

CitySolicitor

THE MAGAZINE OF THE CITY OF LONDON SOLICITORS' COMPANY AND THE CITY OF LONDON LAW SOCIETY



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SOREN KIERKEGAARD

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LEGALLY SPEAKING

Episode 2 of City Solicitor's brand new podcast

We are very excited that the next episode of our podcast will be available to listen to mid June.

Find it where you normally listen to your podcasts – or on Spotify <https://open.spotify.com/show/3It19rGAN1b5Ah6H9iHmgX> scan the QR code or use this link <https://anchor.fm/maroulla-paul>



editor's letter



WE ARE ALL GETTING READY TO CELEBRATE THE QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE. THERE WILL BE BAKE OFFS AND JUBILATION ON THE STREETS. WE EMBRACE THE CELEBRATION IN THIS RETRO THEMED EDITION, WHICH GLORIOUSLY COINCIDES WITH QUEEN ELIZABETH'S PLATINUM JUBILEE (LONG MAY SHE REIGN).

We look back at the Coronation itself, and examine the impact on those who have the privilege of meeting, or performing for, the Queen.

If you indulge me for a moment, I will share a story about the one, and only, time that I had the pleasure of meeting the Queen. Over 20 years ago when I was a trainee solicitor, my friend Gemma, who worked at a charity which was focused on encouraging dialogue between different religions, had a conundrum.

The charity had arranged a prestigious event at St James's Palace, kindly hosted by the Queen and Prince Philip. One of her colleagues had been tasked with presenting a gift to the Queen, but they were unwell. Could I please step in? Of course, was my reply. No problem. I then had to seek audience with the Managing Partner with this unusual request: "could I please have a long lunch so I can present a gift to the Queen". "Of course," came the reply, and off I duly trundled to the Palace on cloud nine.

In this edition we also look at the pressures of working in the profession and consider whether those pressures have changed over time, who can help and consider whether new technology (and an "always on and available" culture) has intensified the levels of stress and pressure. As HR partner of my firm, I am constantly considering new wellness initiatives for our team. Whether that is more holidays, events, benefits, or policies. The most recent policy of not sending emails outside of usual office hours and at weekends has gone down well. Although in our profession there are exceptions to every rule, we need to do all we can to ensure that we do not burn out, as a career in law is – usually – a marathon and not a sprint.

Also, in this edition, we drool over some vintage cars and another restaurant review. We also look at our

own publication and consider how far it has come in its lifetime.

We are grateful to all of our contributors and to our talented editorial team, and our journalist, Maroulla. I am always inspired by stories of the positive actions which the legal profession takes, and we should be incredibly proud of the vast contribution which lawyers, and the City, makes to society.

"I am always inspired by stories of the positive actions which the legal profession takes."

I hope that you have now had the chance to listen to our first podcast – Legally Speaking. If not, please search for legally speaking where you get your podcasts or use the QR code below. Our new podcast will hit the airwaves in mid-June. Initial listening figures show that the podcast is being listened to all around the world from the City, to the USA, Canada and the UAE. Please pass on the word and let's spread the good news to the corners of the world.

I hope that you enjoy reading, listening and reminiscing.

Philip Henson

Editor

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Mental health used to be a taboo subject. Today it's a top topic for discussion.

Is this because modern day living – and working – have all added to the factors that affect our stress? Or is it simply that we are finally facing up to and actually talking about something that has always been there?

If you google which industries and professions are most at risk of depression, anxiety, addiction and other mental health issues, the legal profession is right up there. We constantly hear about burn out from a very early age; people working punishingly long hours, feeling obliged to check their emails 24/7, on call via their mobiles even when not in the office and feeling threatened by the prospect of being replaced by Artificial Intelligence. Technology is blamed for a lot of this pressure; but the reality is that the levels of mental health illness were as bad in pre tech days as they are today – although the causes may have been different.

In the 60s and 70s, business was conducted in a very different way from today – not just in the legal profession but in media, finance and all the other high pay, high stress industries. Business was based on building relationships; getting to know clients, gaining trust – and that would inevitably happen over long lunches with a lot of alcohol involved. This continual and habitual use of alcohol led to as many problems with mental health as face the more abstemious millennials whose addictions today are more around their devices than Pinot Noir.

When we think back, the use of alcohol did lead to harmed mental health in many professions – and, bizarrely, many suffering turned to it as a crutch to make them feel better, only to exacerbate their situation. However technology is different. Whilst there is no question that it can damage our mental health when we allow it to dominate our time, it can also be harnessed to help us lead far more healthy lives.

LawCare is the mental wellbeing charity for the legal profession. It was set up in 1997 and its primary function is to provide emotional support for people in the profession, be they legally qualified or in another role – paralegals, HR, trainees, finance, business services. They also support the judiciary and members of the Bar.

We spoke with Elizabeth Rimmer, a lawyer herself, who is now the CEO of LawCare to find out whether she believes mental health issues are getting worse in our profession and how we can improve the situation. Elizabeth says the charity “does not just exist to pull people out of the river when they are drowning, but to stop them getting into difficulties in the first place.” To that end, increasingly more work is being done around education and prevention and in September 2021 a large study entitled “Life In The Law” was published. This study, which was carried out in conjunction with academics from the universities of Newcastle, Sheffield and Portsmouth, is the largest ever on mental health in the profession. 1,700 people responded to the survey; it was a robust piece of work, evidence based. Not surprisingly, it

showed that working practices in the profession undermine mental wellbeing. Nearly 70% of people who responded to the survey had experienced poor mental health themselves in the previous 12 months. The significant risk of burnout was very high. There is a recognised scale for burnout and the cut-off is around 34. In this study it was around 42. The study looked at who is most impacted by this and found that junior lawyers, lawyers with disabilities, and Asian and Black lawyers have the highest burnout scores.

But is it worse today than it was a few decades ago? Is technology the villain here?

Elizabeth points out that when LawCare was set up it was “way before people were regularly using mobile phones, emails and the internet. Artificial Intelligence had not even been thought of in Law – yet there was still a major problem. Today mental health is so high on everyone’s agenda, particularly after the pandemic which has catapulted everyone’s interest and awareness. There is a tendency to think that the hyper-connected world we live in is the root cause for some of our mental health problems. Whilst this may be compounding the problems because it is

“Technology is blamed for a lot of this pressure; but the reality is that the levels of mental health illness were as bad in pre tech days as they are today.”





“There is stigma around speaking up about problems for fear of being perceived as weak, not good enough.”

harder to switch off, the issues predate the rise in the use of technology.”

LawCare grew out of an initiative from the Law Society of England and Wales; although it is completely independent. In the early 90s, there was a working group concerned about how much solicitors were using alcohol as an unhealthy coping mechanism for the pressures of life in the Law. So LawCare began to help just solicitors in England and Wales who thought they might have an alcohol problem. The first Chief Executive was actually a retired solicitor who was in recovery himself.

Elizabeth emphasises this when talking about problems in the profession today;

“Don’t think this is just about our modern, fast paced world. This is also inherently around lawyer mindset and thinking styles which focus on success, perfection, fear of failure. There is a lack of ability to delegate, a tendency to ruminate. Needing to appear in control. Not admitting to struggling. There is stigma around speaking up about problems for fear of being perceived as weak, not good enough. Add to this an environment that is competitive, multi-tasking, reactive and needing to meet the expectations of clients to respond at all times. Another factor is that this is a highly regulated profession where standards are closely monitored. All of these layers create the perfect storm for the challenges we see facing those in the profession.”



In a strange way, the pandemic could have played a helping hand in beginning to alleviate pressures. The demand for more flexibility in working that was already happening in other sectors was being considered more slowly in the legal profession where a sense of needing to be seen in the office still prevailed. But the pandemic meant a digital transformation had to happen virtually overnight.

“Lawyers – like everyone else – suddenly had to work from home. There was no choice. And whilst that presented challenges in itself, it also highlighted huge opportunities and benefits. So now the horse has bolted. The pandemic proved to the legal profession people can successfully and fruitfully work from home. According to the ONS, in the first year of the pandemic the sector posted its highest revenue ever. Lawyers are typically not good at maintaining boundaries and when they are in a position where they have to regulate their own boundaries, they may fill their day with more and more work. As we come out of the pandemic, we need to ensure that the benefit of hybrid working between office and home is not tainted by working more just because they can.”

Elizabeth believes technology can, and should, be used as a tool to support our lives, to help us manage things better; the challenge is that we must control it and not let it control us by becoming addicted to it as that is where the risks to our wellbeing come from.

Artificial Intelligence is another huge technological advance that can either add to or reduce our stress.

“What we must never lose sight of is that despite living in a highly technological age and with all our information highways, this is still a people business and in any law firm the greatest assets are the people and their minds – and the clients. All human beings. With the rise of technology, we can use it as a tool to work smarter. We no longer have to trawl through a 500 page contract but we can rather use our lawyerly skills and judgements to the pulled out areas which need our intelligence, not artificial intelligence.”



There is an opportunity here to recognise that it is human skills that are key to being a good lawyer; empathy, trust, judgement and building relationships. No client wants to come into a law firm and meet a computer. They want to look you in the eye and trust you to resolve their issue and have their back. Engaging a lawyer is normally a distress purchase; they don't really want to be there; they are there because they have a challenge – we must never overlook the human skills that are required as part of the day job. With AI potentially relieving a lot of the grunt work from trainees, maybe there could be more time spent towards developing their emotional literacy and competency which every client needs and can never be provided by a machine. As lawyers we are trained to leave our emotions at the door so as not to cloud judgement, but emotion comes into everything – technology if used wisely may enable us to focus more on the human element of being a lawyer”.

Once we focus on what humans can do rather than what machines can do and on how we can use machines to free up our time to do those things we do best, then we begin to cease to view technology as a threat that is harmful to our wellbeing. Trainees can spend more time actually getting involved in legal matters – which may start to relieve the pressures on them and allow them to stay in the profession longer.

Elizabeth believes that current working practices in the profession are not sustainable;

“People have used the pandemic to reflect on what they really want from life. Younger people are more clued up. They want a life outside of work. They want work that aligns with that. All the professions need to realise this and adapt. Technology can be used to this end. The legal profession is traditionally slow to change but the pandemic has thrown up a great opportunity and the firms which are smart will rethink. They will use technology to make working life easier and more productive. And wellbeing will really benefit. Culture is also important; people want to feel a sense of belonging, that they matter, that they are part of something, a family. Again this supports wellbeing which in turn leads to more productive workers. Culture comes from people, not from technology. The number one reason people contact LawCare for support is stress. Technology and culture can help really change this.”

