The Anthony Powell Society
Newsletter
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Books and Breakfast
Saturday 2 April 2011
  0930 to 1130 hrs
5th Floor Café, Waterstone’s
Piccadilly, London W1
A meeting with a difference! Informal
Saturday breakfast in a bookshop.
Details on page 17

6th Biennial Anthony Powell Conference
Friday 2 to Sunday 4 September 2011
Naval & Military Club, London SW1
Invited Speakers
Glenmore Trencare-Harvey
Ferdinand Mount, Simon Vance
Details on page 17

*** Special Offer ***
Bound Newsletter
Back Numbers
Details on page 19

Dance available as eBooks
See page 20

!!! Situations Vacant !!!
See page 19
From the Secretary’s Desk

Like all Society Secretaries I get a fairly steady flow of questions and enquiries from both members and non-members. Most such enquiries arrive these days by email, although there are letters and phone calls, and naturally questions asked when people meet me.

Often enough these are interesting: one is alerted to a new article on Powell, a quotation one missed, or letters for sale. And of course there are always welcome requests for membership information.

All too often, however, enquiries are mundane and in many cases could have been answered by reading the last, or last but one, Newsletter. This is frustrating for me, and often for the enquirer as well – especially when one points out that we actually did announce, two Newsletters back, whatever they were enquiring about.

I know I’m organised and I remember things (partly it goes with the territory). I also know I expect too much of people by wanting them to be as efficient as they think I am. But that is unrealistic. I have to realise that other people don’t remember everything and organise facts in their memory. I have to be more tolerant. But in doing so I would be delighted if everyone always read and digested the Newsletter. After all we write this for you, our members!

So please don’t miss in this issue: the London Breakfast meeting (page 17), an opportunity to buy bound copies of this Newsletter (page 19), Situations Vacant (page 19), the availability of Dance in e-book format (page 20) and the latest conference update (page 17). As well as the more important articles, of course.

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.

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All correspondence should be sent to:
Hon. Secretary, Anthony Powell Society
76 Ennismore Avenue, Greenford
Middlesex, UB6 0JW, UK
Phone: +44 (0) 20 8864 4095
Fax: +44 (0) 20 8020 1483
Email: secretary@anthonypowell.org

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The following is a presentation by my grandmother, Minerva Tracy, née Jacox. She was born in Pennsylvania to a very proud German American mother (née Ritter) with status aspirations, and a father from the general American mix who had management skills but was otherwise from a fairly humble family. A funny Powellite detail is that my great-grandmother thought, on the basis of family tradition, that the original Ritter (presumably her great-grandfather) had been an aristocrat from Darmstadt surnamed von Ritter. According to the family tradition, von Ritter, upon disembarking in Philadelphia, had been so filled with democratic sentiment that he dropped the aristocratic “von”. My mother, however, checked the archives in Darmstadt, where she discovered a complete lack of von Ritters and a great many Ritters, suggesting that the Ritter end of the family had a proud tradition of pretending to renounce a fraudulent aristocratic title.

My grandmother made this presentation to the “Literary Society” of Saskatoon. It was found among her papers in the house in Port Maitland, Yarmouth County, Nova Scotia to which she and my Grandfather (who was a professor of English at various universities, notably at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon and Acadia University in Wolfville) retired. The text is not dated, but it seems that she delivered her presentation some time after the 1964 publication of The Valley of Bones: she refers to rereading “five out of seven of the novels” during one weekend. By this time my grandmother was the mother of three adult children and had lived in Saskatoon for quite a number of years.

My grandmother was clearly one of the early fans of A Dance to the Music of Time, and she had in her shelves nearly all of Powell’s published works, or so I remember. In her presentation transcript she says that

the earlier novels are excellent in their way, more concentrated in their humour, more compact, but to study them in any detail would be to neglect the later work, and that I must not do.

Evidently she agreed with me that the shorter Powell novels are well worth reading, although in this presentation she decided to ignore them. This particular presentation does put my grandmother safely in the anti-Trollope and anti-Snow camp, although my mother tells me that she remembers my grandmother enjoying Trollope and disliking Dickens. Otherwise I did not ask about her position on the burning political divisions within Powell-fandom, such as whether Hearing Secret Harmonies is a terrible anticlimax or a brilliant ending, or whether the Fisher King and O, How the Wheel Becomes It! are worthwhile books or terrible disappointments besmirching the Powell escutcheon. I like all the books mentioned above a great deal, but I will never know if, in realms spectral, I join my grandmother on her side of the barricades or glower at her from the wrong side. In fact, I think I know most about her taste in children’s literature. The most serious
literary fault-line was on the subject of Little Women: my grandfather liked to use a silly voice when he read Little Women to my mother, to my mother’s considerable amusement, but my grandmother accused him of ruining the novel. No word on whether she approved of silly voice readings of Powell. Where is Mrs Erdleigh when you really need her!

The following is the transcript of her presentation. My grandmother obviously did not intend this text to be published. She is chatty and personal as she is presenting to her friends. Mixed metaphors abound. Filial pride requires that I mention that she could also write in more formal contexts, one of which was the Canadian Dictionary of Biography; some of her own brief lives of prominent Maritime scholars and educators may be read there on-line for free. She typed most of this text, but also scribbled a number of comments in the margins. Additionally, she makes a number of references to passages from A Dance to the Music of Time. Presumably she brought the volumes with her and read from them. Also included with the manuscript were a number of torn-out pages from the New York Review, the New York Times Book Review and The Spectator, and she makes reference to those pages in her presentation. Here I add the quotations from those newspaper articles where I can identify them, and correct a few typos. Otherwise it is as she typed it, with a few of my notes included. Her hand-written notes are bolded and underlined. My notes are in italics.

Adam Bohnet  
e-mail: adam.bohnet@utoronto.ca  
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada  
10 August 2010

TRANSCRIPT OF THE PRESENTATION

When in telling the sad story of the frustrated love of the armadillo for the armour-plated tank Swan and Flanders sing “Never tell a man the truth about the one that he adores”, they could with variations set the theme for this review … just make it “never try to tell the truth about the author you adore”. Because that is the situation. I am so completely at home, so utterly satisfied with The Music of Time that I can no more be objective about the series than I can about the other things that really matter to me; I can no more give a rational explanation of why a weekend in which I reread 5 of 7 books for the third time was sheer bliss any more than I can convince people that I know what I am doing when I drive a week across the country to sit on a bleak piece of beach surrounded by fog with tears of joy flowing unrestrained. Perhaps I am mad, but if I am not, perhaps by doing Anthony Powell for this meeting and forcing you to read at least some of him I have afforded you a glimpse of paradise.

Ever since the evening, I think the first in our acquaintance, in which I tried to tell Bubs why she should give Anthony Powell at least another chance, I have been searching for words to describe his charm … and I always come back to the advice … just go on reading him. I am willing to believe that millions who receive massive doses of him will only suffer from acute boredom but being an addict I feel that it is better to risk that boredom on the chance that exposure will result in commitment. And judging by the dazzling names of the devoted reviewers over the years, the addiction seems a highly respected vice.
Handwritten Note: I & II

Roman numeral I refers to Gene Baro’s review of *The Valley of Bones* in the New York Times Book Review, 30 August 1964, beginning on page 4. In particular she has marked up the following passage on page 20:

> Mr Powell writes with rare distinction. He is always subtle, clear and unhurried. His wit – exquisitely comic for being low-keyed – is a way of seeing, not a capacity for making jokes; his is comedy without distortion. The excitement in his writing is the sense of discovery it gives us. We are made to take the narrator’s viewpoint and insights effortlessly. Like Sousa’s marches, which stimulate by being just a bit ahead of the heartbeat, Mr Powell’s narrative method excites by being just a bit ahead of our understanding – a bit ahead, but never beyond.

