstep of safety," Gray wrote. Such reporting, Luckhurst noted, "helped topple Anderson from office within weeks."

The Daily Herald's Ritchie Calder likewise exposed official blunders in Canning Town, where hundreds were killed after being left in a school slated for evacuation. His headline "This Must Not Happen Again" became a rallying cry.

"For me," Luckhurst told participants, "these were acts of journalism at its best: informed, compassionate, and defiant. The wartime press investigated power and held it to account in the midst of total war."

The second case study revisited December 1942, when Britain's newspapers ignited national debate over Sir William Beveridge's blueprint for social security. "Here," said Luckhurst, "was the press as a forum for democratic conversation."

The Daily Mirror hailed Beveridge's proposals with the jubilant headline "Banish Want from Cradle to Grave Plan." *The Daily Mail* described the report as "one of the most remarkable state documents of our time," while *The Times* offered sober reflection in leaders entitled "Freedom from Idleness" and "Obligations of Victory."

"Even the conservative titles," Luckhurst observed, "acknowledged that social progress was essential. They recognised that victory would bring demands for 'freedom from want', and that the government must have a social policy as well as a military one."

He reminded his audience that *The Economist* alone spotted a crucial flaw: the scheme would require heavy taxation and sustained economic growth to succeed. Yet across left, right and centre, the press had informed citizens, educated opinion, and "held the government to account on behalf of their readers."

Bearing witness

If the Beveridge debate revealed journalism's domestic influence, the third case study – reporting on Nazi atrocities – demonstrated its moral reach.

From 1941 onwards, Luckhurst showed, *The Manchester Guardian* "worked hard to understand and explain the fate of European Jews." In September 1942 it

published a dispatch describing "a vast system of organised traffic in human beings." By October, its editorial, starkly titled "Extermination," reported that Jews from Poland, Holland and Belgium were "packed together in cattle trucks and transported for many days and nights" to death camps.

"Popular titles responded too," Luckhurst stressed. *The Daily Express* carried Anthony Eden's Commons statement that "the able-bodied are slowly worked to death in labour camps… the infirm are deliberately murdered." *The Daily Mirror* declared that the story of Nazi crimes imposed on readers a "sacred duty to learn the facts."

Nazi crimes

As British troops liberated camps in 1945, correspondents such as Christopher Buckley of the *Daily Telegraph* wrote of "fiendish cruelties and inhuman callousness." Luckhurst quoted Buckley's astonishment at Germans who "professed ignorance that anything of the sort had been going on in their country."

Contrary to later claims of a "conspiracy of silence," Luckhurst insisted that newspapers reported the Holocaust extensively: "There was no effort to conceal. A diligent reader, determined to understand, could know a great deal."

His fourth case study – the press reaction to Hiroshima and Nagasaki – captured the intersection of patriotism, science and moral shock. "Beyond a tiny elite," he said, "the atomic bomb was unheard of and unimagined."

On 7 August 1945 the *Daily Mail* printed Winston Churchill's column, headlined "Most Terrifying Weapon in History." The former prime minister wrote that the revelation of such power "should arouse the most solemn reflections in the mind and conscience of every human capable of comprehension."

The *Daily Mirror* imagined the devastation "if an atomic bomb had fallen on Edinburgh and other British cities," mapping the obliteration of central Edinburgh. Within days, *The Times* published eyewitness descriptions of "blasted corpses too numerous to count" and recognised that "practically all living things were seared to death."

By September, *The Observer*'s Dorothy Thompson warned that the bomb "awed and frightened its own users," while the *Daily Express* printed William Burchett's haunting report from Hiroshima – "a warning to the world." For Luckhurst, these articles showed "how swiftly the British press moved from patriotic pride to ethical questioning."

Wartime shortages, he conceded, took their toll. By 1943, newsprint supplies had fallen from 20,000 to barely 4,000 tons a week, and more than a third of Britain's 9,000 journalists were serving in uniform. Yet the papers, he said, were "diminished but not tamed. They recognised their role was to inform, entertain and defend their readers," he argued. "They challenged injustice, lambasted incompetence and praised progress." Far from being instruments of propaganda, newspapers "served democracy and gave it meaning."

Post-war inquiries confirmed his assessment. The 1947 Royal Commission on the Press declared the British newspaper "free of corruption, eminently readable and inferior to none in the world."

Luckhurst's conclusion was both scholarly and stirring. Wartime journalism, he maintained, "did not always oppose government – nor should it have – but it frequently performed its duty by investigating policy, explaining complex issues and enabling informed debate."

He invoked the image of millions of ordinary readers: "We cannot know how many Britons bought a newspaper primarily to look at cartoons – 'Jane' in the *Daily Mirror* was immensely popular – but we do know that, having bought a paper, they acquired essential news and commentary. Wartime newspapers gave democracy its daily meaning."

The seminar's Q & A crackled with interest and energetic discussion. Institute members praised the depth of Luckhurst's research and the elegance of his argument. His talk had "reclaimed a heritage of professional courage we have too readily forgotten." Others observed that today's journalists, constrained by online outrage and algorithmic incentives, "could learn from the moral seriousness of the wartime press."

The discussion drew parallels between wartime censorship and modern "information management." Luckhurst agreed that independence remains fragile: "The essential lesson," he said, "is that journalism serves democracy best when it resists both state control and fashionable conformity."

