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EDITOR’S LETTER

Oxford calling!! The 2018 Conference starts on 31 August. This is the last issue of the Newsletter before then. You will find booking forms and a piece from Keith Marshall answering the question: Why AP and the visual arts? He provides lots of good reasons. As this will be the last Conference masterminded by Keith, who could miss the chance to savour it and to say thank you to him.


We also feature AP's "most intimate friend" and Oxford contemporary, Henry Green. Nick Birns provides a framework article and your Editor reviews two recent books on Green from the perspective of a non-expert Society member with a general interest in AP and his world.

In Issue 70 Keith Marshall favoured both the Newsletter and Secret Harmonies continuing in hard copy. Issue 8 of Secret Harmonies was published last month. Three letters from readers are reproduced in Letters to the Editor. All feedback good, bad or ugly is always welcome.

When discussing his retirement Keith said that he wanted ‘the recruitment of people and the succession to be in place between June and the AGM so that there can be an orderly handover.’ The good news? It is happening. Thanks to the sterling work of your silver-tongued Chairman and the innate decency of the membership we now have a new team lined up. See the Chairman’s piece on page 5 for more information. Heartfelt thanks to all those who volunteered.

Looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible in Oxford in August. In the meantime happy summer reading.

Stephen Walker  editor@anthonypowell.org
Tony Robinson Memorial Event

Keith Marshall

On Saturday 21 April 2018 the Chairman, the Hon. Archivist and I had the honour of attending a celebration of the life of Tony Robinson, the Society’s previous Chairman and one of our first Trustees, who died on 3 September 2017.

This splendid occasion took place in the sumptuous Georgian setting of Chandos House in London: the headquarters of the Royal Medical Society, of which Tony was a Fellow. In between suitable lubrications of wine and afternoon tea, the assembled members of Tony’s family and friends spent the afternoon exchanging memories of, and paying tribute to, this wise, witty and warm-hearted man.

Sandwiched between some very amusing recollections from Tony’s friends, I struck a more serious note with the following appreciation of Tony’s involvement with the Society.

"Anthony Powell (written POWELL but pronounced, he always insisted, POEL with a silent W) was one of the great English writers of the twentieth century, and what I might sacrilegiously describe as Powell’s ‘posthumous fan club’, the Anthony Powell Society, owes a great debt to Tony Robinson. A much greater debt than most present will know and I suspect even more than most Society members realise.

We founded the Anthony Powell Society on 1 June 2000. Tony was one of our very first members when we invited all the subscribers to the already existing Anthony Powell email discussion list to be honorary members of the Society until we had a subscription scheme in place.

Tony was at our very first conference at Eton on St George’s Day 2001 and he then became one of our first elected Trustees, when we fully formalised our governance in September 2001."
Tony remained a member, a Trustee, and an enthusiast to the last, attending our regular Trustees' teleconference just three or four weeks before his death. In 16 years it was rare for him to miss a Trustees' meeting.

In Summer 2002 the Society started on the process of applying for charitable status, and it was Tony who led that work, helping me put together the submission to the Charity Commission. The application was successful with our charitable status being granted, conveniently, in the middle of our second conference at Balliol College, Oxford in April 2003 – a conference which Tony had helped organise, with the conference dinner in Keble, his old college.

Tony could be relied on to be at conferences or lectures if he possibly could. I recall his disappointment at missing the 2013 conference (again at Eton) when he was unexpectedly in hospital. Not just disappointment at missing the conference, but – a measure of his kindness and thoughtfulness – because he felt he had let me down having promised to courier materials to and from Eton for me.

Yes … thoughtful, kind, helpful, generous and quietly witty – always with an amusingly apposite reference to Powell’s *A Dance to the Music of Time*. What better words could I find to describe Tony?

Another measure of the man came in January 2014 when the Society hit a rough patch with the resignation of the then Chairman. Although he was already unwell, Tony agreed to take on being Chairman for an interim period, which lasted until May 2016. He dearly wanted to guide us through the Easter 2016 conference in York, which he did, complete with his oxygen bottle (and Susan carrying a spare!).

I think my lasting, but rather sad, image of Tony will be at that York conference, complete with oxygen bottle, clearly struggling but so glad and so determined to be there and to enjoy the occasion. That was, I think, the last time we met, though certainly not the last time we talked. To the last Tony always had quiet words of wisdom and advice to guide the Trustees and cut through the occasional, and inevitable, disagreements. For such a quiet and unassuming man Tony has left a big hole in the Society’s board of Trustees, as he will have done elsewhere. Although greatly missed, Tony is remembered with great affection and great appreciation.”
SOCIETY OFFICERS – AN UPDATE

Robin Bynoe

As you know, the Trustees are appointing new Officers, following Keith’s decision to step back from hands-on involvement in the Society’s affairs, with effect from the AGM in October 2018. Because Keith has been involved at many levels of management a one-for-one replacement is neither desirable nor possible, so there are some new positions.

Paul Milliken becomes the Society’s Secretary. His job is to keep the Trustees in order and ensure that we comply with the various rules that apply to us.

John Blaxter will be in charge of operations. He will deal with those issues that can’t be decided by individual officers and can’t wait for a full Trustees’ meeting. This is a new role.

Ivan Hutnik takes over the website.

June Laurenson will deal with Social Media, and therefore work with Ivan. This is also a new role.

Geraint Dearman will take over as Membership Secretary.

The following will continue in their existing roles – some for the time being only.

Chairman Robin Bynoe
Treasurer Graham Page
Social Secretary Stephen Walker
Editor Stephen Walker
Merchandising Robin Bynoe
Archivist Noreen Marshall
Publisher Alison Walker
Independent Assessor George Warren

My profound gratitude (and I’m sure yours) to those named above for agreeing to serve. Finally, I am very pleased to announce that Prue Raper has accepted our invitation to become a Trustee.
Anthony Powell was a writer, so why are we having a conference devoted to the visual arts?

Well why would we not? Just as we might have a conference devoted to AP and World War II, or AP and Eton. All, in their different ways, were seminal influences on him.

We all know Anthony Powell for his magnum opus, A Dance to the Music of Time, and as many commentators have noted Dance contains a multitude of references to art and artists, real and imaginary. There is also Powell’s pre-war novel From a View to a Death the plot of which is centred around the artist, Zouch, whilst his first novel, Afternoon Men, contains some wonderfully vivid vignettes of life and work (or not!) in a London national museum in the years between the Wars.

This should not be surprising for Powell was almost as knowledgeable about art and artists, as he was about literature and writers. If anything his interest
in art pre-dates his interest in literature and during his time at Eton he was heavily involved with the Eton Society of Arts, spending much time in the Studio. From quite early he was keeping scrapbooks which developed into his interest in collage and his own masterful artwork, the collages in the basement at The Chantry.

So it was that Powell’s first published work was a piece of art: a pen and ink drawing of Colonel Caesar Cannonbrains of the Black Hussars which he contributed to the first (and only) volume of The Eton Candle in 1922. It wasn’t until 1924 that AP, now at Oxford, started having reviews, as well as drawings, published in Cherwell. Powell is on record as saying he considered a career as an artist before deciding to become a writer.

Art was at least as influential as literature with the young Powell, and it remained so all his life. He spent the 1920s and 1930s, especially, moving in London’s bohemian demi-monde of writers and artists around Soho and Fitzrovia. Among his many friends and acquaintances from that time were the artists Augustus John, Nina Hamnett, Adrian Daintrey, Edward Wadsworth, Ed Burra, and Henry Lamb. Other friends included writers Evelyn Waugh, Cyril Connelly, Edith Sitwell, collector Gerald Reitlinger, and musician Constant Lambert.

Such a group of friends must have enhanced Powell’s knowledge of, and interest in, art as much as in literature. It also ensured he was painted or drawn on many occasions over the years, and by a whole range of artists from Augustus John down.

It was also in the 1930s that Powell started reviewing, something he continued for the next 60 years. Although principally a literary reviewer, over the years AP wrote many reviews and other pieces on art, artists, and books about them. It is no coincidence that his third (posthumous) book of selected criticism is entitled Some Poets, Artists, and “A Reference for Mellors” – 150 of the 320 pages are devoted to artists. The preceding two volumes selected criticism (Miscellaneous Verdicts and Under Review) also contain a scattering of pieces on art and artists.

We must not forget, too, that Powell was friends with Francis Watson, curator and subsequently Director, of the Wallace Collection, a superb collection of the fine and decorative arts. And it was the Wallace Collection which inspired Dance by putting Powell in front of Poussin’s eponymous painting.

This all led to Powell being a Trustee of the National Portrait Gallery for some dozen or more years in the 1960s and 1970s. And with a large country house
(The Chantry) he also became something of a collector, although in a typically quiet, understated way.

Then, of course, there is that wonderfully painterly and descriptive prose of Dance! Powell, like any good artist, was an observer of people, places and his surroundings.

So art and collecting were central themes of AP's life both within and without literature, and we feel they are themes deserving to be explored in their own right.

Uncle Giles’ Corner

Uncle Giles on Conferences

Myra Erdleigh telephoned.
‘Come to a conference with me?’
I’d never been to a conference in my life, so I declined. ‘No’, she said, ‘You have to. I’m speaking, and I’ve been stood up.’
‘Your first-choice companion another fortune-teller. Something unexpected came up?’
I’m afraid that I may have sniggered. So, the moral high ground changed sides, and I had to go.