Roman numeral II refers to Elizabeth Janeway’s review of *The Kindly Ones* entitled “Far Away Someone Shot an Archduke”, page 5 of the New York Times Book Review, 30 September 1964. She has marked up the article, so presumably she read a number of sections of the article, including:

> Powell’s instinctive concern with history is another factor in his work which moves him out of the rank of the “novelist’s novelist”. But it is his eye and ear for the individual which let him write so well about the great events. Every one of the crowding characters in this marvellous book is seen in his place in society, his place in time.

And

> Francis Wyndham, reviewing *The Kindly Ones* in the September Encounter, speaks perceptively of Powell’s “uncanny accuracy and remarkable clarity”, adding, “More than anything else, perhaps he is a corrector of clichés. Again and again one comes across some received idea (the way public school boys talk, what a wild Bohemian party or a debutante dance are like) that has hitherto been treated conventionally by the most sophisticated of novelists, at last got right”. To the casual reader, this may seem a minor talent, a marginal good. It is not. It is rather the heart of the mystery of art, and it is what makes Powell’s work so exciting in spite of the dryness and reserve of his style, this ability to create truth, emotional, evocative, revealing, out of a congeries of mere fact, so that reading Powell is like living someone else’s life for an hour or two, inextricably entangled with one’s own.

And possibly:
Powell’s world is not all of England, of course, but it takes in a great deal from seedy Bohemia and shabby gentility on the one hand to financial magnates and eccentric peers on the other. It is a world seen with ironic objectivity and described with wit so compressed and refined that it gives an effect of understatement: the more carefully one reads Powell, the more one is rewarded. He is a master of saying just barely enough, of “throwing away” a line. Indeed, he has been praised so wholeheartedly by his colleagues, both English and American, that a stranger to his work might perhaps shy off, fearing that caviar-to-the-general oddity, a novelist’s novelist.

This he is not. For one thing, his wonderful bumbling, living characters some of them confused, some of them shrewd and none of them knowing what they are doing, are enough to place him far above the mere technical craftsman which that phrase suggests. And in this novel, almost casually, he recreates and offers us for comparison the heavy yet unheedling atmosphere of a world on the brink of war – not once, but twice”.

Ideally The Music of Time should be read chronologically, but if it is in the stars that he will be your particular cup of tea it doesn’t seem to matter if you start in the middle and read both ways … at least that is what happened to me, and JUST LOOK.

As you probably now all know, The Music of Time is a series, projected, of 12 novels, seven of which have been finished, about the world as it surrounded Nicholas Jenkins, upper middle class, Eton, Oxford, married eventually into the minor nobility. The earliest episode (which appears in Vol. VI) is of the outbreak of the first war, when Nicholas is about 8 years old … so far the series has reached the end of the first year of the “phony war” … 1940, when Nicholas would be about 32.

Although Nicholas is the central figure of the series, he is there as an observer and perhaps catalyst. Things happen all around him, to friends, families and the world at large, and Nicholas is there remembering earlier encounters that illuminate present occasions … he is constantly reminding us of how things were and how different … or how similar … they are now.

If Powell must have a literary ancestor, Jane Austen is the only one that springs to mind because there is that same cleanness and uncluttered feeling about both their works, the same highly developed comic sense, the same feeling of precise pattern, the same disengagement on the part of the author. There is none of the fussiness or
busy-ness of a Trollope … and none of the pomposity of a Snow.

Handwritten note: It has also been suggested that the brilliance of his characterization is Dickensian

And The Music of Time stems from Bach or Mozart with its clearly stated themes becoming more and more intertwined and yet remaining clear and separate … unlike the colourful, kaleidoscopic, tumultuous [music?] of the 20th century.

The first volume, A Question of Upbringing, opens at school … Eton by another name … and we are introduced to Nicholas, his two great friends Charles Stringham and Peter Templer … and to Kenneth Widmerpool, the earnest, utterly impossible, totally all-wrong boy. The contrast between these three associates of Nick’s at all times … the interrelationship of their families and friends form the major themes of the music. By about volume 3 you have an uneasy feeling that it is the dogged, horrible Widmerpool who is fitted to succeed in our generation … and sure enough he goes on to success largely because he is undeterred by his own failures, his ineptitudes. The genius of Powell is comic … there is high comedy at every turn but it is Widmerpool who provides the custard pie element. It is a sad commentary on our times that success rides on an ability to triumph over the custard pie.

Powell has contrived his series in a way that is remarkably like our own remembrance of things past … a series of climactic episodes … the Old Boys’ Dinner at the Savoy, a debutante dinner and dance, a bohemian party, a reception for a young composer, houseparties etc. in which threads are gathered up and a great leap forward is taken. A reference five volumes later to the time Barbara Goring emptied the sugar bowl over Widmerpool brings back all the people who were there, all that has happened to them since.

Although Powell’s greatest genius is the long, discursive episode, he also is capable of the brief sketch that paints an unforgettable character …

That evening, another MP, Fettiplace-Jones, was present with his wife. Fettiplace-Jones, a supporter of the government’s policy, was at the same time too wary to cut himself off entirely from dissident members of the party. Like Roddy, his contemporary in age, he represented a northern constituency. Tall, handsome, moon-faced, with a lock of hair trained across his forehead for the caricaturist, he seemed to require only sideburn whiskers and a high collar to complete the picture of a distinguished politician of the nineteenth century. His untiring professional geniality rivalled even Roddy’s remorseless charm of manner. His wife, an eager little woman with the features of the Red Queen in Alice in Wonderland – possibly advised by her husband not to be controversial about Czechoslovakia – spoke sagely of public health and housing.

And

It was absurd to have worried about awkward adjustments where Albert is concerned. Talking to him was just as easy, just as natural as ever. All his old fears and prejudices remained untouched by time, the Germans – scarcely more ominous – taking the place of the suffragettes. He was older of course, what was left of his
hair, grey and grizzled; fat, though not outrageously fatter than when I had last seem him; breathing a shade more heavily, if that were possible. All the same, he had never become an old man. In essential aspects he had hardly altered at all; the same timorous, self-centered, sceptical artist-cook he had always been, with the same spirit of endurance, battling his way through life in carpet slippers.

Handwritten Note: Sillery – *Upbringing*, p167 III

I cannot find what *III* refers to

Nicholas Jenkins is Anthony Powell … but about two years younger. Powell is the son of an army officer, born in London in 1905, educated in Eton and Oxford. Like Jenkins he worked for a publishing house, wrote film scripts, wrote reviews and columns for a number of periodicals. His first novel, *Afternoon Men*, was published in 1931 and since then he has written *Venusberg; From a View to a Death; What’s Become of Waring* … all novels before he started *The Music of Time* series. He also became intrigued with the great gossip of the 17th century John Aubrey and both edited a selection of Aubrey’s *Brief Lives* and wrote a book called *John Aubrey and his Friends*.

In 1934 he, like Jenkins, married into the nobility … his choice being Lady Violet Pakenham, who has also written at least one book, and they have two sons. In 1939 he, like Jenkins, was commissioned in the Welsh (sic) Regiment. He was subsequently transferred to the Intelligence Corps and became a liaison officer. Nicholas Jenkins was in the process of being transferred from the Welsh Regiment at the end of *The Valley of Bones*.


Handwritten note: Walk around London IV

[Walk around London IV is clearly an article of some sort; I have not found it]

… *The Kindly Ones* being a recapitulation of the themes in the earlier books … and a tying in of the threads. *The Kindly Ones* are the Furies that gather with the clouds of war, both the first and the second, in Nick’s life.

