A Sort of NEWSLETTER

Winter 2006 THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GRAHAM GREENE BIRTHPLACE TRUST £1.50 Free to Friends

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Do not forget to visit the web site of the Trust which is on
www.grahamgreenebt.org

Editorial

Despite the gleams of sunshine, we still have winter in Berkhamsted, but the snowdrops and crocus show there are better times ahead.

We also hope there are better times ahead for Ken Sherwood, our Secretary and Treasurer, who has suffered a stroke and is now slowly recovering. We wish him the very best.

There is no doubt that he will have to give up some of the many tasks he has hitherto undertaken for the Trust and other organisations and we are looking for help with the administrative work of the Trust. If you have time to spare, please contact us. We do know that it will take more than one person to replace Ken; the work he has hitherto done can be shared among two or three to make it more manageable for the individual, so please come forward - we need you!

Inside you will find a new Quiz. This time we have a new quizmaster, and Colin Garrett has challenged us to show our knowledge of not only Greene's work, but also his life.

This Newsletter always welcomes contributions from Friends, readers and others. If in doubt about format or 'house-style' please contact me before e-mailing your article or other contribution. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yan Christensen

Newslettereditor@grahamgreenebt.org

Your comments and letters are always welcome.

No responsibility will be accepted for any errors or omissions, or comments made by writers or interviewees. Views expressed are not necessarily the views of The Graham Greene Birthplace Trust

REVIEWS

Graham Greene's *No Man's Land*
Foreword by David Lodge
Edited by James Sexton
Hesperus Press £9.99 ISBN 1-84391-414-x

Not mentioned in either the Norman Sherry or the Michael Shelden biographies, *No Man's Land* is an intriguing item in Greene's oeuvre. Towards the end of the story, the narrator muses: 'Is distrust as infectious as all that? Does it stop at no boundaries?' He is referring to the tense relationship between hero and heroine but he could equally be referring to the contemporary political atmosphere of Cold War, memorably described elsewhere in the text as 'an unfathomable emptiness that the propagandists of two worlds have imposed on our minds.' The fusion of the personal and the political is one of the most interesting features of the story.

No Man's Land was written in 1950 as a screen treatment for a film that, in the event, never materialised. It comes therefore between two of Greene's greatest achievements, *The Third Man* (1949) and *The End of the Affair* (1951) and has a kinship with both. Like *The Third Man*, it is a story of treachery and betrayal in a post war Europe of fragile borders and closely guarded secrets (in this case, concerning uranium holdings in the Russian zone around the Harz Mountains). Also like *The Third Man*, it deals with a triangular love situation in which by far the most charismatic figure is the villain. As in *The End of the Affair*, a love affair erupts with startling suddenness and then begins to slip almost immediately into suspicion, jealousy, fears of betrayal. No doubt because of the treatment form, *No Man's Land* seems more like a sketch than a complete picture, but the outline is fascinating.

Also included in the volume is Greene's novella, *The Stranger's Hand*. This story is probably most famous for its opening two paragraphs, which he had submitted in a *New Statesman* competition inviting entrants to write a parody in the style of a writer called Green or Greene: Graham's self-parody came second. He was encouraged to continue the tale as a screen treatment and although he never finished it, the film was actually made. (The story was completed by the screenwriter, Guy Elmes, who was later to co-author a superb screen adaptation of *Across the Bridge*.) A boy travels to Venice for a meeting with his estranged policeman father, whom he has not seen for nearly three years, a period which Greene sensitively describes as a 'No Man's Land... a waste filled with the wreckage of other lives than their own.' On arrival, however, he finds that his father has disappeared. The unravelling of the mystery will prove to be less absorbing than Greene's masterly evocation of the boy's loneliness and fear in a strange land. 'Children belonged to the world,' he comments sternly, 'they could not be hidden from it.' And there is a superb image when the boy is taken care of by an enigmatic doctor and 'he felt the doctor's fingers placed like a bundle of pencils in his hand.' This is the stranger's hand of the title and is an image to be movingly recalled at the very end of the story, with the doctor's life at the point of erasure. In the film, Richard O'Sullivan played the boy; as the father, Trevor Howard spent most of the film in a comatose state not dissimilar to that of the film's audience.