Remembering the journalists

The year 2025, the 80th anniversary of VE Day and VJ Day, has been a year of reflection on how Britain told its own wartime story. In that context, Luckhurst's seminar resonated deeply.

It reminded us that journalism's finest hour was not defined by slogans or propaganda but by stubborn empiricism and moral clarity.

In *Reporting the Second World War*, he wrote that newspapers "informed, investigated, told readers about the plight of others less fortunate than themselves, provided a forum for debate and advocated alternative policies." His seminar brought those words to life.

As the session closed, there was broad agreement that the courage of wartime correspondents – Bernard Gray at the Ritz, Ritchie Calder in Canning Town, Christopher Buckley at Belsen – deserves renewed honour. "Their eyewitness reporting," Luckhurst concluded, "challenged myth-making and created the first draft of history. They were, quite literally, the guardians of democracy."


Ever-Ready Blades

News

"Hiroshima disappeared in cloud

PILOT TELLS W

WHEN ATOMIC BO

Last Allied warning: Yield, or we lay Japan waste

MORE ATOM BOMBERS READY TO TAKE OFF

World scientists foresee new era

Rockets that may go round the moon

Front page of News Chronicle reporting the atom bomb dropped on Hiroshima 8 August 1945

By the end of the evening, his enlightening presentation reminded the gathering of journalists there that the history of journalism in the 20th century can be a rallying call for journalistic integrity in the 21st century. Luckhurst's re-examination of wartime newspapers not only corrected historical misjudgment but offered a mirror for the profession today.

British journalism, he argued, "proved during the Second World War that a free press could be patriotic without being pliant, critical without being cynical." That achievement, he warned, "needs to be more appreciated today."

The virtual applause that followed – an online echo of old Fleet Street cheers – was heartfelt. The seminar generated lively post-session discussion and wide appreciation among members who recognised that, in revisiting the wartime newsroom, Luckhurst had reclaimed more than history: he had reaffirmed faith in journalism itself.

He is currently writing "Reporting the New Jerusalem – Newspapers and the Attlee Governments 1945-1951" – another significant chapter in the history of journalism the Institute looks forward to exploring with him.

At a moment when truth is contested and the press once again faces suspicion from power and public alike, Professor Tim Luckhurst's research and writing powerfully proves that daily newspaper journalism matters. It mattered between 1939 and 1945; it matters still.

Tim Crook

A brilliant first event for the CIoJ Under-35 Group





By Jiji Ahn

The Chartered Institute of Journalists recently hosted its first networking event for journalists under 35 - and it proved a tremendous success. Journalists from across the industry, from recent graduates to editors, came together to connect, collaborate and enjoy an evening of conversation, games and good company.

Rather than the usual stand-and-chat format, the evening featured a lively "speed networking" session, where attendees rotated every few minutes to meet someone new.

It proved a brilliant way to break the ice and ensure everyone left with fresh contacts. This was followed by a journalism-themed pub quiz, which added plenty of laughter and a friendly competitive spirit.

The event was also a valuable opportunity to hear what members and guests want from future CIoJ activities, with many offering ideas for workshops, networking formats and volunteer roles.

Enthusiasm

At a time when the media landscape can feel uncertain, it was uplifting to see such enthusiasm from journalists who are determined to continue developing their craft and supporting one another. While much of professional life now takes place online, it was clear that many valued having an offline community - a space to share experiences, discuss challenges and swap ideas with others who truly understand the profession.

As the first informal launch of this new group, the evening couldn't have gone better. We're now looking forward to building on this success with an exciting programme of events planned for 2026.

New owner for Telegraph Newspapers

The Daily Mail and General Trust (DMGT) – which owns the *Daily Mail* and *Mail on Sunday* – is negotiating for control of the *Daily Telegraph* and *Sunday Telegraph*, following the collapse of the bid by RedBird IMI. Any deal between DMGT and Telegraph Newspapers needs to be signed off by Culture Secretary Lisa Nandy, who said she would "review any new buyer acquiring the *Telegraph* in line with the public interest."

Abu Dhabi-based consortium RedBird IMI had hoped to take ownership, having paid off the debts of the *Telegraph*'s previous owners, the Barclay family, but the prospect of a deal with RedBird was stuck in limbo due to concerns over the *Telegraph* falling under foreign ownership. *Telegraph* staff have been strongly opposed to any deal which would have handed control to RedBird IMI.

DMGT chairman Lord Rothermere said that ownership of the *Telegraph* would give "much-needed certainty and confidence" to *Telegraph* staff. The *Telegraph*, he said, "has a remarkable history and has played a vital role in shaping Britain's national debate over many decades." He added: "Under our ownership, the *Daily Telegraph* will become a global brand, just as the *Daily Mail* has."

'Hate crime' laws under review

Former Director of Public Prosecutions Lord (Ken) Macdonald has been appointed by the Home Secretary to lead an independent review of laws on public order and hate crime. This follows the recent Islamist terrorist attack on the Manchester synagogue and growing concerns around community tensions and the impact of disruptive and intimidating protests on social cohesion and public safety.

The review will examine whether existing legislation is effective and proportionate, and whether it protects communities from hate and intimidation. It will also consider if the law protects free speech and peaceful protest, while also preventing disorder and keeping people safe.

Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood said: "The terrorist attack in Manchester shocked the nation and showed how hatred and division can fuel violence. Our laws must protect the public, while upholding the right to protest and free speech. That is why we have asked Lord Macdonald to lead this review. His experience will ensure it is thorough and independent. Lawful protest and free speech are fundamental rights, but we cannot allow them to be abused to spread hate or cause disorder. The law must be fit for purpose and consistently applied."

Did you know?

Your annual subscription to the Chartered Institute of Journalists is tax-deductible? This applies to any Institute member who is a UK taxpayer.

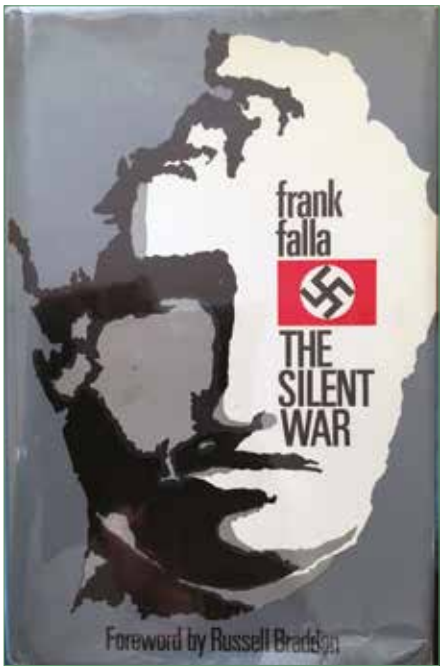
Silent Witnesses: Remembering the Channel Island journalists who resisted the Nazis

By Professor Tim Crook

When the German army marched into the Channel Islands in June 1940, the oldest continuous possession of the British crown suddenly found itself cut adrift — outposts of what became a silenced press under Nazi control. Among those trapped was a 29-year-old Guernsey newspaperman named Frank Falla, who refused to let journalism die quietly. His story, and that of his colleagues in the clandestine *Guernsey Underground News* (GUNs) group, forms one of the most remarkable episodes of resistance in British journalism.

Eighty-five years after the start of the occupation, their courage was celebrated in an online seminar held by the Chartered Institute of Journalists in March 2025 and led by Professor Gilly Carr OBE of the University of Cambridge. She reflected on how Falla's archive — rescued, catalogued, and digitised through her work — continues to bear witness to that "silent war." The discussion has inspired the Institute to investigate whether the Channel Islands journalists who defied Nazi censorship can be remembered in the Journalists' Church, St Bride's, in the City of London.

Institute members praised Professor Carr's academic and civic activism which has resulted in impressive and tangible commemorations in Guernsey. They include the installation of a blue plaque and Stolpersteine for the GUNs group (memorial plaques in the form of a brass cube set into pavements to commemorate victims of Nazi persecution). Professor Carr has also written extensively about Frank Falla and other resistance heroes in *Victims of Nazi Persecution in the Channel Islands, A Legitimate Heritage?* which was published by Bloomsbury in 2019.



Cover of first edition of Silent War in 1967

Overlooked

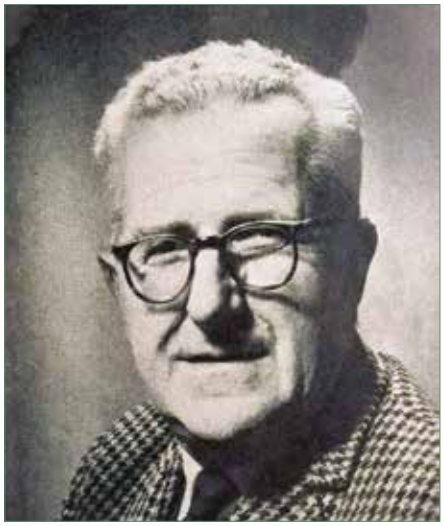
She wrote a foreword to the republication in 2018 of Frank Falla's book *The Silent War*, first published in 1967. She said: "He described the men and women, who like him, had been deported to prisons, labour camps and concentration camps for acts of resistance as 'forgotten people'. They had been left unprotected by the authorities after standing up to the occupiers in acts of protest, defiance and resistance. They were also overlooked after the Occupation and given no recognition or honour by those in authority."

During her talk she outlined how her academic research and scholarship resulted in the 2016 BBC television documentary "Finding Our Fathers." This directly enabled the discovery of where one of the GUNs group, Joseph Gillingham, and Joseph Tierney from Jersey, also arrested and deported for distributing news sheets of BBC radio broadcasts, had been buried in Europe. This brought comfort to their daughters in emotional scenes shown in the programme.

More recently Professor Carr played a prominent role as an advisor and interviewee in the recent Channel 4 series "Britain Under the Nazis: Forgotten Occupation" (2025) – "The little-known story of the Nazi occupation of the Channel Islands in World War II - a shocking tale of collaborators, informants, black marketeers, forced labour camps and brave resisters."

Memorial

Such was the inspiration generated by her seminar, CIoJ President Gerald Bowey asked St Bride's Church in Fleet Street – the journalists' church – if it would be possible for the Channel Islands journalist resisters to be commemorated there. James Irving, Head of Finance & Fundraising at St Bride's, has responded positively to this request, saying: "I can confirm that we would be delighted to accommodate a memorial plaque in the south aisle of the church … we normally ask for a donation of £1,000 to cover the calligraphy and to keep the plaque at St Bride's in perpetuity."

