



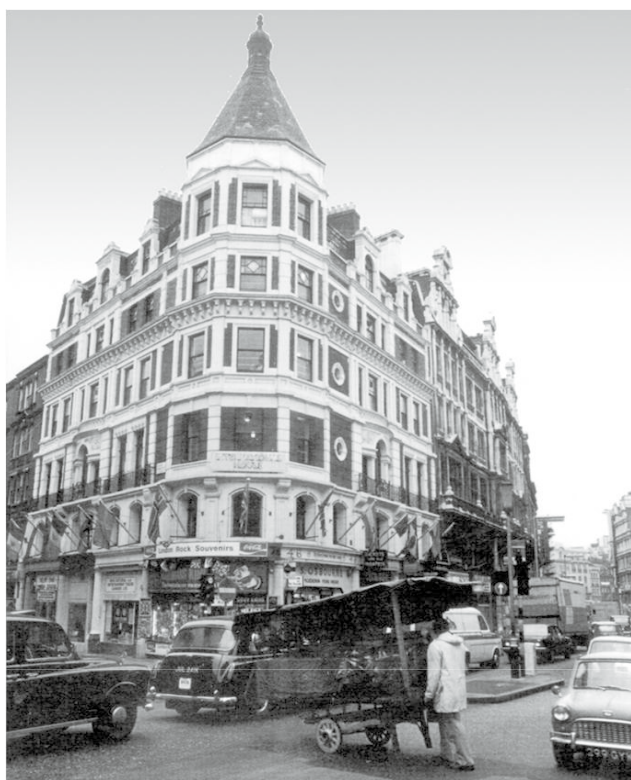
History - compiled by Brita Haycraft

## IH in Shaftesbury Avenue - the formative years 1961-66

By Brita Haycraft

IH first opened in London in the Covent Garden area in 1959, as described in the article *'IH in Covent Garden: then and now'* which also tells how the Haycrafts then managed to rent Shaftesbury Avenue and on what precarious terms. Many will remember those exuberant founding years. Its fundamental principles made IH and still apply. See Recollections sent by contemporaries on p. 7

**40 SHAFTESBURY AVENUE** was the first decent premises John and I managed to rent for our school. Not only was it very near Piccadilly Circus in a busy street lined with theatres, restaurants and pubs, whose name few foreigners could pronounce, but also it was spacious.



40 Shaftesbury Avenue

We suddenly had the whole second floor of quite an impressive corner building, large windows curving round into Rupert Street with six ample classrooms and room for Reception, a library and a bar. The rent was ridiculously low and I remember our sense of wonder the first evening, watching the flickering lights from three theatres opposite entering our classrooms.

1961 was the era of swinging London with espresso bars and the first pizzerias, pre-Beatles and Carnaby Street. Foreigners had always passed here and now began to enter our International House at number 40. IH would indeed experience many firsts here<sup>1</sup>.

Our Endell Street teachers and students happily transferred to the new building, confirmed via a battered old address book. Some students now also worked in admin - Gisela did our accounts, ingeniously storing receipts and ledgers in the boxed-in old washbasins, Reception was manned by Marie-Claude and Muriel<sup>2</sup> who also typed for John and often baby-sat for us in Blackheath. She brought us Marina, our beautiful Swiss au pair girl, the first to go from Beginner to Proficiency in one year.

Ann Mills was persuaded to move her accommodation bureau from Greek Street and an au pair agency moved in, presided over by Vera Traill who was Russian. We also offered translation services with my Transinterpreter agency. That first summer our teacher Colin Mac set up Inter 40, our first canteen, soon followed by Salvatore<sup>3</sup>, who established his Italian restaurant, a favourite IH meeting place for years. With classes of English morning, afternoon and evening, our IH was thus quite well equipped for foreign students. And they arrived in plenty, lawyers and doctors from southern Europe, working as waiters in London to send money home, and girls from all of Europe staying in families as au pairs, everyone happy in the liberal-minded London.

<sup>1</sup> See John's description of the tatty interior in his *Babel In London* (1966) and *Adventures of a Language Traveller* (1998).

<sup>2</sup> East German Gisela Druschke, Marie-Claude from France and Muriel Teuscher from Geneva

<sup>3</sup> Salvatore Fugallo from Sicily is described by John in both *Babel in London* and *Adventures of a Language Traveller*. Colin Mac (McMillan) came back after his last year at university but left in 1963 to start his own school in Lisbon, our first affiliate in Portugal.



**THE ATMOSPHERE** continued to be friendly, welcoming and non-hierarchical, everyone on first name terms, as in Cordoba. Ann Samson alone would keep to 'Mr Haycraft' through the decades, delightfully also referring to John as 'H' or 'Himself'. At the same time our IH was very particular about punctuality, for students as for teachers, with attendance lists and prompt correction of homework. Classes were never cancelled, standbys always ready to replace sick teachers. Students must never be let down.