Through all the books there is relatively little introspection. Nicholas observes, occasionally comments, but doesn’t worry the matter unduly. A rare passage like the following is as near as he gets to philosophizing.

Handwritten note: Casanova 197

For the sake of the review I am concentrating on *The Music of Time* which cannot be considered as anything but one book, as yet unfinished. The earlier novels are excellent in their way, more concentrated in their humour, more compact, but to study them in any detail would be to neglect the later work, and that I must not do. The music is very real,
and the scheme is set in the first page of the first volume.

*[Upbringing, p1]*

This absorption with the inevitability of the recurrence of patterns and themes is demonstrated over and over again … Nicholas comments upon Widmerpool:

Widmerpool’s advent in Eaton Square that night did not strike me at the time as anything more than a matter of chance. He had cropped up in my life before, and, if I considered him at all as a recurrent factor, I should have been prepared to admit that he might crop up again. I did not, however, as yet see him as one of those symbolic figures, of whom most people possess at least one example, if not more, round whom the past and the future have a way of assembling.

And in a later volume:

The meeting had indeed taken place. Isobel had mentioned it. She had not cared for Widmerpool. That was one of the reasons why I had made no effort to keep in touch with him. In any case I should never have gone out of my way to seek him out, knowing, as one does with certain people, that the rhythm of life would sooner or later be bound to bring us together again.

Of the two hundred or so people who appear in *The Music of Time*, certain are so outstanding that they provide the dominant themes. In the first volume most of the men appear at least briefly … Nicholas himself, of course, his two best school friends Charles Stringham and Peter Templer, the infamous Widmerpool … Sir Magnus Donners the industrialist with the strange sexual habits, JG Quiggin, the

angry young man, Mark Members the promising young man, and many more. The pattern is also set in that book of the two or three major episodes in which sooner or later all become involved. That will appear and reappear in different circumstances throughout the years … their relative positions greatly altered but their colour still distinct. One critic has said

*[Bergonzi – p39]*

**Handwritten note:** Because Bergonzi in the *New York Review of Books* last October did the best job of criticism on Powell I have come across I plan to read it aloud in its entirely.

To illustrate force of the will, Mark Members in *Acceptance World* p32. And finally to attempt a short excerpt that makes good use of the Powell technique of achieving lovingly wound round in words. *The Kindly Ones*, page 55. ■
Follow the Eton Wick Road
Retracing the Footsteps of the “Braddock-alias-Thorne” Incident
and Other Etonian Dance Scenes
by Jeffrey Manley

Most of the Eton landmarks mentioned in the text of Dance can still be found with a little effort and some of the reference points noted below. The Eton scenes are contained in Chapter One of A Question of Upbringing and Chapter Five of Books Do Furnish a Room. It is helpful to have reread those chapters before arriving at Eton. The most challenging scene to reconstruct is obviously the “Braddock-alias-Thorne” plot, much of which can be retraced with a fair degree of certainty and the remainder with some imagination. Other scenes require even less work.

Braddock-alias-Thorne
A good starting point for retracing “Braddock-alias-Thorne” is the Eton Police Station, 121 Eton High Street. It looks as if it may have been in that same location when the boys stopped to look at the wanted posters in 1922. They had started their walk from their house, south to the High Street but, after seeing the wanted posters at the Police Station, decided to return back past their house away from the town. To follow their tracks, proceed north on the High Street to the traffic lights across from the chapel and turn left along Keate’s Lane to the first intersection to the right which is Eton Wick Road. Proceed along this road to a large red-brick building on the left which is clearly marked Walpole House. This is where Anthony Powell lived as a schoolboy, although he calls it Goodhart’s after the housemaster in residence in his days, and can reasonably be presumed to be the location where Nick Jenkins lived in the reign of Le Bas:

The house looked out on other tenement-like structures, experiments in architectural insignificance, that intruded upon a central concentration of buildings, commanding and antiquated, laid out on a quadrilateral, though irregular style … Running westward in front of the door, a metalled road continued into open country of a coarser sort than these gothic parklands – fields, railway arches, a gas-works, and then more fields – a kind of steppe where the climate seemed at all times extreme. [QU, 2-3]

Walpole House is indeed surrounded by other tenement-like redbrick structures although not all were there in 1922. The metalled road is Eton Wick Road (the
B3026), which would be the “bleak December tarmac” along which Widmerpool is first seen running back to the house after “trotting across the plough” \([QU, 4-5]\). Continue along Eton Wick Road until the fields open out and there are public footpaths both to the right and left, “entering an area of dusty cow parsley and parched meadows”.

It was at this point that the boys encountered Widmerpool walking ahead of them in the same direction. After walking behind him for a while, they turned off the road and left him to “disappear in a distant cloud of dust”. So, it seems that in the outbound direction, their paths diverged at this point. They did converge later, although at different times, at the point where they separately met Le Bas. Although I got no further than this point on a recent visit, the Ordnance Survey map shows a network of footpaths in that vicinity, at least three of which intersect with Eton Wick Road along this stretch and proceed “beyond the railway line”.

\textit{Eton Great Common Footpath}. I suspect the boys would have taken a turn to the right which followed a small stream (Jordan) running along the north side of what is called Eton Great Common. In 1922 this was an area of “pasture” but today, unfortunately, it much built up along the south side between the path and Eton Wick Road. The Common land is, however, still undeveloped. The footpath continues, with the small stream on the right, under the railway, but is now intersected just beyond the railway by the M4 access road. This area would today certainly be less suitable than in 1922 for Le Bas to obtain “peace and quiet”. The path continues under the highway. The boys “moved along by the hedges, where there was some little shade”. Beyond the highway, there are still hedges along the north and south sides of the Common.

The boys continued until they came through some trees, and faced a low bank, covered with undergrowth, which stood between us and the next field. The road by this time was fairly far away. [From the crest of the bank], there was an unexpectedly steep drop to the ground. In the field below, Stringham and Templer were talking to Le Bas, who was reclining on the ground, leaning on one elbow. \([QU, 38-39]\)

Whether there is such a land formation in the Eton Great Common is not determinable from the OS map, but if there were, it would surely be on the north side near the stream. At this point, the road was “fairly far away”. So, it would probably be where the path passes north of Crown Farm which lies between the Common and the road.

After their encounter with Le Bas, the boys decided to return to the College and “pursued a grassy path bordered with turnip fields” \([QU, 43]\). They passed through a locality made up of allotments, dotted here and there with huts, or potting-sheds. Climbing a gate we came out on the road and there was a garage opposite with a shack beside it, in front of which stood some battered iron tables and chairs. A notice offered ‘Teas and Minerals’. It was a desolate spot. \([QU, 43]\)

They may have taken a short cut through the fields of Crown Farm directly to the road, in which case there is no public footpath. That short cut would be consistent with their having had to climb...
over a fence. There is nothing there today on the side of the road opposite Crown Farm except open plough and if there had been a refreshment shack *cum* garage in 1922, it would, indeed, have been rather desolate. And there are allotments showing on the current OS map just west of that point near the village. On the other hand, if the boys had followed the public footpath through the Common to the village, there is a church at or near where it intersects the Eton Wick Road. Although there is no mention of a church in the novel, it was there in 1922, according to Pevsner (“ST JOHN THE BAPTIST. By A Blomfield, 1867-69”). That would not have been quite so desolate a place as the spot across from Crown Farm.

**South Field Track.** The second possibility is that they took the track that goes between Eton Wick Road and the Thames through an area called South Field. The OS map shows that track continuing under railway and the highway through open plough to a point just south of the village of Eton Wick where it divides, with one branch heading north to Eton Wick Road just opposite the church mentioned above and the other continuing through the fields to Boveney Lock on the Thames and the village or settlement of Boveney. But this area is not pasture land, and there are few if any hedges today (although there may have been more in 1922 before mechanization resulted in their destruction). So it seems less likely that the boys and Le Bas chose this alternative.

