



## From the Chairman

This is my first Chairman's report, having taken over the role from Dr Mary Wheeler. Mary retired from the Trust in May this year after many years of service, she became a Trustee in 1997 and served as Chairman from 2009. On behalf of all the Trustees, our administrative staff and our students I would like to thank Mary for her outstanding contribution, we have benefited from her many years of leadership and she leaves the Trust in excellent shape. As part of the handover Mary has passed on to me the Trust's records which date back to 1919 when it was first established by Sir Richard Stapley. These offer a fascinating insight into the Trust's work over a hundred years and the many thousands of students who have benefited from Sir Richard's legacy. They also provide a testament to the exceptional people who have managed the Trust, Mary was one such person.



The Stapley trustees with outgoing chairman Mary Wheeler (centre), November 2017.

We were also sad to say good bye to Ralph Penny in November. Ralph served as a Trustee for 15 years including a term as our Treasurer and we are grateful for his contribution. With two of our longer serving Trustees departing we are particularly pleased to welcome Clive Seale, who formally joined the council at our May meeting. We have openings for a further two Trustees and would welcome applications from our alumni, especially those with a background in the arts and humanities since these are not well represented on the council. The greatest demand made on our Trustees is the review of grant applications which usually takes place during April and May. We have two meetings a year, one in May and the other in November. If you are interested in becoming a Trustee please get in touch, our contact details are provided at the back of this newsletter.

This year we awarded 150 grants totalling £176,000, 114 of these were to new applicants and 36 to reapplicants. The opening date for receiving applications was 3rd January.

By 20th February we had already received 300 eligible applications and this year's round was closed. Inevitably there is far more demand for grants than we can possibly satisfy with our finite resources. The Trustees and our administrative staff work hard to make sure that we use our funds as effectively as possible in achieving the Trust's goals. To support us in this we ran our survey again in the summer and the results are summarised below, it is great to see that we are continuing to make a real difference. Your many letters of thanks are very much appreciated and we are always happy to receive news of your progress. We are proud of your achievements and wish you continued success in the future.

One final piece of news is that our web site has been updated, I encourage you to take a look and hope that you like it.

## Dr. Jane Dancer

### Trustees

**Dr. Jane Dancer – MA, PhD, MBA (Chairman)**

**Dr. Manali Chitre – MBBS, DCh, MRCP**

**Dr. Tekena Fubara – MChemE, CEng, PPSE  
(Vice-Chairman)**

**Dr. Debbie Marsden – BSc, MBBS, MRCP**

**Dr. Mike Mortimer – MA, MSc, PhD**

**Mr. Roger Pegum – MA (Econ) MEd FCCA (Treasurer)**

**Prof. Clive Seale – BEd, MSc, PhD**

**Prof. Keith Smith – BSc, PhD**

## In Memoriam: Professor Colin Seymour-Ure

The Trust notes with sadness of the passing of Professor Seymour-Ure. A professor of government at the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Kent for many years, he was a Stapley trustee from 1996-2010. We are grateful for his contributions to the Trust.

## Current Grant Holders

**Eiko Honda**, a third-year PhD student of History at the University of Oxford, tells us about her research on the emergence of Buddhist science in Japan:

What if biological sex was not limited to the binary categories of male and female? How would it change the way we understand the world?

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Slime moulds, known as one of the primal intelligent species on this planet, exist in a range from 900 to 6,300 different kinds of biological sex, including mycetozoa, known as *Henkei-kin* in Japanese – literally meaning the ‘bacteria of metamorphosis’. It has a nature without a normativity. It is essentially queer; having a nature that ‘does not correspond to established ideas of ... heterosexual norms’.<sup>1</sup>

My thesis argues that this epistemology of ‘queer nature’ emerged in the life and work of the naturalist and polymath Minakata Kumagusu (1867-1941) in Japan, the US, and London (most notably the British Museum) in the blooming era of Modern Science at the turn of 19th-20th century. Scientific thought of that era largely rested on a dichotomised power hierarchy of culture and nature, men and women, East and West, civilised and non-civilised, and ‘white’ heterosexual male and the rest, with all of its attendant inequalities. Kumagusu, however, envisaged a different kind of science that, while open to ideas from the philosophy of Ancient Greece, folklores of various cultures, works of Modern Sciences such as that of Herbert Spencer and Charles Darwin, and literature on what could be considered ‘sexology’ and ‘gender studies’ in our contemporary terms, was largely based on Shingon Buddhism and slime mould. The origin of everything is represented by the figure of *Dainichi Nyorai* in this Buddhism - which, he argued, was modelled after a eunuch – and the sutra of this universe most resembled the life of slime mould.