Teachers often stayed on in the school long after hours, preparing lessons, drifting into the bar or gathering in the Blue Posts down Rupert Street. Our student club expanded, with film shows and interesting speakers, and sometimes parties in the evening for teachers and students, our own friends turning up too. It was still the time of close dancing and jiving to a gramophone or our jazz playing teacher Martin Joseph would rustle up some band, with him at an upright piano we'd acquired. One New Year's Eve, as the party ended, we came out to find Shaftesbury Avenue deep in snow, hardly a soul about. No one had noticed the snow falling and now our old Morris wouldn't start. Some kind passers-by helped push it down towards the deserted Piccadilly Circus, making tracks in the snow. Down Haymarket the engine jolted into action. Off we trundled past the silent Trafalgar Square, over Westminster Bridge and on to the Old Kent Road. It was a midwinter midnight drive to remember and the old vehicle eventually made it up Blackheath Hill to the vast Heath, covered in snow drifts.

At weekends, we arranged excursions to Stonehenge, Oxford or Stratford, our small children dandled on students' laps and Martin Joseph's toddler cooed over in her push chair.

## BIRTH OF TEACHER TRAINING – WITH DAILY TEACHING PRACTICE

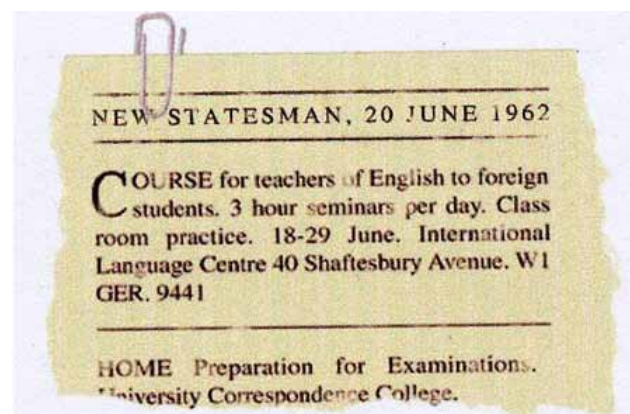
The student numbers rose rapidly and more teachers were needed – fast! But how to be sure they were good

teachers? John decided the quickest way to find out was to offer a short training course and pick the best ones from it. Said and done.

In April 1962 John put an ad in the *New Statesman's* personal column and over a dozen enrolled. It was only a two-week course, but quite a gruelling two weeks.

After three hours' theory each morning, the trainees faced the afternoon practice teaching when they took turns teaching classes of real students, watched by their fellow trainees and tutor. Afterwards, tutor and trainees gathered to take each lesson to pieces, reminding me of Rembrandt's *Anatomy Lesson* and then

they trooped off to prepare tomorrow's lesson. And so on, every day, for the two weeks! It worked.



Was it that instant 'post mortem', carried out with the unique British tact that spurred the trainees to do better the next day? Or the inventive teaching method, inevitable with so many different nationalities in the class making translation impossible and only English could be used, even with beginner students?

The guinea pig foreign students were thrilled to get free extra classes. The students were asked how they liked the lessons and, delighted, they gave their opinions frankly but in a friendly way so the trainees didn't mind. They were also taken to the pub by the trainees who soon lost their nervousness teaching them. A sort of loyalty developed between trainees and students. Trainees worried more about gaining approval from the tutor and they'd never miss a single session.

This type of course could probably only have started in an English-speaking country with its simple 'you'. It would have been hard to get it off the ground, having to choose between a 'tu' or 'vous', 'lei', 'voi' or 'loro', or negotiate a third person approach 'Could Miss Bergman ask Mr. Brown ...'

The teacher training brought immediate advantages to our school: the pick of the newly hatched teachers getting jobs with us where they already felt at home in

our premises after having spent two weeks there. They continued sharing teaching ideas and sparking off new ones. Ideas simply rained down, to be tested, enjoyed, improved, toyed with, discussed and developed, turning the teachers' room into a buzzing laboratory.

At the weekly teachers' meeting new techniques or teaching tricks were always demo-ed and I'll never forget Sue Lake, a mini-skirted 19-yr-old teacher with a pony tail, standing up with a box in her hand. 'Guess what's in this box?', she asked, shaking it about. We all guessed 'It could be a..., or it might be a... It can't be a...'. 'Super!' she affirmed. 'Just something I tried out for the conditional in my class.' Teachers would sit in on each other's classes for inspiration which is still the norm in all IH affiliated schools.

As a new and independent school with all our teachers newly employed, young, mostly unattached, we could allow ourselves to experiment, especially in a workplace in the heart of famous old London in the swinging 60s!

Wages and salaries were modest then, not least in the teaching field. We ourselves lived on little, like students, and took the minimum for our own keep and anything left over John always "ploughed back" into the school. We had not invested any money, indeed had no spare funds, but we developed the school as a surplus allowed. But that era was also a very cheap time to live! Status symbols were despised by the 60s middle classes, even TV was regarded as a rather vulgar phenomenon. People boasted about their second hand furniture and second hand cars and showed off their DIY efforts. This did make living easy.