Voices of Transcendence, it was called. Fifty old hippies in a couple of draughty rooms in Pimlico. My, what a shower! (Actually, for some of them, a shower would not have gone amiss.) Myra, when she spoke, had them in the palm of her hand, of course, but she was the best. One old wreck staggered up onto the podium and started to ululate. Speaking in tongues, they said afterwards, and worth the price of admission on its own. I beg to disagree. Anyway, I did it, and am now qualified to counsel others unwise enough to attempt a conference:
1 Don’t eat the biscuits. They have been held over from last year.
2 But do be quick and secure your fair share of fancy cakes. They will only be M&S, but they will probably be bought that day, and the organisers will have under-catered.
3 Don’t dress with an eye to the occasion. Unless you have a wardrobe full of kaftans, MCC ties and so on, you will fall woefully short. Your tweeds, as always, are the thing.
4 If it’s overnight, don’t stray from your room. They all know each other, and your Qi and shortcomings therein will be the subject of endless gossip on the dreaded social media for months to come. (With Mrs E at my side that wasn’t a problem. For someone with such a vague and benevolent worldview she has a surprisingly firm grasp of *meum* and *tuum*.)
5 Same reason, don’t talk to anyone. Some old creature indicated the fancy cakes to me and said ‘What would HT have thought?’ (Hermes Trismegistus to you, as Myra informed me later.) ‘I’m just a bluff old soldier,’ I said, ‘but I’ve seen a thing or two.’ And as a precaution turned my back.

**A Guide for Visitors to Oxford, by One Who Lives There**

*Clive Gwatkin Jenkins*

This brief guide is for those who do not know Oxford well and who have decided to supplement the sparse free periods of the conference itself by arriving early or staying on.

In the summer vacation students are replaced by swarms of tourists rendering the famous east-west thoroughfares, the Broad and the High, very crowded. Conversely the Conference is not only fortunate in the venue itself but in its setting. Merton Street, the most southerly on the east-west axis, has only university buildings: no shops, pubs, restaurants, or bus-stops. Hence it is the quietest—with added cobbles. So you get an impression of how tranquil Oxford was in the vacation 100 years ago.

Take advantage of the large green lung of Christ Church Meadow immediately to the south of Merton - going northwards will bring you in three minutes into the crowds. It is also a convenient access route for Magdalen, the college
of AP’s friend, Henry Yorke, and for Christ Church. Turn left or right respectively. Leftwards you have to walk a short distance along the lugubriously named Deadman’s Walk - once a licensed route for the Welsh Drovers - then turn left and debouch onto the Eastern end of the High Street for Magdalen and the Botanic Gardens. Christ Church in the aspect of the Dean’s garden, ‘the garden of Alice’, is encountered immediately on the right. If you continue past Christ Church to the Isis itself, stop near the river’s rim, turn and look at Oxford’s famous skyline in perspective. Those who blend the energetic and the aesthetic can cross to the southern bank of the Isis via Folly Bridge on St Aldates, walk down to Iffley village, attractive in itself, and explore its renowned Romanesque Church.

Back in the centre, Oxford is glutted with eating places, pubs and cafes. The Quod, halfway down The High, is dependable, with excellent views onto Radcliffe Square. More interesting is The Magdalen Arms, 243 Iffley Rd, a mile or so east of the centre. Ethnic cuisine is profuse in variety and quantity. The greatest concentration is at the southern end of Cowley Road just east of Magdalen Bridge which also boasts cafes aspiring to style and a variety of specialist shops.

My favourite city centre pub is The Chequers, in an alleyway off The High, part genuinely ancient both in contents and structure. It combines good beer with a wholesome feed-the-brute, fish-focused cuisine aimed at tourists and undergrads. The adjacent Bear, reached from Merton by turning left and entering Oriel Square, is iconic but tiny so soon gets crowded. Oriel Square leads to St Edward’s Street where at no 4 AP shared rooms with Henry Yorke, the pair inviting Bowra, then the enfant terrible of dondom, to lunch. The King’s Arms, also iconic, looks out onto a spacious vista of Broad Street sweeping onwards the Sheldonian and parts of the Bodleian.

Go up the Turl from The High and onto Broad Street for getting about. The crowds may not be thinner than elsewhere but it is exactly that - broad. Hence there is more room for everyone. Cornmarket and George Street can be unpleasantly congested. Off George Street, however, is the bus/coach station at Gloucester Green whence the number 7 bus leaves every half hour for Blenheim Palace and Woodstock.

Do not forget to check the current exhibitions at the Ashmolean in Beaumont Street. It has a roof top restaurant, very pleasant in fine weather but not cheap. The Randolph opposite is classic but cliched in all the tales from Zuleika to
Inspector Morse. Its menu has not always been critically acclaimed. Its teas are very good, but again, not cheap.

Beaumont Street is doorstopped by Worcester College (1714), quite a sight for incorporating the cottagey remains of the black monks' medieval Gloucester College, dissolved by Henry VIII, into its pompous unlissom classicism. Once admitted, there are acres of grounds in which to wander. When the College was founded it was on the city's rural fringe and land was cheap. Then you come to the canal and to Jericho. The latter, Hardy's Beersheba, founded as a little suburb for workers on the railway and at the University Press is now the ultimate in gentrification. Adjacent to the north is Oxford's ancient common land, Port Meadow, through which, the Isis runs. There you are out in the country: highly recommended for food, drink and riverine setting are the Perch at Binsey and further north The Trout at Wolvercote with its weir and its peacocks by the ruins of Godstow nunnery.

Get a street map. This holds good for most places but Oxford is the reverse of an exception: the old city has all points in walking distance but it is hugger mugger. Buildings are crammed together so that one occludes the other, there are winding lanes and alley ways and hidden nooks and crannies.

**‘We Who May Not Have Time’: Reading Henry Green Through a Powellian Lens**

*Nicholas Birns*

Henry Yorke was Anthony Powell’s virtually exact contemporary: born on October 29, 1905, a Scorpio compared to Powell’s Sagittarius/Capricorn cusp of December 21. They met each other at age eleven at the New Beacon prep school in Kent. Yorke, who had an older brother who attended the school, enjoyed his experience there more than Powell. Yet the boys bonded out of their shared intelligence and creativity along with a sense of solidarity regarding the austerities and eccentricities of the school, not least its horrible food. Yorke had the wealthy and aristocratic background people often fallaciously attribute to Powell. His mother was the daughter of a Tory MP and, later, peer, and his father Vincent Yorke, was an industrialist who owned a firm
called Pontifex, which reminds one both of the family in Samuel Butler’s *The Way of All Flesh* and of the Pope, though in neither case is there any discernible connection. He joined Powell at Eton, then went to Oxford as well, matriculating at Magdalen while Powell was at Balliol. He left to work in his father’s firm, an experience that produced his first major novel, *Living* (1929) under a pseudonym which, like that of George Orwell, he maintained for the whole of his writing life: Henry Green.

Earlier writers, such as the major Victorian novelists, had contemporaries who were roughly the same age. But Green’s generation was bonded closely and can be constructively analyzed as a generation, as seen in the work of Martin Green, Humphrey Carpenter, and D. J. Taylor, and in the title of Michael North’s book, *Henry Green and the Writing of his Generation*. As different as Powell, Green, Graham Greene, and Evelyn Waugh all were, they grew up in the shadow of the devastation of the Great War, in the wake of modernist revolutions in the arts and the disruptions of the twentieth century. But these writers were also faced with astonishing vistas of possibility and a sense that, as Green said in his memoir *Pack My Bag*, ‘recognition was no more than deserved.’ Green also shared with Powell and Cyril Connolly that school was not a disposable prelude to ‘the acceptance world’ but a place where character traits gleamed brightly in ways that illuminated their adult versions (as the proto-totalitarian girls’ school in *Concluding* indicates.) There is a generational definition here that is a tighter one than just being contemporaries. Green and Powell, knowing each other even before Eton, had a closer link, almost an idiolect: Powell observes that both tended to use litotes, e. g. ‘not the worst time we ever had…’ which manifests itself in the adult work of the two novelists as a tendency towards nuance and understatement at moments where other writers would dial up the intensity.

*Living* (1929) is often said to represent Green’s rebellion against his class privilege. One might argue that it would be one thing for an Oxford graduate to work in a factory for a year as a post-graduate bemusement, or a salaried
supervisor to write a novel of the factory life in which he was immersed but
that a proletarian novel by the factory’s owner is so bizarre as to make it
actually a proletarian novel, perhaps as a negative number multiplied by
another yields a positive. Living is a closely observed, daringly monotonous
novel. But to say that it is Green’s passport out of his own privilege is simply
to misunderstand privilege.

Party Going (1939) seems to me the most Powellian of Green’s novels. Amabel
is a version of Susan Nunnery, remote and infinitely desirable, her slight
difference from the other women gossamer and deliquescent. The randomness
and intermittent, epiphanic disclosure of the social scene is early-Powellian
both in its sense of vacancy and occasional, glimmering possibility. Living
and Party Going are, to use Sir William Empson’s phrase, versions of pastoral.
Indeed, Empson’s sense of the proletarian novel as pastoral could particularly
apply to Living. As compared to Powell’s prewar novels, though, Party Going
is both less acrid and less Vorticist, slightly more optimistic about the
possibility, though not necessarily the amicability, of human character.

