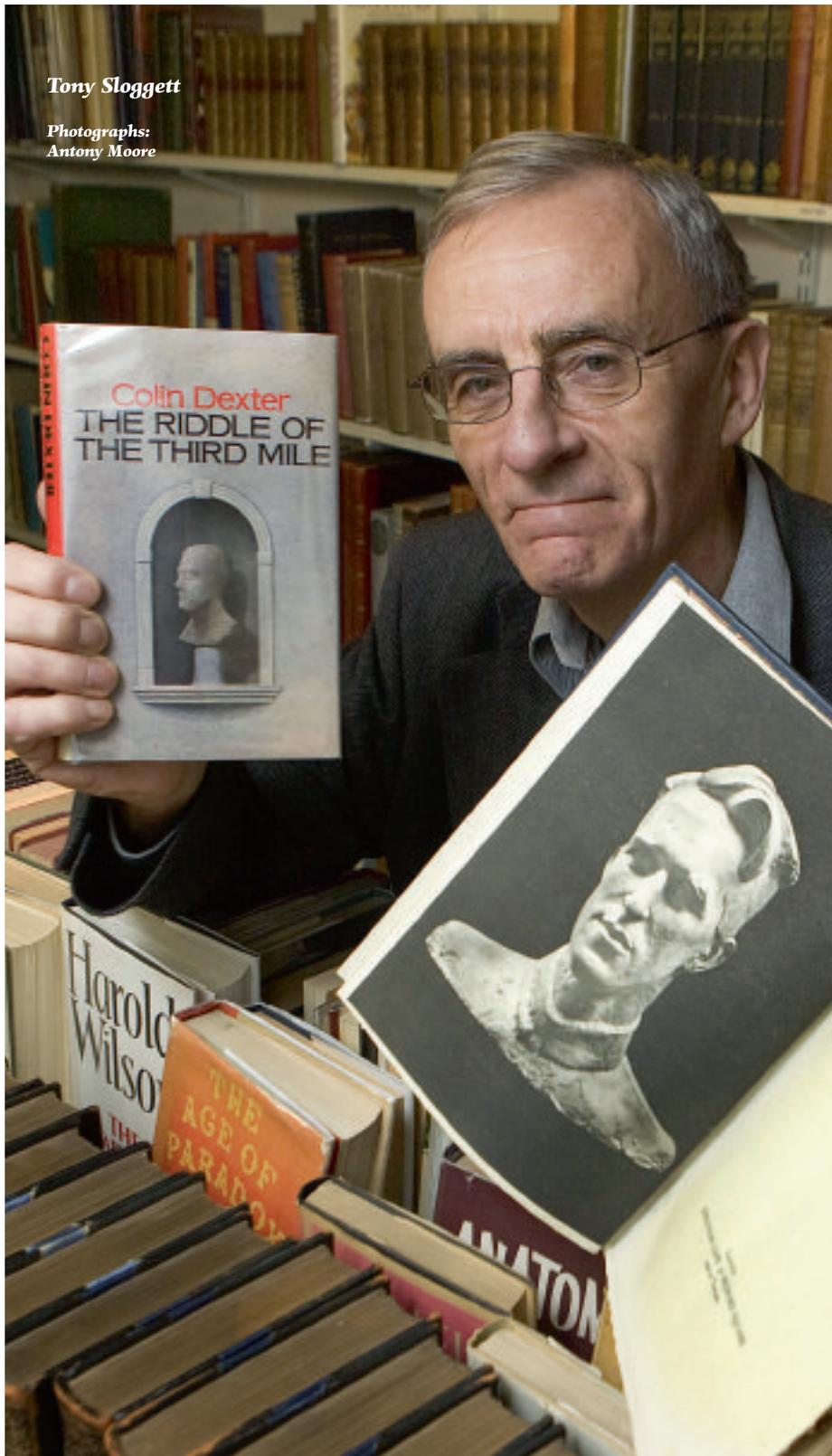


In January 2008, I asked my first castaway Christopher Brown, director of The Ashmolean Museum, 'which work of art, antique or book would you take to our desert island?' writes Sylvia Vetta. Since then, I have been privileged to interview some truly inspirational Oxfordshire people for this magazine's castaway series. This month is the first anniversary of the publication of *Oxford Castaways*, the book which collected together the first 50 interviews in the long-running series. Over the years the 'antique' choice gradually evolved to become any treasured personal object – but for this anniversary edition, we have reinstated the antique and decided to visit some old friends at Antiques on High in Oxford . . .



Tony Sloggett

Photographs:
Antony Moore

Tony Sloggett

Tony Sloggett is the director of Antiques on High and trades from the bookshop at the back of the centre. When the previous director, Sally Young, was taken ill, he and Joan Lee stepped up to keep it going – but he says his motivation was his love of books and the pleasure he finds in having a bookshop in Oxford.