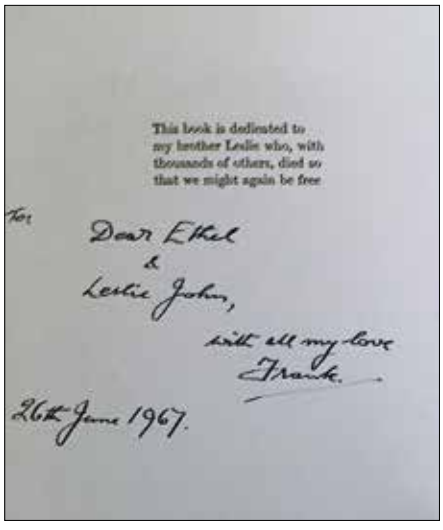


Frank Falla in 1967

The Institute is currently looking to raise the funds necessary for the St Bride's commemoration.

"One man's war"

Frank Falla became acting editor of the *Guernsey Star* after the summary dismissal of the editor Bill Taylor when the occupying Nazis took offence to an article reporting



Frank Falla signs a first edition copy of his book bearing dedication to his brother Leslie who died on active service during WW2



Good Prices Given

The Star

THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 1943

CXXIX.—No. 6. TWOPENCE

PLEASE HELP "THE STAR" FUND

Leader Appeals to Moslems

BRITAIN'S GRIM CHOICE: TO STOP FIGHTING OR STARVE

Nearly Another Quarter-Million Tons of Ships Lost in 48 Hours

British Communists Agitation

Japanese Ascending in Pacific

Front page of Guernsey Star 14 January 1943- censored by Nazi occupation and forced to carry biased news coverage

"TROOPS WHO BREAK INTO PRIVATE PREMISES. Military Authorities Will Do All In Their Power To Stop Them."

Frank and his remaining journalists had to sign a declaration to comply with full censorship and control. He wrote: "So the freedom of the press, which *The Star* had treasured since its birth in 1813 when Wellington was winning the last battle of the Peninsular War, went up in smoke."

Frank said: "To produce a newspaper subject to wartime censorship is difficult enough, but to have the enemy as your censors is ten times worse … King Canute would have been quite as powerless to stem the flow of Nazi news during the occupation of Guernsey, as he was to halt the tide."

The first edition of Falla's memoir, *The Silent War* (1967), is described as "one man's war… told with sincerity, feeling and a surprising lack of bitterness." The book's cover defined his quiet heroism: "For three years he and his colleagues fought Nazi censorship, slipping messages into the newspaper under the guise of news paragraphs, and placing the German propaganda they were given to print in column five '-the fifth column.'"

That subversive humour carried real peril. In occupied Guernsey, even listening to the BBC was punishable by imprisonment. Yet Falla and a small band of fellow activists, truly operating as resisting journalists — Cecil Duquemin, Joseph Gillingham, Hubert Lanyon and others — risked everything to type up summaries of BBC broadcasts on a battered typewriter, producing the underground news sheet GUNs. Distributed by hand, folded into loaves or hidden under doormats, it reminded islanders that Britain still fought on.

Frank Falla said one of "the most dastardly deeds perpetrated" by the censor took place on Christmas Eve 1941 when the Christmas message to the people of the island from the vicar of St Stephen's, the Reverend T Hartley Jackson, was changed from: "The recognition that Christ was born into the world to save the world, and bring peace on earth, is the need of the world" to "The recognition that Christ was born into the world to save the world, and bring peace on earth is the need of Britain and her Jewish and Bolshevik allies."

Defiance

In *The Silent War*, Falla described the provocative epidemic of V-for-Victory signs appearing in roads and on buildings directed by a BBC radio campaign. These were small acts of defiance reassuring the occupied islanders that they had not been forgotten. It was as though the truth was being printed in miniature after having been outlawed through occupation and censorship.

In 1944 the GUNs network was betrayed by an Irishman living on the island, and its members were deported to mainland Europe. Falla endured the sub-human conditions of two Nazi prisons; two of his comrades died in his second prison of Naumburg. He was two weeks away from death when liberated by American forces.

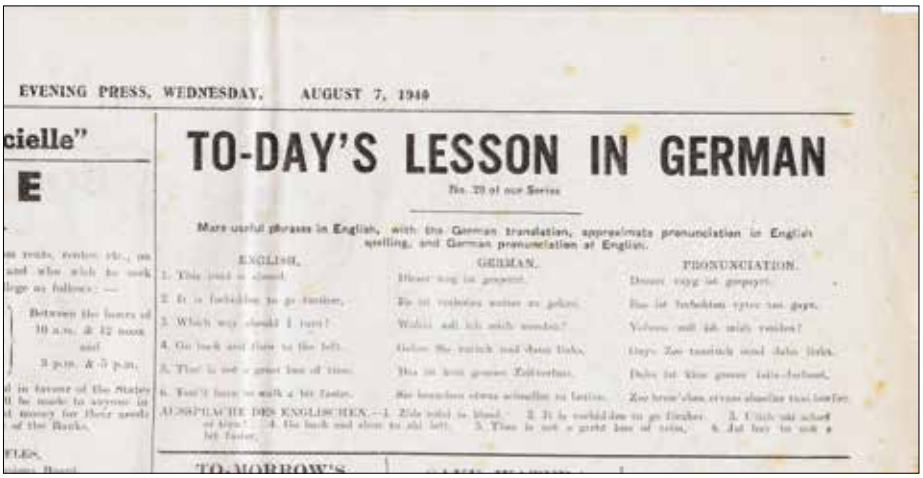
Few scholars have done more to preserve this legacy than Professor Carr, whose research has transformed public understanding of the Channel Islands' occupation. Her work combines forensic historical investigation with moral purpose. Through her leadership of the Frank Falla Archive, she has made accessible hundreds of personal testimonies, letters, and documents detailing the persecution of Channel Islanders who resisted Nazi rule.