Fortunately for our profession and our wellbeing, there are some very smart lawyers and firms rethinking.

Clifford Chance LLP managed to hit all the mainstream press recently when in the election battle for Managing Partner of the London office, one of the candidates, tech lawyer, Jonathan Kewley, campaigned for the appointment of a ‘Chief Happiness Officer’ whose responsibility it would be to ensure that all Clifford Chance employees were in “the most vibrant, happy and uplifting place to work in the world.”

Kewley proposed that employees go on micro retreats every six weeks, not to the usual corporate

type conference hotel but rather to “cool places we might not have thought of.”

He believes holidays are in fact holy days that should be sacred. He planned on treating people with new books from their favourite authors as soon as they were published, sponsoring passions and introducing a four day working week.

Whilst he did not win the election, Clifford Chance are nonetheless taking wellbeing very seriously and on their website say:

“At Clifford Chance we believe everyone is entitled to the same equality of opportunity and experience. Each of us can face a range of personal, work and societal pressures that can impact our mental health and wellbeing.

We realise that working in a law firm can be a pressurised and demanding environment. Our wellbeing agenda aims to ensure our people are able to recognise and appreciate the importance of maintaining good mental health and in building their resilience and ability to operate healthily and successfully.”

Promoting a healthy lifestyle is another focus. We support our people in making healthier choices and encourage them to view exercise as social activity.

“No client wants to come into a law firm and meet a computer.”

Their Global Inclusion Director, Tiernan Brady, is working on many campaigns to reduce mental health stigma. One such initiative being partnering with Peppy, a digital healthcare and wellbeing platform that allows organisations to support their people through major life transitions such as menopause, fertility and parenthood.

It is not just the Magic Circle and major City firms that are making innovative changes. One of the most exciting and bold moves is coming from a firm in Belfast. JMK Solicitors are a personal injury firm whose Managing Director is Maurece Hutchinson. Although the practice might be considered small in England, in Belfast it is one of the big players with a staff of around 80 of which 30 are lawyers.

Maurece says that at JMK they have always tried to do things a little differently; to learn from what they found difficult and stressful when they were young lawyers and to try and make things better for those who now work for them.

As in many industries and professions, the lawyers who tend to become the managers are the ones who have proven themselves as the best lawyers, the best fee earners. Which doesn't necessarily make



them the best managers and also detracts from them doing what they are best at. At JMK there are seven lawyer managers. Three directors plus four other lawyers none of whom handle clients at all anymore; their role is solely to manage.

Maurece believes that the status quo in the legal profession was that the senior partners should be the ones bringing in the highest fees which could lead to a competitive environment and credit not being given where it is rightfully due – hence their resolve to change all that.

“Initially, it was a huge shock to the system to effectively stop practising law. After all, that’s why I went into the profession; a desire to help people and to that client contact. It takes a while to get the dopamine back in a different way – from watching your team succeed and to get happiness from that. What it does mean for our lawyers is that they have someone who is dedicated to managing them and is not distracted with other stuff. In most firms, simply trying to get some time with a senior partner is so difficult as they have so many other things they have to do, they are under serious pressure with work and through nobody’s fault, young lawyers may not get the support they need or deserve. Which leads to stress and anxiety.”

In another attempt to reduce the pressure on their staff, two years ago – before the pandemic began – JMK trialled a four day week whereby they did 100% of the work in 80% of the time for 100% of the money. How is this even possible?

“In February 2017, the whole office went to work in Lanzarote for a month. (Those who had children and could not be away for a month came only at half term week and brought their families with them.)

Firstly, this was to prove that we could do this from a technology perspective. We had been a paperless law firm since 2011 so everything was accessible remotely.

Secondly, it’s not a lot of fun working in Northern Ireland where it constantly rains and you rarely see the sun. It’s pretty grim. So we came up with a ‘Working In The Sun’ project. The idea being if the team could come up with ideas of how to do things better, how to cut costs and thereby pay for half the cost of the trip – then it would go ahead. They did. And we did.

Nobody knew we were away – unless we chose to tell them. We allowed everyone to work whatever hours they chose. A lot would start work at 6.30am in the conference room of the hotel which had great facilities. The staff chose where we were staying so



“The younger generation are not prepared to put up with what we did.”

the trial this went up to 99%. All this during a global pandemic when most people were more stressed than ever and clients in all sectors were complaining about not being able to reach the people they needed to deal with. No mean feat.

Maurece says that technology has allowed the firm to value its people more; they use it to automate and remove the boring parts of the job so that people can do the value part.

JMK brought in a student to conduct some external research to get some unbiased information on quality of life since the changes were put into effect and the data showed that quality of life had increased by a third. Going into the project, everyone was happy to be working at JMK; 63% were very happy and this went up to 91%.

Maurece’s next project is to deal with email which she sees as a “time bandit”. They are trialling all sorts of things; diverting some, turning off notifications, having only certain days where emails are dealt with. The emails are graded as to priority. The ultimate dream is to completely ban them.

JMK was the first company – not just law firm – in Northern Ireland to make such radical changes. They are mentoring other companies in Ireland trialling four day weeks. Maurece is under no false illusion that whilst the positives are glaringly obvious, there are negatives that have to be managed too. Nonetheless she remains firm in the belief that wellbeing is fundamental going forward.

“The younger generation are not prepared to put up with what we did. As the Irish say; we were ‘sold a pup’ and told we could have it all – a career, a family, a life. But it’s not sustainable. Work patterns need to change. Technology makes that possible.”

It seems pressure on lawyers has been there forever. It stems from the nature of the beast and the work. It is exacerbated by other factors. Technology has been the latest perpetrator but one that can be used for good; one that can actually relieve instead of increasing stress, anxiety, overwhelming workload and hours. It requires a shift in mindset, culture and speed from our profession. But we will get there and we will be happier, healthier, more productive and more successful as a result.

LawCare is the mental wellbeing charity for the legal profession offering free, confidential, emotional support, peer support, and resources to those working in the law. For more information call 0800 279 6888, email support@lawcare.org.uk or go to www.lawcare.org.uk.



obviously they chose a stunning 5 star venue. After a few hours they would go out into the sun – between around 10am and noon – and then they would work some more and be finished early.

When we came back we analysed what we had learned and it transpired that it was our most productive time ever in the history of the firm – the lesson being to trust your employees to do the work and let them choose when to do it.

We were determined to get that flexibility into our everyday working so we then spent two years researching how we could go towards a four day week. Obviously service levels could not drop and clients had to be on board. Closing one day a week was simply not feasible – so we developed the ultimate “Core Values” project whereby you choose your day off, or whether you work every day for shorter hours but the basic premise was you choose and you make it work. Everyone logged on their ideas and eventually we proved we could do it before we actually did.

Sadly, we began in January 2020 and by March we were in lockdown. But we still went ahead. It worked.”

Going into the trial JMK had a 95% positive client recommendation – pretty amazing in itself – but after



JACK OF ALL TRADES; MASTER OF ALL

(A retrospective on the life and achievements of Rupert Grey – so far)

Chambers & Partners once described Rupert Grey as ‘an experienced libel lawyer who primarily works with high-profile individuals on reputational matters’. For over four decades Rupert established his reputation as a leader in his field, acting for politicians, national newspapers and publishing houses, amongst many others.

Most of our readers will painfully recognise that such work is extraordinarily time consuming, leaving little room for anything else. To reach the pinnacle of one’s career is more than most achieve – but one peak is not enough for Rupert Grey; he had (and continues to have) many mountains not to climb – sometimes literally as well as metaphorically.

After leaving school (Wellington College) in 1965, he moved to Canada to work as a lumberjack. He returned to the UK to study Law at University College, London at the same time as joining HQ 44 Brigade (TAVR1) of the Parachute Regiment and was placed first in the Army Battle School in Wales.

Before his articles Rupert took a gap year – an uncommon choice at that time – and it actually lasted for three years. He prospected for copper in the South Pacific and oil in the Great Sandy Desert in Australia, dredged oysters in the Tasman Sea and dug fence-post holes in the Canterbury Plains of New Zealand. Obviously, perfect preparation for a life in the law.



In 1972, he finally joined a law firm in Lincoln's Inn Fields as a trainee – and actually enjoyed it. Once qualified, he practised in a top City firm for two years – but was bored.

When an unexpected offer came along to join Operation Drake, a 2 year expedition around the world in a square-rigged barquentine, as a photographer for six months, he grabbed it, undaunted by the fact he was not really qualified for what he was undertaking. He led the South Pacific phase, drawing on his previous experience as a prospector there.

He supervised the construction of schools on a remote island in the Fiji group, negotiated the charter of the expedition barquentine, acted in a Hollywood film and travelled down the Strickland River in Papua New Guinea in a dug-out canoe counting saltwater crocodiles with an Alaskan smoke jumper, 3 Lance Corporals and a radio presenter. As you do.

In 1977, Rupert married Jan Sinclair, a probation officer from Yorkshire, and honeymooned through Europe in a 1936 Austin Seven convertible (vintage cars are yet another passion of Rupert's).

In 1981, the couple travelled in the Far East combining another two loves; walking and photography. Their photo-journalism of the Himalayas was widely published. How many solicitors can claim to have been published in Vogue?

Once his first daughter was born (Rupert and Jan have three daughters), Rupert decided it might be time to settle down. Well, a bit.



Photo by Ray Mears.

“It is said that journalists write the first draft of history and libel lawyers write the second.”

Photo-journalism was not paying him enough to properly support a family so it seemed a return to the Law was the answer – albeit a boring one possibly.

Rupert put his CV together – clearly a highly unconventional one and took it to an agent.

Rupert recalls that meeting;

“I remember going to his offices which were in an attic in Old Broad Street. He took one look at my CV, which he described as the most disgraceful document he had ever seen, and pronounced me unemployable.”

Rupert managed to persuade the agent to make one phone call for him. The agent agreed to JUST one – but he warned Rupert that if he did not get the job, he was not to bother to come back.

Unsurprisingly to us – but possibly highly surprising for the agent – Rupert got the job. And the thing that surprised him was that he did not find it boring.

“It was after I had been there for around three years when I realised for the first time why I had become a lawyer. I was the most junior member of the team acting for the publisher of a book by Nikolai Tolstoy accusing Brigadier Lowe – later Lord Aldington – of war crimes during the Allies' campaign in Italy in 1944. The claim settled, and Aldington went on to win at trial against Tolstoy. My role was to research how it was that 5,000 white Russians had been put on a train back to Yugoslavia and murdered on Tito's orders when they got there. I gathered evidence as to what happened, who was where and when, who gave what orders. I saw at first hand just how important the role of a libel lawyer is. It is said that journalists write the first draft of history and libel lawyers write the second. And the lawyers have to be accurate. Once I realised this, I was hooked.”