**Common Lane.** A third, although altogether more remote possibility is that the boys took one of the paths to the right from Eton Wick Road to Common Lane and turned left on Common Lane, proceeding under the railway and going along the north side of the stream through the open plough of North Field to the village of Eton Wick, then turning south, down to Eton Wick Road. That track today also passes under the highway through the same tunnel as the public footpath through the Eton Great Common. Common Lane is more of a farm track than a footpath after it leaves Eton and would have offered Le Bas less peace and quiet than the footpath through the Common which would also have had more trees and resting places.²

In any event, after stopping at the refreshments shack, the boys, pumped up by Stringham’s launching of the Braddock-alias-Thorne rag, returned to the College by the most direct route, along Eton Wick Road. According to Jenkins:

> [w]e walked at a fairly smart pace down the road Widmerpool had traversed when I had seen him returning from his run at the end of the previous year: the tar now soft under foot from the heat of the summer sun. Inside, the house was quiet and comparatively cool. [QU, 46]

**Widmerpool’s Walk.** After their paths diverged at the beginning of the walk, it seems most likely that Widmerpool took second alternative (through South Field) on his outward journey. He is last seen disappearing into a distant cloud of dust that could have been churned up in the open plough of South Field while the boys turned right through the grassy pasture lands of Common. Widmerpool would have then returned via the path which the boys took through Eton Great Common where he witnessed Le Bas’ arrest.

But there is the problem of elapsed time. If Widmerpool had continued directly to
Eton Wick via the right branch of the South Field track and started immediately back through the Common, he would have arrived at the spot where Le Bas was sitting long before the police got there. Indeed, after the boys and Le Bas had conversed about poetry, it would have taken them 10 minutes to walk through Crown Farm to the refreshments shack and at least 10 minutes there, allowing them to have their drinks and Stringham to call the police. Once called, it would take the policeman 10-20 minutes to reach Le Bas depending on his mode of transport (he may have come on foot because he led Le Bas away or he may have ridden a bicycle part of the way) – so conservatively we must assume at least 30-40 minutes to have elapsed between the time the boys left Le Bas and Widmerpool’s witness of his arrest.

In order to account for this additional time, one can assume that Widmerpool continued along the left branch of the South Field track to the Thames below Boveney Lock until he came to Boveney. From there he either would have taken another track back to the Eton Wick Road and followed the road back through the village of Eton Wick or a more southerly footpath back to the eastern end of the village. From that end of the village near the church he would have taken the footpath though the Common where he would have witnessed Le Bas’ arrest.

One can today do a circular walk and cover two of the three possibilities for the paths followed by the boys. The total distance for the circuit starting and ending at Walpole House and turning back at the eastern end of Eton Wick looks like it would be more than 2 but less than 3 miles. To include Boveney in the circuit would add about 40 minutes.

These paths are also probably the ones along which Widmerpool was running before Jenkins saw him in the opening scene after trotting across the plough, perhaps making a similar circuit. Take a copy of the OS map (Reading and Windsor, Sheet 175) to avoid any misadventures.

**College Chapel.** The boys remained in the house until the bell rang for evening chapel. They met Widmerpool in the hall where they learnt from him of Le Bas’ arrest and then proceeded to the chapel.

There are two chapels at Eton but, since they are older students, the boys would have gone to service in the College Chapel which is back on the High Street just opposite the traffic lights at Keate’s Lane. The description of the service concludes Chapter One of *A Question of Upbringing:*
Although the air under the high vault struck almost chill after the warmth outside in the yard, the evening sun streamed through the windows of the chapel. Rows of boys, fidgeting but silent, provoked, as always an atmosphere of expectancy before the service began … Le Bas came in late, just before the choir, and strode unsteadily towards his stall under the high neo-gothic canopy of carved wood. \[QU, 49-50\]

**Nick Jenkins’ Postwar Return**

After the war, in Autumn 1947, Jenkins returns to the school to arrange admission for one of his sons. It was raining and a feeble sun shone through clouds that hung low over stretches of claret-coloured brick.

Jenkins shelters under a colonnade where a bomb had fallen during the war: “One corner was still enclosed by scaffolding and a tarpaulin”. This would be in the Upper School just north of the Chapel where such a bomb did fall. The period of the Upper School’s architecture (1670, according to Pevsner) brings Robert Burton to Jenkins’ mind and he ruminates over a quotation that causes a time shift back to an earlier part of the year. The colonnade under which Jenkins stands is open on the School Yard side but enclosed on the High Street side, offering no shelter on that side from the rain.

When the narrative shifts back to the present, Jenkins decides that the School Library, just across the road, presented itself as a preferable refuge from the wet … Abandoning the colonnade, I crossed the road to the grey domed Edwardian building. \[BDFR, 230\]

No further directions are necessary.\(^4\) Jenkins is unsure whether entry will be allowed (although present rules seem to permit entry to Old Etonians, if not the general public), but manages to get through to the librarian’s desk where he discovers Le Bas is in charge. After exchangingpleasantries, he learns from Le Bas that he had met Widmerpool in the street that same day.

As Jenkins leaves the Library he sees a man in a mackintosh … sitting on the low wall that ran the length of the further side of the street in front of the archway and the chapel. It was Widmerpool. \[BDFR, 237\].

That same low wall is still there, just about the right height to sit on, although neither comfortably nor for very long. Widmerpool is waiting for Pamela to pick him up in their car after she has concluded a visit with an apparently rather precocious student she had met during his holidays.

**Fives Courts and New Drawing Schools**

Another Eton College site mentioned in *A Question of Upbringing* is the fives courts
which Stringham and Templer are walking past as they discuss Widmerpool’s interception of the banana thrown by Budd. These are located on the east side of Common Lane beyond the School Library. If you continue up the alleyway past the front of the fives courts, you will come to the new Drawing Schools which replaced the old studio where Powell had his drawing classes. The Drawing Schools nowadays are a complex of red brick buildings set at one end of a rather cheerless open space, the whole looking like a military cantonment in India. [Infants, 80].

They offer a more cheerful aspect on the north side where they look out over the Jordan and open fields.

The College Chapel and the old part of the College are open to the public on guided tours. These are conducted twice each afternoon when school is not in session, less often during term. Check the Eton College web site. Walpole House, the School Library and the fives courts are not included in the tour, nor is the Braddock-alias-Thorne walk but with a little initiative the exteriors of these sites can be included in an individual self-guided tour during the same afternoon as the formal tour of the old College and Chapel. Or better yet, see those sights in the morning and do the formal tour after lunch.

Photographs of many of the sites mentioned above can be viewed on the internet at: http://picasaweb.google.com/MariaManley/Eton?authkey=Gv1sRgCLv69KPpta63rAE&feat=email#

More research, with access to old maps, is needed to refine the various routes. It is hoped to publish an updated article and sketch map in due course.

1 Jenkins doesn’t understand how his Uncle Giles found the house without knowing that Le Bas was the housemaster [QU, 18]. It may be that in 1922 the houses did not display the prominent signage that they do today. It is certainly no challenge to find Walpole House by that name with the map provided on the Eton College website. It may be that the practice of calling the house after the master has fallen into disuse as there is no indication in today’s signage as to the name of the master of Walpole House.

2 Jenkins mentions the smell given off by a gas works as they leave their encounter with the Le Bas and return to the road. There is no longer any gas works showing on the OS maps for that area. It was probably dismantled after the war when North Sea gas largely replaced manufactured gas. There is today a sewage treatment plant between the village of Eton Wick and the M4 which would also give off a pong reminiscent of the old gas works in that same vicinity.

