Society to Launch Journal
Following suggestions made by Society members over the years, the Society has decided to produce an annual journal as well as this quarterly Newsletter. The journal will print Powell-related articles that are too long (i.e., over 2,000-3,000 words) or too heavyweight for the Newsletter; for example academic or scholarly articles; chapter extracts from Powell-related books; longer extracts from academic theses; extended book reviews etc. The journal will be entitled:

Secret Harmonies: Journal of the Anthony Powell Society

Stephen Holden, Newsletter Editor, will also be the journal’s editor and the publication will be governed for the Society by an editorial board consisting of Stephen, Dr Christine Berberich (Lecturer in English at University of Derby, UK) and Dr Nicholas Birns (Lecturer in English at New School University, New York, USA). The journal will be sent to all members as part of their subscription; copies will also be available for purchase. Publication of

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From the Secretary’s Desk
This column is an apology! An apology because I have left undone many of those things I should have done. Why? Because normality in the Marshall household has been disrupted by, inter alia, my father’s recent death. While this was not unexpected – my father was 86 and had been ill for some while – there is never any less to do at such times. And things had to be done one small step at a time as my mother is 90 – albeit a hideously fit 90. Consequently many tasks I normally do have to slip. Most visible will be that this year’s membership renewals have not yet been processed and this Newsletter is a couple of weeks late reaching you. [Yes, Stephen edits the Newsletter, but as the Society’s publisher I do the final sub-editing and prepare camera-ready copy for the printer.] Fortunately, at least for now, what passes for normality around here is returning; a start has been made on processing the large pile of membership renewals and generally catching up. Still on the subject of workload, Kevin Jewell, our Treasurer, is standing down at this year’s AGM because of his family commitments. We need someone to step forward and take on this vital, but not difficult, role. This highlights what we all know: more pairs of hands are needed to spread the workload wider or the Society will fail because we can’t do the work. We especially need a Treasurer, a Membership Secretary and a Conference Organiser. Let’s have some volunteers please!

Hilary Spurling
contracted to write
Powell biography
See page 21

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See page 21

The Anthony Powell Society
Registered Charity No. 1096873
The Anthony Powell Society is a charitable literary society devoted to the life and works of the English author Anthony Dymoke Powell, 1905-2000.

Officers & Executive Committee
Patron: John MA Powell
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* Members of the Executive Committee who are the Society’s trustees. All officers are resident in England or Wales unless stated.
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Continued from page 1

The first edition is scheduled to coincide with the Society’s AGM on 28 October 2006.

The editor would welcome submissions on Powell-related subjects which should be sent to:

Editor, Secret Harmonies
Anthony Powell Society
76 Ennismore Avenue
Greenford
Middlesex, UB6 0JW
UK

Email: editor@anthonypowell.org

Anyone wishing to place advertisements in Secret Harmonies should please contact the Hon. Secretary for information.

The deadline for submissions and advertisement copy for the first issue is Monday 4 September 2006.

The competition to select a title for the journal attracted 48 interesting and amusing entries. After long deliberation, and no little discussion, the Executive Committee agreed that the best choice of title was Secret Harmonies, the suggestion of Dr Michael Henle who wins a year’s free membership of the Society. The other top rated entries in the competition were: Fission, The Widmerpudlian, Borage and Hellebore, Powelliana and The Chantry.

As a result of the inauguration of the journal this Newsletter may reduce slightly in size as some articles which would have previously appeared here may now be held over for the journal. The Society will, however, continue to publish this quarterly Newsletter featuring lighter articles and topical news aimed specifically at Society members.

Anthony Powell Society Newsletter #23
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CRAWFORD DOYLE BOOKSELLERS seeks and sells early editions of Anthony Powell’s works together with those of other distinguished British authors such as Evelyn Waugh, P. G. Wodehouse, Virginia Woolf, Henry Green and James Lees-Milne. In addition to rare books, we offer a complete collection of new books in our store near the Metropolitan Museum. Catalogs issued upon request.

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One passes through the world knowing few, if any, of the important things about even the people with whom one has been from time to time in the closest intimacy.

[Anthony Powell, The Kindly Ones]

The Grolier Club is an (most would probably say “the”) association of book collectors in New York that was founded in the 1880s, now located in a pleasing Georgian revival building on East 60th Street. A mezzanine floor provides a room and an ante-room where exhibitions of members’ collections are held. The most recent exhibition, from March to May, was that of Society member William Warren’s Anthony Powell collection, augmented by several loans.

The entrance to the exhibition area displayed all twelve of the fluid and stylish final drawings for the covers of the Fontana 1980s paperback edition of Dance by Mark Boxer (“Marc”). In Anthony Powell’s view, Boxer’s covers for Dance were far the best of any other paperbacks, in a bookshop always “standing out immediately from any other series on the shelves” (Journals, 21 July 1988). In the setting of the exhibition, the much larger drawings (12 ins x 8 ins) probably made an even greater impact.

The drawings reflect Boxer’s earlier career in magazine and book design in a practical way: four of them have paper flaps glued or taped on to add (background characters in A Buyer’s Market), subtract (Templer in A Question of Upbringing), or alter (Sir Magnus Donners in The Kindly Ones; Gwatkin’s head in The Valley of Bones) elements of the overall design and intended to be seen in reproduction on the cover of a book, rather than viewed as a finished work of art in itself. (Boxer is said to have been taken by surprise when he was approached about selling the drawings; it is their purchaser who lent them for the exhibition.)