At the same time Rupert continued taking photographs of the remotest parts of the world that work and time would allow him to reach. He managed to combine his love for photography into his legal work and his pictures – particularly those of the celebrated Iditarod dog-sledging race in Alaska (1,200 miles) – sold well. His agent, John Cleare of Mountain Camera was on the board of the British Association of Picture Libraries. He called Rupert;

“The association needs a lawyer who knows about photography and copyright, can I recommend you?”

Rupert qualified on the first count and he pretty quickly boned up on the second. There followed a

THEN AND NOW – THE LIFE OF A LAWYER



series of cases for photographic libraries and he became the go-to lawyer in the field. Rupert tells us it was not so much copyright that was the issue in those days but the loss of transparencies. In the pre-digital era, original trannies as they were colloquially known, were valuable – anything up to £400.

“Newspapers and magazines routinely lost pictures, and the picture-editors groaned when they received yet another letter – no emails in those days – from me. I was good at understanding the value of a rare image, and it was in this way that I made my reputation in the photographic community.”

He currently sits on the board of three photographic organisations, including Autograph and the prestigious Magnum Foundation, having worked on some significant cases for the Magnum agency over the years and got to know such wonderful photographers as Elliot Erwitt and Don McCullin. He has around 15 photographs relating to the cases he worked on but he says he has so much of his own work all over his home, he has nowhere to put them. Doubtless a

problem many of us would be delighted to help him with.

That home is a cottage in a field in the heart of the Sussex Downs with a large oak-framed library specifically built to house Rupert’s huge collection of books. It is where Rupert and Jan’s children grew up – blissfully enjoying their own sleeping barn and beech woodland.

Talking with Rupert about photography, it is abundantly clear how that has changed so drastically in the past half century. The very thing he built his reputation on – transparencies – no longer exist. Digital has changed everything out of all recognition.

Does Rupert think the Law as a profession has also changed?

“The pattern of working has changed beyond what we could have imagined when serving articles, as training contracts were known then, at Farrers. Working from home was not a concept which existed. We had to be in the office by 9.30am – and in



“As a partner I made a point of asking clients to lunch – or they me – and in this way we built relationships and trust.”

my case that was an aspiration which I rarely achieved but I did feel bad about arriving routinely late! I learned little about the Law, but a lot about working with colleagues and clients. Not being in an office has diluted the collegiality that I valued. I had lunch a couple of weeks ago in the Bunghole with a couple of QCs. The cellars there used to be the gathering ground for libel lawyers; in the past I settled cases there, discussed mergers, met with friends – now the cellar is closed. We were the only people upstairs, bar one other lawyer. This used to be a legal hub; you’d find out who was acting for who, how a case was going, who was having lunch with who – you really got a sense of how things were going in the profession. That now takes place on Zoom or Teams, and doesn’t, for me, have the same magic.

The relationship between solicitors and trainees has also changed. I must have taught dozens of lawyers over the years, and although in many ways the online information bank has massively improved the process of learning, the emphasis on understanding the client and the wider context of the advice given and action required is sometimes overlooked. Relationships with

clients are greatly altered also. As a partner I made a point of asking clients to lunch – or they me – and in this way we built relationships and trust. That is harder to do via a screen.”

Eminent lawyer. Successful photographer. Published photo-journalist. Explorer of wild places. Mountain climber. Vintage car collector. Avid reader. Printer (he has his own dark room). Raconteur. Bon viveur. And, lately, with his wife Jan, the subject of a film. ‘Romantic Road’ whose executive producer is none other than Sharon Stone. How did all this come about?

“Both Jan and I are drawn to India and so ten years ago we decided it would be a sound plan to drive there in the somewhat battered 1936 family Rolls I inherited some years before from my father. Not long before we were due to set off we found ourselves sitting next to a woman from the Foreign Office in a tea shop in Devon. The Rolls was parked outside. She asked about it and whilst talking, we told her of the trip. She told us in no uncertain terms that we must be mad and that we would be kidnapped before



“The excuse for all this was Chobi Mela, a major human rights festival in Bangladesh with which I had been involved for about 20 years.”

we got there. So we changed plans and shipped the Rolls to Bombay. From there we motored for six months across the subcontinent to India’s north-east frontier with China and back via the south.

The excuse for all this was Chobi Mela, a major human rights festival in Bangladesh with which I had been involved for about 20 years. We had been invited as guests of honour by Dr Shahidul Alam, photographer, human rights activist and founder of the festival. It was a rare moment, in which the wealth and privilege associated with Rolls Royces became one with human rights and the fight against political repression and autocratic governments. That moment is powerfully captured in the film.

The film came about by chance. About three weeks before we left, my godson, Oliver McGarvey, who had found out about the trip, called me to say, as he put it, ‘we were simply not allowed to do the trip without filming it’. I had already been approached by several independent film companies about this and refused: Jan and I did not want to be filmed. But we are very fond of my godson so we agreed to let him come for two weeks. There were two conditions; no

retakes and no voice to camera. At the end of the two weeks he was indispensable, and he stayed for the whole time. He is a brilliant cameraman.”

Needless to say the movie has been very successful worldwide – would you expect anything less?

Travel and exploration have been so high in Rupert’s priorities that throughout his legal career he always carved out time for he and his wife to take their daughters to far flung corners of the globe including the heart of Borneo, the high Pamirs, the Arctic tundra and the great mangrove swamps by the Bay of Bengal.

Today, he still represents many of the leading photographic agencies and institutions working out of Swan Turton LLP. He still travels and takes photographs, and a good many of his images are available on Bridgeman Art Library website. And having starred in a movie, maybe he could be a contender for the next James Bond?

What a man. If anyone ever says that lawyers are boring – just send them in the direction of Rupert Grey.






“GOD RESPECTS ME WHEN I WORK BUT HE LOVES ME WHEN I SING”

The words of Rabindranath Tagore, (1861–1941), a Bengali poet & philosopher which echo a universal sentiment and go some way towards explaining why all places of worship have always been bursting with song.

It is not just gods, but monarchs too who love a good singer – especially when associated with worship. Historically, the Chapel Royal was the body of musicians and singers who accompanied the monarchy wherever they went, most famously into battle on the Field of the Cloth of Gold. When Henry VIII went to France in 1520 he had a long line of priests, musicians and choristers with him. The spiritual needs of the monarch had to be satisfied wherever they were and that is what the Chapel Royal did. Over time, the monarchy stopped moving around the country as much as they had done in Medieval or Reformation times and the Chapels became settled in certain palaces.

Chapels Royal fall outside the usual parochial system and are subject to the direct jurisdiction of the Monarch. Today there

are Chapels Royal at Hampton Court Palace, the Tower of London, St James’s Palace, Windsor Castle and the Royal Lodge Windsor, Holyrood Palace and, perhaps much less well known the Chapel of the Savoy. Each of these is a part of the ecclesiastical establishment of the Royal Household.

As many members will know, the City of London Solicitors’ Company has its own connection to the Chapel Royal of St Peter ad Vincula at HM Tower of London. The Chapel is the venue for the Company’s Annual Guild Service in May each year and its Chaplain, The Revd. Canon Roger Hall, is also the Company’s Chaplain. The City of London Solicitors’ Company Charitable Fund also supports the HM Tower of London Choral Foundation.

THEN AND NOW – SINGING FOR THE QUEEN

Michele Price is a Charity and Philanthropy solicitor, with Gunnercooke LLP. When the Hampton Court Palace Chapel Royal were setting up a charity to support the education of their choristers, Michele – whose son was a chorister there – offered her help and so began a change of career from a fraud litigator to concentrate on the transformative power of charities. She ran the charity for five years, with an office in the highest point of the Palace above the organ loft and now is a Trustee.

“I remember firing paper darts with an elastic band down on the assembled foreign dignitaries below.”

Michele’s first year of running the charity coincided with The Queen’s Diamond Jubilee and as a historian at heart, she researched what the various Chapels Royal had done for the Coronation itself. She found the choristers, drawn from Royal Chapels, cathedrals and Oxbridge Colleges had to attend rehearsals over a number of months and were given a book – not dissimilar to the old Green Shield Stamp books – and their attendance was stamped and thus recorded. If they did not comply, they would not be involved in the big day. Sadly, one boy got measles and missed his “ticket”.

Michele set out on a quest to find some of the original Hampton Court choristers and was very excited to track down four of them who had sung at the Coronation.



“We held a special service on the occasion of The Queen’s Diamond Jubilee and had a party after. Hearing the stories that these gentlemen in their 70’s had of singing at the Coronation was incredible. Our current choristers were transfixed, especially hearing how they were up in a specially built loft for hours singing and had to be there for hours beforehand – so going to the toilet was impossible!”

One of these original choristers, John Pickles, recalls the day;

“I was 12 years old and remember how exciting the day was and not feeling nervous at all. It was a rainy day and we saw [Sir Winston] Churchill and saw The Queen come in, though we didn’t see the Coronation itself as we were too high up. I remember firing paper darts with an elastic band down on the assembled foreign dignitaries below.”

The music John and his fellow choristers sang that day 70 years ago is still what the choristers love to sing today.

Michele tells us “the moment you say we are going to sing Handel’s Zadok the Priest they literally run to their choir stools. That piece has been sung at every Coronation since that of George II, it is the thread of history that binds every chorister who has ever sung it for the monarch”

For the Platinum Jubilee, The Hampton Court Palace Chapel Royal have a full itinerary of events. As well as a Festal Eucharist, there will be a concert of royal music entitled Vivat! The Queen makes her chapel available to all who wish to worship or visit.



Choristers from the Coronation.



A chorister from the Coronation meets the Head Boy at the Diamond Jubilee.



Regular choral services take place every Sunday, the chapel is the living heart of the iconic Palace, it is serving the monarch and the people exactly as it has done so for the past 500 years.

Although some of it is quite formal, with prayers for the Queen and the National Anthem being sung, it is open and welcoming to all, and the congregation and visitors alike value the beauty of the chapel, Christopher Wren design and its unique choral heritage. It is said to be 'the cradle of Evensong'. Michele recounts how tourists often see the choir in their royal scarlet processing through the cloister to the chapel and think they are re-enacting history, and how she delights in explaining that it is all for real, happening every Sunday for all to enjoy.