3 The new chapel (Lower Chapel) for younger boys is to the right on Keate’s Lane from where it intersects with Eton Wick Road. It was, according to Pevsner, also designed by A Blomfield and built in 1889-91. If you continue along that road past the Lower Chapel, you will pass the site of “the old Studio in Keate’s Lane, at one end of a low-roofed house across the front of which trailed a purple wisteria, consisting of two moderate sized sky-lighted rooms opening into each other, which had probably once been part of the house itself” [Infants, 81]. This was where Powell had his drawing lessons and was the venue for the activities of the Eton Society of the Arts, which Powell describes in his memoirs. It is, sadly, no longer there. See Michael Meredith, “A Question of Upbringing and the Eton Experience”, Proceedings of the First Biennial Conference 2001 (Anthony Powell Society, 2001).

4 The College Library, where archives and rare books are housed, is in the old part of the college and entered from the cloisters.

The illustrations to this article are taken from Windsor and Eton: A Sketchbook by Fred Richards (Adam & Charles Black, London, 1914) and thus pre-date Powell’s time at Eton by around five years.
Subscriptions
Members are reminded that annual subscriptions are payable on 1 April and that rates remain unchanged this year (see back page for current rates).

Those whose membership has expired will be removed from the membership list at the end of September.

Reminders are a drain on our resources, with each overseas reminder costing in excess of £1 – a significant sum when we send out anything up to 50 second and third reminders most years!

Members are also reminded that subscriptions, membership enquiries and merchandise requests should be sent to Graham & Dorothy Davie at:

Anthony Powell Society Memberships
Beckhouse Cottage
Hellifield, Skipton
North Yorkshire, BD23 4HS, UK

Email: membership@anthonypowell.org
Phone: +44 (0) 1729 851 836
Fax: +44 (0) 20 8020 1483

Local Groups

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

NY & NE USA Group
Area: New York & NE USA
Contact: Leatrice Fountain
Email: leatrice.fountain@gmail.com

Great Lakes Group
Area: Chicago area, USA
Contact: Joanne Edmonds
Email: jedmonds@bsu.edu

Baltic Group
Area: Sweden & Finland
Contact: Regina Rehbinder
Email: reginarehbinder@hotmail.com

Toronto Group
Area: Toronto, Canada
Contact: Joan Williams
Email: jwilliamsto@hotmail.com

Please contact the Hon. Secretary if you wish to make contact with a group and don’t have email. If you wish to start a local group the Hon. Secretary can advise on the number of members in your area.

Contributions to the Newsletter and Journal are always welcome and should be sent to:

Newsletter & Journal Editor, Anthony Powell Society 76 Ennismore Avenue Greenford, Middlesex, UB6 0JW, UK
Fax: +44 (0)20 8020 1483
Email: editor@anthonypowell.org

Copy Deadlines

Newsletter #43, Summer 2011
Copy Deadline: 13 May 2011
Publication Date: 3 June 2011

Newsletter #44, Autumn 2011
Copy Deadline: 12 August 2011
Publication Date: 2 September 2011

Secret Harmonies, 2011
Copy Deadline: 9 September 2011
Publication Date: 21 October 2011
Dates for Your Diary

London Group Meeting

Books and Breakfast

Saturday 2 April 2011
0930 to 1130 hrs

5th Floor Café, Waterstone’s
Piccadilly, London W1

Come and enjoy a meeting with a difference … an informal Saturday breakfast in a bookshop! There’ll be the usual good company, good conversation and good food plus Waterstone’s five floors of books.

Waterstones, Piccadilly is in the former Simpson’s tailors building – which Powell surely knew and is only a hundred yards or so from the Ritz.

Afterwards why not visit the excellent Arts & Crafts Market at St James’s Piccadilly?

Non-members welcome.
Please book with the Hon. Secretary.

6th Biennial Anthony Powell Conference, 2011

Anthony Powell’s Literary London

Friday 2 to Sunday 4 September 2011

Naval & Military Club
4 St James’s Square, London SW1

We are delighted to have the opportunity to hold the conference in the elegant surroundings of one of London’s most prestigious gentlemen’s clubs.

Invited Speakers
Ferdy Mount
Glenmore Trenear-Harvey
Simon Vance

We have a stunning selection of papers: everything from Powell’s relations with other writers, through an enquiry into the Planchette episode to costume in Dance.

Booking forms, pricing and a draft programme are planned to be available in April. Watch your mailbox!

Outline Programme

Plenary sessions: Friday & Saturday
Reception: Friday evening
Events: Fitzrovia Pub Crawl, Coach Tour of AP’s London, Sunday Lunch

Some accommodation has been reserved at the Club and will be bookable direct by delegates.

Provisional bookings may be made now with the Hon. Secretary.

London Quarterly Pub Meets

Saturday 14 May 2011
Saturday 13 August 2011
Saturday 5 November 2011

The Audley, Mount Street, London W1
1230 to 1530 hrs

Good beer, good food and informal conversation in a Victorian pub AP would have known. Why not bring something AP-related to interest us? Members & non-members welcome.
Further details from the Hon. Secretary.

Non-members welcome.
Please book with the Hon. Secretary.
A record number of Northeastern Dance readers (29) turned out for the Powell Birthday Luncheon at the Grolier Club in Manhattan on 17 December, testifying to a collective will to carry on this pleasurable annual affair begun in 2001 by the late William Warren. Bill was President of the Grolier Club during the 1990s, and it was at the Grolier, in 2007, that he and his wife Arete exhibited his extensive collection of Powell books, manuscripts and portraits.

This year’s luncheon was hosted by Arete Warren. Club Director Eric Holzenberg welcomed the guests and recounted Bill’s years of Grolier leadership. Nick Birns then recalled Bill’s first Powell Birthday luncheon at the Century Association in 2001. Jonathan Kooperstein, himself a notable New York Powell book collector, described some of the rarities in Bill’s collection. Later, editor-publisher-literary agent Tom Wallace, the only person present who had actually talked with Powell, discussed the possibilities of getting talented writers to contribute to an Anthony Powell festschrift volume that could be commercially published.

With the dessert emerged three amateur Noel-Poe detectives each of whom had investigated one of the three Dance characters who might have created the Planchette messages in The Acceptance World. The final and, it seemed, the most insightful words of the ensuing Planchette discussion were pronounced at 2.37 pm by novelist and Bennington College professor Annabel Davis-Goff.

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**New York Anthony Powell Birthday Luncheon Honours Bill Warren at the Grolier Club**

*by Ed Bock*

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New York Anthony Powell Birthday Luncheon Honours Bill Warren at the Grolier Club

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Local Group News

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**Annual General Meeting 2011**

Saturday 22 October 2011

1400 hrs

London venue tba

The AGM will be followed by a talk. Further details when available from the Hon. Secretary.

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**London Group Annual Powell Birthday Lunch**

Saturday 3 December 2011

1200 for 1230 hrs

London venue tba

Non-members welcome. Further details when available from the Hon. Secretary.
**Bound Newsletter**

Want a bound copy of the first 10 year’s issues of this *Newsletter*? Now you can!

We are planning to print a limited number of case-bound sets of *Newsletter* issues 1 to 41. Each set (almost 1200 pages) will consist of four volumes.

**Sets will be available to members at cost by advance subscription only.**

The final price will depend on how many sets are ordered but is expected to be around £80-£90 per set (plus p&p). This would compare favourably with the cost of unbound back numbers were they all available. **Only the number of sets ordered in advance will be printed.**

If you wish to reserve a set of case-bound *Newsletters* please contact the Hon. Secretary enclosing a £10 deposit, no later than 30 April 2011. The appropriate number of sets will then be ordered for delivery (and final payment) later in 2011.