This 1962 short teachers' course was the first ever with daily monitored practice teaching and instant feedback in Britain, if not in the entire world. Is this still so? It ran again and again. The fee was only 8 gns, so if you failed, you could do it again. No qualifications were stipulated and one excellent trainee was a former window cleaner while another, an academic, who got caught in his web of theories. Our teachers Roger Gannon, Martin Joseph and Iain Hammet also proved gifted as teacher trainers, as did the newly trained Anthony Skyrme, maybe the first to be 'reared' in-house, by Martin Joseph and John. After all, no short training existed out there in the particular skills of teaching English to adult foreigners. These adult learners, who paid for their classes, would of course drop out if their teacher failed to inspire them. So teachers had to be mindful of this or face sacking by the struggling private school.

With the growing demand for trained TEFL teachers, John tried to get the Ministry of Education to give grants for his TT course to applicants who couldn't afford the

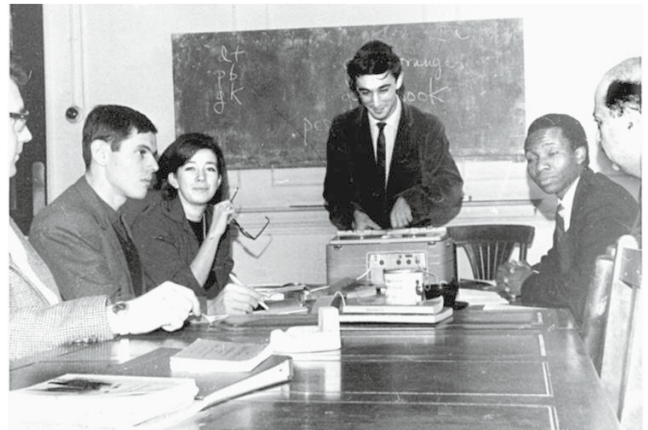
time off even for two weeks. But the Ministry's lofty reply was that they didn't give grants for a course lasting less than a year, adding in the same breath that they only certificated year-long courses. Adult education was outside their care and the only requirements were fire precautions and enough toilets on the premises.

Of course, extra rooms were needed for our training course's afternoon teaching practice, but as the early afternoon was a slack period, some classrooms stood empty then. Fortunately the floor above us was unoccupied, so - with more courses starting - John took a chance and rented it, thinking it would fill up with the coming summer flow of students. It did.

Soon we also ran a 12-week evening part time TT course for people with jobs during the day. It had the same appeal as the day course.

Ever since, IH has only employed trained teachers with the better grades, which inevitably upped the standard of our classroom teaching. The others, even those few who failed, at once found jobs in the many other London language schools.

The IH activities set off a blaze of talks, seminars, workshops, article writing and conferences, open to anyone teaching English to foreigners in the hundreds of language schools in the London area, and our ideas spread.



Martin Joseph teaching with a tape recorder (in Endell Street)

**OUR CLASSROOM NO LONGER HAD TABLES** but was a semi-circle of chairs with side supports. Sitting side by side, students felt more relaxed, speaking more, writing less and able to move about and go up to the blackboard or act out some situation. The teacher never sat down, and had no desk as such. The blackboards became whiteboards and the wonderful new tape recorder made its appearance.

In 1964 John invested in a new learning device called a language laboratory, installed by Alan Wakeman, a

new teacher, also a wizard with tape recorders and all things technical, who went on to write *English Fast*, a tall slim volume with a spiral back ideal for the language lab and the first with characters who bickered in the dialogues! Our children called him Alan 'Makeman'.



Leslie Blundell teaching in the open classroom

The language laboratory was a massive beast requiring a large room with 15 booths and Alan instructed Anwi Buckingham in its mechanisms who then lead each new litter of teachers, teacher trainees and trainees into its mysteries for years to come. It was a totally absorbing lab hour for students once or twice a week, and lang labs would be established in every new IH school to come: Rome, Algiers, Paris, Barcelona, Cairo, etc., always following Anwi's lab discipline and continued by Sheila Sullivan in Piccadilly with affiliates worldwide dependent on her wisdom, assisted by the whole team of teachers taking turns in the lab.



The language lab

This self-correcting with a tape recorder is probably the fastest route to mastering a new language and, as I saw in Tbilisi in 1989, used by the Soviets to train their simultaneous interpreters and secret operators – most effectively.

In Shaftesbury Avenue, course books, wall charts and tape recorders lived in the 'Horse Box', a space storing all the classroom materials

handed to teachers over a half door. Years later, when moving into Piccadilly, I remember new teachers' astonishment at the question: 'Where shall we put the horse box?'



Martin Joseph, Richard Herbert and Roger Gannon outside the entrance of 40 Shaftesbury Avenue



The entrance of 40 Shaftesbury Avenue

Teachers would queue at the horse box and then plough their way to their classrooms, laden with a tape recorder, fifteen copies of the course book under one arm, a bag with 'real objects' (mock fruit, cigarette packets and the like to act out shopping situations) dangling from the shoulder, one hand often balancing a cup of coffee, a cigarette between two fingers. The throng in corridors and on stairs in the breaks was staggering. Many teachers and students smoked then, except in the language lab and it was a relief later, when the insurers forbade smoking in the classroom, not to have any more ashtrays to empty after classes.

As we occupied the third floor too, perhaps also the fourth, we put out flags from various countries over the street, above a board marked International House. The doorway to 40 also had this board.

