A Sort of Newsletter

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GRAHAM GREENE BIRTHPLACE TRUST

Spring 2007

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

Editorial

By the time you read this several Friends of the Trust will have been to Vienna.

This is the first time the GGBT has been involved in a group trip abroad - Brighton is the furthest we have gone until now. In view of the interest shown in Vienna and *The Third Man* you will know that two trips became necessary as the weekend was based on 30 participants and at least 50 applied. A wonderful response and perhaps an indication of the interest our Friends have in combining Greene with travel. At least we hope so because we are now considering a trip to Spain to travel by coach to some of the places visited by Monsignor Quixote and the mayor, his trusty friend and sparring partner.

Such a trip would go through some beautiful Spanish countryside, visit historic sites, refresh ideas around the discussions in Greene's book and afford an opportunity to spend time in congenial company. Apart from the Greene connection such a trip would show us the real Spain with never a fish and chip shop in sight.

It is important that you give us an indication of potential interest in principle NOW as there would be little point in making arrangements if no-one intends to go. Send me a brief e-mail with comments or queries, please.

Yan Christensen

Newslettereditor@grahamgreenebt.org

Your comments and letters are always welcome.

Innocence is like a dumb leper who has lost his bell
(from The Quiet American)

TENTH GRAHAM GREENE FESTIVAL

On Saturday 3 October 1998, I came to Berkhamsted for the last day of the inaugural Graham Greene Festival – it had begun on the Tuesday before, but I had a day job in those days, and the Saturday was all I could manage. A friendly chap called Ken Sherwood was taking tickets at the door, and I had my first sight of Old Hall in Greene's old school. I heard two engrossing talks, by (then simply Mr.) Neil Sinyard and (also then simply Mr.) Martin Corner. Professor Sinyard and Dr. Corner have both spoken since. I met Roger Watkins, Festival Director, and Nick Dennys, nephew of Greene and patron of the Birthplace Trust, and felt welcome. A Greene-themed walk round the school and the town guided by Roger followed, and the festival was over. I had thoroughly enjoyed the day, and intended to come again.

In fact, I have been to every festival since and, having given up my day job, I'm now looking forward to my third festival as director, and the tenth in all. Roger ran two more festivals, established a splendid tradition, and decamped to Yorkshire. His successor, David Pearce, masterminded four festivals, including the superb Centenary in 2004. The nine so far have left me with a store of imperishable memories. Who could possibly forget Father Duran, or Michael Meyer, or Rick Gekoski, or Norman Sherry, or Guy Hamilton, or Giles Havergal's impersonation of Aunt Augusta, or the buzz of the 2004 Festival? And who will attend the 2007 festival without fond memories of those who came to Berkhamsted but are no longer with us – among them, Paul Hogarth, Gloria Emerson, Michael Meyer, Rudolf van Dalm and, most recently, Amanda Saunders?

My hope is that 2007 will live up to the standards of the past, with stimulating talks, good films and animated conversation. For the tenth festival, we welcome back some of those who have delighted us before. Professor Richard Greene joins us again from Canada, as his book of (Graham) Greene's letters is launched at the festival. Professor Robert Davis also flies the Atlantic, this time to look at *The Power and the Glory* and *Monsignor Quixote*. Clive Francis promises us 'A Greene Occasion', David Pearce performs for us once more, and Quentin Falk shares his knowledge and enthusiasm for another Greene film. Above all, we have another talk from (now) Professor Neil Sinyard, the only one to speak at every single Greene festival – this time on that charismatic villain Harry Lime. What a charismatic hero Neil has been.

And, as ever, there is much that is new in this year's festival. The theme of Greene and Africa figures strongly, with a talk on *The Heart of the Matter* by novelist William Boyd, and one on *A Burnt-Out Case* by Professor Chris Woodhead. Africa also enters the story of Graham's cousin Barbara Greene, who accompanied him to and across Liberia in the 1930s; the Friday of this year's festival is the 100th anniversary of her birth, and we are delighted to welcome her son, Rupert, Graf Strachwitz, to Berkhamsted to speak on her life.