Although both stories have been published before (in David Parkinson's valuable anthology of Greene's film writing, *Mornings in the Dark*, currently out of print), this new edition is adorned by a typically shrewd foreword by David Lodge and an informative introduction by its editor, James Sexton. For adventurers along the less travelled byways of Greene's literary career, this is a small gem.

Neil Sinyard

To purchase a copy of *No Man's Land* at the reduced price of £8+ P+P (RRP £9.99) phone 01442 875899 or *email:hazelward@btopenworld.com*. Offer ends 30 April!

The Third Man

An evening at the Austrian Cultural Forum

At the end of January some Friends of the Trust attended an event at the Austrian Cultural Forum in London where Brigitte Timmerman was interviewed about her excellent book of text and photographs about the film of *The Third Man* and about Vienna.

She was, as always, on good form, and was being expertly interviewed by Brendan Caroll who elicited much information of interest to all.

Dr Timmerman told us that she has a teaching background with a particular interest in literature and history. Her current business as a tourist guide ties in very well with her interests which led to the making of the book.

Early in the planning of the book she succeeded in contacting the man who had played the little boy who in the film calls "murderer" after Holly Martin in the street. He still lives in Vienna. Alida Valli lives in Italy, but prefers to avoid any kind of publicity, but we were privileged to have Angela Allen in the audience. She had been a script girl on one of the film units.

So we heard from an authoritative source that Orson Welles' claim to have been much involved in the making and directing of the film "couldn't be further from the truth".

It was interesting to hear that the film was originally not very popular in Vienna and still does not have the cult status it has achieved elsewhere. What the Austrians did like was the use of famous Austrian actors in several roles, but Vienna itself was naturally not at its best after the bombing and many felt it should not have had to show itself in that state.



One part of the film that is known to everybody is the music, and Anton Karas spent three months working on it, having nearly given up several times. A friendship developed between him and Carol Reed, and Karas played at Reed's funeral.