Gilly Carr's scholarship has illuminated what for Falla amounted to post-war silence. After liberation in 1945, islanders who had resisted often found indifference instead of gratitude. As *The Silent War* observed, "freedom… did not bring the hoped-for brave new world. It brought official reticence and evasion about known quislings, about compensation for those who had suffered during the occupation."

For decades, many survivors of deportation and forced labour were denied recognition as victims of Nazi persecution because they were British citizens — a bureaucratic absurdity that left them excluded from post-war compensation schemes. Frank Falla became a campaigning journalist to challenge this injustice in his postwar career.

It is one of the reasons why I have strongly believed Frank Falla's book should be central to any history module in journalism training and education. I place it on a par with the book *All The President's Men* by Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, the two investigative journalists for *The Washington Post* who exposed the 1974 Watergate scandal that led to the resignation of US President Nixon.

Professor Carr's painstaking advocacy has continued Frank Falla's campaigning legacy. Her work with the office of the UK's



EVENING PRESS, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 7, 1940

TO-DAY'S LESSON IN GERMAN

Children in Channel Islands' schools were forced to learn German and the Guernsey Evening Press for 7 August 1940 is forced to publish 'Today's Lesson in German.'

post-Holocaust issues special envoy and the German EVZ Foundation has secured belated acknowledgment and redress for Channel Islanders who suffered for acts of resistance — journalists among them.

Journalism under occupation

Falla's underground reporting was, in essence, a restoration of journalistic ethics under tyranny. He and his colleagues sought to inform the public, to challenge propaganda, outmanoeuvre censorship, and to keep a community tethered to truth. They knew that even a whisper of the BBC through a GUNs news sheet was enough to stiffen the spine.

One might think of the GUNs group as the smallest newsroom in occupied Europe, their carbon-copied bulletins a testament to journalism's democratic instinct. At the CIoJ seminar, we learned that these men risked imprisonment and death not for ideology, but for the principle that information belongs to the people. That principle resonates powerfully with modern journalists. CIoJ members attending her seminar recognised that Falla's group "upheld the same values that the CIoJ exists to defend: accuracy, courage, and the moral duty to bear witness."

After returning home in 1945, Falla became Guernsey correspondent for six national newspapers. Yet he remained haunted by the memory of those who did not return as well as having to deal with disabling Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder himself from the brutal treatment he received during his detention in Germany.

In the 1950s, he campaigned tirelessly for recognition and compensation for Channel Islanders imprisoned by the Nazis. His correspondence with ministries and charities — preserved thanks to Professor Carr's archival work — reveals a man driven by fairness, not bitterness.

Falla also demanded official recognition for the islands themselves. In his book *The Silent War* he expressed his indignation that the Channel Islands as the only British territory to be occupied by German forces were never honoured like Malta with the George Cross, nor visited by Winston Churchill after liberation. He believed that government reluctance stemmed from embarrassment — a wish to forget that British soil had been conquered.

It was this same reluctance, Gilly Carr argues, that long obscured the stories of resistance journalists. The British war narratives focused on military victory and not on the story of victims and victimhood.

From archive to altar

The initiative of the Chartered Institute of Journalists and St Bride's Church, Fleet Street — the spiritual home of British journalism — for a permanent commemoration of the Channel Islands journalists who resisted Nazi occupation would certainly help to bring more recognition to the bravery of the Channel Islands journalists during the Second World War.

There is the potential for a "continuum of conscience" linking these wartime underground reporters with today's journalists who face censorship and persecution across the world. St Bride's, whose walls already bear memorials to war correspondents killed in action, provides a fitting sanctuary for such remembrance.

Professor Carr's comparative research across the islands shows how these micro-resistances — by typists and printers — formed a quiet network of defiance. "Every act of reporting was an act of faith," she says. "They were practising journalists in the purest sense: recording events truthfully so that others might know."

While there was no widely recognised group named "JUNS" the act of distributing BBC news was one of several forms of resistance in Jersey, with different acts carried out by multiple small, independent groups, just as in Guernsey. Groups like the Jersey Communist Party (JCP) and the



William Joyce Thinks :

Poles Jockeyed Into Wrong Position

Europe Disgusted with Downing Street Tactics

"The people of Europe are now more disgusted than ever with the cant and humbug of Downing-street. In 1939 Germany was ready to discuss with the British and decide on matters which the Soviets now refuse to entertain. So, if the position be logical, Britain must now declare war on the Soviet Union!"

So exclaimed Joyce at the conclusion of his stirring broadcast from Germany at 1.30 yesterday afternoon.

As usual, Joyce provided an analysis of the position on the Eastern Front, where the Russians were continuing their desperate onslaughts at the cost of terrible sacrifice in man power and material: "Stalin is throwing all his men and material into this winter battle; he feels he must, or waste completely all that has been lost already," observed Joyce. But, added the broadcaster, Germany stood her ground, to break the strength of the Soviets, who, but for the brave resisting Armies of Germany would crash through to the plains of Europe to establish a hegemony which was outlined by Smuts some time ago.