**WANTED**

**Merchandise Officer**

With the impending implementation of the Society’s online shop, Graham & Dorothy wish to hand over their merchandise role to another volunteer. Are you that volunteer? Are you organised, able to use email and the internet, able to store the merchandise and based in the UK? If so, the Society needs you NOW! Without a volunteer we will not be able to open the online shop and increase Society revenue. Please contact the Hon. Secretary as soon as possible for more information and a chat.

**Christmas Competition Result**

There was a disappointing response to this year’s competition to write an epitaph or memorial inscription for a character whose death is reported in *Dance*. Nevertheless we are pleased to announce that the winner is Katherine Barrett for this entry in memory of Admiral “Buster” Foxe:

_Here lie the bones of Admiral Foxe_  
_Done to death by a stray horse box_  
_Squashed flatter than a housemaid’s duster_  
_Bad day at the races for poor old Buster_  
_Erected by his dear friend_  
_‘Dickie’ Umfraville_

Katherine receives a year’s membership of the Society.
At last! The whole of *Dance* is now available in e-book format.

Last December (2010) the University of Chicago Press released e-book versions of *Dance* for all the current major e-book readers. Because the rights to publish *Dance* are restricted by territory, these versions are available only in the USA and not in the UK. The Amazon Kindle versions are available direct from Amazon.com and other e-book versions can be bought from University of Chicago Press at http://press.uchicago.edu/books/powell/.

Also starting in December 2010, Random House have been releasing e-book versions of *Dance* in the UK. At the time of writing (mid-February 2011) nine of the 12 *Dance* volumes have been released, no doubt with the others to follow shortly. The Amazon Kindle versions are available at around £8 per volume from Amazon.co.uk, however I have been unable to determine the status of UK versions for other e-book readers.

Brilliantly, Hilary Spurling’s handbook, *Invitation to the Dance*, is also available in the UK for Kindle from Amazon.co.uk.

Why buy the e-books? Leaving aside pandering to those of us who are technology geeks, there are to my mind two excellent reasons to buy the e-books. Firstly, with an e-book reader (like Amazon’s Kindle) you can carry hundreds, even thousands, of books on one device no bigger than a slim paperback, which is brilliant for anyone who travels a lot! Secondly e-books are searchable, so if you’re stuck for the source of that elusive quote it is now very easy to find it quickly. For me this latter is absolutely invaluable. It is also worth noting that many older works which are out of copyright are available free in e-book format.

Remember that if you are buying anything from Amazon you should follow the Amazon.com and Amazon.co.uk links on the Society's website. The Society gets a small commission on such sales which help to keep the website running.
Christmas 2010 Quiz Answers

General Literature Quiz
1. Alexander the Great’s horse
2. Alice in Wonderland and Alice Through the Looking Glass by Lewis Carroll
3. They are nicknames for the months of the year originally by George Ellis [Sir George Gander] 1753-1815
4. A Midsummer Night’s Dream is the only one not set in Italy
5. Gulliver’s Travels by Jonathan Swift
6. Gobbo comes from The Merchant of Venice; all the others from A Midsummer Night’s Dream
7. Tom Sawyer by Mark Twain
8. Tiny Tim in Charles Dickens’s A Christmas Carol
9. Nimrod (Genesis 10:9)
10. Captain Nemo in Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea by Jules Verne
11. Thomas the Rhymers
12. Twelfth Night by William Shakespeare
13. Skimbleshanks from TS Eliot’s Old Possum’s Book of Practical Cats
14. A was Portos, B was Athos, C was d’Artagnan and the survivor was Aramis in The Three Musketeers series by Alexander Dumas
15. King Rudolph of Ruritania in The Prisoner of Zenda
16. Dr Johnson’s cat
17. I keep six honest serving men (Who taught me all I knew);
    Their names are what and why and when
    And how and where and who.
    by Rudyard Kipling
18. They’re the pigs in George Orwell’s Animal Farm
19. Treasure Island by Robert Louis Stephenson
20. Sydney Smith in A Memoir of the Reverend Sydney Smith by Lady Holland
21. Sir Arthur Quiller Couch (aka. ‘Q’)
22. Weekly from Southampton
    Great steamers white and gold
    Go rolling down to Rio.
    Rudyard Kipling, The Beginning of the Armadillos from the Just So Stories
23. History. Matthew Paris was a 13th century historian (not to be confused with Matthew Parris, the present day journalist)
24. Eric Blair changed his name to George Orwell (the Orwell is a river in Suffolk) and wrote Down and Out in Paris and London
25. The long distance runner
26. The Jumblies by Edward Lear
27. 80 days in Jules Verne’s Around the World in Eighty Days
28. Bruce Chatwin and Paul Theroux respectively
29. A merry road, a mazy road, and such
    as we did tread
    The night we went to Birmingham by way of Beachy Head.
    The Rolling English Road by GK Chesterton
30. Full of Money by Bill James