We have an intriguing session on Greene and Hungary this year, with the journalist Laszlo Robert, who knew and interviewed Greene, helping Dr Tamas Molnar and Ramon Rami Porta to explore a relatively undocumented connection. We also continue the tradition of looking at Greene's contemporaries – Sebastian Peake will talk about his father Mervyn, whose work Greene helped to get published, and Anthony Burgess's biographer Andrew Biswell who also attended the first festival in 1998, will look at one of Greene's old sparring partners.

Films will once more feature strongly in a festival focussing on a man with such strong connections with the cinema. The Rex in Berkhamsted will again be a festival venue, this time for a screening of *Across the Bridge*, considered by Neil Sinyard to be the second most successful Greene film adaptation. The Civic Centre will host *The End of the Party*, an award-winning short, and *Went the Day Well?*, the third of this year's films to be based on a Greene short story. We will also be showing Greene in the longest filmed interview he ever did, on stage at the National Film Theatre in 1984.

The festival will again be supported by Berkhamsted Collegiate School, by *The Tablet*, the publishers Random House, by its patrons and advertisers, and this year also by Greene King, the brewers with a family connection to our author. To them we give our grateful thanks.

Add to this the traditional Birthday Toast, this time proposed by Graham Greene's daughter Caroline Bourget; a tour of Greene's school and of Greene's Berkhamsted; a bookstall, displays, a prize draw; good food, with a Saturday evening meal rounded off by an after-dinner speech by Sir Clement Freud; and a pre-festival literary quiz in aid of the Hospice of St Francis, just moved to new premises in the town. Add further a

festival which for the first time takes place entirely in Berkhamsted. The result, I hope, will be a tenth festival of which Berkhamsted will be proud, and which repays some of the enjoyment I felt at that first event all those years ago.

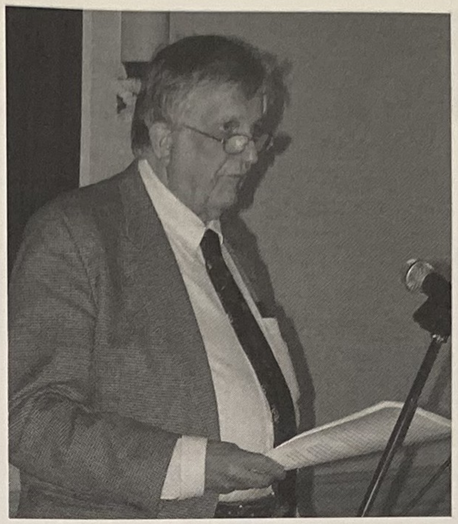
Mike Hill

REVIEW

The Sorbonne Conference

In September 2006 I met Professor François Gallix at the Graham Greene Festival in Berkhamsted. He is an eminent French authority on modern English literature; we had already been corresponding, and I had accepted his invitation to give a paper at a one-day conference on Greene that he was organizing at the Sorbonne. In December it was my turn to cross the Channel; I had not been to Paris since 1990 and as the train from the airport approached the city I was happy to spot such familiar landmarks as Sacré-Coeur and the Eiffel Tower looming in the wintry dusk. Professor Gallix had arranged a comfortable hotel for me, and the next morning he genially greeted me after breakfast and conducted me across the street to the university. The conference was not simply on Graham Greene, the world-famous writer with many French connections; the proceedings were directed at one work, *The Power and the Glory*. This concentration reflects the high degree of centralization of the French educational system. Anyone who wants to become a university teacher in France has to pass a demanding national examination called the agrégation and in 2007 *The Power and the Glory* is one of the texts for the *agrégation* in English. Would-be academics all over France will be studying this novel. So it was not surprising that the lecture hall in the Sorbonne where the conference took place was crowded with students whose intellectual curiosity was reinforced by ambition, or at least aspiration.