Brigitte Timmerman

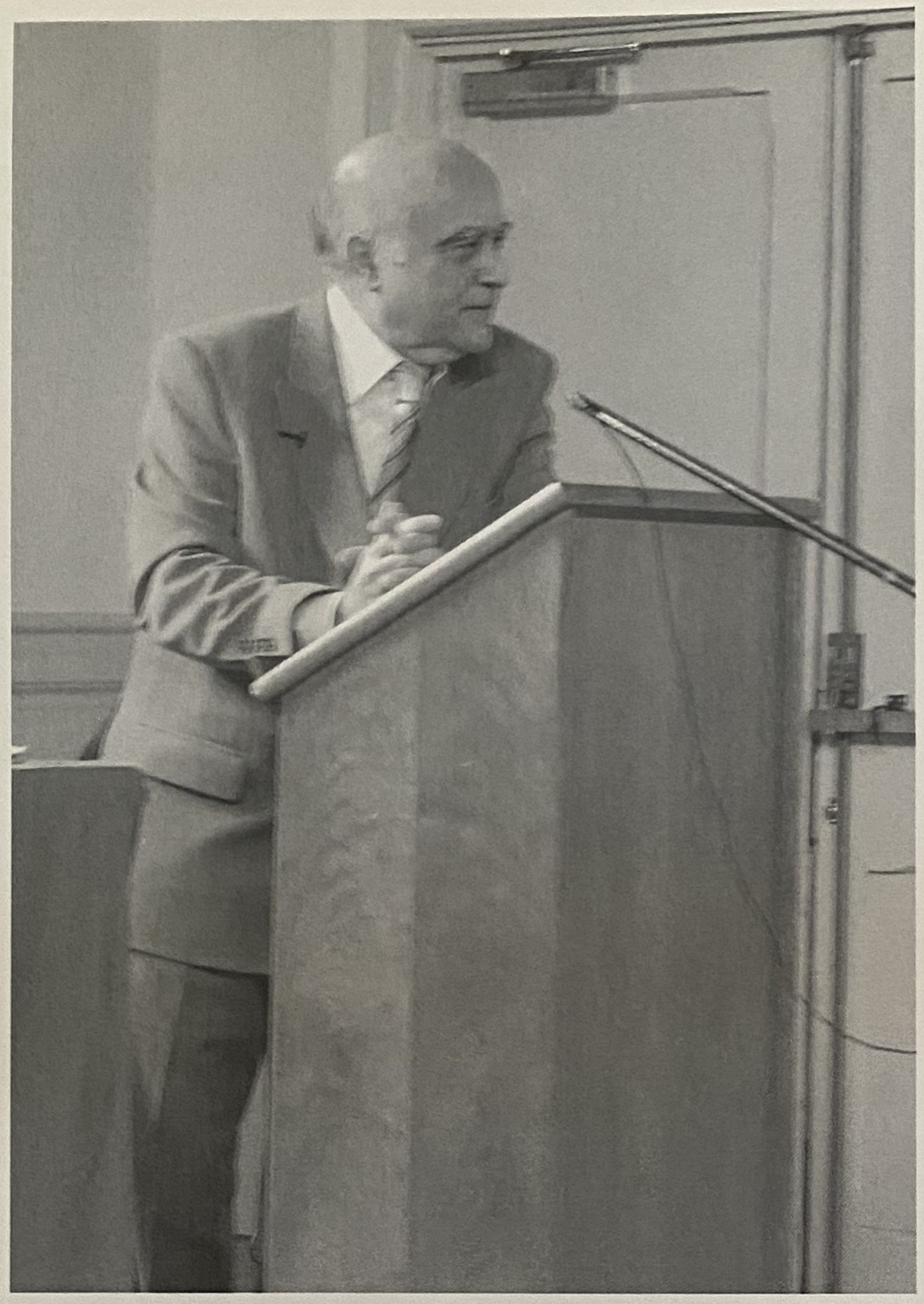
Towards the end of this interesting evening we heard Dermot Gilvary read from Greene. Dermot Gilvary is a Friend of the Trust and faithful Festival goer. The English version of Dr Timmerman's book was by then available and several copies were sold and signed.

It is hoped to bring a review and details of where to obtain copies in a later issue.

MISCELLANY

Alexander Kulpok on Greene and the Nobel Prize

Alexander Kulpok, a German Friend of the Trust and past speaker at our Festivals, has kindly sent a copy of an article he recently contributed to the Almanac of the annual Press Ball in Germany.



Alexander Kulpok

A free translation of the title might be *A life without the Nobel prize*, and the article points out that 1991, the year of Greene's death, was also the year Artur Lundkvist died - the man who it is thought prevented the award being given to Greene.

It is interesting to learn that Greene was first considered for the Novel prize for literature in 1950; at the time it was apparently decided to give the writer time to develop further. Other writers nominated at that time were Bertrand Russell, William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway and Nikos Kazantzakis.

Graham Greene was next under discussion by the committee in 1952 when the original idea had been to share the prize between François Mauriac and Greene. Mauriac objected - he would rather have refused altogether than share with someone he considered more a pupil than an equal.

There has been much speculation as to why Greene did not receive the coveted award. His lifestyle seemed a possibility with its emphasis on women and drink; or his Secret Service activities. Another theory has been that the writer's thorough readability might strike the committee as insufficiently serious.

Two of Graham Greene's biographers, Norman Sherry and Michael Shelden, thought otherwise. In 1955 Greene started an affair with the Swedish actress, Anita Björk, who always had the impression that he did not like Sweden much. Björk's husband had committed suicide by means of exhaust gases from his car in the garage after several earlier attempts.

About the time the affair ended Greene wrote the play *The Complaisant Lover* which featured a husband who attempted suicide in his garage, but changed his mind before the level of exhaust gas became lethal. Just like the first attempts of Björk's husband.