The Grolier Club Anthony Powell Exhibition
by Jonathan Kooperstein

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Only the drawing for the cover of Hearing Secret Harmonies is signed “Marc” (not reproduced on the cover as printed), suggesting that Boxer saw his cover designs for Dance as a single undertaking, just as Powell saw Dance as a single novel.

In the main exhibition room, Powell’s books were displayed in more or less chronological order. In addition to three of the four pre-war Duckworth novels in dust jackets, and Caledonia inscribed to Julian Symons, there were some more unusual books from this period. The earliest was a copy of the second printing of Afternoon Men (1931), disbound, and containing the author’s revisions for the 1952 Heinemann edition, transcribed by Lady Violet Powell. (This was Lot 365 in Sotheby’s 15 December 1992 sale for the benefit of the London Library, donated by Powell.) Juxtaposed with From a View to a Death (1933) was the first American edition of this novel, re-titled Mr Zouch: Superman (1934). The dust jacket for the latter, showing vignettes of “English county life” on a yellow background, suggests a bizarre cross between a group of Pont cartoons and a sample of between-the-wars American wallpaper embellished with idealised illustrations on an overall theme.
The selection from the pre-war books also included What's Become of Waring inscribed “For Moby Dick [Richard Wyndham (1896-1948)] from Captain Ahab [Powell]” at the time of publication (26 January 1939), together with a 1985 letter from Powell to a previous owner of the book, explaining the identities of donor and recipient, and evincing a distinct anxiety to establish that he barely knew Wyndham.

Yet Powell was a guest at Tickeridge Mill, Wyndham’s house in Sussex, before the war (Caroline Dakers’ Clouds: the Biography of a Country House). Even more to the point, Wyndham’s girlfriend in Biography of a Country House war (Caroline Dakers’ Wyndham’s house in Sussex, before the war (Caroline Dakers’ Biography of a Country House) was Enid Firminger (26 January 1939), together with a 1985 letter from Powell to a previous owner of the book, explaining the identities of donor and recipient, and evincing a distinct anxiety to establish that he barely knew Wyndham.

Could this old but presumably disagreeable memory account for the odd tone of Powell’s 1985 letter in the exhibition? Whatever the answer, the pairing of book and recipient is an apt one, since Wyndham’s real-life career as traveller, adventurer and travel writer matches the myth of TT Waring’s exploits far better than Alec Pimley’s adventures do.

This section of the exhibition also contained books by Powell’s friends, including Cyril Connolly (Enemies of Promise; both the limited and commercial editions of The Unquiet Grave [in which Tickeridge Mill is spoken of longingly by Connolly as the Great Good Place]), Henry Green (four novels, all inscribed to Olivia Manning, the dramatisation of whose Balkan and Levant novels the Powells strove valiantly to watch on television in the autumn of 1987 [Journals, 11 October and 22 November 1987]) and Constant Lambert (Music Ho! lent by Society member Edwin Bock), in addition to books by Evelyn Waugh, Kingsley Amis and Philip Larkin.

The earlier, done in 1934, was by Powell’s future brother-in-law Henry Lamb, a portrait painter). The other drawing, also a study for an oil painting, and done in 2002, was by the American artist Duncan Hannah, after a photograph of Powell reading a newspaper, standing, outdoors reproduced in Messengers of Day. The photograph was also used on the dust jacket of the American edition of Messengers of Day, which itself was exhibited just below the drawing to allow comparison of the drawing with its source.

What’s Become of Waring?

The exhibition labels for the twelve volumes of Dance (as well as proof copies of the English editions). The former unquestionably constitute a more successful job of satisfying a coherent design of a series of books produced over a twenty-five year period than the latter. In the case of A Buyer’s Market, however, the English and American first editions are essentially identical, since the American publisher was so unenthusiastic about the book that it published only a thousand copies from sheets of the English edition. As a result, after 1953, and until publication in 1962 by Little, Brown of the substantial book containing the first three volumes of the novel, it is not clear how American readers could have obtained A Buyer’s Market if they wished to read it. The display of the two editions of this book next to each other spurred the visitor to the exhibition to think about what must have been a vexed point for author, publishers and readers.

The exhibition labels for the twelve volumes of Dance accomplished the heroic feat of summarising the plot of the novel in accurate detail in a very limited space.

A particularly laudable feature of the exhibition was the display of so many of the editions, paperbound as well as cloth, in which Dance has appeared. (The minimal monetary value of the out-of-print paperbound editions unfortunately makes them harder to come by for the collector than the more expensive first editions.) It was instructive, for example, to see how the removal of colour from Mark Boxer’s covers for Dance (which after all was an element of his design for each) renders them slightly less sparkling in the 2005 Arrow reprints than they are in the 1970s Fontana edition.

Those paperbacks of Dance on display included most of the Penguin volumes with covers designed by Osbert Lancaster, as well as several volumes of the less well-known first American paperback edition published by Berkley in 1965, with covers designed by Paul Weller reproducing his trompe l’œil paintings of objects embodying the themes and subject matter of each volume. That for A Buyer’s Market is perhaps as good as any other paperbound cover: an opened champagne bottle has come to rest in an upturned top hat, while an infinitely relaxed artist’s lay figure lolls on the brim of the hat, legs crossed, with its arm placed around the neck of the bottle – a perfect evocation of the atmosphere of Mrs Andriadis’s party.