Loving (1945) is a highly empathetic and conviction representation of
working-class servants—a more thorough rendering than even a later book
such as Ishiguro’s Remains of the Day. In its depiction of the love between
Raunce and Edith, a nonpareil unfolding of emotional intimacy, Green is able
to de-Platonize love without reducing it to something Freudian or instinctual
and material. He also renders love between two people both very different
from himself convincingly. If Green wrote eloquently about his (not
untroubled, to be aptly litotic) marriage to Adelaide “Dig” Biddulph in Pack
My Bag—‘we are man and wife, there was love’—to write about love between
people who are independent in spirit from him in Loving was even more of an
achievement.

Green wrote Pack My Bag (1940), at the early age of thirty-four, against the
pressure of an oncoming war, referring to his generation, possibly having to
face another stalemate of slaughter in the trenches, as ‘we who may not have
time.’ Though Powell slightly ribbed the idea of writing a memoir so young in
What’s Become of Waring, there was no doubt Powell felt this same shadow
overhanging what should have been the prime of his early adulthood. During
the war Green served as a fire fighter in London, an experience reflected in
Caught (1943). Though drawing from his own experience, Green was not,
unlike Powell, his own ready historian. Green’s conviction as a novelist was
that the narrator was obtrusive and falsifying, and that dialogue and flashes of
consciousness—in Green’s case, flashes more than a ‘stream’—was all that was
needed to reveal characters to the reader. This is an intensification of the practice of Henry James, who used the third-person limited viewpoint to make his characters vital perceivers, and Ivy Compton-Burnett, who made the reader decode the mysteries of her books through complex, discontinuous dialogue. Green refuses to interpose a screen of rationalization between the readers and how his characters speak and feel. Though dialogue is nearly as important to Green as to Compton-Burnett, his delicacy has none of her late-Victorian reticence. Green tends, like Gertrude Stein and e. e. cummings, to use short, simple words. Yet he possesses a comprehensibility on a sentence-by-sentence level, and a sense of being continually in action, one vouchsafed by the gerund ‘-ing’ at the end of most of his novel-titles:

“We could make a go of it between us, you know, if we tried,” she said.
“What’s that?”
“You wouldn’t have heard, would you dear?” she said gently. “I was making a proposal.”
He still did not trust his ears.
“I didn’t quite catch,” he said.
She stopped in her tracks. She put her hands up to the lapels of his coat.
“I was proposing, dear.”

We hear here how people actually use language, sometimes directly and sometimes not, sometimes to communicate and sometimes to hide from communicating. Even in this climactic, and quite moving, moment from Back, Green never lets any overriding purpose compromise the integrity of what his characters say and feel in the given situation. Yet, as tempting as it may be to see Green’s technique as liberating us from narrative authority, it bypasses a stable narrator only to substitute Henry Green, as what Wayne C. Booth called ‘the implied author,’ the force that orchestrates all these characters, that is conjuring the words and feelings of people who are fictional creations. As much as Green may have observed daily life and listened to how people talked, the formulation of these gleanings is his. You cannot have montage without an auteur.

Indeed, Green’s use of a pseudonym comes in here, as one can differentiate between Henry Yorke, in Booth’s terms ‘the breathing author,’ and Henry Green, his authorial construct who is lurking behind characters who are apparently narrative-free. Green, for all his originality, fit right into the midcentury dogma, upheld by critics such as Percy Lubbock, of short, tightly-knit novels with unobtrusive narrators, that Booth helped explode. Thus, while I understand the readers of Powell who find Nicholas Jenkins too much
of a filter, who, like Sir Frank Kermode (author of a bravura analysis of *Party-Going* in *The Genesis of Secrecy*), prefer the anarchy of Powell’s early work *sans* this garrulous, erudite personage, Green’s novels, like Powell’s prewar work, cannot be said to be random. There is an intention directing them, and even if the author tries to hold themselves back from supplying one the reader will, as it were, abduct a meaning. Green filters his stories in a far more serpentine way than Powell in *Dance*, one studded with what Kermode called “intermittencies.” But filter them he must do.

Even as he was enunciating his anti-narrator credo in his 1950 BBC radio talk, ‘A Novelist to His Readers,’ Green’s later work was edging back towards narrative coherence. In *Back* (1946), just as the returning soldier Charley’s leg is prosthetic, so is his relationship with Nancy, which replaces his love for the dead and already-lost Rose. But Nancy never replaces Rose entirely, or on some level is still Rose, such that, at the end, Charley is still thinking of Rose, yet Nancy knows and accepts it: ‘And she knew what she had taken on.’ There is thus an ironic touch to the novel’s Shakespearean reparation, yet the sense of meaningful reparation is vividly present. For all the deliberate imprecision of the story’s unfolding, there is a narrative arc here which yields emotional engagement while still drifting in the experientially open way that Green prized. *Concluding* (1948) renders a portrait of postwar England reminiscent of Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in Miss Edge’s authoritarian management of a girls’ school—‘We have our Directives, you know’—and the scattershot and idiosyncratic resistance offered by old Mr. Rock—‘they did say he had been someone.’ *Back* has a Shakespearean-romance quality as a returned soldier finds qualities of his lost love, Rose, in Nancy, who may or may not be Rose’s double and/or half-sister and marries her in an act of healing and reparation. Though tactile and dense with felt specificity like Green’s fiction, *Pack My Bag* tells the story of ‘how one changed from boy to man, how one lived, things and people and one’s attitude.’ *Back* and *Concluding* fictively track this discernible pattern.

*Back* and *Concluding* are to me are Green’s major works, although perhaps I was traumatized by trying to, at the age of fourteen, read *Living, Loving, and Party Going*—they were packaged as three-in-one in the 1970s—as a kind of ‘sequel’ to the narrative pleasures of reading *Dance*. I undertook this act partially because I thought Green was the model for Stringham. This was an enterprise doomed from the start. Whereas, despite differences in tone and bearing, there are recognizable similarities between the worlds of Anthony Powell and Evelyn Waugh, the same is not true of Powell and Green. It is best
to expect different pleasures in reading Henry Green than the pleasures Powell offers. But I am fated to always read Henry Green through a Powellian lens.

In 1952, just as his last novel, *Doting*, was published, Green was profiled in *Life* magazine, at that time the journal which effectively reached most American homes. Here, he was lauded as a genius by W. H. Auden, in one of his more Mark Memberish modes. The positive publicity Green received in this era was a kind of rescuer of British modernism, or at least novelistic experimentation. Withal his eccentricities, Green was ideal for this role. Green was a heterosexual male (while the homosexual Jocelyn Brooke, who also wrote in a modernist mode in the late 1940s and early 1950s, and whose work was esteemed by Powell, was always under-noticed.) Moreover, Green was English, unlike Joyce and Eliot. Unlike Woolf, who was associated with Bloomsbury and bohemianism, Green’s writing about working-class life in the West Midlands, if only in one novel, made him potentially more, in a totally unsought way, a writer of the nation.

Indeed, when I was young a family friend confused Henry Green with Colin Wilson, the author of *The Outsider*, a far more working-class and anti-establishment thinker than Green ever was. The mix-up, though far-fetched, was not totally risible. As a modernist, Green was, weirdly, in British terms, both ‘national’ and ‘relevant.’ This helps explain why there have been continued attempts to revive Green, even though every iteration of a revival somehow instances that its predecessor had failed to take. Yet, much like Powell, he has never gotten on the English department syllabus—though probably known by more English professors than Powell—and his reputation has been largely left in the hands of nonacademic readers. These readers value Green’s deep, fugitive distillation of intimacy, ordinary life, sensations, feelings, the speech of people, all registered with caring and insight.

During the last decades of his life, Green read a novel a day. This fact is often mentioned in articles on Green in tones that exhort us to admire this practice, or at least see it as charming. We do not really, though, know which novels he consumed in these diurnal exercises. He could have easily read a novel by Michel Butor one day, by Barbara Cartland another. But presumably some sort of philosophy of reading would be necessary to encompass both. Green’s reading of these novels, whatever they were, did not provoke him to write about them. For a writer, reading novels and not doing your own writing is as pointless as is doing your own writing without reading other people’s books (as undergraduate creative writing majors often want to do.) This is in
contrast to Powell, who was a copious literary critic into his mid-eighties. One can see this divergence in the two men’s work. Green delighted in imagining subjectivities, getting into people’s heads and burrowing into their imperfect communications. Powell was much more of a scene-setter, a maker of analogies, a melancholy recorder. Green did, however, read deeply in the history of the Ottoman Empire, although he died too soon to read the great work on the subject by his generational peer, Lord Kinross.

Despite their profound connection as boys, as adults Powell and Green did not get along. Though there might be reasons for seeing Green as a character model for Stringham, Powell vehemently denied such a link. The two men were, as biographies reveal, for a moment rivals in love, and very much diverged as imaginative writers, though from a common inheritance. The musical, erudite, baroque discontinuity of Ford Madox Ford in the Parade’s End tetralogy can be said to stand behind aspects of both Powell and Green. If the essence of Ford’s self-characterization as Christopher Tietjens was Toryism, a sense of social chronicle, stylistic discontinuity, and self-pity, Green may be said to have inherited the self-pity and most of the stylistic discontinuity, Powell the Toryism, the sense of social chronicle, and only the tail end of the discontinuity. Here, Green seemed to have gotten the better deal. But I would argue that Powell won out in the end, and that the self-pity which ballasted Green’s fictional posture eventually came to contribute to his paralysis as a writer.