The literary world of Stockholm was enraged; the relevant scene was unnecessary and could only have been inserted to offend Anita Björk and the memory of her husband. Greene did tell her that he had not intended anything offensive by that scene, but Artur Lundkvist could not forgive. In interviews Lundkvist gave as the reason or reasons for not awarding the Nobel Prize to Greene that "He is too popular" or "He does not need the money". It was clear that Lundkvist disliked or despised Greene. As Alexander Kulpok puts it: A war between two aging men, which was determined by the longer lived.

We are grateful to Alexander Kulpok for this article which seemed interesting enough to report more fully than would be possible as an 'In the Press' item.

New Professor

It is with great pleasure that we are able to announce that Neil Sinyard, that most faithful and popular supporter of the Trust and speaker at our Festivals, has been appointed Professor at Hull University. Congratulations Neil, we all know how well-deserved the title is.

News

The Trust is proud to be associated with a forthcoming book by Rudolf van Dalm. It is a book



Professor Cedric Watts and Professor Neil Sinyard

of Greene quotations selected by Dr van Dalm; the book will be invaluable to scholars, universities and libraries and it will be an asset and ornament to the bookshelf of anyone who likes reading, and of course that means all of us.
It is anticipated that the book will be available at the next Festival in September 2006. Further details will be announced before then.

Of interest to all Greene fans is the news that the publishers Jonathan Cape have commissioned a book about the Greene family. We have at present no idea when it might appear but it is something to look forward to in due course.

Exciting Plans

Plans are afoot to arrange a trip to Vienna in May 2007. Brigitte Timmerman, the Vienna guide and author of the excellent book about the Vienna associations in the film of *The Third Man*, will prepare a guided tour of all the film locations and other points of interest in that beautiful city especially for us. Friends of the Trust will have an opportunity to book through her. The event will be planned as a slightly extended weekend, but no doubt some will want to take more time to explore. More details will follow in the summer.

Black Lion Lane, Brighton

Greene's favourite pub in Brighton, to which he resorted for many years as one of his ways of escaping from London, was *The Cricketers*. He wrote of it in *Travels with my Aunt*, of Pulling eating sausages and drinking Guinness with Augusta. It's still a traditional pub, full of wood panelling and real ales, in the traditional premium retailing zone of the Lanes. This year[2005], the pub has gained a Greene Room, above the bar rather than behind the stage, promoted by bold gold lettering on the outside walls, and as an intimate meeting and eating place. Its decor is quite different from that of the dark bars beneath: carpeted, soft chairs, and broad bay windows. On the walls are displayed a few Greene mementoes: a cartoon with the quotation about Augusta and Guinness, a poster for the Attenborough film, framed photocopies of a dozen letters, most looking forward to his next break in Brighton, from

Greene to his friend the navigator Michael Richey. Reflecting the presumed taste of today's habitués of London's seedy seaside sump, the bar list offers cocktails and the menu 'international cuisine', not beer nor sausages. Next door is the Jack the Ripper room, another museum framed on its walls.

It was impure chance that my brief halt at the bar coincided with that of a short, shaven-headed cockney, with three companions of mixed ages and genders (but one taller, younger and female). He boasted laughingly that he came from within two mile [sic] of Jack's haunts in Whitechapel. I expected Kolly Kibber to walk in next - and left for the station.

James Mackay

The Quiz

As we all know, Mike Hill is currently the Festival Director, which gives him plenty to do, so Colin Garrett has done the annual Quiz. It does assume considerable knowledge of Greene's life and writing, but there are no penalties for being wrong, so do give it a try:-

1 Who 'sold herself for a pair of sunglasses'?

2 Who was 'Mrs Meadmore's young Croesus'?

3 Who 'always carried a small box of currants in his waistcoat pocket'?

4 From whom did Conrad Drover try to acquire a revolver?

5 And what did he try to do with it?

6 Who demanded brandy in Sebastian Lintz's shop?

7 'We're a pair, aren't we, you and Krogh and me and Maud'. Name the unidentified pair.