The exhibition approached its subject from another angle with the inclusion of two pencil drawings of Powell as a young man. The earlier, done in 1934, was by Powell’s preparatory sketch for the oil portrait he painted in September 1934, shown in the Wallace Collection exhibition. In the drawing, Powell appears the embodiment of youthful melancholy. (This drawing was Lot 366 in Sotheby’s 1992 London Library benefit sale.) The exhibition layout made comparison of the drawing with the finished portrait easy, as the University of Chicago Press edition of To Keep the Ball Rolling (2001), which reproduces the portrait on its dust jacket, was displayed nearby.
What's Become of Waring – Revisited

by Mike Jay

The fifth and final Powell novel written before WWII is set in London, Hampshire and the Côte d’Azur during one summer. We are treated to a dry run for the post war Dance sequence because the story is told by an unnamed narrator, but one so close in resemblance to Nick Jenkins as makes no difference. This narrator (‘N’) is a reader and assistant to Hugh Judkins of the publishers Judkins and Judkins. One of their star writers is TT Waring whose entire oeuvre is travel writing.

‘N’ is invited to a séance by his employer and one of those present, Mrs Cromwell (an American widow) is heard to croak “TT” which leads us to expect something is wrong with Waring. It soon becomes apparent that evening newspapers have been reporting the demise of TT Waring, in the south of France at the age of 31. Judkins and Judkins decide they must cash in with a biography of Waring. Hugh wants Mr Shirley Handsworth but his brother Bernard wants Minihnick to be appointed as author. Neither is really suitable and both are mollified when asked to prepare autobiographies instead. ‘N’ pushes his choice, Captain “Tiger” Hudson, who he met at the séance, to TT Waring’s ‘N’ who already knows (naturally). Tiger is engaged to Beryl who has a somewhat elderly sister Winifred (she is having a clandestine relationship with Mr Lal - an Indian who may or may not be a bigamist!). There is also a missing brother Alec who, we are informed by the 90 year old grandfather Captain Plimley is ‘N’ (a scoundrel)! The father, General Plimley is interested only in golf with Tiger and philately with ‘N’.

We are also introduced to the young and attractive writer and journalist Miss Roberta Payne, a friend to ‘N’ and their mutual friend Eustace Bromwich who lives mostly on the Côte d’Azur. Roberta says she was once engaged to Waring (under the alias of Robinson). Tiger through meeting Roberta to research the Waring biography, falls for the fatal Miss Payne and because they have a brief affair, he calls off his engagement with Beryl. Roberta then goes on a cruise with Hugh and the silly middle-aged man is besotted by the fashionable young woman. He thinks he has a chance with her. She only wants a free holiday. Her rebuttal of his inevitable advances changes Hugh from an industrious effective publisher into someone who “finds” religion and begins to act inappropriately in business dealings.

Meanwhile, Tiger has discovered from library research on Waring’s first book (on Ceylon) that TT Waring is a plagiarist. ‘N’ and ‘N’ then take their holiday with Bromwich on the Côte d’Azur. Tiger continues his research in local libraries and discovers further evidence of plagiarism. We then bump into Alec Plimley and he is revealed as TT Waring aka Robinson and now aka Alec Mason and married to Mrs Cromwell! As he is now well moneyed he is ending his career as Waring. The Masons, eager to escape further inspection flee on their yacht and perish in a storm.

Back in England ‘N’ is summoned to Camberley by General Plimley. The old man has died and Beryl shows ‘N’ some of her grandfather’s personal effects including letters between him and his scoundrel grandson Alec which reveal it was Captain Plimley who originally wrote the book on Ceylon. Any biography on TT Waring would now be impossible for Judkins and Judkins to publish, especially as they are busy pushing the final Waring volume. Besides, Hugh has been destablised by Roberta and leaves publishing to return to schoolmastering. ‘N’ returns to advertising once he has taken the chance to reunite Tiger and Beryl.

What’s Become of Waring begins slowly and dustily in London and Camberley but the pace accelerates in the chapters before and during the sojourn on the Côte d’Azur but then declines again in the final chapter once all the mystery has been explained. But now war really intervenes: Powell’s novel publishing is shelved for thirteen years and Dance is to follow.

Material from the Wallace Collection Exhibition

by Noreen Marshall, Hon Archivist

Like so many other people, I felt that one of the highest highlights of last year’s centenary celebrations was Dancing to the Music of Time, the Wallace Collection’s exhibition on Anthony Powell. It was not just that such a fascinating array of material was assembled for us to see, some of it for the first time in public. I was also conscious, as a curator myself, that all the graphics and interpretational material for the exhibition had been produced to a very high standard, and I knew just how much hard work had gone into them. But what happens to all this sort of work when the exhibition is over? Sadly, the answer is often that it is impossible to keep it.

The exhibition closed on 5 February and I asked Jeremy Warren if it would be possible to have for the Society’s Archive one of the three splendid banners which had hung at the front door and the entrance to the exhibition. Members will be pleased to know that not only was the answer a resounding ‘yes’, but he also kindly gave the Society first refusal of all the texts, labels and other similar material which the Wallace did not wish to retain. I accepted this generous offer on your behalf, so the Archive now has two banners; all six large text panels (including the timeline ‘Anthony Powell 1905-2000’); exhibition booklets; the smaller text boards (on subjects ranging from book cover designs to Malcolm Muggeridge); even a listing of related events and the directions signs.