From this point Joyce entered into the current history of the famous overtures made by the Polish emigrés in London to Russia, and the Soviet's snub in their reply. It was a most brutal rebuff for London Poles, and exhibited the depths of impotence to which the British Government had sunk. On Saturday came the news that the Polish politicians had proposed a conference between themselves, Britain, America and the Soviets! Could there be any greater temerity than this from a party which had been so insulted? The Poles could not prevent the Russians from breaking through and setting up a goverment more to their liking.

Joyce, continuing, observed that "The Times" had written of the Polish declaration being characterised by clear statesmanship, and that time should not be lost, for no such favourable opportunity for an agreement would be reached.

The main fact was that the B.B.C. and the British press led the Polish group to believe that the Russians would admit them to a conference. And now the respose was a snub! Stalin had denounced the Poles on a number of counts, and accused them of assisting Germany, and reminded them that their diplomatic connexions with Moscow were broken off.

"Both Eden, the British Government and the Poles must feel they have been fooled, and, like Malvolia, 'been notoriously abused'" reflected Joyce in an open aside to the world! Then he added that the Poles were victims of a vile deception, but it was the prestige of Britain that had been hit well "below the waterline." Either Britain shared the rebuff of the Soviets or it was following a plan by which the Poles must "walk the plank." At any rate, Britain cut a sorry figure in the whole affair. Possibly Britain would say she had done her best and failed, and that, after all, it was the fault of the Poles for not heeding the warnings given them.

The position found the people of Europe disgusted, concluded Joyce.

Front page of Guernsey Evening Press 14 January 1944 forced to publish the script of a 'Lord Haw Haw' William Joyce broadcast

Jersey Democratic Movement (JDM) led by Norman Le Brocq circulated translated BBC news sheets and anti-Nazi leaflets.

Canon Clifford Cohu used to call out the BBC news while cycling through St Helier and passed it on to patients in the General Hospital. He was arrested, deported, and died as a result of his brutal treatment in Zoeschen labour camp. Joseph Tierney and John Nicolle were part of a group that listened to a forbidden radio and compiled the news sheets that Cohu and others distributed. Like the members of GUNS, many Jersey Islanders involved in these acts were caught, imprisoned, and deported to Nazi camps and prisons, with many never returning home.

It could be argued that The Frank Falla Archive now unites these stories, linking the Channel Islands' experience to broader questions about media freedom under occupation — from wartime Europe to today's authoritarian regimes. Their courage echoes that of contemporary reporters imprisoned in Russia, Myanmar or Iran. Remembering the Channel Islanders, therefore, is not an exercise in nostalgia but a reaffirmation of journalism's universal values.

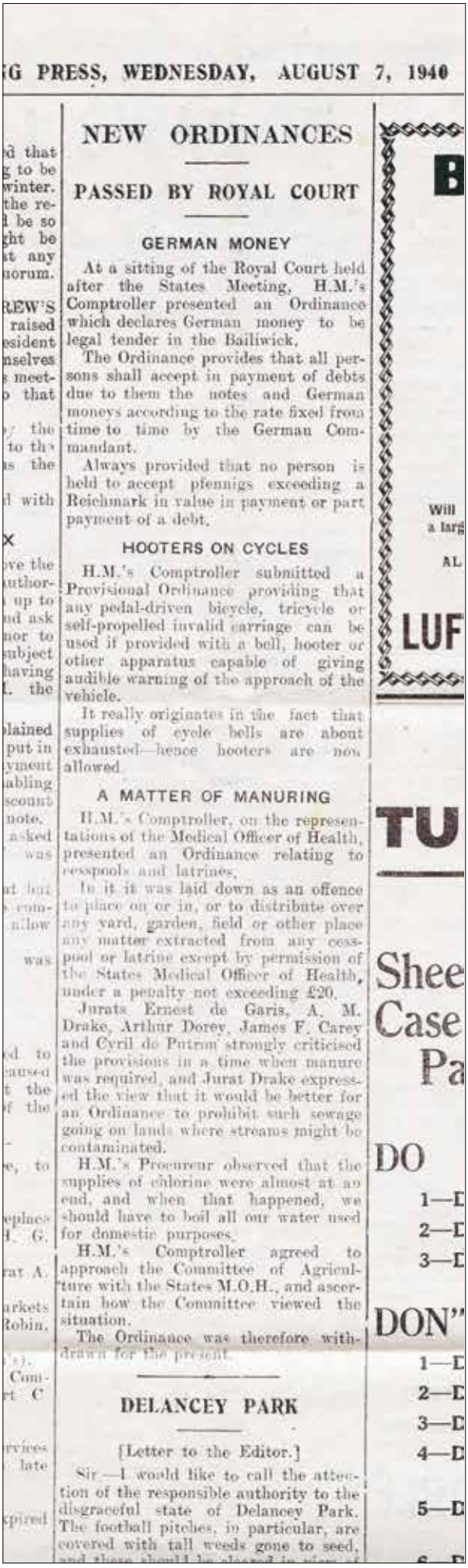
Falla himself foresaw that continuity. There was a telling episode in his book when he described how "We lost publication for two days in one bad spell and it was amazing and flattering the number of people who asked why had we been caught. It was then that we realized as never before that our own news-sheet meant something." The lesson of his book *The Silent War*, is that truth is always deeply valued through journalism.