Green died in 1973 at what Brooke Allen calls ‘a very old sixty-eight,’ even as Powell had published Temporary Kings, and had still to write three more novels, four books of memoirs, and three of journals, not to mention sundry book reviews. That Powell lived so much longer, and that he began to publish Dance a year before Green’s last published novel, has separated these two near-exact contemporaries, put them into different epochs. Unlike Powell, whose legacy is just now being consolidated with the Spurling biography, Green has passed into legend and literary history, attracting able academic work by North, A. Kingsley Weatherhead, James Gindin, and now Peter Wolfe and Nick Shepley, and a biography by Jeremy Treglown. We can appreciate Green’s work more by seeing it is part of a past. Situating Green contextually, as recent critics are beginning to do, might open up Green’s aesthetic more, might reveal the ‘light of roses...in all their summer colours’ that shines through so brilliantly in his remarkable fiction.
Henry Green was part of AP’s world. Their lives intersected; he provides a benchmark for AP’s work. Nick Birns has written an insightful and useful framework article for this issue.

As he points out, both were born in 1905. Both went to New Beacon prep school, Eton and Oxford. Neither enjoyed Oxford. Both were academic failures. AP took a third - which was a pretty dismal showing even for the 1920’s. Green, like Waugh, didn’t even take his degree. A key difference, apart from Green being aristocratic and rich, was that he had already published a well-regarded novel, *Blindness*, which earned him invitations to Garsington from Lady Ottoline Morrell.

On to literary London where they both made their way with comedies of manners as was the fashion. And then things turned out so differently for them. Green was described by Auden in 1925 as ‘the best English novelist alive’. But he fell away. Powellians might be interested in finding out why AP flourished after a sluggish start and Green faded after a coruscating one. Also how did two boyhood friends, and flat mates - those attending the Oxford Conference can see where they shared digs in St. Edward’s Street - who became friendly rivals eventually fall out so badly? AP described Green thus: ‘My final judgement on Henry, my oldest intimate friend, who meant a great deal to me when we were growing up, is that he was really rather a shit.’

Was it a Question of Upbringing? Green was, as he said in *Pack My Bag*, born ‘a mouth-breather with a silver spoon.’ He had all the social, financial and physical advantages which AP lacked and craved. In the social rankings he was definitely smart, and extremely rich compared to AP, from a well-established family with prominent social links - on his mother’s side, a Wyndham, related to the Egremonts of Petworth fame. He was tall, dark and good looking. And he had the family seat, Forthampton Court.
The 'horse faced dwarf' son of a Major of no fixed abode who lost out to Green in the competition for Dig Biddulph's hand may be forgiven if he felt envious at any stage. However, they both liked an active social life, smart society, attractive women and alcohol.

But AP, while not starting in pole position, negotiated the chicanes of social advancement and the pit-stops of literary reinvention much better and so far at least is the winner in the literary F1. He had staying power and perseverance. Green wrote 10 books between 1916 and 1952 when he stopped: AP wrote 8 (eventually 32) and started Dance just as Green had given up. Green died in 1976 and AP lived for another 20 years.

Now we have two books seeking to re-evaluate and reassess Green. They make an interesting compare and contrast exercise. Nick Shepley, a young English scholar, has turned his Ph.D thesis into a book. Beautifully produced by OUP, compact and with an understated stylish font and front cover, it is just a lovely object to hold and is 195 pages. Peter Wolfe is an American emeritus professor who has written over 20 books on Iris Murdoch, Yukio Mishima, Rebecca West, August Wilson, Penelope Fitzgerald et al. His book's production values are lamentable: a floppy oversized paperback with an overstated green cover that curls up. Its 250 pages are presumably aimed at students on his college literature courses which seem to have divided student opinion judging by some of the comments on http://www.ratemyprofessors.com

That is the externals: what about the internals? What question is each writer trying to answer? What will the general as opposed to the academic reader, find useful in these two short academic books?
Although many general readers deride academics as being introverted, incomprehensible and self-indulgent, we can profit from reading their
commentaries about our favourite authors. Nick Birns’ *Understanding Anthony Powell* is an outstanding example. Here is an early warning: neither of these books on Henry Green is as good as Nick Birns’ book on AP.

There are similarities between the two books. Each takes you through a detailed analysis of plot, character and style of Green’s novels. Shepley tries to do this a little more thematically in chapters such as *Style: Deconstructing Names, Style Symbolic Flight, The Everyday and the Non-Event*. But essentially he follows a novel-by-novel approach. Wolfe takes a much more straightforwardly chronological plot summary approach.

Both quote extensively from other critics - sometimes excessively, even allowing for an academic’s need to demonstrate that they have read all the relevant literature. Pardonable perhaps in a reworked PhD thesis but less understandable in a student's book. Also, Wolfe rather overdoes the ‘references and borrowings’ that he identifies in Green’s work: Shakespeare, Dickens, Greene, Mann, Cheever, Poe, Chesterton, Conrad, Keats, Celine, Dostoevsky, Kafka, Beckett, Coward, Rattigan, Wordsworth, Strindberg, Chekhov, Bellow, Plato, Ford, Dylan Thomas, Browning, Mozart, August Wilson, Joyce, Isherwood, Thackeray, Braine, Bartok and so it goes on and on. Why?

For Powellians, both books promise interesting material. Whether we like it or not, Powellians are interested in social class, not least because AP was obsessed with it. (See Shepley Chapter 4 and in particular p 83-91) Shepley makes the early bold assertion that Green in his novels ‘Living, Party Going and Loving for example, provide some of the most nuanced sensitive and unsentimental writing on class: the best of his generation.’

Wolfe comments on Green and class: ‘Mandarin English writers like Anthony Powell, Anita Brookner and Edward St Aubyn see the stain of social class as indelible, ... Class determines your identity despite all your thoughts and words about equality. Green deals with this idea without bias.’

There are differences. Shepley introduces his book by telling us that it ‘examines the continuity between Green’s novels and the dialogues taking place across the novels in order to see better how his oeuvre offers a bridge between the modernist, interwar and post-war writing’ and ‘explores how ... Green, produces writing that is subtle, flexible, poetic and witty; it celebrates the power of his fiction to metamorphose cliched dialogues into vital and poetic expressiveness,’ concluding that he sought ‘to strengthen and extend
this widening reception of Green’s novels by setting up a critical prism through which Green’s fiction can be seen as a coherent, subtle and humorous critique of the tension between class and upbringing, prose and individual style and representations of the everyday in the first half of the twentieth century.’

Does he succeed? Yes, to a non-specialist reader like your reviewer, he does. Being a repurposed Ph.D thesis means that it’s occasionally hard work for the non-academic reader. And certainly his style is not ‘subtle, flexible, poetic and witty’ but then he is writing about novels not writing novels.

Connoisseurs of academicese will find some gems. ‘[A]n opportunity to situate Green’s rather shape-shifting oeuvre in more direct alliance with a burgeoning number of authors that are increasingly being seen to problematize the everyday’. ‘Green’s manipulation of names throughout his oeuvre such that they become multi-use, polyphonic, shifting and often dysfuctional containers, resonates with the fluidity present in the Greek notion of naming-as search-as explored in Plato's Cratylus.’ Yes, answers on a postcard, please.

As you would expect from a much more experienced author who is not recycling his Ph.D thesis Wolfe is a much easier read. Although he does contribute some gems as well.

‘Green’s omission of commas and relative pronouns in comma-less compound sentences put the sentences’ components on a par.’ ‘Lax, loose-limbed, and meandering Party Going drifts driftingly.’

Unlike Shepley, Wolfe does not tell us at the outset what is trying to do in his book. So how can we judge whether he had succeeded? But his conclusion is clear and commanding: ‘Though unlike anyone else’s, his work is more than a fascinating oddity. Joined by internal repetitions, the books echo, contradict and amplify each other, fusing as a single body. (Does this remind you of Dance?) ‘Read a Green novel’ he tells us. ‘Then read it again. It’ll shake your preconceptions about literature’s imitating life - and leave you in a better place. The second reading counts.’

So yes, Powellians, whether APSOC members of not, will profit from reading these two books. But before you start either of them read Jeremy Treglown’s life of Green Romancing: the Life and Work of Henry Green, London: Faber, 2000."
In advance of the Society’s conference this summer at Oxford University, we may want to take note of a recent book entitled *Evelyn Waugh’s Oxford*. This is by Dr Barbara Cooke and grows out of her work for the OUP’s *Complete Works of Evelyn Waugh* (‘CWEW’) project. She is a co-executive editor (with Martin Stannard) of the entire project and was co-editor of the volume containing Waugh’s autobiography *A Little Learning*, which ends with a description of his Oxford years and the time immediately after he went down. She also curated an exhibition at the Bodleian Library late last year on Waugh and is Lecturer in English literature at the University of Loughborough.

*Waugh’s Oxford* is divided into three sections. The first is a brief history of Waugh’s life, with more detail devoted to his Oxford years and the beginning of his writing career. It is in this section that the story of his truncated college career is told.