Apart from myself, the speakers were all French academics and the proceedings were entirely in English; the linguistic competence as well as the intellectual content were impressive. My own paper was on the dramatic heritage of *The Power and the Glory*, picking up Greene's remark that it resembled a seventeenth century play, and finding echoes of medieval morality plays and Elizabethan drama in the novel. I spoke early in the proceedings, which meant that I could listen to subsequent papers in a relaxed spirit. Representative titles were *'The Dark and Magical Heart of the Faith* – The Paradoxical Poetry of Greene's



Imagery in *The Power and the Glory'*, 'From "Sedate" to "Rotten" – The Role of Books in the Genesis of *The Power and the Glory'*, and *'Escape, Quest and Inquest* – Graham Greene's *The Power and the Glory*...A Suspense Novel?'. This was high-powered stuff and I must confess that I did not hear all the papers. Lacking the stamina of the keenly concentrating audience I retreated to my hotel for a rest during the afternoon. But I returned for the closing round-table session, and I have since been able to catch up on the one I missed in the published version of the proceedings, *Plus sur Greene*, edited by François Gallix and Vanessa Guignery (Atlande, 2007). Professor Gallix's own paper, on Greene and the cinema, was one I found particularly interesting, since it was illustrated by clips from films. One was from John Ford's version of *The Power and the Glory*, which appeared as *The Fugitive* in 1947; it takes many liberties with Greene's novel, such as making the police lieutenant rather than the priest the father of Brigitta, while the firing squad who execute the priest look more like Nazi storm-troopers than down-at-heel Mexican soldiers. I was fascinated by the clip from François Truffaut's *La Nuit Américaine*, made in 1973. Truffaut needed to find an Englishman who spoke French for a brief walk-on part. Greene was persuaded by friends to offer himself, under the pseudonym of 'Henry Graham' (his two Christian names). Truffaut did not initially know who this tall Englishman was – he was dumbfounded when he found out – and asked him to play the part. In the event Greene delivered his few remarks in English, which were translated by someone in the scene. This is, I believe, the only time the reclusive Greene appeared on either film or television.* I had gone to Paris expecting intellectual sustenance and I found it. But in that city one expects to eat well too, and I was not disappointed. Following the morning session, at an excellent lunch in the Sorbonne's equivalent of a senior common room I sat next to Professor Christian Gutleben of the University of Strasbourg, who pointed out with pride that the agreeable white wine we were drinking was from his native Alsace. That evening I was entertained to dinner by François and his wife in a lively restaurant on the Boulevard Saint Michel. The French know how to do these things !

Bernard Bergonzi

*Certainly in an acting capacity. ed.

MISCELLANY

GRAHAM GREENE QUIZ 2007

Answers

1. The Tenth Man
2. Morin
3. Orient Express
4. England
5. Pyle
6. Papa Doc Duvalier
7. Night & Day
8. Fowler
9. Pyle
10. The Quiet American
11. Loser Takes All
12. The Lawless Roads
13. Elizabeth Bowen, V.S. Pritchett
14. Dr. Fischer of Geneva
15. The End of the Affair
16. The Quiet American
17. Pinkie Brown
18. Kollek
19. Jerusalem
20. Virginia Woolf, E.M. Forster
21. Shirley Temple
22. Postcards
23. Dr. Fischer of Geneva
24. Dr. Philipot
25. Prostitute

This time, quite exceptionally, there are two winners, Roger Smith and Ian Fisher. They had identical marks and both deserve their season ticket. They have been advised. There were other good attempts and it is always worth having a go.

Friends go to Vienna



We got to Vienna and made for Restaurant Stopfer where most people had a good lunch; some only arrived in time to join the walk around beautiful Vienna where Brigitte Timmermann took great pains to point out every spot with a Graham Greene or *Third Man* connection. We saw several actual locations and some of the filmic tricks

were revealed to us. This was followed by a visit to the *Theater in der Josefstadt* – a gem which had featured in the film.

Then a wonderful reception at the British Embassy where Christopher Wentworth Stanley read from Brigitte Timmermann's book on *The Third Man* in Vienna; it was good to see Tom O'Connor again, and he gave a talk about his GG documentary. We were entertained by Barbara Laister, an accomplished musician, who played some lovely, appropriate zither music. For this marvelous reception we are indebted to the Ambassador, John MacGregor, a gracious host indeed.

Day two started just after 9:30 and we got back to the hotel more than 12 hours later. An interesting city sightseeing tour took us first to the cemetery where Harry Lime's burial was filmed, then to Prater, the fairground famous for the giant Ferris wheel that was such a powerful image in the film. Naturally we went up in the wheel and enjoyed the stunning views and the atmosphere of the cabin, although we had been told that the cabin scenes in the film were in fact studio shots.