8 What did Richard John have hidden in his trousers?

9 And what was his real name?

10 Was the hero of *A Burnt Out Case* - Quarry, Quarrel, Querry or Query?

11 And what was his profession?

12 Greene's book about the Mafia in Nice was: - J'Abuse, J'Accuse, J'Amuse or J'Oppose?

13 On his flight from Amsterdam, what did Fred Hall have in his overcoat pocket?

14 Who was the Norwegian poet who visited Graham & Vivien Greene in Chipping Camden?

15 'What star has made her first appearance on the international screen with a highlight gleaming on her nose tip'? What star in what film review?

16 Who was the teenage hero of *Brighton Rock*:- Pinkie, Porkie, Parkis or Perky?



17 What did Elizabeth and Andrews have for tea?

18 In his Stockholm flat, what did Minty keep under a glass?

19 Greene as a teenager had residential medical treatment. Was it by:- an acupuncturist, a psychiatrist, a herbalist, or a homeopath?

20 In which of Greene's short stories does the General shoot the Pope?

21 Which of Greene's Essays started 'It is said that the effect of eating too much lettuce is soporific'?

22 Who was the individual nicknamed 'Dr Funkhole'?

23 *In The Third Man* what was Greene's first choice of name for the character ultimately called Holly?

24 Which well-known film director, when drinking in a Naples bar with Greene persuaded the barmen and some GIs that Coca-Cola rendered men impotent?

25 At the age of 19 Greene says that he considered a career in the.....Navy - which country?

26 Which book (recently reprinted) did Greene describe as 'the most amusing book of childhood memories I can remember reading'?

27 As a young man Greene published a book of poetry. Was it called *Bubbling Brook, Babbling April, April Showers* or *Budding May*.

28 Where did Mr Thriplow buy his first lottery ticket?

29 Greene served in the Intelligence service. Was it in Bridgetown, Capetown, Freetown or Georgetown?

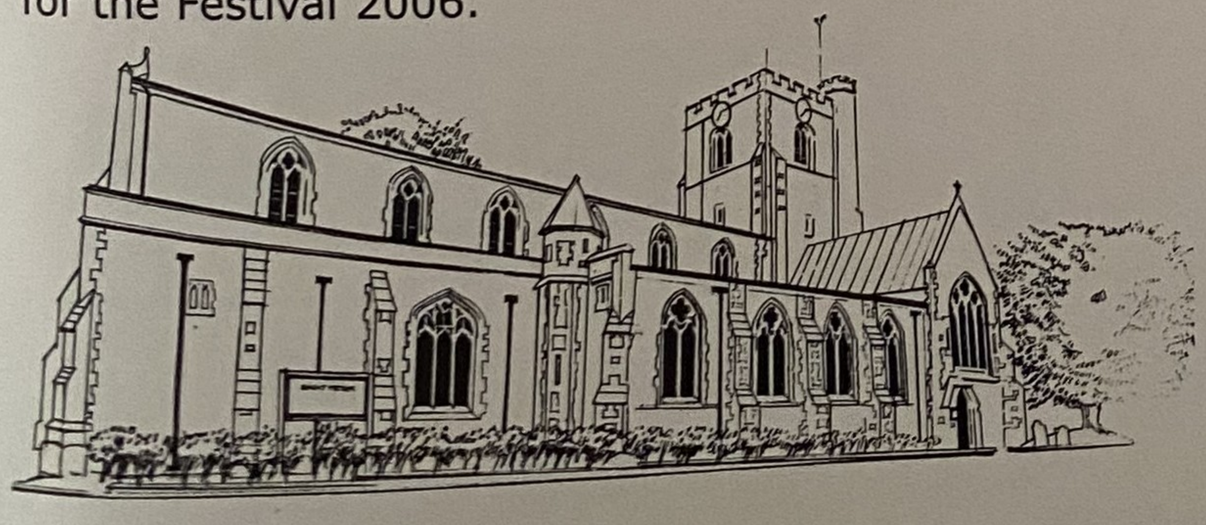
30 Greene's play *The Potting Shed* was first performed in London. Who played James Callifer?