Before considering the text, however, it may be useful to understand the extent by which Waugh’s time at Oxford overlapped with that of AP, as in Waugh’s case his timing was not straightforward. Oxford then, as now, had three terms in each academic year, with each term scheduled to include 8 full weeks of teaching: **Michaelmas Term**: October-December, **Hilary Term**: January-March and **Trinity Term**: April-June.

Residence for 9 terms (3 academic years) was required before qualifying for a degree. Waugh’s Oxford started in a “by-term”: Hilary Term, January 1922. This had consequences later in the timing of his final exams, which he took at the end of Trinity Term in July 1924 (his 8th) instead of Michaelmas Term (what would have been his 9th) in December of that year. He passed with a third (the lowest level).
As described in the first section of Dr Cooke’s book, Waugh had already arranged for an apartment on Merton Street in what would have been his final term, to be shared with Hugh Lygon. But when he managed only a Third Class result on his finals, he lost his scholarship at Hertford. Because he was already deeply in debt, his father refused to fund the ‘empty’ term, and he left Oxford without a degree.

AP started in Michaelmas Term October 1923 and graduated with a Third Class degree at the end of Trinity Term in June 1926 after the 9 full terms of residence needed to qualify. The two novelists overlapped for one academic year: Michaelmas Term 1923 through to Trinity Term 1924. Waugh was at Hertford College and AP at Balliol.

The second section of the book (‘Evelyn Waugh’s City’) is its central part and focuses on how Oxford is reflected in Waugh’s work. It is divided into three chapters. The first (‘City of Invention’) deals with his writing and illustrations for several Oxford student papers and journals. These include the Oxford Broom, a short-lived journal founded by his classmate Harold Acton for which he designed the cover. He also wrote, inter alia, for Cherwell, Oxford Fortnightly Review and Isis, where he was sub-editor for a 6-month period. This section of the book is amply illustrated with Waugh’s drawings for these publications, many of which I have not seen before and which, on the whole, evidence a talent that might, with experience and training, have supported a career other than writing. Waugh thought of that career after leaving Oxford and studied art, but as described by Dr Cooke:
After a few abortive attempts to train in the applied arts – first as a draughtsman, then a cabinetmaker, and finally as apprentice to a printmaker – Waugh was forced to take a job as a master in a remote Welsh public school.

By the time Waugh had failed at that career as well, he was back in London where he met up with AP who had just finished his own exams with no better results than Waugh but with a degree in hand since he had completed the required 9 terms. AP had met Waugh in Oxford, but both writers concede that they were not friends as undergraduates. They were both in the Hypocrites Club, to which Dr Cooke devotes a short chapter in the third section of her book, and AP recalls attending what he calls ‘offal dinners’ in Waugh’s rooms at Hertford. These ‘offal dinners’ are described by Waugh in his autobiography (CWEW, v.19: A Little Learning, pp. 148-49): ‘… open house for men from other colleges; sometimes as many as a dozen collected; Terence [Greenidge] dubbed these assemblies ‘offal’. We drank large quantities of beer and made a good deal of noise...’ Dr Cooke describes Waugh’s third-year accommodations as ‘a ground-floor room at Hertford, facing out over the front quad. In Brideshead Revisited Charles Ryder is housed in the same location, thereby enabling Sebastian Flyte to introduce himself by vomiting in through the window.’

The book picks up on the relationship between the two writers after AP has come down to London. This is when he is working at Duckworths. He wrote a letter to Waugh (and probably to his other Oxford and Eton acquaintances) asking whether he might have anything Duckworths might like to publish. They got together and struck up a close friendship, involving frequent visits to Waugh’s family home on North End Road where AP got to know and quite like Waugh’s parents. It was during this period that AP arranged an interview for Waugh with his superior at Duckworths, Thomas Balston, about possible publication. As described in the book, Waugh had written a pamphlet called P.R.B.: An Essay on the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood while recovering from an injury incurred at an Oxford going away party. According to Dr Cooke, AP ‘read the pamphlet and passed it to his superiors, who commissioned Waugh to write Rossetti: His Life and Works (1928).’

It was probably a bit more complicated than that, or at least it was more dramatic as AP describes it in his memoirs. According to AP, Waugh was interviewed by Balston but, without knowing that Balston was looking for someone to write about Rossetti, Waugh ‘brought a copy of P.R.B. with him simply as evidence of literacy. Balston, on the strength of the essay,
immediately suggested Rossetti as a theme.’ (Messengers, 22-23). While that description may have been embellished into one of the coincidences AP so loved to use in his novels, it is also consistent with Waugh’s own recollection of the interview. In 1961, Waugh wrote: ‘…when I was seeking a commission to write a biography, I showed this essay [P.R.B.] to Mr. Balston of Duckworth’s (Mr. Anthony Powell introducing me) and since a centenary was imminent he very kindly set me to work on Rossetti’ (CWEW 16, p. xl). Whoever gave the copy of the pamphlet to Balston is less important than the fact that Waugh never forgot AP’s part in launching his career as a writer.

The next two chapters discuss how Waugh’s experiences at Oxford are reflected in his writing. The primary Oxford writings are divided into those that were written at a distance and reflect a more idealistic and even romantic approach. These are Brideshead Revisited (where Oxford is the ‘city of aquatint’) and the Oxford chapter of A Little Learning and are treated in the chapter ‘City of Memory.’ The other Oxford writings were those composed shortly after he went down and reflect a more realistic and satirical style (the novel Decline and Fall and the short story ‘The Balance’ fall into this category). These are discussed in the chapter entitled ‘City of Imagination.’

Dr Cooke distinguishes (p. 48) between these two periods at the start of her discussion:

Waugh’s earlier writings are, perhaps, fueled by the bitterness of finding himself ejected, before time, from Oxford’s ‘rare glory’. However, while Brideshead Revisited and A Little Learning are more realist than the earlier fictions, they are not realistic. Their appeal does not lie in a documentary account of what life was really like in 1920s’ Oxford, but what Waugh first expected and, later remembered it to be.

AP effectively made the same distinction. He remarks in his memoirs how he was entertained by reading Waugh’s manuscript of Decline & Fall and thought it genuinely funny. He recommended it to his publishers but, according to AP, the director of Duckworths opposed publication, not on the merits, but on the basis of his personal opposition to Waugh’s contemporaneous courtship of Evelyn Gardner to whom the director was related. On the other hand, in his Journals, AP thought the Oxford descriptions in Brideshead were unlike anything he remembered from the time and were not based on Waugh’s own rackety Oxford life. In a review, he had the same problem with the Oxford chapter of A Little Learning. He much
enjoyed, however, the early chapters of the autobiography where Waugh described his family and childhood. Waugh noted in a letter to Maurice Bowra the irony of AP (obsessed as he was by genealogy) preferring that portion of the book that so many others found boring. Dr Cooke also compares (pp. 64-65) Waugh’s reaction to the abruptness of his severed ties with the Oxford world with that described by AP in A Question of Upbringing where Nick Jenkins and Charles Stringham begin to fall out at Oxford, which Stringham leaves after his first year.

AP comments at some length on Waugh’s frequent returns to Oxford during breaks in his school-mastering responsibilities. In those postgraduate days (if one may properly use that description with respect to Waugh), there was no abatement in the drinking and debauchery of his undergraduate years. AP thought those postgraduate visits may have more connection with Waugh’s attempts to curry favor with upper-class echelons of Oxford society than did his years in residence. But they do not appear as such in Waugh’s fiction or autobiographical writings and perhaps for that reason were not included in Dr Cooke’s narrative.

In the book’s final section, Dr Cooke chooses several places in and around Oxford as a basis for brief discussions of Waugh’s associations with those locations as expressed in his writings. Each one has a drawing illustrating the places discussed. There is also a map in the book’s frontispiece placing many of these illustrations in the streets of Oxford. These ‘vignettes’ serve to familiarize the reader both with the city and with Waugh’s life in or writings about it. Most are specific: e.g., a college (Hertford, Balliol, New, Christ Church, and Campion Hall) and others, more generic (the Junk Shop, Pubs and the Oxford Canal). In each of these entries there is a short introduction that may segue into something related or something else wholly unexpected. For example, the entry on Hertford College briefly mentions Waugh’s enmity to CRMF Cruttwell, the Dean who was also his history tutor, but this theme is then is fleshed out in another entry on ‘The Junk Shop’ where a stuffed dog used in Cruttwell’s persecution was acquired. His similar persecution of Francis ‘Sligger’ Urquhart who was dean of Balliol is mentioned in the entry for that college but this abated after Waugh went down, whereas he continued to create unpleasant characters named ‘Crutwell’ throughout the 1930s.

Sometimes, quite interesting and new (to me at least) material is mentioned in these seemingly geographical references. For example, the sources of Arthur Waugh’s theatricality are explained in the entry for ‘The New Theatre’ and his
Oxford academic career in that for ‘New College.’ I had not known that Arthur also received a third class degree (to a large extent accounted for by his time spent on theatrical matters)—so it must have been more his son’s extravagance than his poor scholarship that caused Arthur to refuse to pay for the final term needed for his degree. Moreover, I had not realized that Evelyn was the 5th generation of his family to attend Oxford. (Although not mentioned, there were at least two more after him, his children Teresa and Auberon, and his great granddaughter, Mary. There are perhaps others, although the line seems to skip the generation of Evelyn’s grandchildren.)