Similarly, choristers from every background, from all denominations and none, are welcomed to continue this living tradition.

"What the Hampton Court Chapel Royal offers is something that is not elitist but something that truly reflects the society of the day. Originally the Chapel was Cardinal Wolsey's, built on the site of a St John's Hospitaller chapel, before Henry VIII decided that he would like it for himself. In those days the choristers were more or less "press ganged" into taking part. They were often the sons of musicians or palace workers; they would just be taken into service and their families told they would be singing for the King. One of the most famous Royal composers ever,



Henry Purcell, was one such chorister – his father was a musician in the palace and Henry earned his keep by singing in the choir and helping his father repair instruments. In fact the Schrider/Hill organ is affectionately known as Purcell's Pipes."

As these preparations unfold, certain traditions will remain as always. Much of the music that was sung at the Coronation will be featured in the Platinum Jubilee; obviously Zadok the Priest and also Parry's I Was Glad amongst others. The choir has always and will always sing Royal music, music by composers



“Some of the boys have never sung a note before; others have enormous musical talent which needs to be nurtured.”

strongly associated with Hampton Court such as Thomas Tallis and William Byrd – music that has been sung for over 500 years. But the Chapel Royal continues to be at the musical forefront. As Judith Weir, the current Master of the Queen’s Music who has composed for the choir, says;

“...this particularly historical foundation is on the leading edge of accessibility in recruiting choristers.”

Michele emphasises that they are not a choir school.

“We take boys from all sorts of schools. We particularly direct to state schools, and schools in less affluent areas, they rehearse in our song school twice a week under the Director of Music, Carl Jackson MVO, Court Assistant of the Musician’s Company. One minute a boy from, say, Brixton or Hounslow may be kicking a football around – then the next he is putting on his ruff and singing Handel. Although, football is never far away with the choristers enjoying an annual football match against their peers at St James’s Palace, now in its 50th highly competitive year.”

Her Majesty has supported and encouraged this change;

“I am delighted with the progress that the Choral Foundation has made in securing the future of the unique English choral heritage in my Chapel Royal at Hampton Court Palace”.

Some of the boys have never sung a note before; others have enormous musical talent which needs to be nurtured. The charity believes in creating a level playing field, funding their musical education and bringing them all together for the great honour of singing for The Queen. The Choral Foundation ensures that boys who wish to sing at this level have every

chance to do so, it is truly accessible. Training as a chorister to this level is incredibly hard. But Michele believes that what it sets you up for in life is incredible.

“Even if you never sing another note again, the discipline, the self-confidence, the ability to work as part of a team, holding your nerve to stand up on your own and sing, and producing live music for the thousands who visit the palace – all of these instil a work ethic and an ability to communicate that can be truly life changing”.

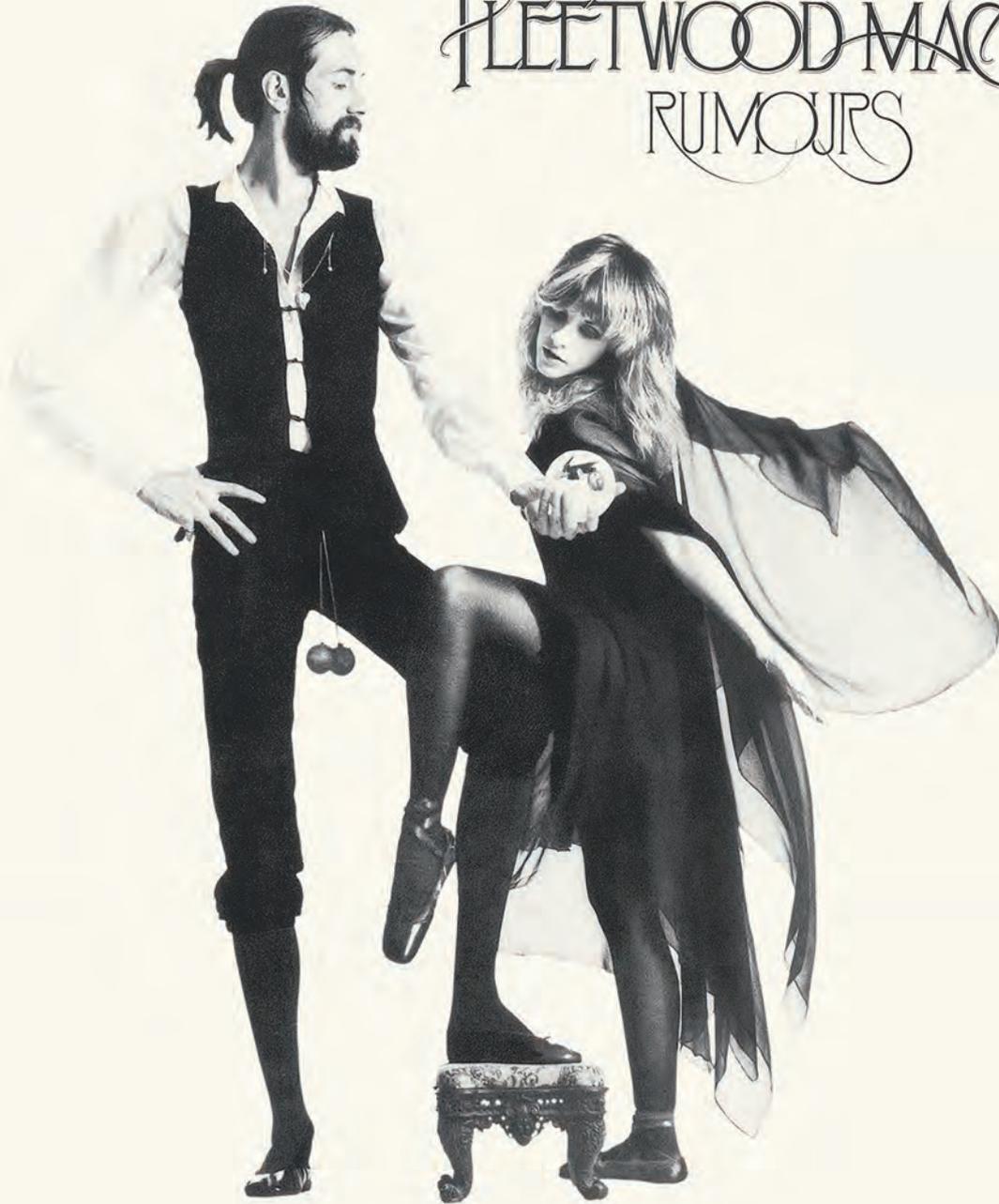
Life changing indeed. One of the original Hampton Court choristers at the Coronation, Nigel Palk, was reminiscing at the Diamond Jubilee. He had come from a very poor background and after his father was killed, he had to leave the choir to go and work to support his family. He was only around 13 years old at the time. When speaking with Michele he said something which she has never forgotten, and which has fuelled her passion to make this happen for any boy with potential ever since. He said that standing up and singing for your Queen enables you to do anything in life. Nigel had that moment and whatever else happened in his life, he held onto that. A moment where The Queen – and the gods – loved and respected him. Wouldn’t we all love to experience a moment sometime in our lives?

Photography by
Johnny Millar
www.johnnymillar.com
with the gracious
permission of
Her Majesty The Queen.

For more information about how you can support The Choral Foundation RCN 1142075 call 07399 114 937 and for details of services, the chorister open day and Platinum Jubilee events at The Hampton Court Chapel Royal visit www.chapelroyal.org call 44(0)20 3166 6515 or email chapleroyal@hrp.org.uk



FLEETWOOD MAC RUMOURS



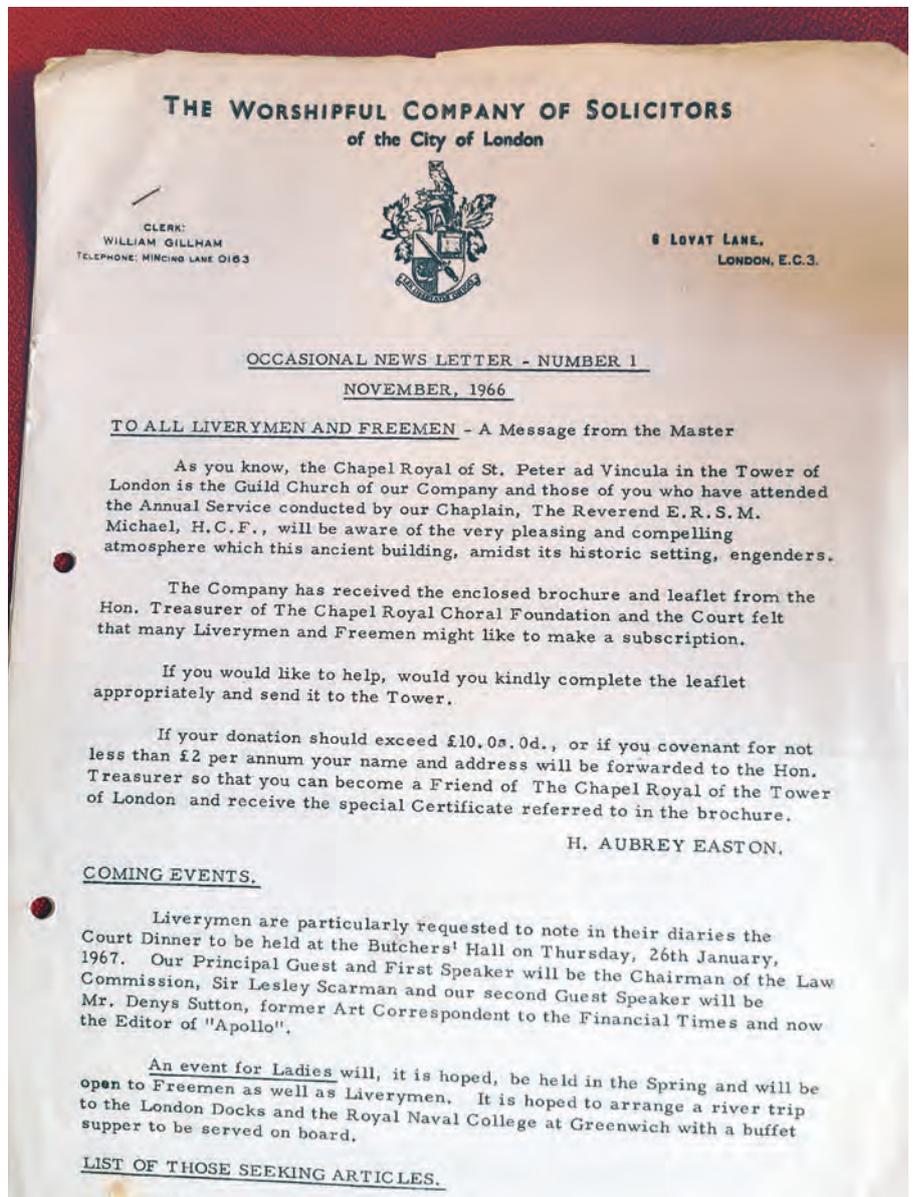
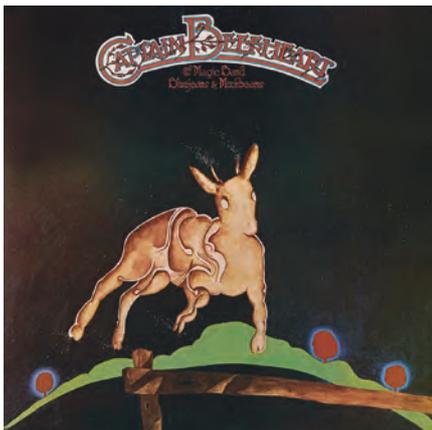
**WHAT DO FLEETWOOD MAC,
CARL JUNG AND
HELMUT NEWTON HAVE
IN COMMON
WITH CITY SOLICITOR?**