Commemoration

Any forthcoming St Bride's memorial can contribute to the restoration of a missing chapter of British journalistic history. It could help to extend Frank Falla's own campaign for recognition — the campaign he waged from his small home in St Peter Port, writing letters to ministries and newspapers long after the war ended.

Frank Falla died in 1983, aged 71. Yet his legacy — of integrity under duress — feels newly urgent. *The Guernsey Press* office where he once edited copy still stands, its post-war façade concealing the memory of the underground newsroom that defied Hitler's censors. From there, Falla's moral lineage should run directly to Fleet Street, to St Bride's, and to the wider fraternity of journalists who continue to confront tyranny with truth.

Any future memorial can honour not only the men of GUNs but the principle they embodied: that even in the darkest times, the duty to report endures. In *The Silent War* Frank Falla reminds us, in writing without rancour but charged with unflinching clarity, that they had fought their war with words, and those words had won.



G PRESS, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 7, 1940

NEW ORDINANCES

PASSED BY ROYAL COURT

GERMAN MONEY

At a sitting of the Royal Court held after the States Meeting, H.M.'s Comptroller presented an Ordinance which declares German money to be legal tender in the Bailiwick.

The Ordinance provides that all persons shall accept in payment of debts due to them the notes and German moneys according to the rate fixed from time to time by the German Commandant.

Always provided that no person is held to accept pfennigs exceeding a Reichmark in value in payment or part payment of a debt.

HOOTERS ON CYCLES

H.M.'s Comptroller submitted a Provisional Ordinance providing that any pedal-driven bicycle, tricycle or self-propelled invalid carriage can be used if provided with a bell, hooter or other apparatus capable of giving audible warning of the approach of the vehicle.

It really originates in the fact that supplies of cycle bells are about exhausted—hence hooters are now allowed.

A MATTER OF MANURING

H.M.'s Comptroller, on the representations of the Medical Officer of Health, presented an Ordinance relating to cesspools and latrines.

In it it was laid down as an offence to place on or in, or to distribute over any yard, garden, field or other place any matter extracted from any cesspool or latrine except by permission of the States Medical Officer of Health, under a penalty not exceeding £20.

Jurats Ernest de Garis, A. M. Drake, Arthur Dorey, James F. Carey and Cyril de Putron strongly criticised the provisions in a time when manure was required, and Jurat Drake expressed the view that it would be better for an Ordinance to prohibit such sewage going on lands where streams might be contaminated.

H.M.'s Procureur observed that the supplies of chlorine were almost at an end, and when that happened, we should have to boil all our water used for domestic purposes.

H.M.'s Comptroller agreed to approach the Committee of Agriculture with the States M.O.H., and ascertain how the Committee viewed the situation.

The Ordinance was therefore withdrawn for the present.

DELANCEY PARK

[Letter to the Editor.]

Sir,—I would like to call the attention of the responsible authority to the disgraceful state of Delancey Park. The football pitches, in particular, are covered with tall weeds gone to seed,

Guernsey Evening Press for 7 August 1940 forced to report German Ordinances on occupation to people of Guernsey

OBITUARY

Paul Leighton (1951-2025)

Paul Francis Leighton, an active member of the Chartered Institute of Journalists for four decades, has died after a short illness. He was 74.

A journalist and broadcaster since 1969, Paul served as President of our Institute twice (1991-92 and 2014-2016) and was also Chairman of the Broadcasting Division.

Paul trained as a reporter at the *Birmingham Post* newspaper, and continued to work there during his holidays while he studied at Nottingham University. But



broadcast journalism was his first love, and so he joined BBC Radio Derby as a trainee after university, and was promoted to news editor.

He then spent two years as a Radio 4 staff announcer, before joining BBC Radio 2 as a Newsreader. Paul also freelanced as a local government stringer for both the *Telegraph* and the *Guardian* newspapers, covering Derbyshire County Council and the Peak Park Planning Board, and for four years was political columnist for the *Derby Trader* group of newspapers. He returned to the Home Counties as news editor for Chiltern Radio Group, based in Dunstable, and then as Head of News for Mix96 at Aylesbury & Swan FM in High Wycombe.

He joined the Institute of Journalists in 1977, after two years as an FoC ('Father of the Chapel') for the NUJ, leading to a long involvement with the Institute, serving in a variety of roles and being elected to Council many times. He became the Chairman of the Institute's Broadcasting Division in 1983, succeeding fellow BBC broadcast journalist Chris Underwood.

Paul remained a stalwart member of the CIoJ after being elected as President for the first time in 1990 and returned to the role 25 years later. He also worked closely in developing membership recruitment and training for our Institute, and enjoyed working to promote journalism in all aspects as a former member of the Press Complaints Council, serving as a trustee on the CIoJ Welfare Fund, and was on its admission panel.

He also served as a Derbyshire County Councillor and was a Conservative



Parliamentary Candidate.

We share our condolences with his wife Davina, son Dominic, daughters Rebecca and Emma, and stepdaughter Lena.

Liz Justice

The Editor adds: I first met Paul when I joined the Institute in 1986. He was Chairman of the Broadcasting Division at that time, hosting Institute events at the BBC Club but also frequently coming along with other Broadcasting Division members to meetings and socials organised by the Institute's Fleet Street District (on whose committee I served at the time) at a variety of pubs in and around the Street!