During a good lunch at Café Museum most of us went down the iconic sewers of Vienna on a tour led by the PR Manager. Where else could you find a sewer system with its own PR? We were the first tourist party to go down for several years and it was a very interesting experience. Then we saw the film, and *The Third Man* is always a winner, and on to a museum devoted entirely to the film – full of posters, photographs and other memorabilia. There we also eventually saw a trailer for Tom O'Connor's documentary about Graham Greene, and it looks as if it will be comprehensive and interesting. The day ended by a drive out of town to a Heurige – a restaurant in the Vienna Woods where growers sell the new wine. We had an excellent meal and sampled the wine as intended. This was a very Viennese ending to a very full Vienna day.

Sunday morning we were free to explore or recover according to need and desire. We then met at the famous Hotel Sacher for lunch and a tour of the hotel, including the *Third Man* Suite. By now several people were due to leave, but some went on the final Vienna Walk with more Greene and *Third Man* information.

The average age of the party was probably more than Brigitte Timmermann is used to and she drove us pretty hard in her enthusiasm and determination that we should not miss anything of interest. She did a great job and it was altogether a very full and interesting weekend.



The group visiting the Theater in der Josefstadt

Accident on Pillar Rock

The story of the accident on Pillar Rock is not mentioned in Graham Greene's autobiography, nor of course in Sherry's biography as it does not directly relate to his subject, but it happened in the summer of 1920, just before GG's 16th birthday, a sensitive age for anyone, let alone this particular young brother. It therefore makes for interesting speculation.

Raymond Greene, Graham Greene's elder brother, recalls in his reminiscences *Moments of Being* (Heinemann 1974): 'Charles Holland, my sister Molly and I had a wonderful day on Pillar Rock. We descended by the new West climb. I led down, Molly between us, Holland as befitting the most experienced climber, in the rear. We came to a place where we climbed down a vertical 'chimney' and struck out horizontally on a traverse before descending vertically again. I took up my stance at the end of the traverse, but, being inexperienced, did not belay myself and merely took in the rope as Molly climbed across to me. I assumed that Holland would be, as he should have been, protecting her with her rope above. Suddenly she fell, and instead of being supported by Holland, she plunged downwards. The rope ran through my hands until about a hundred feet below, she struck a grass ledge, and was momentarily halted before bouncing off again. At this moment I twisted her rope round my forearm and stopped her. The rope between her and Holland had almost run out and he, against all the rules, was himself climbing down the chimney. Had I not stopped her when I did, he would have been pulled off. I could not have held them both and all three of us would have been killed. In fact Molly had no injury except minor cuts and bruises and I only a flayed hand'.

Raymond's story was not published until more than fifty years after the accident yet his description is as vivid as if he were telling it to his family on his return home from the Lake District. We can only speculate the effect the story had on the young Graham whose own emotions at that time appear to have been in a very vulnerable state. It was only a short while after this that he had his breakdown, as a result of which he was sent to Kenneth Richmond for treatment. It was also about this time that he first read Robert Browning's *Bishop Blougram's Apology* and in particular the words: 'My interest's on the dangerous edge of things', words which he might possibly have linked to Molly and Raymond's accident, although Browning is describing human paradoxes ('the honest thief') rather than the physical dangers of the English Lake District.

Ken Sherwood

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.

I am writing to tell you about www.booktribes.com – an exciting new social networking website that I'm hoping could become a way of enriching and enhancing your members' appreciation of Graham Greene in general and your Society in particular.

Booktribes is aiming to become a MySpace for book lovers, as well as a dynamic new shop window for authors, book news, literary events and much more.

It's early days yet (we have been trialling what people actually want), but we are already generating significant traffic. When users type in a favourite title, they are immediately connected to other people who also love that book, their comments, and other books they love. By

registering – it's free – users can flag their own favourites, rate, tag and review books, join discussions, form online book clubs, message other members and generally get involved.