THEN AND NOW – CITY SOLICITOR

In 1966, when the first ever copy of City Solicitor was published it was a humble single sheet typewritten black and white newsletter with no illustration, photography or design. 56 years later it is a full colour, 36 page, all singing and all dancing blockbuster (well, we think so) full of interviews with the top lawyers and politicians of the day and which even has its own podcast. Somewhere along the line (eight years ago to be precise) it was designed by one of the most celebrated graphic designers/artists in the world; Larry Vigon. Whether or not you have heard of Larry, I am prepared to bet that you have some of his work in your home. And I don't just mean because you may nerdily collect your copies of this magazine.

Larry's most famous piece of work was designing the Rumours cover artwork for Fleetwood Mac – a record which has become one of the most commercially successful of all time with over 50 million copies sold worldwide. You probably have a copy yourselves – who doesn't? The lettering on the cover was hand drawn by Larry, something which in this day of computerised typography, we sadly never see anymore. But back in the day, it was an artform – and something Larry is renowned for.

Larry says it was always his dream to combine his love of music, of design and of art into a job. Designing album covers fulfilled that dream. Larry studied at ArtCenter College of Design in Los Angeles, one of the world's leading colleges in its field who famously hired some lecturers who were themselves working in the industry and could, therefore, not just impart real and relevant knowledge but also, crucially, provide contacts. Larry tells us one of his professors was Roland Young who was also the Creative Director of A&M Records. He loved Larry's work and told Larry to use his name when trying to get interviews.



“Larry says it was always his dream to combine his love of music, of design and of art into a job.”

Proof that it's not just what you know but who you know that counts, this opened doors for Larry who combined this intro with a specifically designed poster which was his preferred way of applying for a job instead of a letter or CV. Young's intro and Larry's innovative approach worked and he was spotted by AGI who were one of the largest album cover printers of the time. They were based in Chicago with a design house in LA. The creative director, Desmond Strobel, saw Larry's poster and

called him to ask if he had ever done hand lettering. He hadn't. But of course he said he had. So he was commissioned to design the cover for Captain Beefheart's album.

This masterpiece paved the way to a long series of covers including for Eric Clapton, Chicago. Bonnie Raitt, Carole King, J.J. Cale, Sparks, Pat Benatar, Frank Sinatra – the list is literally endless and resulted in Larry being inducted into the Album Cover Hall of Fame.

THEN AND NOW – CITY SOLICITOR

There was however one that eluded him. Over his career Larry has worked with some of the world's greatest photographers, one being Helmut Newton. At one point, Jeff Ayeroff, the Creative Director of Warner Brothers Music, knowing Larry was friends with Helmut contacted him to discuss a new project. Helmut and Larry attended a meeting with Jeff who told them he had just signed a new artist and her name was Madonna. He wanted them to create and shoot her new album cover.

"Helmut and I came up with a great concept. We would create a Pieta in the middle of a downtown LA street. The cost and logistics for this photo shoot were too high for an unknown artist. That's my 'almost doing Madonna's first album with Helmut Newton story.

Larry's is far from solely based on album covers. He has designed hundreds if not thousands of famous logos and has worked in numerous sectors and industries including the corporate world where he wanted to bring "a more rock 'n roll sensibility to what, up until then, was what I call Corporate Blue, a blue folder with just information. It was the right time to make



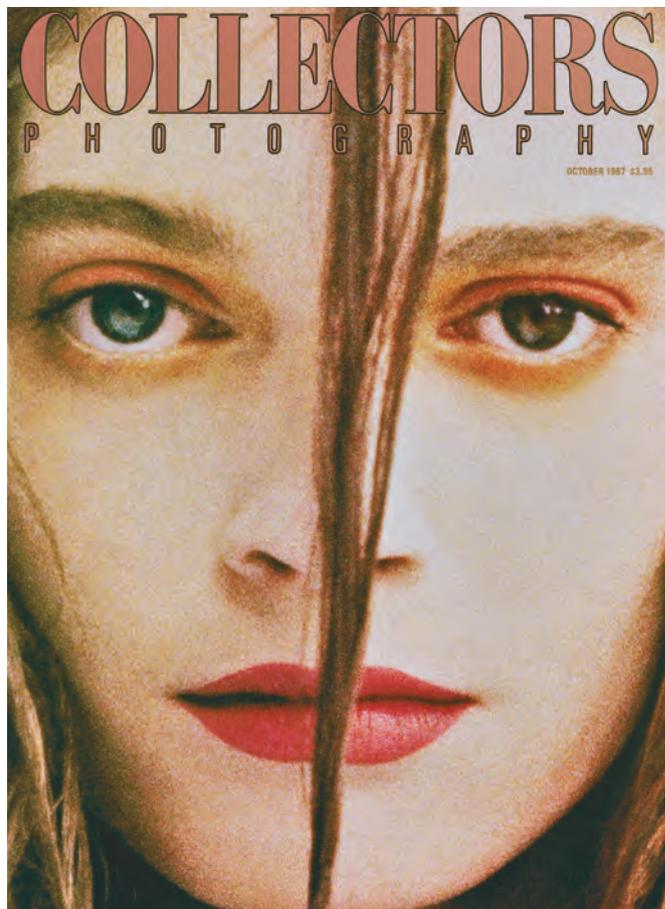
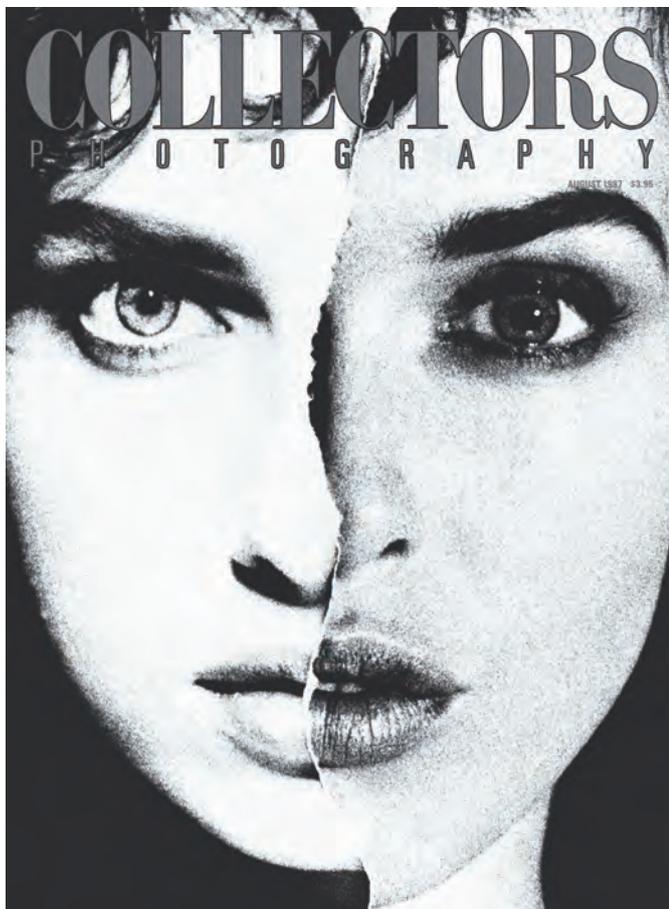
corporate graphics more conceptual, entertaining and fun. My approach was to use original photography, art work, cultural references and innovative photography."

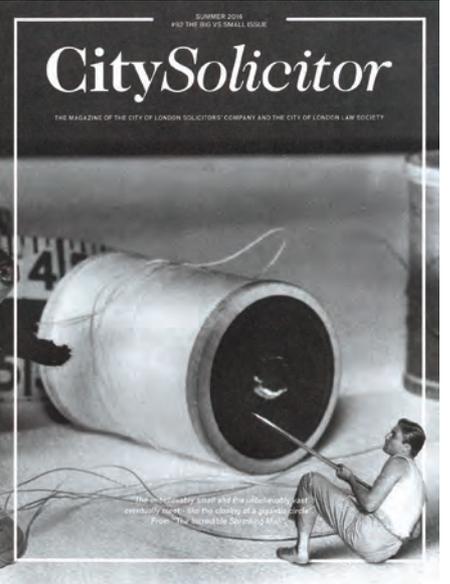
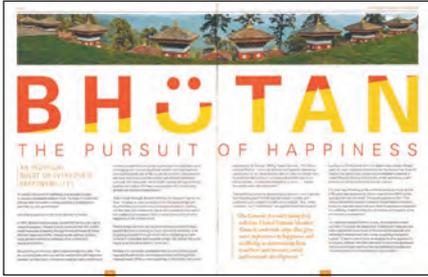
Larry loves magazines and so it was inevitable that he would design some.

"Larry loves magazines and so it was inevitable that he would design some."