Answers, please to

Colin Garrett
17 North Road
Berkhamsted
HP4 3DX

by 30 April 2006.

The prize for the best answer is a Season Ticket for the Festival 2006.



CORRESPONDENCE

Please use these columns to express views, discuss themes, comment on the news and views of others, or simply to tell us you are there.

Happy New Year and very many thanks for the GG newsletter.

I am not sure who did the review of my talk, but before your distinguished Greene academics write in with complaints there seem to be a few things wrong with it, and which I did not say. I am not a Greene scholar but I am pretty sure that Greene was not editor of *Night and Day*. All I said was that he wrote film reviews for it (which is correct). I also did not say that Greene consciously <u>used</u> cartoons in the magazine, just that he would have been aware of them as they often appeared in or near his film reviews. Finally, though I am very flattered to be described as 'the leading authority on cartoons in this country' there are a number of others toiling in this particular field who are, in my opinion, more worthy of this title.

Mark Bryant

We are happy to bring the correction and Mark Bryant's modest disclaimer although there have of course been no complaints at the 'leading authority' description; but GG did edit *Night and Day*. ed.

IN THE PRESS

The Editor cannot keep up with the entire International Press, so please help by sending any press cuttings you would like to see reported. An English précis in case of the more exotic languages would be appreciated.

We are grateful to have received a cutting from *The New Yorker* reviewing the film *The Fallen Idol*, which was shown at Film Forum during February. The reviewer reminds us of the successful collaboration of Greene and Carol Reed that created not only this film but also the outstanding film, *The Third Man*.

Last year was Hans Christian Andersen year and La Jornada Semanal, Mexico carried an article by our friend Rubén Moheno drawing attention to Greene's essays which included one about Andersen.

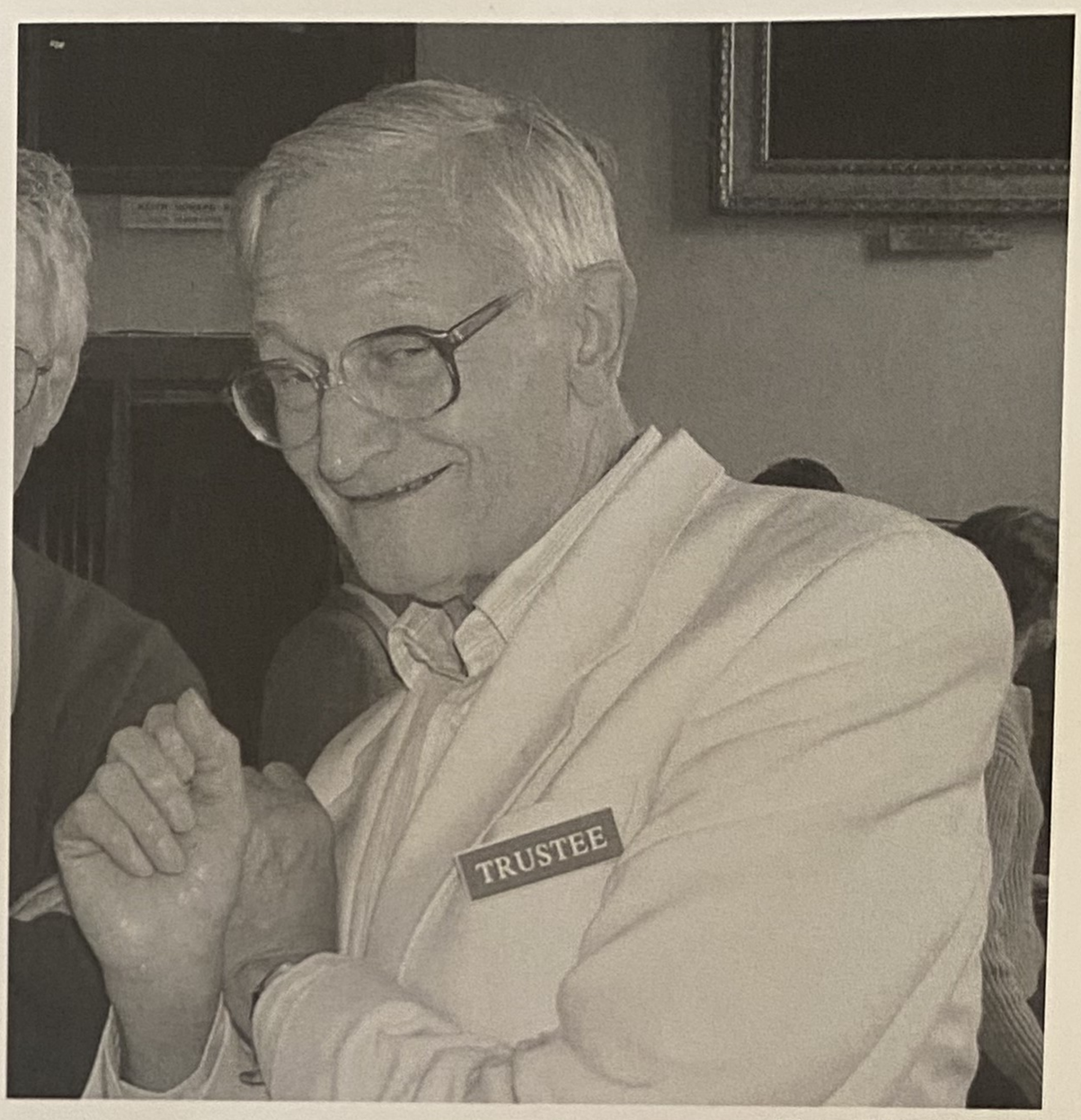
It is frankly all but unbelievable how widespread knowledge of Graham Greene is. There is constant mention of his name and his work in publications all over the world. The information we get from the Internet is limited to the English language - just think what we could find if we were not limited in that way. The instances are too numerous to mention, but a list of some of the sources is impressive: the following have had reference to Graham Greene in some way, either by way of quotations, general reference, or most often in connection with reviews where phrases such as 'it wasn't quite Graham Greene' or 'reminiscent of GG' frequently occur:

In USA alone: Lexington Herald Leader, Lexington, KY; The News Tribune, Tacoma, WA; Crosswalk, VA; Trenton Times, Trenton, NJ; Calendar Line, LA, CA; New York Sun, New York Times; Palm Beach Post, FL; Hollywood Reporter; New York Jewish Week; Film Stew, Hollywood; North Bay Bohemian, Sonoma, CA; Chicago Times; TAEmag.com, Washington, DC. In fact you can take it that every town of any size (or none) in USA has a publication where the editor or a reviewer has wanted to mention Graham Greene. In USA there have in particular been a lot of mentions of the opera based on *The End of the Affair*.

Other matters that have caused several references to be made have been Greene's biography of the well know poet and rake: 'Lord Rochester's Monkey'. In addition the 50th anniversary of the publication of *Lolita* brought to mind the fact that Graham Greene had praised the book.

Around the world references were found in: Enter Stage Right, Sudbury, Ont. Canada; Winnipeg Free Press, Manitoba, Canada; The Age, Melbourne, Australia; Noriegaville, Panama; Jamaica Observer, Kingston, Jamaica; The Financial Express, Bangladesh; TVNZ, New Zealand; Outlook, New Delhi, India; Jakarta Post, Indonesia; Ha'aretz, Tel Aviv, Israel; Yemen Times, Sana,a, Yemen; Hindu Chennai, India; Farang Untamed Travel, Bangkok, Thailand; Manila Times, Philippines; Taipee Times, Taiwan; Cyprus Mail, Nicosia.

THE TRUST



Ken Sherwood

We are sure that everyone will want to join the Trustees in their wish for Ken's continued and speedy recovery.

STOP PRESS

It is with great pleasure that we can announce that Colin Garrett - quizmaster in this issue - has agreed to be the Treasurer of the Trust; Ken Sherwood has had to resign that post for health reasons.

We are still looking for someone to take over the role of Secretary.



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