Just inside this entrance, in the little lobby, there was a door to some sort of closet. That became Room One, our first Welfare Desk open every day with Gill and soon Anwi and other volunteers giving information to students and arranging visits to London's landmarks. Some eminent IH teacher trainers remember doing stints in Room One, like Lin Hutton/Coleman, Margaret Westell, and Maureen McGarvey.

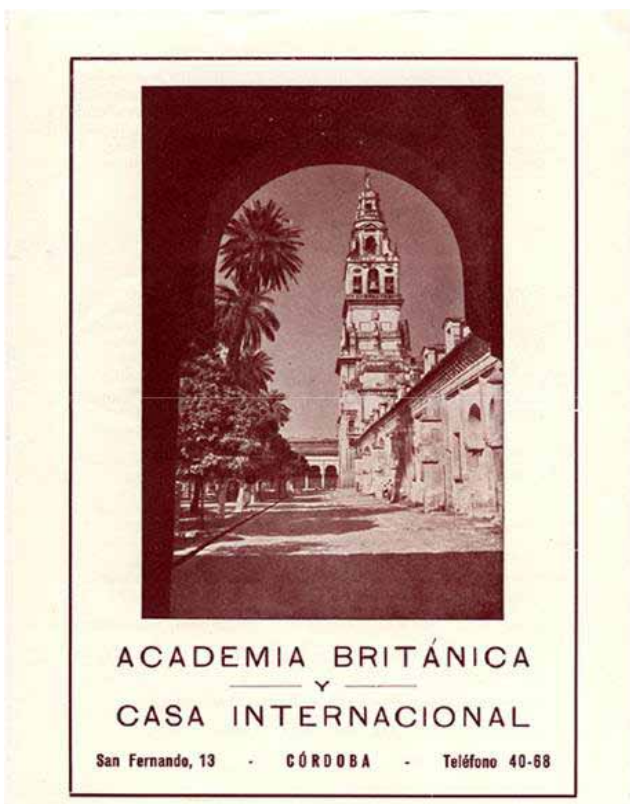


Gill in Room One

From 1963 John had a full time secretary, Tina Navas<sup>4</sup> (briefly before working for John's brother Colin) and then Silvana Orlando<sup>5</sup>, both Italian ex-students with their Proficiency certificates. Silvana witnessed and recorded all John's IH developments during our time at 40, as many still remember fondly, also in the IH World Organisation.

## THE FIRST AFFILIATES

Our first school abroad was, of course, Academia Britanica / Casa Internacional in Cordoba, mother of IH, which could now get trained teachers, thanks to our London training courses.



But already in summer '62 a group of Italian juveniles had arrived in London, led by Ausonio Zappa, from his school in Rome. He asked John to send him good teachers and so the first IH link with Italy was established.

In 1963 our teacher Colin McMillan started his little school in Lisbon, with IH trained teachers from London. After all, every two weeks London had a new issue of teachers to pick from.

Then, as now, the aspiring trainees were longing to get a job abroad, preferably with IH, hoping their grade would be good enough. In return, they could trust the IH school to treat them well and show them more teaching techniques and know-how. The school would be visited annually by John or a teacher trainer or me who sat in on classes to make sure standards didn't drop. It was a most fortunate symbiosis: affiliated schools abroad only used teachers trained by IH. And in the summer when schools slowed down in the warm countries, teachers would come back and teach in London, then bursting with students.

Suddenly, in 1963, just as our Shaftesbury Avenue was expanding, John decided he must go to newly liberated Algeria and start a school. He felt they were bound to need English. To my mind, it seemed too soon, with our teacher training still young. Who knows how he could have influenced the Ministry of Education with his bold ideas, had he given his all to IH London TT for another year?

But this new North African venture also beckoned and its pioneering spirit was to inspire many of our teachers to set off likewise. It opened new horizons for teachers of English to foreigners. For years after, I can remember in teachers' meetings John asking 'Who wants to go to Oran, Tripoli, Beirut...Bangkok, Tokyo, Casablanca, Sudan?' and hands would shoot up. The following Monday, they'd be in the faraway wherever, ready to teach!

The instant bonus with this Algiers affiliate was that a whole contingent of Algerians arrived at Shaftesbury Avenue for a whole three-month English course. Educated French-speaking young engineers that they were, exuberant with their new-found independence, they scored highly in class and added a lot of vitality – and income – to Shaftesbury Avenue. One of them was Aissa Hadj Naceur who stayed on to run our first IH bookshop for the next seventeen years.

**WE NEVER ADVERTISED** during our sixteen years at 40. All our teachers came off the training courses, and all the students streamed in from the street. All other staff joined us on recommendation or just by chance. Only the school itself had an ad in the Underground and the double deckers making their way up and down Shaftesbury Avenue.

<sup>4</sup> See Tina's recollections below

<sup>5</sup> See Silvana's recollections below

In Oct 1964 Ann Samson called in about a job in reception but was soon heading it, then became house manager as the school spread upstairs and sideways down Rupert Street, comprising over 90 rooms in the end. Salvo's restaurant moved to the very top, later to be adorned with a beautiful mural painted by teacher and teacher trainer-to-be Jane Glover. Here students and staff tucked in, gazing out on all the theatre roofs.