Tony, who lives in Stevenon, has been involved in books all his working life, but not always as a dealer.

He said: "I started my career as a librarian at The Ashmolean and then at The National Art Library at the V&A. I had the privilege to handle valuable books and learn what makes them valuable. Then in 1972, I became involved in academic publishing."

Later, Tony was a partner in a small publishing company which was bought out by Pergamon Press, then owned by Robert Maxwell.

Tony said: "I was working for Robert Maxwell when he died in 1992. Pergamon had been sold to Reed Elsevier, but the remaining Maxwell companies went into administration. Many employees were made redundant and some had nothing to fall back on. I escaped redundancy, but I vowed never to let myself be in that position again."

Tony rented a space in the Oxford Antiques Centre (in what was originally Cooper's Oxford Marmalade factory in Park End Street) and started selling collectable books.

He said: "I have always avoided specialising in just one subject. I mostly stock literature, natural history, travel, art and antiques, children's books, and anything about Oxford. I particularly like illustrated books."

"For my desert island choice, I would pick this book." Tony unlocked a cabinet and took out a copy of the first trade edition of TE Lawrence's *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*.

"This edition was published by Jonathan Cape in 1935, is bound in rich brown buckram and has fine-quality paper.

"You can still find copies fairly easily and they usually sell for £60 or £70, but more if they have a dust-wrapper. So it is not rare, but it is a lovely book to hold."

Tony's will be the second copy on our desert island. Bestselling author and castaway number 32, Michael Smith also chose *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*.

Tony still works as a consultant for American publishers Rowman and Littlefield and he added: "I have always been a great reader. But when it comes to working with books as a librarian, a publisher and a dealer, I can say that these roles involve quite different skills."



Caroline Henney

A High old time

Caroline Henney

Caroline Henney also traded in the old marmalade factory – but this was not where she began dealing in speciality vintage costume jewellery.

“I was born in the London suburbs, but consider Oxford my home,” Caroline said. “I moved here as a child when my parents took the bold decision to become grocers and invested their time and money in a corner shop near Headington.

“From an early age, while helping out in the shop selling potatoes and tea to local housewives, I developed a customer service ethic which still holds good for me today!

“Our house was in close proximity to the headquarters of the world’s biggest marketing research company, A C Nielsen. When I joined them, as a secretary in the public relations office, I could walk to work in five minutes. While there, I made close friends with a fellow ‘collector’, Sally Forster, and this was the catalyst to my antique-dealing career,” Caroline added.

“A shared love of all things old and curious

and a ‘maggie habit’ led to a need for us to move some of them on! So Sally and I took a stall at London’s Alexandra Palace Antiques Fair, and the start of a career as an antiques dealer had begun. The timing coincided with the arrival of children, daughters Lauren and Jessica (both now in their twenties), and the work of buying and selling fits around a growing family.”

Caroline said: “Oxford’s antiques scene, in those days (1984-1998) included venues such as the monthly fairs at the Clarendon Press Centre, followed by Oxford Antiques Omnibus and the superb Jam Factory Antiques Centre.”

I hope readers will forgive my bit of nostalgia this month because Gill Hedge and I founded and ran all of them!

Caroline, who still lives in Headington, added: “Antiques on High is now home for my business and I also have cabinets in other much-loved local centres such as the award-winning Swan at Tetsworth and Yarnton. Once a month I trade at the London Vintage Fashion Fair at Hammersmith Town Hall and I have a website www.bagthejewels.co.uk.”

Caroline’s knowledge and expertise have made her a source for both props and jewellery for films and TV. I wondered what kinds of pieces in particular?

She said: “The ‘hat flash’ is the jewellery partner of the cloche hat. Light, quirky and adding extra style. These celluloid and diamante jewelled pins were mostly made in France in the 1920s and 1930s and are becoming increasingly difficult to source. I have sold pieces like these to the costume director of the *Poirot* and *Miss Marple* drama series and I am still thrilled to see ‘my finds’ on television.”

So what would Caroline like to take with her to our desert island?

“I would take the Hoover building on Western Avenue in Perivale, west London. Anyone who has travelled on the A40 into London will have passed by this amazing piece of Art Deco architecture. Designed in the 1930s by Wallis, Gilbert and Partners it is everything that good Art Deco should be – timeless, functional, stylish and a statement!”

“I am lucky enough to have copies of the original architects’ plans and lots of black and white photographs and I obtained them for free! A cheeky note to the PR team at Gallaher, who occupied the Hoover building in the 1980s, resulted in this booty. So I had better take them instead.”

More castaways on page 11

Dr Richard Shock, the chairman of The Oxfordshire Craft Guild, is one of only 200 registered professional wood turners (supported by the Worshipful Company of Turners) in the UK and was selected as the winner of the Oxfordshire Artweeks' Mary Moser Award in 2010.