On attending a talk given by Helmut Newton Larry met a photographer called Jeff Dunas who had just begun a magazine called Collectors Photography. Jeff says;

"When I was formulating the idea for Collectors Photography in early 1986, I knew I was capable of editing and publishing the magazine but also realised that for it to fulfil my vision for the kind of high quality, groundbreaking publication I envisioned, I needed a designer who could bring the highest level of graphic design and ability to conceptualise to the project. At that critical juncture, I was introduced to Larry Vigon. Larry's portfolio was already amazing; sophisticated, original and superior to anyone's work I'd yet seen. Larry had that rare ability to





"I was so excited that one of my all time favourite design heroes was there at my launch, and a neighbour to boot."

consistently elevate whatever project he worked on – and Collectors Photography benefited greatly from the imaginative designs and type treatments he created to open each of our extraordinary portfolios. Together we did 11 issues, winning the Gold Award and numerous Silver Awards from the New York Art Directors Club And Ten Maggy Awards from the Western Publishing Association amongst others. Vigon's sheer brilliance and high standards of excellence made Collectors Photography perhaps the best designed magazine of its time."

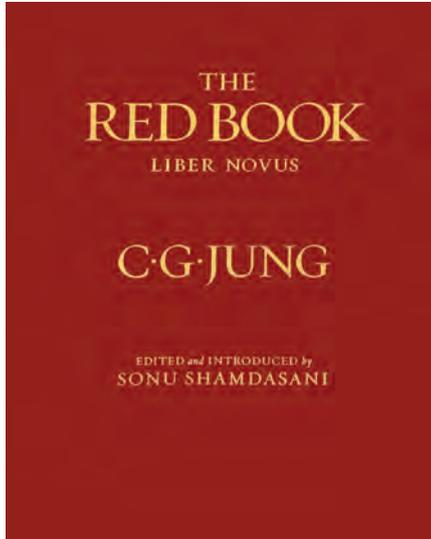
And, of course, we are very honoured that Larry designed two issues of City Solicitor. I was very fortunate to meet Larry in Italy when he and his wife Sandra attended a book launch of mine held at an art gallery in Barga, in Northern Italy.

Larry and Sandra were living in a nearby town, Bagni di Lucca, and I had a house in a village called Fattone. I was so excited that one of my all time favourite design heroes was there at my launch, and a neighbour to boot.

We quickly bonded over our passion for design, art, music, Italy, film, food, wine and became firm friends. This friendship continued and grew when the couple moved to London and as I was still working in advertising and branding myself at the time, Larry and I began working together on many commercial projects including writing, designing and creating websites for dyslexia charities and care homes, rebranding law firms and major financial institutions and in the Spring and Summer of 2016, Larry and I collaborated on this magazine.

What resulted were two utterly beautifully designed editions which showcase Larry's incredible talents.

As well as magazines, Larry has also designed many books. His first happened when his very dear friend, the late Ricky Jay, stumbled across some of Larry's journals where he drew his dreams. Jay immediately saw the quality and appeal of these and insisted Larry show them to his own editor who literally snapped up the opportunity and the beautiful coffee table book 'Dream' was born. Just before Larry flew out to Italy to oversee the print his wife Sandra, a highly respected and renowned psychotherapist, not to mention the muse for 'Black Magic Woman' and several other famous rock songs, very fortuitously had lunch with the head of the Jung Institute in Los Angeles and she



asked if Sandra and Larry were by any chance visiting London whilst in Europe and, if so, if they would meet with Sonu Shamdasani who had spent 13 years translating Carl Jung's 'Red Book' from German to English. At that meeting, Larry took the flat sheets of 'Dream' to show Sonu and it was a perfect synchronicity of time, content, talent and people. Larry's book proved that he would be the ideal art director for the 'Red Book' not just because of the obvious design qualities he would bring to the project but because of his own extraordinary vision regarding the power of dreams and our subconscious. Sonu had reached the end of his tether with publishers who really did not appreciate the treasure they were being offered and were discussing 10' by 8' books in black and white and other such unworthy treatments. Larry called his editor and the rest is history.

Sonu says;

On shelves in bookshops, homes and libraries, books stand next to books. What is less realised is that books can also engender books, and be their hidden progenitors. Without Larry's 'Dream', Jung's 'The Red Book: Liber Novus' would not have been published in the form we have it today. Its readers are in his debt."

To say Larry is an artist is an understatement; each piece of his commercial work is a piece of art in its own right. But Larry is also a fine artist with collectors from all over the world buying his work.

To coincide with the launch of his latest book; 'Serious Play', a very weighty (literally) and utterly gorgeous two volume

retrospective of Larry's work both in graphics and in fine art, a show was held in Santa Barbara (where Larry and Sandra now live) which had people queuing round the block to get in and which caused quite a stir as images of the work were projected onto the massive building which housed it; Silo 118 which was actually a grain silo.

City Solicitor is proud to count itself in the same group as Fleetwood Mac, Carl Jung and Helmut Newton and so many others who have had the privilege to have had some of Larry's magic sprinkled upon us.

To order a copy of 'Serious Play' visit www.seriousplay-book.com

For more information on Larry's art visit www.silo118.com



A MARTINI WITH AN OLIVE, A TWIST – *Or a Vintage Ferrari?*



In the olden days – like yesterday – we used to go to restaurants to eat, cocktail bars to drink, art galleries to view masterpieces, delicatessens to find delicious goodies and car showrooms to buy cars. But now, courtesy of the legend who is Paul Michaels, we can do all of these wonderful things in their most excellent form, in one glorious place. And if you may think that sipping a martini in a car dealership is not that glamorous, rethink. The Engine Rooms restaurant and cocktail bar, alongside Bottles 'N' Jars coffee, wine and all things yum shop and Hexagon's classic and vintage car showroom come together to form one of the most beautiful and unique destinations in London – possibly even the country.

If you haven't heard of Paul Michaels, you probably have zero interest in cars as anyone who is in any form a petrol head knows that he is the

Chair of Hexagon, which sources, restores and sells some of the most beautiful classic cars in the world. Even if, like me, you are not crazy about cars, these beauties are irresistibly jaw dropping; to call them cars is akin to calling Chateau Margaux 'plonk' – these are works of art.

Paul's first word was 'car'. His father was in the motor trade. His destiny was written. He had his first garage at the age of 17 and since then has a list of car related achievements longer than my arm – not least of which was running a Formula 1 team at the age of 28 with John Watson as the driver. My limited car knowledge will not do justice to Paul's incredible career so our motoring correspondent, Joel Leigh, will cover the four wheeled side later in this article leaving me to stick to what I know best; food, drink and art.

THE ENGINE ROOMS. PUTTING THE VROOM INTO FINE DINING.

“Unusually for any London restaurant, you can drive and park onsite.”



This really is a very different type of restaurant and cocktail bar. Situated in an absolutely ginormous site just outside of Highgate, this place has the WOW factor in droves. Unusually for any London restaurant, you can drive and park onsite.

Not that you would particularly want to as then you would miss out on the extraordinary cocktails and wines. As you enter this Alice in Wonderland venue, you will undoubtedly be greeted by Zak Jones, who is as celebrated in the hospitality sector as Paul is in the motoring one. His CV is extraordinary; he was a restaurant owner for 17 years – the Clerkenwell Dining Rooms in St John Street and the Chancery in Cursitor Street and worked with Soho House, Quo Vadis, L’Escargot, Anton Mossiman, Mirabelle and the Criterion amongst many others. As well as an experienced foodie, Zak is also a car lover as was evidenced by his shirt which was covered in cars on the day we met. Zak has the knack of making every guest feel like they are a friend; he greets everyone personally and ushers you to your chosen place with



cheer and enthusiasm. And your chosen place could be one of many. Firstly, there is a cocktail bar; a beautiful space with cosy tables and large plate glass windows overlooking the beautiful cars. You can sit on a stool sipping a negroni and gazing onto an array of Aston Martins, Porsches and Jaguars. If the showroom is open you can even have a wonder through the “gallery” of cars whilst enjoying your aperitif. Walk past the kitchen into a stunning black and white restaurant on two levels. Or choose to sit outside on the suntrap terrace – very reminiscent of Soho House, although a lot more chic I would say. And there are three different sized private rooms which can cater up to 300.

The styling of all the spaces is exquisite. No expense has been spared. The attention to detail is

extraordinary. The result is something that looks like it should be in the pages of Vogue or Tatler. Everywhere you go there is art. Some of it car related; you will see an engine, a sculpture by Jaguar’s Director of Design entitled ‘Colours Through Speed’, a vintage Shell petrol pump, massive black and white photographs of engines reproduced onto the glass windows that front part of the space. These all sit alongside a Miro painting (bought the day after Paul sold his first dealership) and a series of quite extraordinary pieces by an Israeli artist. The entire place is beautiful, perfect and an homage to Paul’s late wife who was a great art lover and chose most of the pieces exhibited herself.

Joel and I had lunch in the main restaurant. We started with a selection of in house made breads



including a garlic and rosemary focaccia that were served with some exquisite extra virgin olive oil and some Gordal Olives from Andalucía which were so good, I could have quite happily eaten nothing else.

Or so I thought until our starters arrived. We shared the burrata that was served with the most colourful array of tomatoes and a basil and pesto dressing and the heritage beetroot carpaccio, pickled apple, curly endive, beet ketchup, toasted walnuts – both were fresh and delicious and perfect for the sunny day we were enjoying.

For our mains we both opted for the robata grilled sea bream served with lemon and herb butter, some broccoli with romesco smoked almonds and skinny fries with truffle. Just glorious.

We shared two desserts; the vegan chocolate mousse which was made from Guanaja dark chocolate, caramel infused banana, salted peanut butter & olive oil. I resented every mouthful Joel had!



Our second dessert was the gin & tonic cheesecake which was served with an apple & cucumber salsa, some bourbon vanilla and minted makrut lime sorbet and was probably one of the best cheesecakes ever to pass my lips.

We chose an Austrian Gruner Veltliner to accompany our food and it paired beautifully; it was aromatic, peppery and fruity all at once.



We were served by Rosie, who was super friendly but without invading our privacy. She was clearly knowledgeable and took great trouble to explain everything to us. She is indicative of the staff generally. Everyone smiles and says hello. Everyone is enthusiastic about what they are doing. And it creates a convivial, warm and familial atmosphere which is quite an achievement in such a big space.

Zak joined us for coffee and shared some exciting plans for the Engine Rooms with us. The place has not been open very long and, of course, the pandemic delayed a lot of stuff. Zak was brought in in March to bring it all together for a full launch before the summer. Weekend brunches with live jazz bands, oyster bars, pop ups are all in the pipeline along with expanding the team both front and back of house. Zak's long involvement with the Soho House Group has led him to want to bring a sort of clubby feel to the Engine Rooms; to make its guests feel like they are a part of and belong to something special. It already looks and feels amazing but Zak sees this as just the beginning so it seems Engine Rooms will soon be THE destination in town.