Our independent venture, conceived and developed by a number of figures from the UK literary world, is now a growing Web community based upon the joy of reading, with the content of the site provided by the opinions and choices of our members. The database, provided by Nielsen, contains more than 2.5m titles and is updated weekly.

You and your members of course are already welcome to join in – as is anyone who loves books. But I'm hoping that together, over time, we might develop a special area within the site, exclusively for members of your Society, where all the benefits of online social networking could help to serve their literary passion.

I very much hope you will click the link above, take a look at us, and let me know what you think.

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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.

The Independent of 14 March 2007 carried an obituary by Christopher Hawtree of Amanda Saunders. She was the eldest child of Graham Greene's sister Elisabeth and Rodney Dennys; she was a model and a photographer and later became the manager of the literary estate of her famous uncle. In recent years she had taken up painting for which she had been awarded a prize. Festival goers know her husband Ron Saunders and their daughter Lucy who have often been with us. The article mentions that Amanda Saunders was a strong supporter of the Festival.

Chris Adye has very kindly sent a copy of an article in the March issue of *Book and Magazine Collector* that mentions that large caches of letters have been uncovered and are to be published as *Graham Greene: A Life in Letters*, edited by Professor Richard Greene (who will inevitably be known henceforth as 'no relation').

Cuttings always welcome.

The Google subscription as always yields a great number of mentions; GG is appearing regularly in a Book Blog where for example *Monsignor Quixote* has recently been added.

In connection with the death of Kurt Vonnegut a Lansing, USA paper mentioned that *Cat's Cradle* established him after Graham Greene called it 'one of the three best novels of the year by one of the most able writers'.

We find out that in The Philippines there is a hotel with a 'Graham Greene Suite'.

Space does not really permit an exhaustive listing of hits from very many US cities and a total of 11 countries including Nepal and Sierra Leone. But even now critics will use expressions like 'it reminds me of Graham Greene' or in one case 'Graham Greene this ain't'.

Appropriately for some of us, there have been a lot of reviews of *The Third Man* which is now available on DVD.

Book blogs are full of comments by what one assumes are younger readers discovering Greene for the first time.

The New York Times has carried a travel article which is available online; the title is *In Search of Graham Greene's Capri* and it tells of Greene's many visits to the island and the fact that he wrote several of his novels there. There is a plaque on the house he had, but none of his books are on sale in the local bookshop, only Shirley Hazzard's book about him. Although one does not think of Capri in terms of Greeneland, the writer does draw certain parallels but also notes that the island was never used as a setting for any of the novels.

THE TRUST

The Trust Library

The Trust is proud to be able to report that there is now a considerable collection of Greene-related books available for borrowing to Friends of the Trust.

The Library was recently relocated in the former lobby of School House of Berkhamsted Collegiate School, the Greenes' family home from late 1910 until Charles Greene retired in 1927. Clearly there cannot be unrestricted access as that would be much too disruptive to the working day of the School. Therefore anyone wanting to borrow a book from the Library should in the first instance contact the Secretary, Ken Sherwood, who can supply a complete list of all books held and can also advise on the method of despatch. It is hoped that a complete list of books will also be shown in due course on the Trust's website.

The bulk of the books held was donated by Pollingers, GG's erstwhile literary agents, to whom we express our grateful thanks. Books of interest continue to be published as Graham Greene is still read all over the world and such books will be added to the Library as funds permit. There are at present a few gaps in the collection, see below, and if you can help fill these, then the Secretary will be very pleased to hear from you. But please do not bring or send books until you have talked to him.

Books still needed for the Trust Library –
Uniform Edition (Nos 1 to 4, 6 to 12 and 14/15 in Library already)

5 *Journey without Maps*
13 *The End of the Affair*

Also unnumbered (listed on back of 1956 Uniform edition of The Confidential Agent)
The Third Man and the Fallen Idol (1 vol)
The Living Room
Loser Takes All

Collected Edition (Nos. 1 to 4, 13 and 18 to 22 in Library already)

No. 5 *The Power and the Glory*
6 *The Heart of the Matter*
7 *The Confidential Agent*
8 *The Collected Stories*
9 *A Gun for Sale*
10 *The Ministry of Fear*
11 *The Quiet American*
12 *Stamboul Train*
14 *A Burn-Out Case*
15 *The Man Within*
16 *The Third Man* and *Loser Takes All*
17 *The Comedians*