Christmas Crossword Solution

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T R A P N E L G W A T K I N
O U X P E H
O B A N N A L E E R I S
B C U K
B I H E L R E X O D I U M
N S L N O D
I S I L E G A N L E R E G I
R F T E T H E L C L A M A T I C
O L I A R T F U FFORD
P W R U D
P E N N I S T O L S P O O L
D E R I L L P E
C O N Y E R S N A M S S E
```
James Tait Black Memorial Prize Quiz

2. *The Devil’s Advocate* (1959) – Morris West
4. *Eustace and Hilda* (1947) – LP Hartley
7. *Jerusalem the Golden* (1967) – Margaret Drabble
8. *Lady Into Fox* (1922) – David Garnett
9. *The Lost Girl* (1920) – DH Lawrence
11. *Memoirs of a Midget* (1921) – Walter de la Mare
12. *The Middle Age of Mrs Eliot* (1958) – Angus Wilson
14. *Mother and Son* (1955) – Ivy Compton-Burnett
17. *Riceyman Steps* (1923) – Arnold Bennett
18. *A Ship of the Line* (1938) – CS Forester

Identify the Painting

As many readers spotted, the painting is *The Adoration of the Magi* by Nicolas Poussin. Painted in 1633 this now hangs in the Gemäldegalerie, Dresden, Germany.
From the website *Lovereading.co.uk* from an interview with Alan Furst, January 2011:

**Who’s your favourite author?**
I’ve got a lot of favourites, but my favourite favourite is Anthony Powell – his insight and technical magic are just beyond good. He is for me a real pleasure. I grew up with John Steinbeck and especially Bernard Malamud, I also like Von Rezzori (not all of it, but most), Joseph Roth, Primo Levi, Eric Ambler, of course, some Graham Greene, Mary Renault as a historical novelist, and I must include George MacDonald Fraser.

From an article in the *Guardian* by Robert McCrum called “The Best Boring Books”, 4 January 2011:

It’s the 70th anniversary of the Blitz here in London. One of the very worst raids on the capital took place on 29 December 1940, destroying several Wren churches and Paternoster Row, the home of British publishing. Partly inspired by this, I’ve been looking into the literature of this traumatic period.

One place to start is Paul Fussell’s *Wartime: Understanding and Behaviour in the Second World War* (Oxford, 1989) … I found one chapter in *Wartime* to be especially suggestive. “Reading in wartime” considers the fiction that cultivated British and American readers tended to turn to as the bombs began falling. The short answer seems to have been Trollope, Dickens, Austen and Henry James. “People are reading more”, declared TS Eliot in a BBC radio broadcast in December 1941, “and reading good stuff”. No doubt that’s true, but I bet they were reading rubbish, too.

Perhaps more interesting, as a guide to the psychology of living under the threat of bombing, is Anthony Powell’s preference for “dull books”. Powell used to settle into bed at night with books whose monumental dullness offered some relief from the noise, excitement and terror of the Blitz. “War”, he writes, “lent attraction to the prosiest aspects of the past”. It was, he said, comforting to revisit the “apparently stable world” described in a history of the Druids.

From an article by Sarah Sands “The hating of Bercow – let me count the ways” in *The Independent*, 16 January 2011. (John Bercow is a British MP who has been Speaker of the House of Commons since June 2009.)

Bercow’s most annoying trait is his Piers Morgan-like refusal to live quietly and modestly. A smaller-than-life character who enjoys the spotlight, he has a job that keeps him there. There is something of Anthony Powell’s Kenneth Widmerpool about him. He can only triumph. He is not “fucking royalty”, but he knows how the world works, and will use the knowledge to his advantage. I have a sneaking admiration for him.
From an interview with Patrick Hennessey (author of *The Junior Officers’ Reading Club*) on UK Channel 4’s “The TV Book Club” programme, 30 January 2011:

**Who is your favourite author?**
I’m really bad at picking “favourites”, like your favourite meal depending on how hungry you are, your favourite author surely depends on your mood etc. I’m a huge Sterne fan, hence the references to *Tristram Shandy*, and for entertainment with a dark edge I’ve always loved Evelyn Waugh, Graham Greene and Anthony Powell. George MacDonald Fraser’s *Flashman* books are brilliant escapism. I also love Aldous Huxley when you’re in the mood for something a bit more serious.

From an interview with the author Jay Parini on *Vermont Public Radio*, 7 February 2011:

Books do furnish a room, as the English novelist Anthony Powell once said. But it’s more than that. I like to live among my books, with their familiar colours, each of them a memory – some slight, some profound. When you finish reading an e-book, it winks out of existence. A book, on the other hand, provides a continuing link to a particular text in a satisfying and tangible way.

From an article by Harry Mount in the *Spectator* “The surprising return of the public lecture”, 5 February 2011:

So it’s not just interaction that people crave – but intelligent interaction. Is it because our education system and our culture have been so dumbed down? Whatever the reason, there’s definitely an increased appetite not just for public conversation, but for serious, challenging subjects. A few weeks ago I went to a talk at the Wallace Collection by Grey Gowrie, comparing Anthony Powell with Marcel Proust – chewy stuff, on a cold Friday night at the height of rush hour. It had been sold out for weeks before the event.

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Complimentary sample copies and subscriptions available by calling +44 (0) 1507 339 056 or email to editor@quarterly-review.org
Visiting the Grosvenor Chapel in London’s South Audley Street recently I spotted a plaque (above) on the outside of the west front.

The inscription, which is rather worn, reads: *In this Chapel the Armed Forces of the United States of America held Divine Service during the Great War of 1939 to 1945 and gave thanks to God for the Victory of the Allies.* It’s curious because the epithet “the Great War” is normally applied only to the 1914-18 conflict.

This is an interesting and unexpected link with AP, whose memorial service was held in the Grosvenor Chapel, as not only did he have peripheral contact with the US allies during WWII but of course the US Embassy in Grosvenor Square is only a couple of hundred yards away. And the Society’s London Group meet at The Audley pub just a few yards off to the left of the chapel (right). The tablet can just be made out in the bottom left blank window embrasure on the west front.

Sadly Grosvenor Chapel was closed when I visited but walking up the cul-de-sac to the left of the chapel takes you into the rather pleasant Mount Street Gardens and thus to the back door of the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Farm Street where Evelyn Waugh was received into the Catholic Church. ■
Evelyn Waugh Conference

Downside School and Abbey
Somerset, UK

16-19 August 2011

Each day there will be at least one session for the presentation of papers and discussion. Evelyn Waugh’s grandson Alexander Waugh, a distinguished author in his own right, will preside.

There will be at least two excursions, one to Combe Florey, Evelyn Waugh’s last house and the site of his grave. Other possibilities are Bath and Mells Manor, near Frome, where Waugh was often a guest of the Asquiths.

Registration is $100 for members and $150 for nonmembers; limited accommodation (room and board) is available at Downside School for $75 per day for members and $90 per day for nonmembers. Non-US registrants may pay equivalent amounts in local currencies in the UK, EU, Japan, Canada, India and Australia and New Zealand.

For information see http://www.evelynwaughssociety.org and click on membership

To register and for more information, please contact:

Dr John H Wilson
Department of English
Lock Haven University
Lock Haven
PA 17745, USA
Email: jwilson3@lhup.edu

Anthony Powell Resides Here

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, PG 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 upon request.

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Father Gerard Irvine, who died on January 13 aged 90, was almost certainly the last of an older style of Anglo-Catholic priest who accorded the highest priority to colourful worship [...] The house was described by Anthony Powell in his journals as “somewhere between a Firbank novel and Cruikshank’s illustrations of the Old Curiosity Shop”.

[Daily Telegraph, 20 January 2011]
Letters to the Editor

Another Painting of Dance

From Elwin Taylor
I visited the art museum in Zurich recently, and discovered a painting of “Dance to the Music of Time” by Claude Lorrain (below). It is dated 1662, and so is 20+ years later than Poussin’s. Apollo is leading the seasons in the dance.

Claude Lorrain (born Chamagne, NE France circa 1604; died Rome November 1682) was active in Italy and is admired for his achievements in landscape and seascape painting. He received patronage from Cardinal Bentivoglio and Pope Urban VIII. He was a friend and sketching partner of Nicolas Poussin.

The Real Widmerpool?

From Nick Birns
Obviously the principal models for Widmerpool lie elsewhere, and Widmerpool’s sexuality was different, but Tom Driberg might have contributed a bit, in terms of his mother being from Dumfriesshire and the sheer unlikelihood of his being made a peer, as well as the general run of his politics. This has been said before but the Scottish link, which I just noticed, makes it a bit more viable.

Claude Lorrain’s painting of A Dance to the Music of Time as discovered by Elwin Taylor which hangs in the Kunsthau Zürich
On Snipe Shooting and Godfathers

From John Powell
Re. “Snipe Shooting” (Newsletter 41, Winter 2010, p11)

The vivid description of his housemaster Le Bas in A Question of Upbringing by Peter Templer as being “so wet you could shoot snipe off him” also appeared in the dialogue of the first episode of the Channel 4 TV adaption of Dance in 1997. Seeing this reminded my father that the phrase was provided by his friend Christopher Holland-Martin. He was the MP for Ludlow in 1955 and also my godfather (1946). He must have been a good friend, with his wife Anne, of my parents during and after WW2. He may have known my father at the War Office. However he died comparatively young in the late 1950s or early/mid 1960s. I have not been able to glean any more precise information about him, I’m ashamed to say, as he was a generous godfather.