As the Wallace Collection also took a photographic record, future generations of researchers and enthusiasts will certainly be able to get a good idea of this exhibition and why it was so special.
The Greville Press

In 1975 Harold Pinter had accepted an invitation from Anthony Astbury, a teacher at a private school in Warwick, to give a reading of his own work at the Warwick Gallery. The two men discovered they shared similar tastes in poetry, and when Astbury decided to set up a small publishing imprint called the Greville Press, Pinter gave it his enthusiastic support. Indeed, the Press was launched with an event at the Purcell Room in September 1979 when George Barker, William Empson, David Gascoyne, WS Graham, John Heath-Stubbs and John Wain all read from their work. Pinter chaired and compèred the evening; and over the years he has devoted a good deal of time, energy and money to the Greville Press.

Anthony Astbury subsequently wrote a fan letter to Powell in 1997, enclosing four copies of Poem for Guatemala, which had been published in pamphlet by Greville Press, and you commented that the Press “is reputed to be owned by Harold Pinter.” Knowing your passion for exactitude I must tell you that I am the “onlie begetter” of the Press, but Harold Pinter, for some years, out of friendship for me and love of poetry, became a fellow Editor and most generous supporter.

“The above bit of publishing history is really only a pretext for writing you a “fan letter” – often contemplated, but shyness, hitherto, always preventing. A Dance is, in my view, the greatest novel, written in English, since Vanity Fair. That says “everything”, because “everything” is in there, for your novel evokes the whole of the 20thC in England, others only a part.

“Thank you for your great achievement.

“I enclose a gift from GP as a small item of gratitude.”

Powell replied in longhand, on a postcard: “Dear Mr Powell, Please excuse me for troubling you but I have recently read your marvellous Journals in which you mention giving lunch to Judith Kazantzis, who gave you a copy of Poem for Guatemala, which had been published in pamphlet by Greville Press, and you commented that the Press “is reputed to be owned by Harold Pinter.”

A campaign to rescue one of the legends of literary London from the oblivion of an unmarked grave is about to bear fruit. If all goes well, the final resting place of Julian Maclaren-Ross – novelist, short story and script writer, boulevardier, drinker, debtor and Soho barfly in the mould of Jeffrey Barnard – will soon bear a headstone.

Thus he will be memorialised more than 40 years after he swilled a brandy to celebrate a new commission, had a heart attack and died aged 52.

The Society Merceandise Prices

UK members will be aware that UK postage has increased recently. Regrettably this has meant the need to revise the cost of Society merchandise, and at the same time we have tried to simplify things. While most items have had to increase in price, a couple of items have reduced. Each item now has two prices: one for UK members, another for non-UK members; both prices include postage and packing. When ordering please ensure you use the correct price.

Julian Maclaren-Ross Memorial

A campaign to rescue one of the legends of literary London from the oblivion of an unmarked grave is about to bear fruit. If all goes well, the final resting place of Julian Maclaren-Ross – novelist, short story and script writer, boulevardier, drinker, debtor and Soho barfly in the mould of Jeffrey Barnard – will soon bear a headstone.

The efforts to mark his grave in a cemetery in Mill Hill, London, chime with the recent literary resurrection of a man who, until a few years ago, was known chiefly as a Soho dandy and for the Grub Street tangles with publishers and bailiffs that made him the model for X Trapnel in Anthony Powell’s A Dance to the Music of Time. Two collections of his stories and writings have been republished after many decades, a novel issued as a Penguin Modern Classic, Paul Willetts’s biography Fear and Loathing in Fitzrovia, and his selected letters are to be published.

His Memoirs of the Forties is recognised as the definitive portrait of London’s bohemia of that time, and his first editions can sell for thousands. Figures such as Michael Holroyd, Harold Pinter, Jonathan Meades, Lord Bragg and Lucien Freud are known Maclaren-Ross admirers.
Powell Judges Eton Short Story Competition

Society member Charles Villiers entered a short story competition held at Eton College in mid-1980. The competition was judged by Anthony Powell. “To my everlasting chagrin, I came second,” writes Villiers, who has kindly allowed the Newsletter to reprint Powell’s report (entitled Report on Head Master’s Short Story Prize for C) on the competition, and the house notice.

“Short stories have more in common with the Play than with the Novel, and can vary from scrupulously naturalistic stories of, say, Maupassant, with their violent twist at the end, to, say, Chekov’s mere indications of states of mind; and indeed the short story can take almost any form the writer chooses. The former kind tend to have a beginning, a middle, and an end, and, although the latter may not be so easily described, they do require some sort of development. The merits of different kinds of short story are not easy to compare, but here S Kinsman’s Renaissance (belonging roughly to the second group) seemed to me to have the most depth of the stories submitted; with CAH Villiers’s The Hostess (belonging roughly to the first group) coming second. Renaissance was perhaps rather too static, but had a good deal of feeling as to the main character, even if he was rather a stylised one. The Hostess moved quickly within its own convention of man-about-town life, but the climax was rather flat. Surely Cinderella Ayrton should have been reintroduced and provided some sort of dénouement? Runners-up were Heavy Mental (NAR van Moyland), and The Professor (P Hennessy), but elsewhere there was rather too much vague ponderings about inner sensations without either action or situation.