The entry for Balliol notes that Waugh had several friends who lived there (including AP, Richard Pares, Christopher Hollis and Alfred Duggan) and supposes that he would have preferred to have lived there himself. AP mentions in his memoirs an anecdote that would support this. After AP moved to Somerset, he lived near Waugh’s friend Ronald Knox, and they became acquainted. Waugh frequently visited Knox in the village of Mells and mentioned to AP that he sometimes found him a bit cold. AP responded that he hadn’t noticed this froideur to which Waugh responded: ‘You were at Eton and Balliol’ as had been Knox (To Keep the Ball Rolling, p. 347). Waugh once told a BBC interviewer that he would have preferred New College, his father’s alma mater, if given the choice (CWEW, v. 19, p. 558). Despite Waugh’s usually dismissive treatment of Hertford College and Dean Cruttwell in his writings, there are examples in this book of postwar visits to the college where he was well received and said to have much enjoyed himself.

Sometimes things go amiss. In the entry for Maltby’s the Bookbinders, Waugh’s attention to detail and craftsmanship is considered. This includes his writing, which he was constantly adjusting, even after publication. In the case of Unconditional Surrender, he was motivated to change the ending after publication based on a letter he received from AP. He wrote a letter to AP explaining his reason for the change, which is quoted by Dr Cooke. Unfortunately, the addressee of this letter is named in the book as John Sparrow, rather than AP. I’m afraid I will have to take some of the blame for this. The source of the quote is the video recording of a paper I presented to a Waugh conference at the University of Leicester in 2015. I took care to assure that I pronounced AP’s name as “Pole”, consistent with his own insistence. In addressing an audience of AP enthusiasts, this is not a problem. In other contexts, however, I should have known from experience that this eccentricity must be explained, and I failed in this case to do so. AP was mentioned only once in the paper, and Dr Cooke, hearing my long “O”, misinterpreted it. The
paper has since been published in *Evelyn Waugh Studies*, No 47.3, p. 4, Winter 2016 (the Journal of the Waugh Society), so hopefully future scholars will not have to grapple with AP’s eccentric pronunciation of his name.

If there is a second edition, I would suggest an entry be included in the final section for Wadham College. In this, Waugh’s friendship with Maurice Bowra could be briefly explained. This blossomed after Waugh went down, and he became a frequent visitor to Bowra’s quarters at Wadham. Several of Waugh’s friends (eg, Christopher Hollis and Cyril Connolly) were acolytes of Bowra during Waugh’s undergraduate days and met at Bowra’s rooms in those days, but Waugh was not invited. Waugh later complained that Bowra took him up only after he became well known as a writer, but Bowra denied that. Waugh’s drinking and carousing as an undergraduate were probably considered inconsistent with being a fully-fledged ‘Bowrista.’ Bowra does make an appearance in Waugh’s fiction as a model for Mr Samgrass in *Brideshead Revisited*. Although ‘Sammy’ was a fellow of All Souls, there can be little doubt that he owes something to Bowra’s use of student friendships for social climbing. Also, in a second edition, it should not be claimed that Hugh Lygon and his family were Roman Catholics.

Dr Cooke’s book is an enjoyable and informative introduction to the Oxford of AP’s years. It is well produced and nicely bound and printed on high quality paper. The illustrations, which are numerous and of excellent quality, are well integrated with the text. It is highly recommended to those planning to attend this summer’s APSOC Conference at Merton College, as well as those who simply want to know about Oxford in the days AP was a student.

**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

Derek Pasquill writes:

Interesting to read Jeffrey Manley’s Late Weimar Berlin account in the latest *Secret Harmonies*. I made notes on *These Germans* while reading a copy at the British Library sometime in 2014. Two points struck me at the time of reading, both of which are related to Powell’s *Dance*.

1. If one of the *leitmotifs* of *The Dance* is nudity – a long novel punctuated by moments of significant nakedness, then Heygate’s memoir in describing so many instances of Germans taking their kit off, whether in the city or
countryside, that both he and AP were exposed to, might it not in some way have contributed to one of The Dance’s structuring devices?
2. Of greater import is the epiphany shared by Heygate and AP when witnessing a group of naturists. It is as if the naked Germans in their resplendent nudity symbolise the great cyclical return of the ever same. How we get from them to poor old Widmerpool dying while running naked is of course another matter, but the trigger perhaps was a walk through the German woods.

Vavasor Powell and Mr Bagshaw: An Aubreyan Echo

Nicholas Birns

Admirers of Anthony Powell have always sensed that there must have been some substantial influence of his researches on John Aubrey (which produced, in the late 1940s, both a biography of Aubrey and an anthology of Aubrey’s writing), on the then-gestating Dance. Whether in his gossipy, at times indiscreet, but historically probative tone, or, as Kate Bennett argued at the York conference in 2016, Aubrey’s humane and tolerant view of human idiosyncrasies, the observable affinities between Aubrey and Powell cannot help but have galvanized the energies of Powell’s great novelistic undertaking.

I am very surprised that neither I nor anyone else has come across this before—and apologies if anyone in fact has—but there is an intriguing nugget in Aubrey’s account of Vavasor Powell. Vavasor Powell was a Nonconformist preacher, and divine from the borough of Knocklas (Cnwclas, Knucklas) in Powell’s ancestral county of Radnorshire, although whether there is any direct lineage or relation is unclear. Aubrey describes the Radnorshire Powells as ‘very ancient’ and makes clear that Vavasor Powell should have been proud of his pedigree, even if his religious conscience might have tempted him to downplay it.

Vavasor Powell’s great friend was a Mr. Edward Bagshawe (in some versions Bagshaw, without the e) and Aubrey’s source for Vavasor Powell was Mistress Bagshaw, Edward’s widow. What strikes me beyond the obvious pertinence of the names, Powell and Bagshaw, is that Vavasor Powell was a Nonconformist. Both Aubrey, who clearly tends to the higher side ecclesiologically, and
Anthony Powell, no Puritan, by his tacit reference in the name of ‘Books’ Bagshaw acknowledge Vavasor Powell’s merit as a man. This buttresses Bennett’s point about the tolerant sympathies of both men. Vavasor, by the way, was the preacher’s mother’s maiden name, and characterized by Aubrey of a Yorkshire family ‘of great antiquity.’

We should then consider the fact that ‘Books’ Bagshaw not only features in Books Do Furnish A Room but gives the novel its title, and that it is in this volume of Dance that the only recorded book of Nicholas Jenkins, Borage and Hellebore, his biography of Robert Burton, is mentioned. Powell has mentioned that Jenkins’s researches on Burton are meant to stand in for his own on Aubrey, making us realize how Powell’s work reflects equally the grave erudite melancholy of Burton and the off-the-cuff but eerily observant anecdotes like Aubrey. Aubrey is not explicitly mentioned in Books at all. But the name “Bagshaw’ means there is a tacit reference to him. Powell is not really a meta-fictive or self-referential writer, but I feel he did leave this inside joke for his reader to at some point discover.

**MY FIRST TIME**

*Tony Lancaster*

In 1977 at 23 I first became aware of AP. Although memories fade I recall seeing the Mark Boxer illustrations on the newly issued series. Beyond that I do not know what made me pick up a copy and start on Dance. There was nothing in my suburban background which chimed with it.

I had recently returned from an overland trip to Asia of four months. I had been completely out of touch. I asked my friends what I had missed. “The Sex Pistols”, was their collective response. So I embarked on Dance in punk torn Britain.

I had not met anyone like any of the book’s characters with the possible exception of McQuitty whom I encountered on a carnival in backwater America where we both had student work visas. He arrived in 100 degree heat wearing a tweed jacket, shirt and tie. He had just finished his degree at Oxford and appeared to have connections everywhere.
A few years later when I started the book I had closeted myself away to do my law finals. Such was the amount of legal stuff I had to plough through that the idea of reading anything which did not relate to the rule in *Foss v Harbottle* or the finer points of Corporation tax was heresy and as such irresistible.

I would bring a newly purchased edition to the library, still in its bag, with the intention of doing a few hours trying to knock vast amounts of seemingly irrelevant material into a reluctant brain. I would find myself opening the bag examining the book and before I knew it I was 40 pages in.

Although I have said that AP’s world was different from my own, I found the narrator’s romantic ambitions and his finding himself in cinema queues with different girls something to which I could relate. I aspired to but did not manage to be like Barnby who was effortlessly successful and thankfully I was not as disaster prone as Widmerpool. By the early 1980s qualified and married I had finished every bit of fiction AP wrote and there I left it.

Over the years my remembrance of how much I enjoyed the books was subject from time to time by sniping comment about his being snobbish, irrelevant and a second rate Waugh. Despite this I retained all of them and they were squeezed into various book shelves and then disgorged on moving and various changes of personal circumstances and stuck up again.

The recent biography and attention on AP made me start to reread 40 years later. The pages were now brown and brittle but the content equally if not more enjoyable. I doubt that I had much sympathy for Le Bas in my first reading but now found him a more sympathetic character. After completing two of the series I googled AP and found that none other than Tariq Ali had given a speech at an event called the AP Society. On a whim I asked my wife to join me up and after a few key strokes she did or rather she became a member on my behalf. A few days later I received a goody bag and whilst not containing a badge, did contain several quarterly magazines. Imagine my surprise when I saw Steve Walker appearing Quiggin-like from the inside cover. I play tennis with him and he never once made mention of this affliction, sorry affection. AP would surely have approved of this connection but not of my use of Google, I fear.
LE BAS DINNER IN COLOGNE

The Anthony Powell Gesellschaft (the German branch of the APS) celebrated the 112th birthday of Anthony Powell on 21.12.2017 with a Le Bas Dinner at the Excelsior Hotel Ernst, the only possible equivalent to a Ritz Hotel in Cologne.