When Paul was elected Vice-President of the Institute in 1990, he played a key role with then President Charlie Harris in organising the hugely successful "Charter Centenary" events marking a hundred years since Queen Victoria granted the Institute its Royal Charter. Later in the 1990s he provided the catalyst for the formation of a South East Region group for CIoJ members in Surrey, Sussex and Kent, and he provided sound advice and support during my Presidency of the Institute a few years later. I shall always be grateful to Paul for his encouragement, experience, and boundless enthusiasm for the Institute cause!

Andy Smith

CIoJ Funds in numbers...

133 - years of support

£72,000 - total support provided in 2024

14 - people in receipt of support in 2024

£3.9m - the value of Institute charitable funds

13 - families helped in 2024

Chartered Institute of Journalists CHARITIES CIoJ

OBITUARY

Verité Reily Collins (1938-2025)

Verité Reily Collins, one of the most characterful and distinctive members of the Chartered Institute of Journalists, has died aged 86. In a long and eventful life, Verité combined several careers into one, earning not just rave reviews and a considerable readership for her 17 published books, but gaining the respect of many thousands of people across the country for campaigning on the issue of NHS shortcomings in the area of cancer treatment. Versatility and the ability to dedicate herself to many causes was her enduring characteristic.

We all have fond memories of her wit, good humour and dedication to the principles of journalism, but perhaps not everyone realises that Verité's considerable reputation in the world of travel journalism arose from her beginnings in the tourism industry. In those early days, Verité had a thirst for adventure and discovery, but was very keen to stress the importance of discovering one's own country, as well as far-off and mysterious places abroad.

Her first commercial assignments were in the organisation of tours and itineraries, and it was in the 'construction' of the latter that Verite began to write bulletins, brochure information and such like — exercises which naturally gave way to more expansive essays in full-blown and increasingly professional travel writing. Book after book, followed, not to mention a rich stream of articles, which even when forthright and serious always contained the wider view, acknowledging the other side of the argument (yet usually demolishing it with good sense and a dash of wit).

The Union Jills

But organising events was always a passion, and she founded — in order to promote British business overseas — 'the Union Jills'! This initiative, part of the wider "I'm Backing Britain" campaign, arose from her time as an organiser in the international Miss World competitions. Verité's idea was that international businessmen should arrive in Britain to be greeted by an attractive welcoming party of young ladies, dressed in Union Jack mini-skirts!

Patriotism was very important to Verite. Her activities were certainly eye-catching, earning her a 'mention in despatches' by none other than ultra-feminist, Germaine Greer.

Verité came from a naval family — her father's postings including a spell in the Eastern Mediterranean and Turkey. Discussing this early life, her nephew, Henry Reily Collins, described an outlook planted in wide horizons, intellectual self-sufficiency and a general 'get up and go' approach. Despite embracing life with verve, Verité suffered as a child from polio. It was perhaps because of this that she was very conscious of her health, eschewing the usual journalistic tipple of wine (and stronger concoctions) in favour of healthy tomato juice.



Verité Reily Collins (right)

Fine chocolates, though, compensated, and again, her nephew spoke of his aunt's carefully ordered refrigerator: "Ranks of Lindt chocolates on one shelf, neatly arranged containers of tomato juice on the other!"

Verité was down-to-earth and never ostentatious, but she resisted the age of 'cutbacks', economies, household budgets and forced egalitarianism in her own inimitable way. Regular visits to Fortnum's maintained a sense of the finer things of life, which were always important. Taste, distinction and culture: the riches valued by Verité.

As a devoted aunt, Verité was very keen to know that Henry was — and I quote — "not wasting his time on this planet" — an attitude which she maintained in her work for our Institute, which included active involvement in our Freelance Division and South East region, attendance at many of our conferences, and contributions to *The Journal*.

Hard work and purpose, tempered with a truly pleasant and approachable personality. Always colourful and interestingly dressed, multi-lingual, multi-talented Verité was a fine writer, careful administrator and much-loved and missed friend.

Stuart Millson

Internet freedom declines

Freedom House, the US-based advocacy organisation that promotes democracy and human rights, has released its latest Freedom on the Net report, revealing that global internet freedom has declined further in the last year. According to the report, digital repression has deepened in Russia, Turkey, and Venezuela, whose authoritarian leaders are increasingly trying to emulate the draconian censorship that has long been found in countries like China and Iran. Freedom House researchers also documented growing threats to free expression in more democratic countries, such as Germany and the USA.

The report's authors state that artificial intelligence and satellite-based internet service have "the potential to transform how people communicate and access information across borders … but to ensure that this next wave of technology actually strengthens democracy and does not exacerbate repression, we need to develop tools and regulations that reflect the lessons of the past 15 years of digital policy. We cannot afford to make the same mistakes."

Freedom House was among the non-government organizations affected by the Trump Administration's freeze on US foreign aid, including the removal of funding for Freedom on the Net and cuts to emergency support for journalists, human rights campaigners and others facing persecution for expressing their beliefs and dissent online. For more information on the work of Freedom House, go to: www.freedomhouse.org

E-mail address

If you are not receiving regular messages from us via e-mail it is likely we do not have your up-to-date details. Don't miss out. Update your details today - memberservices@cioj.org .