June, 1980. AP”

Dates for Your Diary

Saturday 24 June 2006
East Coast USA Group Meeting
Venue: Riverside, CT
Time: 1200 hrs
Details from Leatrice Fountain (leatrice.fountain@gmail.com)

Saturday 12 August 2006
London Group Pub Meet
The Audley, Mount Street, London, W1
1230 to 1530 hrs
Regular quarterly meeting. Good beer, good food, good company, good conversation in a Victorian pub AP would have known. Members & non-members welcome; further details from Hon. Sec.

Saturday 28 October 2006
Anthony Powell Society AGM
To be followed by a talk
Wynter Room, Swedenborg Society,
20-21 Bloomsbury Way, London WC1
1400 hrs; further details to be confirmed

Saturday 11 November 2006
London Group Pub Meet
Details as for 12 August

Saturday 8 September 2007
Fourth Biennial Conference
University of Bath
Details to follow.

2007 Conference

The Fourth Biennial Anthony Powell Conference is provisionally booked for Saturday 8 September 2007 at the University of Bath.

The eagle-eyed will notice a subtle change. As we have not had anyone volunteer to take on the role of Conference Organiser the Executive Committee have decided to cut our cloth according to a different pattern, a pattern we can manage from the cloth we have.

It has been decided that we will try something different for the 2007 conference: a one-day symposium with perhaps half a dozen speakers each of whom will get a longer time in which to speak and answer questions. Although there was hot debate about whether this will work for us, it does work for many other societies and has the merit of being something which can be managed collectively by the Executive.

Speakers have not yet been arranged, but we hope to attract the usual interesting guests. In addition we would welcome paper or session proposals from members, so if anyone wishes to submit a suitable proposal for a (probably 45 minute) session, please contact the Hon. Secretary soon.

This leaves the Sunday of conference weekend free. However we hope to be able to offer some optional extras this day for those wishing to stay over in Bath: perhaps a charabanc trip, a walking tour of Bath or Sunday lunch.

Contributions to the Newsletter are always welcome and should be sent to:
Newsletter Editor, Stephen Holden,
Anthony Powell Society
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Greenford, Middlesex, UB6 0JW, UK
Fax: +44 (0)20 8864 6109
Email: editor@anthonypowell.org
Nominations for the three Executive Officers (Chairman, Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer) and up to six Executive Committee Members must be received in writing by the Hon. Secretary no later than Saturday 5 August 2006.

Nominations must bear the name & signature of two proposers, the signature of the candidate and a short biographical statement about the candidate. Electronic signatures will be accepted by e-mail, post or fax.

Treasurer. Kevin Jewell is standing down, for family reasons, after several years as Treasurer. We would like to hear from any member who is willing to take on this essential but not difficult role.

Motions for discussion at the AGM must be submitted to the Hon. Secretary no later than Saturday 5 August 2006. They must be clearly worded, proposed by at least two members and contain a statement in support of the motion which will be published to members.

The AGM agenda and proxy voting papers will be sent to all members with the Autumn Newsletter in early September. Proxy votes must reach the Hon. Secretary no later than Friday 20 October 2006.

The formal business of the AGM will be followed by a talk. Details to follow in the Autumn Newsletter.

Note: Members of the Executive Committee (three officers and six committee members) are the Society’s legal trustees. Those elected must not be barred from being trustees under English law and a majority of the trustees must be ordinarily resident in England and Wales.

Annual General Meeting 2006
Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of The Anthony Powell Society will be held on Saturday 28 October 2006 at Swedenborg Society, 20-21 Bloomsbury Way, London WC1 commencing at 1400 hrs.

Society Officers and Roles
One of the tasks which the Society’s Strategy Review has undertaken is to look at the various roles which need to be performed within the Society – and this does not just mean the traditional roles of Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. There are many roles (few are onerous) which the Executive recognises need to be done for the Society to work effectively and grow. Clearly many of these are already being done – although in some cases not as thoroughly as we would like due to constraints of time and indeed skills. So here is the list of all the roles which need to be undertaken:

- Chairman
- Secretary
- Treasurer **
- Membership Secretary **
- Social Secretary **
- Local Group Coordinator **
- Newsletter Editor
- Journal Editor
- Conference Organiser **
- Merchandise Organiser **
- Archivist
- Webmaster & IT Advisor
- Press Officer **
- PR & Media Adviser
- Publisher

Any member willing to take on work for the Society will be very welcome; we are especially keen to find people for the roles marked **. Please contact the Hon. Secretary for more information.

Subscription Renewal
Subscriptions were due for renewal on 1 April. Members who have not yet renewed will be sent a reminder in the coming weeks. In order to help keep costs – and subscriptions – down please renew promptly.

We are able to accept subscription payments by Standing Order (UK members only) and recurring credit card transactions; appropriate forms will be sent with your reminder notice. Payment may also be made in UK funds by cheque, Visa, Mastercard or online using PayPal.

Members who are UK taxpayers are asked to GiftAid their subscription. This enables the Society to reclaim basic rate income tax already paid on the subscription; currently this is 28p for every £1 paid to the Society.