In his introduction the author of this article in his capacity as President of the Anthony Powell Gesellschaft informed the 62 guests that the year 2017 was a very productive one for German Anthony Powell aficionados: volumes 9 (Die Philosophen des Krieges) and 10 (Bücher schmücken ein Zimmer) of Dance have been published in German, translated by Heinz Feldmann, who is mentioned twice in AP’s Journals 1982 – 1986 (p 14, 117/8) and have been reviewed very favourably by Andreas Platthaus, one of the speakers of the evening, in the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ) the same day.

A Question of Upbringing (Eine Frage der Erziehung) was produced as an audio book and the first three volumes of Dance have been published in a paperback edition. Furthermore Hilary Spurling’s biography and its reviews in The Times, the Sunday Times, the Financial Times, the Guardian, the Spectator and the APS Newsletter 69 were introduced. It was quoted from the article of Claire Messud in the Guardian in which she compares AP to Proust, Balzac, Joyce and Woolf (not Leonard). As those authors ‘rewrote literary convention’, AP had done the ‘same for the patterns of worldly experience’, quoting the famous tank – comparison of Evelyn Waugh. With pleasure it was noted that the common knowledge of AP novels can be assumed just like that since D.J. Taylor reported in his article Orwell at the BBC (TLS of 17.11.) that the people to be interviewed had gathered ‘as in an Anthony Powell novel,… like Widmerpool hastening through the Berkshire mist’. And finally the verdict of A.N. Wilson, that today’s AP readers were just ‘a handful of cult followers’ (TLS of 29.11.) was very much appreciated, considering how hard it is to achieve ‘cult status’ in these days (especially for AP readers in Germany).
The Vice President of the APG Henner Löffler explained the backgrounds of the Le Bas Dinner in the Ritz in July 1933. Henner quoted from Hilary Spurling’s description of Le Bas (‘no sex life’) and pointed out how the dinner was dominated by Kenneth G. Widmerpool. He then explained the figure of Widmerpool and said that not only were we never to find out what the G. stands for, but that Widmerpool could be a counterpart of Charles Dickens’ Uriah Heep in their striving for power and their spoilt relations to their mothers.

After the starters (Glen Douglas Salmon and Riesling Lagen Cuvée Gut Korrell) one of the most famous German literature critics, Denis Scheck, spoke about ‘News from the World of the Dance’. He spoke about AP’s 112th birthday and mentioned the fact that on the same day Heinrich Böll celebrated his 100th birthday. Denis referred to the episode that the Nobel Prize Committee of 1972 first awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature to a craftsman in Cologne of the same name. Modest as this craftsman was, he rejected the Nobel Prize and referred to his famous namesake. He reminded us that AP never even was considered to be awarded with the Nobel Prize, a fate that he shared with Kafka, Joyce and Nabokov.

Denis further talked about how much of AP could be found in Dance and referred to Anthony Blunt, one of the notorious Cambridge Five, who had written that the painting of Nicholas Poussin did not refer to the four seasons but that at least one of the four seasons was a man and that – according to Giovanni Pietro Bellori, a contemporary of Poussin - the painting reflected allegories of Poverty, Labour, Luxury and Lust, as commissioned by Giulio Rospigliosi, later Pope Clemens IX. Denis finally reflected about Joshua Reynolds, who once had painted over two famous Rembrandt paintings in his possession, because he found them not ‘rembrandtesque’ enough, and tinkered with the idea whether AP might have done the same with the painting of Nicholas Poussin by writing Dance.

After the main course (Roast Beef and E. Guigal, Côtes du Rhône) Andreas Platthaus (another of our most renowned critics who wrote the review in the FAZ of the same day) gave his speech titled Kenneth Widmerpool’s Fan. He referred to the relation of AP to Oscar Wilde and painted a portrait of Kenneth Widmerpool as a broken figure not without some sympathetic features thus we all should be fans of him. He started by reflecting about a German name for Powell fans as ‘Powellaner’ or ‘Powellisten’ or ‘Powelleten’ and about the surprises in dinner speeches, quoting from the second speech of Widmerpool at the prize ceremony for Russell Gwinnet in Hearing Secret.
Harmonies. With that he arrived at the main topic of his speech, the person of Kenneth Widmerpool who is not only the first person we meet in Dance but about whom we get to know more than about any other figure in all 12 volumes. Andreas then analyzed AP’s attitude to Wilde and quoted the scene in which Le Bas makes his pupils guess about an Andrew Lang poem to which Stringham quotes a Wilde poem without mentioning the author’s name. Le Bas answers: ‘It is a villanelle. I believe Oscar Wilde wrote it. Not a very distinguished versifier’. The ‘I believe…’ of Le Bas would have been pure understatement since a ‘Villanelle’ is a Neapolitan folksong directly referring to Lang’s poem To Theocritus, in Winter, so Le Bas knew perfectly well what he was talking about. Andreas went on by referring to Casanova’s Chinese Restaurant in which it is again Stringham who quotes Wilde casually (‘….a drawing-room-comedy by Wilde or Pinero’) and finally Andreas mentioned that Wilde is mixed up with Whistler in Temporary Kings, by all these quotes asserting that AP had not a too high opinion of Oscar Wilde.

After desserts (Bread and Butter Pudding) and before Le Bas’ breakdown at 22.23 the Cologne actor Charles Ripley read the scene of the Le Bas Dinner in July 1933 at the Ritz, a reading that was performed half in German and half in English. All in all: there will be another Le Bas Dinner on 21.12.2018! All four speeches mentioned above are published (in German) on the website of the APG, www.anthonypowell.de.

Theo Langheid, Anthony Powell Gesellschaft, Deutschland

Elwin Taylor notes: It is after all, a question of upbringing:

"Following the comment, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov described 41-year-old [Gavin]Williamson [the UK Secretary of State for Defence] as “a nice young man,” who is trying to get his place in history, but “lacks upbringing.”
The *Daily Mail* announced last week the marriage of Georgia Powell, AP’s granddaughter and well known in this parish, to Harry Beaufort, also known as the Duke of Beaufort, or more simply, as ‘Bunter’ to his fellow rock musicians. It was a private wedding at Badminton, his Gloucestershire estate, in front of a handful of guests at St Michael and All Angels Church:

"Georgia, 49, who has quit her job as a newspaper obituaries editor, is the granddaughter of Anthony Powell, celebrated author of *A Dance To The Music Of Time*. Once asked his ambition in life, the novelist replied: ‘To marry a title and to live in a house with a long drive.’ He did both and, now, so has his granddaughter. Georgia was previously married to ... artist Toby Coke, with whom she has two children."

In the Powellian tradition, an issue of titles arose. AP once said he would turn down a knighthood because no one would know how properly to address his wife. The correct address would be her inherited courtesy title Lady Violet, but AP feared less well informed friends would call her Lady Powell. (I think I’ve got that right but this is a bit of a nomenclatural minefield.) According to another report in *Gloucestershire Live*, a similar issue had arisen in the case of his granddaughter's marriage but has been amicably resolved: "There was talk about a row over the title but [the Duke’s former wife] Tracy reportedly said: “I like Georgia a lot. She’s fun and intelligent, perfect for
Harry.” It said that Tracy Ward will be called Tracy, Duchess of Beaufort and Georgia will become Duchess of Beaufort. The Duke’s stepmother is officially addressed as Miranda, Duchess of Beaufort, after becoming the second wife [of his father who was the 11th Duke]."

I am confident that I speak from all of us on APList and the AP Society in extending best wishes to the new couple and their families.
J.M.

**A note from Jonathan Kooperstein, New York**

The Strand bookstore has bought (the?) books that belonged to Tom Dardis (who published the Berkley [New York] paperbacks of Dance 1-7, and wrote a book about writers, including AP, in Hollywood called *Some Time in the Sun* - and submitted his draft account of AP to the subject himself (now in the Lilly Library, I think). A number of reprints of volumes of *Dance* and then, heart-stoppingly, the file copy of the first edition of *Afternoon Men* in a dust jacket (both in rough shape, but still…). The dust jacket illustration is a black-and-white photographic still-life: a man’s hat, an umbrella, a lady’s glove, two cocktail glasses, an ashtray with cigarette butts etc.* Thus, not unlike the color photographic still-life covers of the pre-Marc Fontana paperbacks or the painted still-life covers of the Berkley paperbacks.

I don’t think I’ve ever seen this before.

Book Fair highlights included *From a View to a Death* presented to Tom Balston, and *Caledonia* to Tom Rosenthal (November 1992, but not mentioned in *Journals*, I think).