As students multiplied, the battle for more space intensified, and the classrooms always won. Ann's first office just inside reception was commandeered as an interview room and she found herself three flights down in the basement on Rupert Street, but she took it stoically. Once the neighbouring Rupert Street merged with 40, everyone rushed up and down different flights of stairs, still lugging tape recorders and books etc. The IH school was successful but any surplus money always went towards new projects, never to restoring the grimy old lift in 40, which we could have done with.

By 1965, Shaftesbury Avenue probably had 20 or 30 teachers including Tony Thompson, Dominic Gill, Adil who wrote poetry and also teacher trained. And Ben Warren, who also translated for my Transinterpreter, with his degree in French and German. But he was promptly roped in by John for Algeria, followed by Libya where he went with his wife Carmen. Many hand written, very interesting letters from Ben remain in Silvana's files, now in my Blackheath archive.

## 1966 WAS ANOTHER INCREDIBLY FULL YEAR.

The London school progressed at an ever increasing tempo. There were now several directors; one for the school, one morning Director of Studies, one afternoon one and one for the evening classes. Lin Hutton became our first Director of Teacher Training.

John offered the VSO a five-day training course for their young volunteers. One of them, Andrew Chitty who was only 16 and due for Oxford, instantly grasped our teaching ideas (and we ignored his bare feet!). In the evening French, Spanish and German were taught to English people who had conversation exchanges with our foreign students. John launched The Exporters Club, optimistically thinking it would draw businessmen. It soon folded, perhaps because the student-like atmosphere wasn't their scene. And their scene wasn't our priority.

Among the Affiliates, Libya had an IH school, Nick Dobbree had started in Beirut and Japan was on the cards. In February of that year John rang me from Algiers and said "Come out for a few days." It was easy and very cheap and I was in the plane later that week, our three children cared for by our devoted Cordobese au pair girl Antoñi-

ta. I was amazed how Algiers with tree-lined boulevards looked like a replica of a French Riviera resort, but it also had narrow alleyways with donkeys laden with goods, just as in Cordoba. One of the three days I was there, a student called Mouloud took us into the desert country where abandoned foreign legion forts still stood.

That September, John and I also went to Rome, asked by Ausonio Zappa to run a two-week teacher training course, memorably yielding new IH teachers Sheila Sullivan, Roger Gower and Edward Woods, as described in Sheila's and Edward's stories in the sequel to this article.

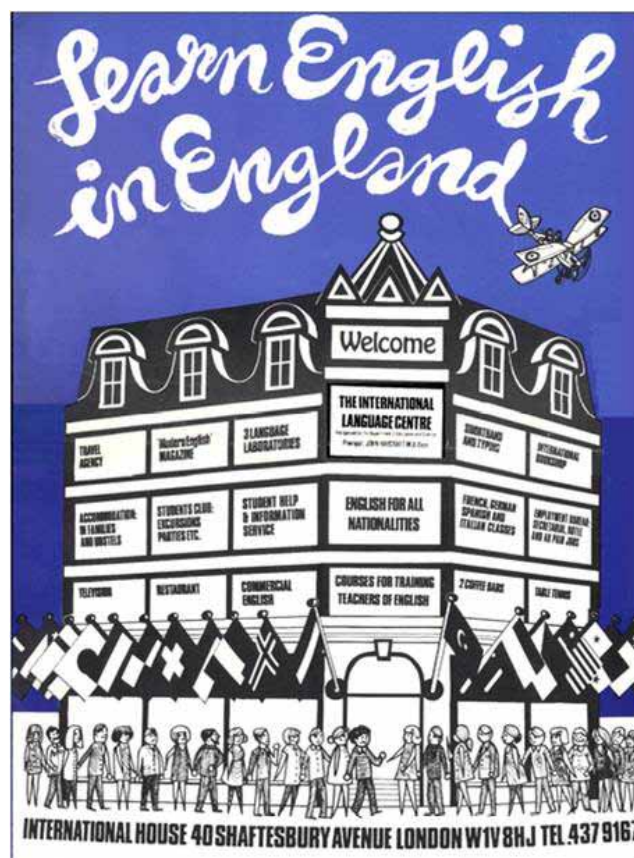
December saw the first issue of Charlotte Eastwood's Modern English magazine.

Our Christmas party that year was held in the Lyceum, stage, stalls, balcony and all and with a live band. John was in Japan setting up a school in Osaka funded by Tom Hall, but he was back home in Blackheath in time for Xmas.

On the threshold of 1967 were the Video filming and the English Teaching Theatre and more affiliates!

IH had reached its two highest peaks: teacher training and worldwide affiliation. These years in Shaftesbury Avenue really formed IH. Now it was ready for a broader stage. The next twelve years brought more innovation and expansion and later 106 Piccadilly became the splendid icing on the cake.

*Read about Endell Street and Shaftesbury Avenue in John Haycraft's Babel In London. (Hamish Hamilton 1966)*



# Recollections from other IH contemporaries from the years at Shaftesbury Avenue 1961 - 1966:

*Many in IH have kept in touch over the years and I want to give special thanks to colleagues who, fifty years on, are bringing our beginnings in Shaftesbury Avenue to life below. It is delightful to note how they echo mine and each others' memories. Brita. August 2011.*

## **Roger Gannon (remembering in 2002 from Canada):**

'Brought back happy memories of my time with John and reminded me of the major part he had played in my early post-Cambridge life. He had that wonderful characteristic of giving you a task and letting you get on with it, rarely if ever breathing down one's neck.