Copy Deadlines
The deadlines for receipt of articles and advertisements for forthcoming issues of Newsletter and Secret Harmonies are:

- Newsletter #24, Autumn 2006
  Copy Deadline: 11 August 2006
  Publication Date: 1 September 2006

- Newsletter #25, Winter 2006
  Copy Deadline: 10 November 2006
  Publication Date: 1 December 2006

- Secret Harmonies #1, 2006
  Copy Deadline: 4 September 2006
  Publication Date: 28 October 2006

Local Groups
London Group
Area: London & SE England
Contact: Keith Marshall
Email: kcm@cix.co.uk

North East USA Group
Area: NY & CT area, USA
Contact: Leatrice Fountain
Email: leatrice.fountain@gmail.com

Great Lakes Group
Area: Chicago area, USA
Contact: Stephen Pyskoty-Olle
Email: widmerpool@hotmail.com

Swedish Group
Area: Sweden
Contact: Regina Rehbinder
Email: reginarehbinder@hotmail.com

Please contact the Hon. Secretary if you wish to make contact with a group and don’t have email.

Any member wishing to start a local group should contact the Hon. Secretary who can advise on the number of local members.

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Local Group News

London Pub Meets, Spring 2006
By Noreen Marshall

London members have recently had the benefit of double rations in pub meets. The usual Spring meeting took place on 13 May following an extra one convened on 21 April to greet Jeff Manley.

Jeff was in Europe on a visit from Washington, and was particularly keen to track down a recording of the Arena TV programme on Powell from 1983. Thanks to John Potter and the Wallace Collection, the Society is fortunate in having several copies in the Archive, and Jeff later reported “What was most enjoyable was that there were the extended sequences of AP talking about his own work and his own house. Indeed, it was the next best thing to being there on a visit”. Jeff also paid a visit to 1 Chester Gate and took some very evocative photographs – with a wonderfully blue sky to contrast with the truly awful Spring weather which we’ve been experiencing in London almost ever since.

This meeting had a very international flavour as we also had the pleasure of the company of Mr and Mrs Hans Johansson from Sweden, and Peter Kislinger was over from Vienna. One more pleasant surprise was to see Michael Hodges, now on the road to recovery from the ill health which had prevented him from taking part in most of the centenary celebrations last year. We conversed on the usual wide range of topics, especially music, and Hans brought a message from the Swedish Group. They had felt that the 2005 Conference was a great success, and that they were looking forward to the 2007 event in Bath; they were holding a joint Baltic meeting with Kaarina Huhtala from Finland on 26 April.

At the regular meeting we welcomed three new members: Mr & Mrs Graham Davie and Guy Robinson. Among the subjects discussed were hats (which few characters in Dance would have been without); Dance as social history and how it would be apprehended by other cultures; Waugh and AP, modernist novels; schools and schoolmasters; and Society matters such as the journal, Newsletter and Bath 2007. Auctions, book collecting, architecture, Kew Palace, romantic fiction, St Anthony (most, if not all of them!), films and Irish art also received an airing, and as usual members tucked into the Audley’s menu of good pub food. The menu has recently been revised to include some more modern and healthy eating options, such as extra pasta, and pesto-crushed potatoes, but the old favourites such as ham and eggs, curry and the Big Ben burger are still going strong and you can still have chips with everything. And if “Eaton Smash” (sic) is going to feature on the puddings menu again this summer, perhaps they’ll get the spelling right!

London members are always pleased to meet visiting members; if you’re in London please let us know in good time and we will try to arrange a meeting. Meanwhile the next regular London Pub Meet is on Saturday 12 August.

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Local Group News

Toronto Dinner
by William Denton

Eleven admirers of Anthony Powell and his writing met for dinner at The Arts and Letters Club of Toronto in early March. Society member Joan Williams and John Gilks, both active on the mailing list, were there, along with friends and acquaintances of mine who I knew had read Dance. We talked about Powell and Dance (and much else) through the evening: favourite books and incidents, how we had discovered the series, and all the other things one wants to discuss with another Dance reader.

In the invitation I said people were welcome to toast a character from Dance. The dinner began with a toast to Powell, and at dessert I toasted General Conyers, one of my favourite people in the series. Others toasted CSM Cadwallader, X Trapnel, Matilda, and Stanley Jeavons, all of whom got great cheers from the table. Few there had met before, but the common bond of Powell among so many interesting people made for a very enjoyable dinner and one I hope to repeat.

Are you waiting for something, Greening?

The General bade me discourse fair words to you, sir, anent traffic circuits.

What the hell do you mean?

I don’t know, sir,” said Greening.

That’s exactly how the General put it.

[Anthony Powell, The Soldier’s Art]

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Report from the Swedish Group
by Hans Johansson

The Swedish group met on 26 April in the Korean restaurant Busan as usual. In fact it should be labelled a Joint Intra-Baltic Meeting as the entire Finnish group that is Kaarina Huhtala from Helsinki visited us.

The discussion roamed over vast areas as usual. Kaarina started out by mentioning that at the London conference she had been advised to read Venusberg since the action should be located to Helsinki. After having read it she had found out that for several reasons neither Helsinki nor Tallinn – which cities she knew well – could have been Powell’s model for the city in the book. Riga or Vilnius on the other hand might be possible.

Hans had just reread Evelyn Waugh’s Decline and Fall and suggested Waugh made fun of Powell in that book partly by talking of “fashionable bachelors … in the upper rooms of Shepherd’s Market”, and partly by describing the Welsh in a mocking or even malicious way.