A highly prolific writer, with over 1,000 publications in both English and Japanese, he is celebrated in Japan as the pioneer of ecological thought because of his success as an activist, not least in protecting the primordial forest of the Kii Peninsula, now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, from industrialisation. In so doing, he tried to convey his own notion of ‘ecology’ - a term newly translated into Japanese language, signalling not only the obvious damage to nature but also potential negative cultural impact on both the local community and its people’s psychic tie with nature. However, he never ended up writing his own theory of ecological science in his lifetime. My DPhil research argues that it developed through his work on slime mould, which overcame dichotomised intellectual boundaries. It is a hermeneutic enquiry to define this knowledge of nature that has remained unresolved, until now.

Today, the impact of human activities on the life of non-human majorities on the earth has reached an unprecedented level. It is in this context that Sciences and Humanities are increasingly urged to engage with each other beyond disciplinary and cultural divides. The ultimate aim of my career is to contribute to the emerging international effort to make interdisciplinary and intercultural methods of thinking based on environmental history an essential part of educational curricula. Undertaking DPhil research enables me to train

<sup>1</sup> Queer in the Oxford Dictionary of English, Version 2.2.2 (203) 2005-2017 Apple Inc.



myself in the creation of new language necessary to convey such a method of knowing. By uncovering the significant case study of the intellectual history of modern science that defied accelerated divides, I hope to open up a new trajectory for present and future histories.

**Anne-Marie Greenaway**, a second-year PhD student of Biomedical Engineering at the University of Reading, tells us about her research into technology for music-mediated interventions in dementia:

Almost everyone can think of a piece of music that when heard, evokes particular feelings and memories. There may also be a time when we have used music to improve our mood or provide relaxation. We are able to do this because music processing involves a combination of cognitive, emotional and physiological systems which unite simultaneously and can be modulated. Interestingly, people with severe dementia can respond to music and even recall the lyrics to their favourite songs when other cognitive abilities are severely impaired. Musical memory is thought to be relatively preserved and may use partially different neural pathways in the brain compared to other types of memory. This may present an opportunity to access and modify dysfunctional systems via music in dementia. The overall aim of my PhD research is to provide a technology based musical intervention for depression in dementia.

Depression in dementia increases the rate of cognitive decline and lowers quality of life. Currently, anti-depressant treatments are the front-line intervention but research suggests that they are only marginally effective when compared to placebo. Although there are alternative treatments such as psychological therapies, they involve waiting lists, and may not be appropriate or the type of treatment the particular individual wants to have. It is important to provide a variety of evidence-based, cost-effective treatment options for people with dementia to choose from. As research has shown that music based interventions are safe, enjoyable and can quickly improve mood and subjective levels of depression, one of the aims of my PhD is to explore how music can be used more effectively in treating depression in dementia to foster longer lasting effects on mood and levels of depression. Having worked as a Dementia Advisor, I have witnessed how difficult it can be for people with dementia to access services outside of their home for a variety of reasons, including low mood and depression. Therefore, I hope my research will lead to the development of a home-based intervention that can be operated unaided by the people living with dementia.



Pursuing this particular PhD has not only allowed me to further develop my knowledge in dementia and research methods, it has also opened up new and exciting directions for my future research due to the multidisciplinary elements of the project (psychology, human computer interaction and neuroscience). For example, I recently presented a poster about my research at The Physiological Society’s ‘From lab to

clinic: Pathways to translational brain machine interfaces for rehabilitation' symposium. It is a research connection I would not have envisaged at the start of my PhD. I think we are at the tip of the iceberg in our understanding of the potential of music in dementia and I intend to be one of the leading researchers in this field.

**Parash Agarwal**, AMIMEchE, a second-year PhD student of Aerospace Propulsion at Cranfield University, tells us about his research:

Planes have always been my prime desire. Ever since childhood whenever I would see a plane fly I couldn't help but wonder what an amazing concept flying is. My love for flight and speed has always come first and has aided me in making many important decisions in my life. It is this enthusiasm and motivation that truly propelled me towards choosing Aerospace Engineering as my field of study. My passion for aviation, coupled with my love for physics and math was perfect for such a field. Due to the lack of aeronautical institutes in Nepal, I decided to further my passion for aerospace here in the UK. I completed my B.Eng. in Aerospace Engineering at the University of Hertfordshire with a First Class Honours Degree. This further set in motion a true passion and appreciation of the multi-faceted design enigma that is the jet engine. Motivated by a desire to further broaden my understanding of the subject, I decided to join Cranfield University to pursue my MSc in Aerospace Propulsion. The decision proved pivotal in ensuring my steadfast progress as a propulsion engineer. Not only did I upgrade my knowledge arsenal but I also learnt the value of innovation in the field. I successfully completed my course and was accorded with 'Cranfield MSc Thermal Power Scholarship 2016-17' and 'The Course Directors Awards 2016-17'.