ONE STOP SHOPPING; PORSCHEs, OLIVE OILS AND NATURAL WINES.

Also situated on the Hexagon site is a beautiful fully glass fronted shop that looks like a work of art itself. It's called Bottles 'N' Jars which, in case you are not au fait with the Cockney chatter, is rhyming slang for cars. Obviously.

As if the car showroom and the Engine Rooms were not enough to draw you to Highgate, this luxury food and wine shop is a destination in itself. It is full of deliciousness; chocolate, pasta, bread, cheeses, olive oils and, of course, wine. Everything is personally sourced and made by fine artisan producers – it is a real treasure trove.

Like everything in this conglomerate of all things food, wine, art and cars, Bottles 'N' Jars is run by people right at the top of their chosen field, Bert Blaize and Jac Smith. What Bert and Jac don't know about wine is not worth knowing. Bert is the co-author of the best selling wine book 'Which Wine When' and was sommelier at both The Clove Club and Raymond Blanc's Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons. He met Jac at the Clove Club and she has worked as a somm in countless places as well as having travelled the world working harvests and learning to make wine in places like Hunter Valley and Yarra Valley in Australia, Martinborough in New Zealand, Burgundy in France.

And don't be fooled into thinking this is just a shop either. You can pop in for a coffee and a pastry. Sit outside and have a glass of wine and some olives. Join the staff on a Friday afternoon between 4 and 6pm for Pit Stop Friday where artisan wine or gin producers let you sample their wares or Bert and

Jac simply open a bottle of their current favourites for us all to try.

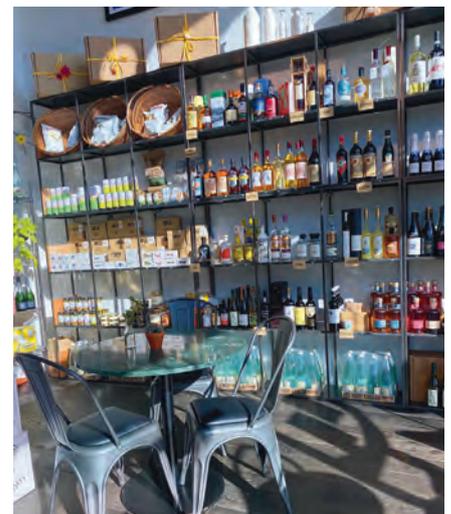
There are even regular wine tastings; currently monthly but soon to become more frequent where Bert and Jac share their expertise and knowledge of a particular style or region. These tastings are held in a beautiful and intimate mezzanine room above the shop. I recently attended the orange wine one which was fabulous. All of the guests were greeted with a glass of fizz and had the choice of sitting either at small tables for between 2 and 4 or a bigger communal table which made it ideal for people, like myself, who had gone on their own. I sat next to Matthew Clarke who has worked at Hexagon for 16 years now and who has seen it through its various reincarnations and transformations. Matthew has always loved wine so for there now being a wine shop at his place of work is a dream come true and has inspired him to take the WSET qualifications. Matthew's enthusiasm for his work, his colleagues



and his wine journey literally brim out of him and he made my evening even more enjoyable.

Bert guided us through four very different orange wines; Field Recordings Skins, a 2020 vintage from California, Mick O' Connell's Buccia Not Battles from Sardinia, a 2020 Portuguese Fitapreta A Laranja Mecanica Alentejo and a 2016 Tombacco Origine Terre from Sicily. From saline to sherry reminiscent flavours on the palate, from pale to deep orange colours, from light to full bodied – these wines were a revelation. To compliment our wines, we were given breads, cheeses, salamis, crispbreads, olives and crisps – all delicious and all from the shop. We were able to purchase bottles of our favourite wines (or all of them as I did of course) at reduced prices.

The shop should come with a health warning as it is impossible to go in there without buying huge amounts of stuff – not just wines but grappas, dessert wines, vermouths as well as all the glorious foods, Bert's book and even some divine Georg Jensen glassware, ceramic hearts and other beautiful housey things – so your credit card could be sorely damaged. All I can say is it is utterly worth it – and Harrods Food Hall, eat your heart out.





CELEBRATING THE MANY SIDES OF HEXAGON

By Joel Leigh



Hexagon racing its 1987 Porsche 962.

There are few corners of the motoring world which the founder of Hexagon Classics has yet to traverse, but the company's status as one of the world's leading and most respected dealers of classic and sports cars endures.

Founded in a Hampstead mews in 1963 by Paul Michaels, Hexagon Classics is now so well established within the high-end classic car market, that the thought of visiting its current premises in Highgate with City Solicitor's resident food critic Maroulla to sample its culinary rather than automotive delights, felt incongruous to say the least.

I needn't have been concerned. Paul's long history of succeeding at whatever enterprise he turns his hand to was clearly in evidence at his latest new venture – an excellent Mediterranean inspired restaurant and cocktail bar aptly named 'The Engine Rooms' and the boutique food and wine store 'Bottles 'N' Jars'. Both are located at the glitzy Highgate showroom, and both stand easily on their own merits – Maroulla's review is also in this issue.

Later, Paul will recount that he already knew where his future lay long before leaving school. Years of watching his father enthuse over all things mechanical but especially cars, in his capacity as a Lotus dealer in Leighton Buzzard, made it virtually inevitable that he would follow in his footsteps.

With a business model concentrating on some of the rarest and most collectable marques, Hexagon quickly outgrew the original showroom in Hampstead, prompting a move to new premises in South Kensington where the focus became prestige cars spanning the 1950's to the 1970's. A second dealership specialising in modern classics, commonly Porsches, Ferrari's, and Aston Martin's from the 1980's to present, followed later at the now flagship site in Highgate.

The two sides of the business were eventually consolidated at the Highgate showroom, where Hexagon became known not only for its highly desirable classic car collection but also for the ever-rotating display of artwork and automobilia drawn from Paul's growing personal collection.

Newly refurbished premises at nearby Fortis Green, which today house Hexagon's servicing and restoration department for classic car owners, previously served as the hub for the company's long-standing association with Lotus Cars, after Hexagon became a main dealer in 1964. The location was particularly apt, being just 200 yards from the former home of Lotus founder Colin Chapman, but the premises also formerly housed the headquarters of Ian Walker Racing, one of the most prominent names in motor racing in the 1960's and forever associated with both rallying and racing the Lotus brand.

Over time Paul built what was then an almost unheard-of multi-franchise business, holding numerous main dealership agencies for both new and used cars, spanning brands as diverse as Alfa Romeo, Aston Martin, Marcos, Reliant and finally and most famously for over 45 years, BMW. Many who have worked in the City of London will recall Hexagon's association with the marque, and until the 2013 decision to sell, the company consistently held the crown for London's pre-eminent BMW dealership.

Back in the day many such entrepreneurs would have been more than satisfied with having developed so many strings to their commercial bow, but as a road and race car enthusiast Paul's passion was equally the thrills and spills of driving and racing classic cars.

To that end and as soon as finances allowed, Hexagon also became involved in motor sport, initially racing D-Type Jaguars before changing lanes to the newly formed 'Goldie Hexagon Racing' team, which competed in Formula 5000, the now defunct open wheel, single seater format denoted

by its 5.0 litre engine capacity; a great fit because of Hexagon's existing links with Lotus.

At the time, Formula 5000 was sometimes used as a segue to Formula 1 and in 1972, Paul arranged for the team to enter the so called 'World Championship Victory Race', an event run to Formula 1 rules. It purchased a March 721, driven by British racing driver John Watson and remarkably, he finished in sixth position.

During their most adventurous period in 1973/74 the team partook in a full Formula 1 season, entering via a Brabham BT44 purchased from its then team owner, one Bernie Ecclestone, again retaining John Watson as its driver. Whilst this adventure only lasted for one season, the team scored an extremely respectable total of six championship points, including the highlight of finishing fourth in the Austrian Grand Prix.

Racing with an emphasis on history remained a passion, as evidenced by the purchase of a 1987 Porsche 962, which raced twice at Le Mans, finishing 4th and 8th, respectively.

Today, the business is principally focused on the classics market, offering some of the rarest and most collectable cars in the world. I was privileged to be given a tour of the premises by the man himself who explained Hexagon's particular focus on original condition, ultra-low mileage examples with a proven history.

Wandering around the upmarket showroom, my eye was drawn first to a Porsche 911 2.7S Targa dating from 1976 with just 570 miles on the clock, having originally been secured by a collector, box-fresh from the factory. Next, I spot surely one of the most beautiful cars of all time in the sleek form of a Jaguar 4.2 Litre E-Type Fixed Head Coupe, and also possibly one of the lowest mileage examples in existence. I'm told that whatever the sought after model, it's odds on that one of the team will know exactly where to locate and secure it, with confidentiality and discretion assured.

Next year marks 60 years in business for Paul, but however Hexagon Classics celebrates its diamond anniversary, this jewel in the London motor scene continues to shine brightly.

Joel Leigh is the motoring correspondent of City Solicitor and a Partner at Howard Kennedy LLP

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DO CITY LAW FIRMS HAVE A COLDPLAY PROBLEM?

A LOOK AT WHAT THAT IS AND WHY IT MATTERS...

The Solicitors' Company was delighted to be able to host an in-person seminar intriguingly entitled "Do City law firms have a Coldplay problem?" at Salters' Hall on 24 February 2022, as part of its "Food for thought" series. The Company was especially pleased that the Lord Mayor, Vincent Keaveny, had encouraged attendance by all given the session's fit with his mayoral theme of "People and Purpose – investing in a better tomorrow!"



Senior Warden, Tony King, and Junior Warden, Sarah de Gay, chaired a conversation with Christopher Saul and Charles Wookey, who generously answered questions from members and guests of the Company. Chris was the senior partner of a magic circle law firm until 2016 and now runs his own advisory firm, focussing on providing trusted advice on matters such as governance, succession and the moderation of differences to senior executives and key stakeholders of all sorts of businesses, whilst Charles was the CEO of a charity, Blueprint for Better Business, which helps business to be inspired and guided by a purpose that benefits society and respects the dignity of people. We'd like to thank them both for the time they gave us, and the interesting thoughts they shared with us, at this event.

So what exactly is a Coldplay problem?