We then turned to Powell’s way of describing women which had puzzled us all. Barbara Goring, Gypsy Jones, Jean Templer and finally Pamela: none of them is very sympathetic. Nick’s wife, Isobel, is very vaguely sketched etc. Having reached so far, Kaarina had to rush for the steamer to Helsinki so we closed the meeting.
General Sir Michael West, character model for General Liddament, played a discreet but key role in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. His part is recorded in Ringside Seat, the wartime and political memoirs of Lt-Col James Allason to be published later this year:

“I was in Chicago completing a lecture tour when intermediate range ballistic missile sites were detected in Cuba, and President Kennedy went on coast-to-coast television to announce the imposition of a quarantine on all ships bound for Fidel Castro’s island. Suddenly the world seemed on the brink of an atomic exchange as the President despatched an envoy to London to brief Harold Macmillan on the photographic evidence obtained by reconnaissance overflights of the missile sites. The Prime Minister, General de Gaulle and Chancellor Adenauer had all given their support to the immediate ban on all further deliveries of offensive weapons to Cuba.

“The world waited, hastily preparing contingency plans, while Nikita Khrushchev pondered the Kremlin’s response. Fortunately a face-saving compromise was agreed.

“I had returned to England to be at my post [as Parliamentary Private Secretary to the War Minister], where I immediately received a disturbing intelligence report that the Americans were poised to start World War III with a limited nuclear attack. The Prime Minister received this briefing from Major-General Sir Kenneth Strong, director of the Joint Intelligence Bureau, on the 19th November before the crisis had been resolved. So alarmed was he that he had a copy delivered to the Queen without delay. While I had been engaged on my tour the US Navy, it now emerged, had been conducting a rehearsal in North Carolina for the invasion of Cuba, again without informing us, apparently in anticipation of our objections.

“The order for the exercise had been given when Castro had shown signs of reneging on the Soviet agreement to remove the missiles and Ilyushin-28 bombers. Evidently Castro had been infuriated by compromise and had voiced his opposition to what the Kremlin had agreed with Washington. The sabre-rattling along the eastern seaboard of the United States had been intended as a none-too-subtle warning to Havana, and the point was taken.

“The American intelligence briefings given to President Kennedy had anticipated a Soviet move against Berlin, and the doctrine recommended a pre-emptive bomber strike against Soviet intercontinental ballistic missile sites. Our own assessments were altogether less confident that all the launch-sites had been identified, and far from certain that they could all be rendered harmless in one attack. Macmillan and the Foreign Secretary, Lord Home, were shocked to discover that consultation by our closest ally had proved to be a sham, a realisation that was all the more grave when we knew how close we had come to a nuclear exchange, the outcome of which was, in our estimation, far from guaranteed. We did not share the American estimates, and the lack of discussion on this sensitive topic suggested that the full consequences of a Soviet retaliation had either been miscalculated or, worse, had been deliberately overlooked.

“Whilst in Washington I had stayed with an old friend, General Sir Michael West, then the British representative to the Combined Chiefs of Staff. He had known John McCone, the US Director of Central Intelligence, since they had both collaborated in the planning of the D-Day invasion in 1944. Apparently McCone was altogether less sanguine about the likely outcome of a military confrontation than the Pentagon, and he had shared his concerns discreetly with his British friend.

“West, who had been in command of the British contingent during the Korean War, was an engaging host, greatly respected by the Americans because his challenges to the Supreme Commander, General Dwight D Eisenhower, during the invasion planning, had proved prescient. Of course, at the time Eisenhower had not seen West’s interventions in quite that way, but the latter had been proved right. He was an experienced professional, whereas Eisenhower was a political appointee who had never seen combat during his lengthy military career. Thus in October 1962 West found himself acting as a conduit during one of the most sensitive periods in Anglo-American relations, adding a valuable understanding of US strategic and tactical thinking. It was a judgment he was uniquely qualified to make.

“West was a great aficionado of pop music, which he played constantly, and at full volume. When a new ADC had asked Lady West if she could get the General to turn down the noise, she replied that she had been trying for thirty years. West was later immortalised by Anthony Powell in his sequence of novels, A Dance to the Music of Time, as the eccentric General Liddament. Characteristically he never troubled to read them.”
The Widmerpool Award 2006
Request for Nominations

In 2003 the Society decided to inaugurate an annual Widmerpool Award, for that public figure who most embodies the characteristics of Kenneth Widmerpool. The award takes the form of an engraved “wrong kind of overcoat”, purchased by the Society (at no small expense) from some local flea-market or charity shop.

The first award, announced at the Balliol conference, went to Lord Irvine, the then Lord Chancellor. The nominations referred to his “unabashed exercise of the powers and privileges of his office without care of public opinion.”

The 2004 award went to the journalist Sir Max Hastings. The nominations were on the grounds “not only of physical traits (thick specks, booming manner) but for petty abuse of power” in using the medium of a review of a new biography of Powell as an excuse for personal score-settling (Powell had been very mildly disparaging of him … to the point where he rejects ‘all bourgeois values’. There is nowhere else left for him to go.”

The 2005 award went to Sir Ian Blair, Commissioner of London’s Metropolitan Police. His nomination noted his “combination of PC cringe and personal pompous” and “a snob.”

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The 2005 award went to Sir Ian Blair, Commissioner of London’s Metropolitan Police. His nomination noted his “combination of PC cringe and personal ruthlessness that make him appear by far the closest to Kenneth Widmerpool in character, as ongoing events continue to demonstrate. The mixture of accomplished climbing, political trimming and recently revealed disregard for the law are entirely what one would anticipate in a 21st Century Widmerpool”.