I do not recall who was on the training course and frankly am not sure if even I was. Certain names occasionally float back from that time: Felipe, the odd-job man, Salvatore and his restaurant and his English, air hostess wife, Gisela Druschke, Anthony Skyrme, Martin Joseph (still I believe living in Italy), Alan Wakeman, the language lab guru, Tony Horwood, Tony Thompson, Brian Falloon, Mohammed Yunus (who started his own school – in Holborn I think).'

## **Anthony Skyrme, the first trainee teacher to become a teacher trainer (recalling all those happy times at IH, 2010):**

'I joined in the early summer of 1962.

When I first entered the portals of IH, the school was on the second floor, with Gisela's small room on the left as one entered, a tiny Director's Office and a humble staff room, and Salvatore in his small coffee bar. An (employment) office was run by Mrs Traill, an old lady who, John told me, was a daughter of one of Kerensky's ministers in the short-lived government after the Russian revolution.

The teachers already there were Roger Gannon, Martin Joseph, Tony Horwood, Iain Hammett and Rodney Forwood and perhaps Brian Falloon. Richard Lucas and Tony Thompson joined in 1963 and the year after Anthony Paul and Patricia Smith/Kazan.

I trained Avril Banta, Barry Tomalin, Benetta and lots of others I have forgotten. I taught Hadj ( a super guy) in 1965 and he managed the bookshop, when it started round the corner in Rupert Street.

Shaftesbury Avenue was certainly my working home in the sixties and seventies before I went off to Spain. I do remember many of my earlier colleagues of the sixties going off to far-flung exotic places - Mar-

tin Joseph to Oran (or was it Rabat?), Tony Thompson to Rome and Peter North to Algeria and being particularly saddened by Roger Gannon's departure to Canada, because he and I shared a particular interest in modern jazz (as did Martin, of course) and we would frequently go together to Ronnie Scott's Club in Dean Street after working hours. I also remember Silvana being very upset when Roger left - she was quite distraught ! Rodney taught Tina (Nava) in early 1963.

Did we get the whole building in 1965, after Mrs Traill left and Alan Wakeman thought about installing a Language Lab?'

## **Silvana Orlando, first a student and then John's secretary (sent 2011):**

'Here is how I remained in contact with John who was my teacher at the Western London College of Commerce. Before he left, he gave me the address of the school he had just opened. When Fiorella arrived in April 1960 I went to Endell Street and asked John whether he would be willing to give her ten private lessons, which he did. I liked the atmosphere of the school so much that I decided on the spot to continue my studies there. It was so different from big and impersonal schools.

I took the Proficiency exam in June 1962 and then got a job in a hotel. But one evening in spring 1963 I went to fetch Fiorella and I was standing outside waiting for her when John came out by chance and when he saw me, he asked if I was still working as a chambermaid. On hearing that I was not, he invited me to go and see him on the following Monday because there might be a job for me. As it turned out, I started working as his secretary in 1963.

The school was on the 2nd floor and small with an informal atmosphere. The students were mostly young working people who, for an affordable fee, had a first class tuition. John's office was mostly occupied by an imposing desk at which he seldom sat for more than ten minutes. In a corner, by the window there were a small table and chair and a typewriter: that was my working space.

When John had a private meeting, I would go to the

restaurant run by Salvatore Fugallo, a young Italian chef, to frank letters. The school soon expanded and John and I moved to the third floor. I shared the office with Josephine, a pleasant Maltese girl who looked after the Teacher Training Courses and Brita's Transinterpreter. John's office was next door.

Our offices were the epicentre of the school, full of life with people coming and going and although the work increased enormously, I loved every minute of it.

In the 60s, IH was a place of talent, youth, excitement, energy. The people who worked there in whichever capacity were all dedicated to helping make IH a success. John with his charisma, unstoppable enthusiasm and lively mind was the driving force and I remember Anthony Paul who had a book published and Dominic Gill who I believe became the musical critic of the Times. I left in 1976.'



Silvana (left) and Josephine

### Fiorella Orlando, Silvana's sister and a student at Shaftesbury Avenue (sent 2011):

'I arrived in England in April 1960 without being able to speak or understand a word of English. In June my sister Silvana introduced me to John Haycraft who had just opened his own school, 'Academia Britanica' in Endell Street. He agreed to take me on for ten private lessons after which I was moved to a class and in December of the same year I took the Lower Cambridge. John was a learned and inspiring teacher, full of enthusiasm and optimism and his lessons were so interesting that one learned with great pleasure.

When the school moved to 40 Shaftesbury Avenue, I continued to attend until June 1962 when I left, having taken the Proficiency examination.

The same warm and friendly atmosphere of Endell Street was in IH too. The quality of teaching was as always first class. I remember with pleasure the parties

where the students had the invaluable opportunity of meeting English people for conversing with and listening to in order to practise the language and they were always very enjoyable gatherings.'