Chris began by demystifying the possible ailment at play. He explained that, having read a review of Coldplay's performance at 2021's remote Glastonbury, he was struck by how, not for the first time, they had been critiqued as competent, energetic and tuneful but "ever so slightly bland". This had caused him to reflect on whether "Big Law" might suffer from the same characterisation. Whilst discretion is valued by commercial law firms, which are not seeking to themselves be the story, he wondered whether they might be too grey and, as the post-pandemic return to the office gathers pace, whether this would be a good moment for them to challenge themselves to think in more primary colours – to articulate and drive the personality of the firm. Consideration of this question seemed especially timely given the recent invasion of Ukraine, an unknown at the time our session was planned, with all that that has entailed in relation to law firms being very publicly challenged to make some values-based decisions.

Chris added that he has observed that many big corporates (NatWest, Reckitt and Anglo American to take just three examples) have in recent years set out clear and inspiring purposes and been led by them, driving cultural change whilst also sustaining financial performance. As to whether large law firms could and should follow suit, there are challenges, one being the legal press's fixation with profits per partner meaning that other KPIs don't seem to get the traction they deserve. Notwithstanding this, some large law firms are on a journey to becoming more purposeful, and are trying to promote metrics of success apart from financial performance.

Could pursuing purpose be the remedy?

Given Chris' outline of this possible and not uncontroversial law firm malaise, we asked Charles what he thought the remedy might be. Charles observed that two assumptions appear to have dominated and shaped the business world in recent years – first, that the purpose of business is to maximise profit and, secondly, that, when at work, people are "atomised" individuals motivated by money, status and power. This, he thinks, leads to a double disconnect, as business becomes apart from society rather than part of it, and people, whilst well paid, do not feel happy, fulfilled or valued. In Charles' view, therefore, the cure (easy to say but harder to achieve) would be to abandon these two ideas and instead replace them with two new ideas, namely to have a purpose beyond profit, and to adopt a more realistic view of people, recognising that most people value the quality of relationships at work, and seek meaning and fulfilment not just money.

He expanded on these replacement notions by suggesting that it is possible for business, including a law firm, to have a purpose which is expressed in

terms of the benefit to society which arises from its success. Profit then becomes a means and not the ultimate goal. People who then feel that they are making a genuine contribution through their work, and belong to a social organisation which cares about people, have the opportunity to realise their potential and grow.

The combined result of these two new ideas should be that people feel they are "a valued member of a winning team on a worthwhile mission".

Is there an inevitable trade-off between purpose and profit?

Chris thought that it was fair to say that "taking a view" can lead to challenges but added that it can also give law firms an edge. Being perceived as being over-zealous on societal issues might well impact on representing some clients, who might take the view that the law firm is "too resonant for us" and that could in turn impact, negatively, on profits. But if an organisation understands what they are about, and stands with its values, then purpose becomes the glue which leads to success and profitability.

What will motivate the future leaders of big law firms, and make younger lawyers stay in firms?

As to the impact of the current war for talent, and whether the very high salaries now being paid to newly qualified lawyers in the larger firms might indicate that the law firm leaders of the future care a great deal about profitability, and less about purpose beyond it, Chris thought that the recent salary increases for junior lawyers does demonstrate that salary levels are still a feature in attracting young talent. Money does drive the thinking of younger members of the profession. But, he also thought, they were increasingly motivated by issues such as climate change and "doing the right thing". Whilst remuneration is a driver (not least because of the recognition it brings), younger lawyers look set to balance that against the fact that they care about the world. This suggests that they will want their firm to make purposeful decisions in the future.

In relation to attrition, firms would surely need to look at the length of their partnership track – is 12/14 years to achieve promotion still realistic? Chris thought that firms might wish to give their people a more meaningful say sooner in their legal careers and hence a more fulfilling career path.

Might purpose diminish partner autonomy and so eat away at what binds many law firms together, in a way which is counter-productive?

Charles's response to this question was that whilst law firms are traditionally conservative, in many law firms there is a conscious discomfort with the status quo. And so, while it may be a longer time coming to the legal sector than others, purpose will in time be taken up. Major companies are changing and are expecting their principal advisers to change too.

What do lawyers talk about when they meet clients?

A member of our audience observed that, when meeting clients, lawyers rarely talk about their latest pay rise. You must, they thought, articulate to the market why you exist. If you do not, the implication is that associates and other staff simply work for the firm to enrich its equity partners. Defining a firm's culture means the culture can be protected and defining values will motivate people. This need not impact on profitability, as by taking a stance you increase the number of good people wanting to work for you and the clients that want you to work for them.

Could the Rule of Law be our purpose?

Another attendee queried whether law firms in fact needed to define their own singular purposes and might instead embrace the Rule of Law as a means of unifying and inspiring its people. As a profession, they wondered whether we do enough to convey to our own, as well as to wider society, the good things we do every day to contribute to the proper administration of justice, human rights and the global value of English law. Another attendee queried whether this viewpoint risked treating the Rule of Law as something merely mechanical. With greater agency, law firms can make choices as to how they exercise their role and take a wider approach to what the Rule of Law involves and demands. A clear purpose (which Charles thought was usually not reducible to a strap line but could be embodied in a paragraph setting out a distinctive point of view) should help guide decision taking and help differentiate a firm.

Could a more female approach work?

Our final question from the audience centred on the assumption made in our debate that City law is



something which is done by and belongs to large firms alone, whereas there are many successful niche firms in the City and many run by women. Could a more female approach, centred on a philosophy that happy firms lead to happy clients, deliver? Both Chris and Charles agreed that diversity in law firm management is important and impactful and had in their day jobs observed how female leaders tend to understand and embrace purpose as a concept – and the more human centred approach it entails – more readily, and to very good effect.

And the debate continued...

We are limited, by word count and publication space, in what we can say here about the Coldplay problem, whether it exists and if so how law firms might address it. But our event was far less constrained,

with attendees exchanging views up to the point of being asked to leave our venue as time ticked by. Our audience may not have been unanimous about the benefits of purpose but they were unanimous in their enjoyment of the event, not just in listening to what our speakers had to say but in debating the issues with City solicitors from other firms in person in the fabulous surroundings of Salters' Hall.

Get in touch, get involved!

One of the Company's values is, of course, collegiality and this event seemed to embody this in a way which made us all feel purposeful! City solicitors tell us they really value the seminars in our "Food for thought" series, so do please contact us with suggestions as to what we might cover next and, of course, be sure to join us in person next time.

THE ANNUAL BANQUET AT MANSION HOUSE

The Company was pleased to be back in the spectacular surroundings of the Mansion House on 30th March for its Annual Banquet. We were delighted to be hosted by our own Lord Mayor, Past Master & Alderman Vincent Keaveny and to hear from our guest speaker Alison Kellett, President of the Solicitors' Disciplinary Tribunal.



THE LAST WORD

DID YOU KNOW?

The retro trend that keeps coming back



What does your mind conjure when you think about tartan? Are you transported to the Highland Games, with kilted athletes competing for spectators who are themselves sporting tartans of many colours and designs.

If you are American, you might think of plaid-clad lumberjacks in the vast, haunting forests of the Pacific Northwest. Maybe you are a child of the 70s and associate the striped designs with punk aesthetics bursting into the popular culture. Or perhaps you think of its use by leading fashion houses – the Burberry Check that has been splashed on everything from lining its classic trench coat to trainers and cars.

In 2018, the podcast 'Articles of Interest' covered plaid (the American name for tartan). It was one of the stand out episodes from a fantastic podcast series. Have a listen, and you'll agree that tartan is the retro fashion trend that just keeps coming back, reinvented for each generation. But how did this quintessentially Scottish design go from an outlawed symbol of the defeated Jacobites to a royal favourite in less than a hundred years?

In 1745, Charles Edward Stuart (the Young Pretender) landed in Scotland. He had a simple but audacious aim – to ferment a national rebellion against the Hanoverians and regain the throne for his father, James Francis Edward Stuart (the Old Pretender). To begin with, there were successes. Edinburgh was taken in September and his army defeated a government army at Prestonpans. Exuberantly, the Jacobites invaded England. They expected support to pour in from the northern counties and towns that had supported a similar uprising in 1715. This time, the support failed to materialise.

Stuart's army reached as far south as Derby, and then turned back. The following year, the fire of rebellion was brutally extinguished at the Battle of Culloden. With defeat came reprisals, many aimed

at eradicating the distinctive highland culture of central and northern Scotland. It is here that tartan takes centre stage in the story. The Act of Proscription 1746 outlawed Highland dress unless worn in military service. In the ponderous language of eighteenth-century drafters:

"No man or boy, within that part of Great Briton called Scotland, other than shall be employed as officers and soldiers in his Majesty's forces, shall on any pretence whatsoever, wear or put on the clothes commonly called Highland Clothes (that is to say) the plaid, philibeg, or little kilt, trowse, shoulder belts, or any part whatsoever of what peculiarly belongs to the highland garb; and that no tartan, or partly-coloured plaid or stuff shall be used for great coats, or for upper coats".

The penalties for breaching the Act were severe – six months imprisonment for the first offence and transportation to a colony for seven years for the second offence.

Within the space of two generations, tartan underwent a surprisingly successful rehabilitation. The key moment in tartan's comeback was the visit of George IV to Scotland in 1822. Whilst many in England were, at best, ambivalent about their gluttonous monarch, he was received with excitement and pageantry north of the border. But what pageantry should be used for a royal visit to Scotland? This was uncharted territory – the last visit of a reigning monarch to Scotland had been King Charles II for his Scottish Coronation in 1651.

Fortunately, Sir Walter Scott was on hand to organise the visit and to infuse it with as much tartan pageantry as he could imagine. And, getting



into the spirit, King George was dressed in an arrestingly bright tartan outfit. King George being King George, this was no ordinary tartan outfit. Spending the equivalent of £130,000, George was swathed in a bright red, green and yellow royal tartan. Pink pantaloons concealed his bloated legs. Someone complained that the kilt was too short for proper modesty. Lady Hamilton-Dalrymple wittily responded "Since he is to be among us for so short a time, the more we see of him the better!"

By the end of the visit, tartan was elevated from being the "primitive dress of mountain thieves" became the national dress of the whole of Scotland."

The Georgian tartan craze would be equalled and exceeded by Queen Victoria's patronage. The interiors of Balmoral Castle are, to this day, an explosion of tartan. The Queen would be woken by pipers and her children were attired in Highland dress. Victoria and Albert both designed their own tartans, versions of which are still used by the royal family.

How many other fashion trends are as long-lived and pervasive as tartan? What else can be worn by the Queen and safety pinned to the back of a punk rocker? From its role in queer culture to an internationally recognised global brand for Scotland, tartan is the retro trend that keeps coming back.

This article was provided courtesy of Ian Chapman-Curry, Principal Associate at Gowling WLG and host of the Almost History podcast.

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