He sells his creations from the craft gallery in Antiques on High. That may surprise readers when you realise that the subject of his Oxford DPhil was chemical engineering.

Richard, who lives in Woodstock, said: "During one of my long vacations as an undergraduate, I worked for eight weeks at the then Atomic Energy Research Establishment at Harwell, which led to my doctorate.

"After that, in 1974, I took up a research fellowship, and soon afterwards became a permanent staff member at Harwell. In 1984, I was chosen to be a member of the Chief Scientist's Group, part of the Energy Technology Support Unit (ETSU), advising ministers on energy technologies for the UK.

"In 1989, I spent a year in Brussels working at the EU commission, and then on my return to ETSU in 1990 the post of International Manager for Energy Efficiency took me all over the world. I got to know the departure lounges of Heathrow very well!

"After my father died, in 1999, I inherited his lathe. He was an accountant, but as a hobby he made pinewood furniture. When I transported the lathe to Oxford, I intended doing the same thing," Richard said.

"I embarked on a few lessons using a lathe and learned how to make bowls. I enjoyed the experience and carried on for fun, but it was only when people started wanting to buy them



Richard Shock

that I realised I was good at it. When someone buys something from me as a maker, the pleasure is at least as much in the recognition as the money. A customer looks at the object I have made and they like it enough to buy it.

"For 35 years at Harwell I had enjoyed my work but, in 2005, I realised that I was getting more pleasure out of turning as a hobby than I was out of my day job. So I asked if I could take voluntary redundancy. They replied saying 'no'.

"I talked it over with my wife, the artist Katherine Shock, and suggested I take a hit on my pension and leave three years early. And that is what I did and have never regretted it.

"It is not so much a retirement hobby as a new career. As well as selling my work in galleries and online, I began selling in Antiques on High when they created the craft gallery and I love the atmosphere here. I am

usually in my workshop (a shed at the bottom of the garden) by nine o'clock and put in a full day's work."

So what would Richard take to the island?

"I want a bowl by wood-turner Bert Marsh from Brighton, who died last year. Not only was he a very nice man, but you can recognise a Bert Marsh piece from a distance. They are incredibly thin and characterised by a graceful elegant form," Richard said.

"When I am interviewing makers who want to be Guild members, I point out that once you have acquired the technical skills, your work needs to acquire personal characteristics.

"Someone said of my pieces 'Doesn't your work look like ceramics?' I realised that I have been next to Jane Hanson's shelves in Antiques on High since 2007, so I must have absorbed something."

Jane Hanson

South African-born craft potter Jane Hanson. arrived in the UK in 1971, aged 27, having studied industrial design at The School of Art in Johannesburg.

Jane said: "Once in London, I applied for, and went to the Royal College of Art to do industrial design. I thought of industrial design as an external form of art and wanted something that could bring together the spiritual and functional. When they asked for a second choice, I suggested ceramics. That is what they asked me to do and that is how I became a potter."

Jane described how she imagined her future. "I had a vision for myself of having children without being married and supporting them with my pottery."

I began my career in a studio in Stepney Green, east London, which I shared with a group of sculptors. One of them, Peter Fink, became my partner."

Anyone who has driven into London on the A40 will have seen one of Peter's public art projects – Northala Fields on the edge of Southall – four dramatic overlapping mounds which were created with the involvement of members of the local community.

Jane said: "When my mother left me £4,000, I was able to buy land in Waterstock, near Thame, on which there were four cowsheds. We lived in caravans while we converted them. The result is that, in my opinion, I have quite



the best studio in Oxfordshire.

"I teach there and at The Oxford and Cherwell Valley College, as well as make my pots. I love playing with glazes and letting them flow into each other. The hardest colour to achieve is Chinese red or *sang de boeuf*. For me, bowls are like canvasses."

When did Bill Heine come into her life?

"Bill and I met 25 years ago just before the creation of the shark. Our son Magnus was also born in the same year."

So what is Jane's desert island choice?

"Bill and I love Egypt and every time we visit we make a trip to Luxor. I will take a pot to the island – but I would also like the Bedouin rug

which now lives on our sofa. Its colours and geometric patterns are so beautiful I do not want to walk on it, but somehow do not mind sitting on it."

Jane is clearly a practical person. As she pointed out, it can act as a tent, a coat or a blanket as well as a rug.

And she could continue to make pots using the materials on the island.

"I teach my students to make kilns out of all kinds of simple materials," she said.

"The pots I produce here are fired at an intense heat, and that may not be so easy to reproduce."