With best wishes to everyone at the Society for 2011.

Christopher Holland-Martin was five years younger than AP and also educated at Eton and Balliol. He served in the Royal Fusiliers in WWII and after being invalided out was appointed Military Secretary to the Governor-General of New Zealand. He was Conservative MP for Ludlow from 1951 until his death in April 1960 following a heart attack.

Captain Beefheart, RIP …

From Robin Bynoe
Don van Vliet, who recorded his music under the name of Captain Beefheart, died on 17 December 2010. His relationship with Anthony Powell, touched on in issue #37 of your publication, was tangential at best. Van Vliet, born in 1941, was of a much later generation than Powell, but gave up performing because of ill health and spent the last decades of his life as a recluse near Trinidad, California, at a time when Powell was enjoying the active retirement documented in the Journals. If van Vliet ever arrived in the Frome taxi shyly proffering a bottle of something agreeable from the Napa Valley the Journals are silent; nor is there any record that Powell ever made a social visit to northern California during the period in question. In fact there is no reason to believe that the two men ever heard of each other, let alone met.

Nevertheless, there are reasons for recording van Vliet’s life and work in this forum.

The ways that the two men worked were very different. Powell approached writing with the “hard, cold-blooded almost mathematical pleasure” that he ascribes to Nick Jenkins, and maintained an effective support system (Heinemann, Lady Violet, close friends) throughout his working life, marred only by the occasional tiff, such as those with the Daily Telegraph and Malcolm Muggeridge. These were no doubt painful but also, possibly, nourishing. Nick Jenkins is described at one point as “in lowish water”. So was van Vliet for much of his life: Powell as a writer never.

Van Vliet would periodically explode with ideas, and if some of them stuck, that was
good. He relied on record companies and musical associates but went through them more rapidly than was healthy; his relationships tended to end in blame and litigation. One candidate for his greatest album (**Bat Chain Puller**) remains unreleased thirty years on because no one can agree who owns the copyright. At least two of his band-members, John French and Bill Harkleroad, have written books, French at very considerable length, to the effect that he could not have done it without them. The many virtues of Powell’s legacy include that of tidiness.

The fact is that whilst van Vliet might not have been able to do it without French, Harkleroad and the others they certainly couldn’t and didn’t do it without him. At his best he was astonishing and unprecedented. Like Powell he has no followers. Those who tried sound messy, as Powell’s putative followers are often effete. It is perhaps useful to be reminded that the practice of art comes in very different guises, feeds itself in different ways and often disguises itself.

Both Powell and Beefheart are with the passing of the years in danger of sliding into heritage. Re-watching the television version of the **Dance** recently it was apparent how much it must seem to a viewer, coming to it now for the first time, no more than an account of the fabulous Twenties or the fabulous War, when people talked in a funny way and wore strange clothes. The fabulous Twenties and the fabulous War, and even fabulously eccentric old Eton College, are quite interesting, but only so much, and they are distracting. The only way to avoid this is to read the books. Because they are great books, they do not boil down to heritage detail and disguised autobiography. Some other fiction does that, as time goes by: Powell’s doesn’t.

Likewise, there are distractions when viewing Beefheart and his music. His “genius” is a much more intrusive than Powell’s; the hagiography more extreme. There is the controversy with his former colleagues. There is the miasma of the hippy dream, the culture of the Sixties that Powell got so intriguingly almost right in **Hearing Secret Harmonies** (but missed the importance of the music). Again, this can be avoided by listening to the CDs again. They are embarrassingly cheap these days and filed, in such record stores as remain, under “Classic Rock”. They are still startling and wonderful. Try **Trout Mask Replica**, or, easier, **Clear Spot**. There are no cold-blooded mathematical pleasures to be had, but the other sort – bewildering, overwhelming, passionate – have their place too.

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**... and Queen’s Harmonies**

*From Colin Donald*

Listening to the **Greatest Hits** album by Queen (a popular music group, m’lad, fronted by the late Mr Freddie Mercury) in the car today, not my choice I hasten to add, I heard to my great surprise that the final volume of **Dance** is referenced in the 1986 song “It’s a Kind of Magic”:

> The waiting seems eternity,
> The day will dawn of sanity,
> It’s a kind of magic,
> There can be only one,
> This rage that lasts a thousand years
> Will soon be gone,
> This flame that burns inside of me,
> I’m hearing secret harmonies
> It’s a kind of magic.

Coincidence? We may never know …
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<th><strong>Society Merchandise</strong></th>
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| **Jeff Manley et al.; Dance Music**  
A 150-page guide to the musical references in *Dance*; compiled in the style of Spurling’s *Handbook*.  
UK: £7  Overseas: £9.50 |
| **BBC Radio Dramatisation of Dance**  
Originally broadcast on BBC Radio 4 between 1979-82. 26 one-hour episodes.  
For copyright reasons available to Society members only.  
**Single CD** of 26 MP3 files.  £11 (£3 + minimum £8 Donation)  
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American High School student essays from John’s teaching of *Dance* at Philips Academy. Perceptive insights.  
UK: £11.50  Overseas: £15 |
| **Audio Cassette Tapes of Dance**  
Simon Callow reading (abridged) volumes of *Dance*:  
* A Question of Upbringing  
* The Kindly Ones  
* The Valley of Bones  
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Collected papers from the 2005 centenary conference at The Wallace Collection, London.  
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Collected papers from the 2003 conference at Balliol College, Oxford.  
UK: £7  Overseas: £11 |
| **Eton Conference Proceedings**  
Papers from the 2001 conference. Copies signed by the Society’s Patron.  
UK: £6.50  Overseas: £9.50 |
| **Writing about Anthony Powell**  
The talks given at the 2004 AGM by George Lilley, Michael Barber and Nick Birns; introduced by Christine Berberich.  
UK: £4  Overseas: £5.50 |
| **Michael Bakewell, Fitzrovia: London’s Bohemia**  
Published in the National Portrait Gallery “Character Sketches” series. Snapshot biographies of Fitzrovian characters including Powell and many of his friends.  
UK: £5  Overseas: £7.50 |
| **The Master and The Congressman**  
A 40-page monograph by John Monagan describing his meetings with Powell.  
UK: £4  Overseas: £5.50 |
| **Society Postcard**  
UK: £1.50  Overseas: £2.50 |
| **Wallace Collection Poussin Postcard**  
UK: £2.50  Overseas: £4 |
| **Wallace Collection Poussin Poster**  
UK: £7  Overseas: £9 |
| **Secret Harmonies: Journal of the Anthony Powell Society**  
All issues available.  
UK: £5  Overseas: £7.50 each |
| **Newsletter Back Numbers**  
Back numbers of *Newsletter* issues 9 to 19, 22 to 29 and 31 onwards are available.  
UK: £2 each  Overseas: £3.50 each |
**Pricing Notes.** The prices shown are the Society members’ prices as of November 2010 and are inclusive of postage and packing.

Please note the different UK and overseas prices which reflect the additional cost of overseas postage.

Non-members will be charged the overseas price shown plus postage & packing at cost.

**Ordering.** Please send your order to:

**Anthony Powell Society Merchandise**  
Beckhouse Cottage, Hellifield, Skipton  
North Yorkshire, BD23 4HS, UK  
Phone: +44 (0) 1729 851 836  
Fax: +44 (0) 20 8020 1483  
Email: merchandise@anthonypowell.org

Payment may be by cheque (UK funds drawn on a UK bank), Visa, Mastercard or online using PayPal to secretary@anthonypowell.org.

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### Anthony Powell Society Merchandise Order Form

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- [ ] I enclose a sterling cheque drawn on a UK bank  
  Please make cheques payable to **The Anthony Powell Society**
- [ ] Please debit my Visa / MasterCard  
  Card No.:  
  Valid from: Expires: Security Code:

### Name & Address of Cardholder & for Delivery

Name:  
Address:  

Town:  
County / State:  
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Date: Signed:
## The Anthony Powell Society
Registered Charity No. 1096873

### Membership Form

**Member Information**

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- **Buy 5 years membership for the price of 4**
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Subscriptions are due on 1 April annually. If joining on or after 1 January, membership includes following full subscription year.

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(Please give name & address of cardholder if different from the above.)

- **I authorize you, until further notice, to charge my Visa / MasterCard account for the sum of £_______ on, or immediately after 1 April each year. I will advise you in writing immediately the card becomes lost or stolen, if I close the account or I wish to cancel this authority.**
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  - If this is a gift membership please attach the name & address of the recipient plus any special message on a separate sheet of paper.
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By completing this form I agree to the Society holding my information on computer.

Signed:  

Date:  

Please send the completed form and payment to:  
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Hellifield, Skipton, North Yorkshire, BD23 4HS, UK  

membership@anthonypowell.org  
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