### Tony Thompson, teacher and one of the first teacher trainers (sent 2011):

'Yes, I started pre-Teacher Training. I had heard of IH from Heather Horwood at Cambridge and I started teaching in 1963. Heather Horwood, Rodney Forewood and Tony Horwood had already left.

My first class was a Proficiency one, sharing with Jennifer Coutts. I certainly remember Anthony Skyrme, Martin Joseph, Roger Gannon, Colin McMillan, Ian Hammett and also Alan Wakeman, Yunus Raiss, Adil Jussawalla, and Anthony Paul, Anwi Buckingham, Patricia Smith, Lin Hutton, Ann Mills, Vera Traill, Gisela, Silvana et al.

I was one of Ben Warren's teacher trainers and then his best man. I also taught Paco Peña's 'waiters' class'. I became the afternoon DoS and when James Taylor took over the afternoon reins, I became morning DoS. I think I became Director in 1967 before John sent Sheena and me off to Rome in 1970 to replace Guy and Angela Wilson.'

### Tina Nava (sent 30<sup>th</sup> June 2009) :

'I was preparing for the Cambridge Proficiency exam, in the first semester of 1963, by having three-hours lesson with John from 9.30 to 12.30, and then one-hour pronunciation class from 6 to 7 p.m. with Rodney Forewood. As John realized that I had some free time in the afternoon, he asked me whether I could type and take shorthand. He needed someone who could answer the numerous letters from abroad, enquiring about English courses of the coming summer. The task was rather easy, because all I had to do was to adapt a standard letter text to each reply. I did that with great pleasure, for it implied speaking English with John, my Superteacher, who always corrected any slightest mistake I made during our conversation. At that time, the real snag for foreign students was to meet English people outside the school, in order to practice the language. So, I felt privileged for not having that problem. After all, I was among English teachers the whole day! At times I also had to replace Gisela at the reception desk, and I did that with enthusiasm, as I loved welcoming students, making them feel at home, correcting their ten-sentence grammar test, in order to put them in the appropriate class. I remember I had a successful way to deal with people, which was in keeping with my extrovert nature. On the very day I arrived in London, through common friends, I met Liliana, who suggested, from the very beginning, I should attend courses at IH in Shaftesbury Avenue. I worked for



John from January until May 1963.

The teachers I remember were: Rodney Forewood, Martin Joseph, Richard Lucas, Heather Horwood, Tony Horwood and David Walker from Ireland. (Martin Joseph was a jazz pianist, and he used to play on Saturday night at the Troubadour Cafe which was at a stone's throw from where Liliana and I lived. So we enjoyed his jam sessions quite often).

In June 1963 I started working with John's brother Colin. He appeared at the school one night, as he was looking for a secretary of Latin origin, since the English one he had, was unable to spell the words he dictated properly. His language was full of Latinisms - I presume because of his humanistic background at Oxford. Colin interviewed me, and after 10 minutes, he asked me whether I could start working for him as from the following Monday.'

### Jane Willis (sent 2010):

'It would have been 1963 or 64 (Easter hols); and it was in a rather dark interior room in Shaftsbury Ave - about 20 of us and I remember you doing a stunning lesson on pronunciation and at some point having a session on English grammar; and I had to do - for my 'teaching practice' a lesson on the present cont. v pres simple - which I had never heard of! The grammar part was a complete revelation to me as I had never thought about English grammar in that way before even though I had done parsing and clause analysis at school, and I knew a lot about French and German and Italian grammar...I was quite nervous and remember thinking - as I was 'teaching' - 'But these people (the other members of the course) know all this already' I remember being disappointed with my grade - a B - and a comment about needing to be more enthusiastic in my classroom manner - which I certainly tried to do later on!! I vaguely remember a few other people on the course 'cos we all went drinking together in the Blue Posts. And then I went off to do VSO in Ghana and that is where I met Dave and where my language teaching career was launched - although I had never ever wanted to be a teacher - in fact I had always said I would never be one!

Good luck with the memoirs!

### Alan Wakeman (sent 2009):

'When I began'in '64, I definitely remember Ann Samson, Martin Joseph, Roger Gannon, Iain Hammett and Yunus.

Then we only had the second and third floors. As soon as the classrooms filled up, John expanded up a floor. By 1965 we'd expanded to the fifth floor. Expansion down to the first floor and the opening of The Exporters' Club was the last phase - possibly in 1965. Five Smith Brothers came up in the evening from Brighton and worked all night because noth-

ing, but nothing, was allowed to stop classes taking place as usual in the daytime. Somehow I became responsible for decorating and furnishing all the new classrooms and, of course, putting up signs so that students could find them. My guess is that we started expanding down Rupert Street in 1965, knocking holes through walls etc. etc. to join the whole rabbit warren together.

I somehow also got landed with the responsibility of surveying the decrepit vacant buildings there, doing drawings of my proposed changes, getting planning permission from Westminster City Council for Rupert Street downhill to Coventry street. This meant careful surveying of levels so that when they successfully knocked through to the next door Rupert Street building, the hole had to appear as near as possible to floor level in the Rupert Street Building though we usually had to construct a short flight of stairs. All the while I was doing all this every night, I was also teaching the same hours as other teachers every day - and being paid the same salary.'