Greene on Capri – Shirley Hazzard 2000
The Art of Graham Greene, Kenneth Allott and Miriam Ferris 1951
Saints, sinners and Comedians, Roger Sharrock 1984
The Art of fiction: Graham Greene, Martin Shuttleworth and Simon Raven
Graham Greene: A collection of Critical Essays Ed. Samuel Hynes New Jersey 1973
G W Gransden, *Graham Greene's rhetoric. 'Essays In criticism 31.* (1981)
Julian Maclaren Ross, *Memoirs of the forties* (1984)
Maria Couto, *Graham Greene on the Frontier* Macmillan Press 1988
Grahame Smith, *The achievement of Graham Greene* Brighton 1986
John Spurling, *Graham Greene* London 1983
Evelyn Waugh, *Essays, articles and reviews* Edited by Donat Gallagher London 1983
Evelyn Waugh, *Letters* ed. Mark Amory 1982
William Cash, *The Third Woman* Little Brown & Co 2000
Articles of Faith, edited by Ian Thomson The Signal Press 2006
Julia Llewellyn Smith, *Travels without my Aunt* 2000
Selection of manuscript annotations in GG's library published 1993 by Gloucester Road
Graham Greene's narrative strategies by Murray Roston (Palgrave Macmillan 2006)
The Life of Graham Greene Vol.3. Norman Sherry Published 2004.
Travels in Greeneland, by Quentin Falk Edition 2000 Reynolds and Hearn Ltd
The Third Man by Brigitte Timmermann English edition
No Man's Land by Graham Greene published by Hesperus Press
BFI Film Classics *The Third Man* by Rob White BFI publishing
Brighton Rock, Turner Classic Movies British Film Guide by Steve Chibnall IB Taurus

Email: secretary@grahamgreenebt.org





Barbara Laister



Ferris Wheel



Sewer Entrance

We are very grateful to Hope Gilbert for all the photographs from Vienna.



In the Sewer



Vienna Cemetery

Amanda Saunders - A Personal Tribute

Anyone who has any understanding of the real Graham Greene world will be saddened by the death of his niece, Amanda Saunders. When her own mother, Elisabeth Dennys, died, Graham especially asked that Amanda should take over the vital role of secretary, remembrancer, practical helper and keeper of so much that appertained to Graham in both person and in publishing. I suspect that only the immediate family knows what that meant to Graham's peace of mind. Amanda ever fought his corner with tenacity, and devotion, and with that light graciousness of character that was her mark. When sister Louise spoke at her funeral of those qualities that had made their childhood lives shimmer with joy in the presence and example of Amanda, I reflected on all that she had meant in the ten years' history of The Birthplace Trust; and to me, who played some part in the Festivals.

In the early days there was a need for us to build up a tradition of goodwill; to show that The Trust was sincere in its intentions. The Greenes, by nature, do not rush into friendships. But Amanda came, year by year, and she brought Ron and daughter Lucy. It was not always easy to travel down from Northamptonshire, but they came, and their presence brought a kind of affirmation to our gatherings. Ron was a man of warm handshakes, and Lucy easily won golden opinions for her charm and confidence. They all made a difference to us, and I hope they have realised our pleasure in their company. To Amanda I owe more than to anyone else for her encouragement throughout four Festivals. She was a constant resource, and, even in recent years of gathering illness, she never minded. Because of her standing and significance, and because she was unforgettable to those who had moved in and out of Greene circles, we were able to invite speakers of repute, and those whose own lives had touched Graham's. 'I have been thinking about it,' Amanda would say in answer to my question, or, 'Let me just look at my address book'; and always there would be a name, an idea, a new possibility to explore. I was able to invite speakers because of the esteem in which Amanda was held; and through her we were led into all sorts of marvellous associations that would never otherwise have happened.

Amanda's family know what I would wish to say to them, and for her. Members of The Trust and many others join me. Let this simple 'Thank you' remain with them, and add to the riches they know.

David R.A. Pearce

The Graham Greene Birthplace Trust

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