More castaways on page 13

Rev Jonathan Edwards



THE *Oxford Castaways* anniversary event takes place on Friday, March 15, at Antiques on High, 85 The High, (opposite Queen's Lane) 5.30-7.30pm. This is your chance to meet this month's castaways and former castaways — including Bill Heine, Korky Paul, Sir Roger and Lady Moyra Bannister, Colin Dexter, Debbie Dance, director of The Oxford Preservation Trust, Professor Jim Bennett, director of the Museum of the History of Science and geologist Professor John Dewey, psychologist Dr Diana Sanders, poet and dramatist, Jenny Lewis, musician Robin Bennett and Ray Foulk, founder of the Isle of Wight Festival. Artist and illustrator Weimin He (castaway 40) will be present and sketching the scene. Drinks and refreshments. 20 free tickets for readers on a first-come, first-served basis. Call Antiques on High on 01865 251075 to secure your free invitation.

I moved to Regent's Park College, just across St Giles, to read theology and to train for the Baptist ministry. I have never been anything other than a clergyman. After spending some time working in India with disadvantaged communities, I ministered in Suffolk, and then moved to Orpington in Kent until, in 1998, when I was appointed General Superintendent of the South-West, looking after 100 churches and 90 ministers."

In 2006, Jonathan was unanimously elected as General Secretary, which means he is the highest representative of the Baptist Union in the UK. That post bought him back to Oxfordshire.

"The Baptist Union offices moved out of London to Didcot 24 years ago. But I do a lot of

work in London at Westminster and in working together with the other denominations and other religious faiths. The Baptist Union has over 2,000 churches and 1,700 ministers, so it is a busy and demanding role. Postcards have helped to keep me sane and have been a faithful friend."

Jonathan filled me in on the history of the postcard.

"Postcards first appeared in the late Victorian era, but due to post office regulations any message had to be written on the picture side of the card," he said.

Only the name and address were allowed on the other side. In 1902, the Post Office permitted postcard producers to divide the back of the postcard between the message and the address — and the postcard craze took off!

Jonathan said: "The heyday of postcards was 1906 but their use declined sharply when the postage rate (which had only been a halfpenny) was doubled in 1918 so that it was the same as the letter rate — a princely one penny."

Jonathan showed me some First World War postcards of stately homes turned into hospitals as recently portrayed in the television series *Downton Abbey*.

He added: "I enjoy street scenes which show how life has changed. As a clergyman, life is all about people. Postcards shine another light on people and how they live."

"The advantage of postcards is that they can be easily organised. And not all postcards are made of card. Some, made from cork and leather, could even be washed up on the island."

So what is Jonathan's desert island choice?

"It has to be the albums that started my fascination with postcards, the ones my grandmother gave me. They include cards sent by my grandfather to my grandmother during the First World War."

Andrew Joyce

Andrew Joyce was brought up in Harrow and his school was next to the famous Whitefriars Glass factory.

"I could look over the fence and see the glass blowers at work. When I was studying A-Level art, the class visited the factory. I did not realise the significance at the time but I watched the famous glass designer Geoffrey Baxter at work."

Today, among the things Andrew sells at Antiques on High is Whitefriars glass.

He said: "After school I studied painting and pottery at Trent Park College which is now part of Middlesex University. Back then it specialised in training teachers of music, art and drama. A high proportion of the students were mature and had worked as musicians, actors and artists."

Andrew, who lives near Aylesbury and is married with two daughters and a son, added: "A favourite haunt for me in my student days was the Portobello Road. It was an exciting and unusual place. Shortly after I began teaching I needed to supplement my income and took a stall at the Saturday market there."

"I supposed that as an artist I had an eye for



the decorative arts was particularly drawn to Art Nouveau and Art Deco. At that time they were not highly regarded in the antiques trade.

"After ten years trading in Portobello at the weekends, I began teaching in Aylesbury where I met Paul Lipson. He wanted a shop in the Jam Factory and asked me to share it with him and a local amateur opera singer, Michael Cowdy."

So what would Andrew take to the island?

"My interests have broadened and I love 18th and 19th-century tiles. Can I take a set by William de Morgan (an English potter and friend of William Morris)?"

The Rev Jonathan Edwards trades in postcards at Antiques on High. He said: "When my grandmother gave me her postcard collection I was ten years old and they opened a new world for me."

Through them I learned geography and social history. So when, in 1974, I came, as an undergraduate student, to St John's College here in Oxford, I was delighted to discover a recently-opened shop called Jeremy's on the Cowley Road. Jeremy specialised in postcards and stamps. We became friends and he fed my postcard habit."

Jonathan, who lives in Newbury and has two daughters and one son (Hannah, 22, Tom, 20 and Bethany, 14) — remained a collector until 1985 — then felt that in order to continue being able to buy, he needed to sell as well.

"I started to put some postcards into auction and for the last five years have put them into antiques centres and joined Antiques on High in 2011."

So what career did Jonathan pursue after studying law alongside former Prime Minister Tony Blair at St John's?

"I decided that law was not for me and so after completing the first part of the law degree