The Widmerpool Award has been widely reported in the UK press and garnered the Society some useful publicity.

Therefore, the Anthony Powell Society is formally inviting members to submit nominations for 2006 for this prestigious award. Nominees must be living figures who are in the public eye. The deadline for nominations is 1 August 2006 and should be made to the Editor of this Newsletter.

Once nominations are in, a cabal or Star Chamber will decide the “winner.” The award will be presented at some suitably Widmerpoolian location.

Widmerpool Sighting

In a short article in the 20 May issue of The Spectator Allan Massie picks up on a question asked at the Centenary Conference by Colin Donald: Does Widmerpool ‘add up’ as a character? Along the way Massie adds illumination to Powell’s working method. “Powell told me he didn’t do ‘a lot of planning’ … when Stringham says of Widmerpool ‘that boy will be the death of me’, he didn’t … know that Widmerpool would … be responsible for sending Stringham to Singapore.”

And does Widmerpool ‘add up’? Massie concludes: “It is Widmerpool’s determination to live by the will … which gives unity to his life, making him … ‘add up’ as a character. Without imagination … the failure of his respectable career brings [him] … to the point where he rejects ‘all bourgeois values’. There is nowhere else left for him to go.”

Elizabeth Barrett Browning was born on 6 March 1806. Fifty years later, in November 1856, she published Aurora Leigh. Other notable publications of 1856 include Thomas De Quincey’s Confessions of an English Opium Eater, William Makepeace Thackeray’s The Memoirs of Barry Lyndon, and Gustave Flaubert’s Madame Bovary.


The first novel in John Galsworthy’s The Forsyte Saga, The Man of Property, was published in 1906, as were Henry Adain’s The Education of Henry Adams, Upton Sinclair’s The Jungle, GK Chesterton’s The Man Who Was Thursday, The Railway Children by Edith Nesbit, In the Days of the Comet by HG Wells, and Puck of Pook’s Hill by Rudyard Kipling.

The Everyman’s Library was born in 1906. It was conceived in 1905 by London publisher Joseph Malaby Dent, whose goal was to create a 1,000 volume library of world literature that was affordable for, and that appealed to, every kind of person, from students to the working classes to the cultural elite. Everyman’s Library books were pocket-sized hardcovers that sold initially for what was then the remarkably low price of a shilling apiece.

Max Beerbohm, Walter de la Mare, AA Milne and Bertolt Brecht all died in 1956. New novels in 1956 included Saul Bellow’s Seize the Day, Time for a Tiger (the first volume of the Malayan Trilogy) by Anthony Burgess, Diamonds Are Forever by Ian Fleming, Pincher Martin by William Golding, Peyton Place by Grace Metalious, The Flight From the Enchanter by Iris Murdoch, One Hundred and One Dalmatians by Dodie Smith, and Anglo-Saxon Attitudes by Angus Wilson.


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Widmerpool Crossword Clue
From Nick Hay:
This occurred in a *Times* Crossword in September (I regret I did not record the exact date).

“Anxious Widmerpool should admit point (4).”

The answer is, of course, obvious to anyone with any knowledge of Widmerpool or Dance, but Widmerpool’s appearance in *The Times* Crossword (although of course this may have happened before) appears to me an interesting event. Widmerpool himself would of course have been delighted—well at least in his pre-1960s days.

Pursuing the question in my usual meandering and inconsequential manner I wondered how far the clue-setter was in fact using the answer to make a point about Widmerpool’s character, or indeed to refer very specifically to Dance: given that it is Parkinson’s exact description of Widmerpool very early in *A Question of Upbringing*, it would seem to me that this is either a very strange co-incidence, or is indeed an in-joke for Powell fans (of course if it is “merely” co-incidence it is still, or maybe more, pleasing for Dance readers).

Hilary Spurling contracted to write Powell biography
From Colin Donald:
This may not be news to many of you but my Scotsman colleague literary editor has just put this my way, from The Bookseller on 2 June:

Hilary Spurling, Whitbread-winning biographer of Henri Matisse, is to write a life of Anthony Powell.

Simon Prosser of Hamish Hamilton has signed up the book through Spurling’s agent, Bruce Hunter of David Higham. “Working with Hilary on the two volumes of her Matisse has been one of the highlights of my time at Hamish Hamilton,” he says. Volume two, *Matisse the Master*, was the 2005 Whitbread Book of the Year.

No date for the biography of Powell, author of the novel sequence *A Dance to the Music of Time*, has been announced. Spurling will produce a single-volume version of Matisse in 2008. HH has world rights in both projects.

We will keep members updated as and when we have further information; for now this is all we know — Ed.

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The bumper 120-page celebratory Powell Centenary Newsletter (issue 21; December 2005).

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Collected papers from the 2003 conference at Balliol College, Oxford. **UK Price:** £8  
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Fitzrovia: London’s Bohemia
Written by Michael Bakewell and published in the National Portrait Gallery “Character Sketches” series this small volume contains snapshot biographies of Fitzrovian characters including Powell and many of his friends. **UK price:** £4.50  
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Society Postcard
B&W postcard of Powell with his cat Trelawney. **Picture, page 3.**  
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Wallace Collection Postcard
The Wallace Collection’s luxurious postcard of Poussin’s *A Dance to the Music of Time*. **Picture, page 3.**  
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Back numbers of *Newsletter* issues 6, 8 to 20 and 22 are still available. **Per copy.**  
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