

## Editorial

If you looked at the preliminary pages before arriving at this one you may have noticed some changes in the editorial team. Most were announced at the AGM last October, when I paid tribute to the dedicated years of work of John Homan and Will Harris and welcomed the newcomers. John Homan's untimely death in the early part of last year left us with a gap (not just on the editorial team) which in some respects can never be filled, but to fill his place here we co-opted Stephen Francis Clarke (ratified at the AGM) who has already proved himself of sterling worth. Will Harris then announced that he would be standing down from this particular duty as from the 1993 AGM. Will was the original editor, and is due full praise for getting the *Journal* off the ground in the early days. He relinquished this post at the end of 1984 (after Issue No. 10) due to the pressure of work that his then new headship imposed, but remained on the 'team'. Now however, having to combine duties as (an excellent) Chairman with those of Secretary (Is there really no-one out there prepared to take this on?) he has enough on his plate. He was replaced at the AGM by Peter Lewis, who cannot be a full committee member due to his duties as our Auditor, but who can serve on this sub-committee. Then I had a further offer of help from Ian Abernethy, who lives in the Border country and who combines teaching music with looking after a nature reserve on Earl Haig's land. Ian's offer came too late for consideration at the AGM (and thus full Committee status) but at our subsequent Committee meeting in November I asked if Ian could be co-opted onto the team, and this was duly passed. Not forgetting the stalwart Brian Fullagar and Paul Reed, there is a lively team at your service.

In this issue we have a most important piece of research which gives the background to HW's involvement with the BBC, prepared by John Gregory. John's hard work in producing the Society publications makes it only just that he should have been awarded the Margaret Clarke prize 'for services rendered'. This further work greatly enhances our knowledge of HW and deepens our appreciation and interest in the two books which cover the broadcasts: *Spring Days in Devon* and *Pen and Plough*. John brings up the 'legend' of HW going into the Broadcasting House at Bristol with a revolver, saying it seems scarcely credible. Those with personal knowledge of HW's 'Til Eulenspiegel' character find it entirely credible. Richard says that HW told him that the incident concerned a shotgun which he had collected after repair work at a gunsmiths, and for a joke he had pointed it around the foyer saying, 'Stick 'em up!' Whether revolver or shotgun, there was inevitable misunderstanding and immediate backfire. He commonly held his two fingers, make to look like a gun, in his jacket or trouser pocket for a joke – an imitation of American gangster films of which he was a great fan. Lois Lamplugh relates another incident of a prank misfiring on p.45.

I make no apology for printing HW's story 'The Pond' in facsimile MS even though it will be difficult to read. To have typed it out would have utterly destroyed its unique atmosphere of immediacy. Its whole point is that it is real and raw HW. I always have a high quality magnifying glass to hand which I use constantly to help decipher HW's writing (and many others): I suggest you do likewise.

Reviews of HW's early work are quite difficult to find as HW did not systematically file them at this time (his clippings date from 1924 but are not complete by any means). So the good detective work by Peter Robins in finding one contemporaneous with publication is very useful. If you know of others I would be glad of copies for the archive file. We hope to make this a series covering all of HW's work in due course.

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