### Lin Hutton / Coleman, the first Director of Studies for Teacher Training (sent 2010):

'Anwi (Buckingham) was already in IH in 1964 in Room One on the ground floor in charge of the Social programme as I helped her on Wednesday evenings in 1964-5 (after my day job in a new comprehensive school) in exchange for an omelette in Salvo's restaurant at 7pm!

I taught from September 1965, after a two-week training- course given by Roger Gannon, yourself (pron!), Martin Joseph, Yunus (Malay) and John giving the introduction.

Anthony Paul and Adil were both teaching at IH at the time as well as Iain Hammett, Tony Thompson, Richard Hunter (who went to Morocco ), Anthony Skyrme. And Jennifer Coutts had just been taken on from the course before mine.

I think we went from 3-week courses to 4-week ones in the space of about a year.

### Pat Smith / Kazan (sent 2010):

'When I started in '64 I was interviewed by Tony Horwood and started taking Anthony Paul's Italian evening class almost immediately, doing evening classes for most of that year as I was at Guildhall...

I often used to do tapes for John for Candlin Bk 1 and 2 and also most of 'Getting on in English' up in the Language Lab high up on the top floor. The voices were mainly me and Iain Hammett....we did it for love..... he used to yell with great earphones on looking like the Mekon in Dan Dare,....

...and I remember thinking as I took a taxi back to Islington (where I shared with Steven Birkoff and Lindsay Kemp) that I was spending all the money I had made teaching that evening so I went to the Porcupine and took a bar job as well!

I also remember having drinks with Alan Wakeman at the Exporters Club Bar down on the first (?) floor after staying late for yet more recordings.

I did a 2-week TT, as well as teach, in the summer with Ian Hammet, Yunus gave the fantastic foreign lang class, We did lots of sitting in, mainly in the class of the one with the long hair, legs and mini jupe. (probably Jennifer Coutts). We were soon to be singing in tune with Alan's English Fast.

Susan Wheeler was there in 65 and of course Gisela doing accounts, and lovely Silvana, John's secretary..... Ann Mills had a wonderfully cultured fellow with ginger hair and cord/velvet jacket helping her....many happy times, when reception was up the stairs ....rather than on first floor...must have been 65/66 as I went to Libya in summer of 66 to Derek Risley's school.

The staff room on the corner overlooking Rupert St was next to the Directors study when Tony (Thompson) was director and James (Taylor) sitting in.....that was early 66 (?). Harvey Webb, and Heather (Peter Menzies' girl with motor bike) were teaching and the white boards had started with those dreadful pens.

Wasn't another bit added to the school in 65/66 which made it even more like a rabbit warren...at the back on Rupert St side? The stairs were manic between classes...as were Hammet's hands!!! When we were all carrying piles of books and couldn't slap those wandering hands!!

### **Margaret Westell (sent 2010):**

'.....looking for details of my time at IH.

Attended the evening Teaching Course from October 18 to December 8 1965. The tutor was Iain Hammett. And I gained a Grade 2 certificate. Taught evenings from March 1966 to November 1967., while also working in Room One welfare bureau. Then I became a full-time teacher and also teacher trainer until June 1979. I believe I still have my Grade 2 Certificate amongst other certificates.'

### **Letter from Marco Marcolin – a student at IH during this time (sent February 14<sup>th</sup> 2010):**

Dear Mrs Haycraft,

I'm sure you won't remember me – one student

among thousands who studied at International House. I arrived at the school on 10 January 1966 and joined a special course for people without any notion of the English language: John Insole's class and James Taylor was the pronunciation teacher.

We had classes for 5 hours a day, but I was one of the luckier ones who passed my Lower Certificate Certificate in June.

I'll never forget :

- *your husband for the wonderful person and human being that he was.*

- *in March 1966 money was short and we were ready to leave. Mr Haycraft told us you must stay and he found a place in the kitchen of Salvatore for my friend Corrado and a place for me in the welfare office.*

- *how your husband screamed when he found the tape recorders about to be taken away in Rupert Street. The week before I had informed him that two guys were on the point of stealing them during the evening. I surprised them in a classroom opening the chains.*

- *your husband, holding a teacher's meeting at Salvatore's Restaurant, reading my day report in my accent "that is not a classroom, that is a restaurant" and saying I don't need to tell you where this message comes from.*

- *I did manage to put a stop to cups, glasses and plates being taken into the classrooms – your husband wasn't really aware of the problem until I started to put my daily report about the classroom situations onto his desk – and teachers started to be more careful about not placing the blackboard cleaner, full of chalk, onto the tape recorders. However I lost my battle to stop people smoking in class.*

- *when your husband called me into his office, sitting behind his desk, playing with his eyebrows, and he told me look after the school, because he was going away for three weeks to Japan and said "I hope, when I come back, that I'm not going to find you in my place with your red flag, Garibaldi."*

- *how I shocked your husband when he realized that during the Christmas holidays I had been busy covering the floor of the three school toilets with lino.*

- *when, at the moment of my departing in March 1967, he said to me, 'now I must employ two people to replace you, Marco.'*