- it also has ‘moderne’ lettering.
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

from Stephen Eggins

Secret Harmonies 8 is a tour de force – indeed a tour de force de tours de force - particularly Jenkins and Manley - extraordinary diligence and scholarship.
V many congrats
Steve

from Jilly Cooper

Dear Keith
I am so sad I can’t make your wonderful conference but I just wanted to thank you for all the wonderful stuff you send me about Tony. The Secret Harmony Journal is magical. I can’t wait to devour it. He was such a lovely man and I’m sure is proudly looking down from heaven and loving the way you honour him.
Much love and gratitude.
Jilly Cooper

FROM THE APLIST

I only watched bits and pieces of the Royal Wedding on television yesterday (19 May), so it wasn't until I was scanning Yahoo news a few minutes ago that I learned that "Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer" was one of the hymns selected. I also learned that it had been Princess Diana’s favorite hymn.

Of course, Bithel sings "Guide Me O Thou Great Redeemer" as he is leaving the reception for the Akworth-Cutts wedding at Stourwater (HSH, 238, University of Chicago Press). Much as I would like to think otherwise, I suppose there’s little chance that Bithel's preferences played a role in the selection of hymns for that other wedding.

Jim Scott
Dates for your Diary

Anthony Powell Conference 2018

*Anthony Powell and the Visual Arts*

Friday 31 August to Sunday 2 September 2018
Merton College, Oxford

Booking leaflet included with this Newsletter
Further details from the Hon. Secretary, secretary@anthonypowell.org

Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the 18th Annual General Meeting of the Anthony Powell Society will be held on Saturday 20 October at 14:00 in the Conference Room of St. James’s Church, Piccadilly, London W1.

The formal business of the AGM will be followed at 15:00 by a ‘Pub Quiz’ for teams of up to four (£1 entry per person). Quizmaster: Stephen Holden.

**Nominations** for the two Trustee posts which fall vacant this year must reach the Hon. Secretary by Monday 6 August 2018. Candidates must be proposed by two members, indicate their willingness to stand and provide a short biographical statement. Nominations will be accepted by post or email. The elected Trustees must not be barred from being Trustees under English law and a majority of the Trustees must be ordinarily resident in England and Wales.

**Motions** for discussion at the AGM must also reach the Hon. Secretary by Monday 6 August 2018. They must be clearly worded, proposed by at least two members and be accompanied by a statement on support of the motion which will be published to members.

The AGM agenda and voting papers will be included with the Autumn Newsletter in early September. Proxy votes must reach the Hon. Secretary by noon (UK time) on Wednesday 17 October 2018.
London Group 2018 Pub Meets
Saturday 4 August Saturday 3 November The Audley Mount Street London
W1 12.30 to 15.30
A pint, a pie and informal conversation in a Victorian pub that AP would have
known. Why not bring something AP related to interest us? Non-members
always welcome. No need to book but further details from the Hon. Secretary
secretary@anthonypowell.org.

London Group Summer Saturday Stroll
Stringham at a Loose End … Again!
Saturday 7 July 2018
Meet Knightsbridge Tube station entrance opposite Harvey Nichols for
departure at 1015 sharp
Although the Huntercombes, like many others, are away for the season we will
be perambulating Belgravia and Mayfair on the look out for the ghost of
Charles Stringham.
Following the walk we will lunch at The Audley, Mount Street at 1230.
No need to book for the walk, which is free (donations to the Secretary’s top
hat welcome).
If you wish to join the lunch party please let us know as we may need to
book tables. Lunch will be “pay on the day”.
Non-members welcome.
For further details and booking please contact Ivan Hutnik,
ivanhutnik@gmail.com or the Hon. Secretary.

SOCIETY NEWS AND NOTICES

Subscriptions
Subscriptions were due on 1 April and reminders have been sent out to
everyone needing to renew.
Thank you to those who have already renewed; if you have not done so,
please let us have payment soonest.
Where we have your email address, we will use it to send your reminder as it is
quicker and a lot cheaper. Others will receive their reminder by post.
Subscription rates are:
Individual: UK £22, Overseas £28
Joint: UK £33, Overseas £39
Student: UK £13, Overseas £19

**Why not save time and money with our “5 years for the price of 4” membership offer?**
Valid for all grades of membership.

Anyone whose membership has expired will be removed from the membership list at the end of June.

Subscriptions should be sent to the Hon. Secretary, at the usual address.

Please help us to keep costs down by renewing promptly

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**Honorary Life Membership**

At their April meeting the Society’s Trustees agreed an amended policy on the award of Honorary Life Membership.

Hitherto the policy has been that Honorary Life Membership is awarded only to our Patron (John Powell), past Patrons (if any), President (Lord Gowrie), past Presidents (currently Simon Russell Beale), plus Tristram Powell (AP’s elder son).

In recognition of Anthony Powell’s longevity (he died at the age of 94) it was agreed to award Honorary Life Membership to any fully subscribed member who reaches the age of 90 years. This formalises an existing informal policy. Currently we have two nonagenarian Honorary Life Members: Prof. Ed Bock of Syracuse, New York (96) and Kathleen White of Southampton (97). If there are other nonagenarian members and they get in touch with the Hon. Secretary or Membership Secretary we will be delighted to update their membership.

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**Membership Updates**

**New Members**

We extend a warm welcome to the following new members:

- Mark Champness, Chelmsford
- Sam Edmonds, Chicago, USA
- Sandy Lancaster, London
- Stephen Lloyd, Luton
- Antony Taubman, Switzerland
LOCAL GROUP CONTACTS

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

New York & NE USA Group
Area: New York & NE USA
Contact: Nick Birns
nicholas.birns@gmail.com

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

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

German Group
Area: Germany
Contact: Theo Langheid
theo@langheid.de

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.

SOCIETY MERCHANDISE

SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

York 2016 Conference Proceedings
UK: £8; Overseas: £14

Venice 2014 Conference Proceedings (including recordings of the papers on a CD) UK: £11; Overseas £16

Eton 2013 Conference Proceedings
UK: £8; Overseas: £14

London 2011 Conference Proceedings
UK: £8; Overseas: £14

Centenary 2005 Conference Proceedings
UK: £11, Overseas: £17

Oxford 2003 Conference Proceedings
UK: £7; Overseas: £13

Eton 2001 Conference Proceedings
UK: £7; Overseas: £10

Anthony Powell on Wine. Six pieces by AP and one by Violet Powell on the
pleasures of food and drink, ed. Robin Bynoe. UK: £17; Overseas £23

Bernard Stacey, *War Dance*, a glossary of the military terms and references in the War trilogy novels. UK: £10; Overseas £14

Jeff Manley et al.; *Dance Music* 150-page guide to the musical references in *Dance*; in the style of Spurling’s *Handbook*. UK: £7; Overseas: £13

*Writing about Anthony Powell*  Talks given at the 2004 AGM by George Lilley, Michael Barber and Nick Birns; introduced by Christine Berberich. UK: £4; Overseas: £7

*The Master and The Congressman* 40-page monograph by John Monagan describing his meetings with Powell. UK: £4; Overseas: £7

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

**Violet Powell; A Stone in the Shade**  Fourth & final volume of Lady Violet’s autobiography covering mostly the 1960s. Includes many of Lady Violet’s coloured travel sketches. Hardback. UK: £24; Overseas: £32

**Anthony Powell, Caledonia, A Fragment**  The 2011 Greville Press reprint of this rare Powell spoof. UK: £8; Overseas: £11

**John Gould; Dance Class**  American High School student essays from John’s two teachings of *Dance* at Philips Academy. UK: £12; Overseas: £18


Hardback: UK £18; Overseas £24

**JOURNAL**

*Secret Harmonies: Journal of the Anthony Powell Society*  Back numbers of issues 1, 2, 3 & 6/7 are available. UK: £6; Overseas: £9 each
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AUDIO

BBC Radio Dramatisation of *Dance*
Originally broadcast on BBC Radio 4 between 1979-82. 26 one-hour episodes. Single CD containing 26 MP3 files. *For copyright reasons available to Society members only.*
**UK & Overseas: £12** (£6 + £6 donation)

SHOPPING BAG

Society Shopping/Tote Bag
Sturdy 10oz cotton bag approx. 38cm square with 10cm gusset. Each bag has *A Buyer’s Market* and Ada Leintwardine book cover designs.
**UK: £8; Overseas £10** (If you want multiples please email us for a postage quote)

POSTCARDS

Powell Ancestral Lands
Postcards
Set of four colour postcards from photos by John Blaxter of the Powell ancestral lands on the Welsh borders. **UK: £3; Overseas: £5**

Society Postcard
B&W postcard of Powell with his cat Trelawney. Pack of 5. **UK: £3; Overseas: £5**

Wallace Collection Poussin Postcard
The Wallace Collection’s postcard of Poussin’s *A Dance to the Music of Time*. Pack of 5.
**UK: £3; Overseas: £6**

ORDERING

The prices shown are the current members’ prices (revised June 2017) and are inclusive of postage and packing, hence the different UK and overseas prices. **Non-members will be charged the UK member’s price shown plus postage & packing at cost.**
Please send your order to:
**Anthony Powell Society Merchandise,**
**48 Cecil Road, London, E13 0LR, UK**
**Email: merchandise@anthonypowell.org**
Payment by UK cheque, Mastercard, Visa or PayPal (to **secretary@anthonypowell.org**). You may also order through the Society’s online shop at www.anthonypowell.org.
Anthony Powell Society
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Membership Form

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Gift membership & standing order payment also available. Subscriptions are due on 1 April; if joining on or after 1 January membership includes following subscription year.

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[ ] I agree to the Society holding my contact details on computer and using them to provide me with member benefits.

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Email: membership@anthonypowell.org