Despite learning a host of new things during my MSc there was still much to learn from a researcher's perspective. Hence in the summer of 2017, I decided to pursue a PhD in Aerospace Propulsion at Cranfield University. My PhD research is a part of the bigger EU Horizon 2020 project called the ENABLEH2, which involves the design and development of a novel Ultra-Low NOx hydrogen micromix combustion system. I am currently working with seven other R&D organisations across the EU as a part of the project. To put my research into perspective, the aviation industry currently accounts for 2.1% of global carbon emissions; with the anticipated growth in air traffic, emissions in 2050 are expected to be 7-10 times higher than in 1990. To reduce the environmental impact of aviation, 'Flightpath 2050' targets have been set by the EU. However, increasing evidence suggests that these targets will be very difficult to meet with conventional carbon-containing fuels despite major research efforts in improving the airframe and propulsion technologies. As a part of my research, I will investigate the potential use of Liquid Hydrogen fuel as an alternative to meeting these ambitious targets. The scope of my research can help significantly improve the



local air quality in the vicinity of airports, providing long-term sustainability and unrivalled environmental benefits. In addition to upgrading my knowledge arsenal, I would also be able to develop a set of transferable skills: leadership, project management, problem-solving, critical reasoning, research and information management, which will hone me to the best of my capabilities as a professional in my field.

## Letters of Thanks

*Over the past year the Trust has received a number of letters from current and previous grant holders. Here are some excerpts below:*

### **Third-year medical student, UCL, June 2018:**

I cannot begin to express my gratitude to the entire Stapley Trust team for your continual support, which is absolutely invaluable to me. As I've mentioned in the past, I am ineligible for student loans and do not receive any financial support from friends or family so without awards like these I truly don't think I'd be able to make this work and make my dream of becoming a doctor a reality.

Thank you all so very much.

### **Third-year PhD student, biomedical science, University of Aberdeen, June 2018:**

I am so delighted to have received this prestigious award for the second time in a row. More importantly this award has contributed immensely to my research funding in the last couple of years. As a researcher, one of the biggest challenges one will often encounter is financial short-fall, but with a body like the Sir Richard Stapley Educational Trust, researchers such as myself have been able to pull through over the last couple of years. This award will aid my current conference in Berlin for the Federation of European Neurosciences Societies (FENS2018) and subsequently the International Congress for Neuroendocrinology ICN2018 in Toronto Canada.

I am so grateful. Thank you.

### **Second-year veterinary medicine student, RVC, June 2018:**

I am writing to thank you for awarding me the grant from The Sir Richard Stapley Educational Trust for covering the short fall in my funds for the coming academic year. As a second degree student and funding my own tuition fees as my parents are unable to assist, the grant will go a long way to help me this academic year and will help to provide me financial security. This means that I can focus on my studies more and will enable me to keep pursuing my ambition of becoming a Veterinary surgeon.

### **Second-year Masters student, fine arts, Royal College of Art, June 2018:**

Your support has helped make this year one of the most exciting and productive of my life: I've been able to pour all of my energies into this incredible opportunity and really push myself, both in making and research. I continue to be overwhelmed by the calibre of the visiting speakers, permanent staff and my peers, and am incredibly excited to begin work towards the degree show in a year's time.

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### Third-year PhD student, theology, Cambridge University, July 2018:

I am writing to convey my gratitude for your support of my studies. Your help is enabling me to pursue what is for me a life-long and enduring passion, and to study and develop my skills at the very highest level. Without your invaluable support, such pursuits may not have been possible.

I wish to express my sincere thanks.

### Alumni News

**Anna Snowball**, who received a grant in 2014 in support of her Master's studies at the National Film and Television School, tells us about her career development:



Since completing my MA in Directing Documentary at the National Film and Television School in January 2015, I formed a production company with two film school colleagues, including a fellow Stapley Trust grant recipient. We've had the privilege of making documentary films for Channel 4 News, *The Guardian*, CNN, *The New York Times* and many more. We're currently making films about the impact of 'the Jungle' in Calais, Brazilian mothers, the Iranian diaspora in London and a unique portrait of grief. You can find out more about what we're up to by visiting our website, [www.glow-films.com](http://www.glow-films.com). My time at film school was integral to launching my career; it gave me the skills, resilience and network to begin work straight out of school. Thank you very much for helping me fund my studies.

Photo: Anna Snowball filming in Brazil. Source: [www.instagram.com/p/BI20DmEhFxm/?taken-by=glow\\_films](https://www.instagram.com/p/BI20DmEhFxm/?taken-by=glow_films)

### Sir Richard Stapley Survey Monkey Report 2018

Thank you to the 105 students out of 157 who completed the survey. Although it took most of you less than 7 minutes to complete, we know that you are busy and really appreciate your taking the time to provide this feedback. The largest percentages of students who responded were studying for a PhD (51%) or Medicine (24%). The biggest proportion (43%) had a shortfall of between £751 and £2,000, while only 7% had a shortfall of more than £10,000.

Students have adopted a range of strategies to address the shortfall remaining following receipt of a grant from us. Most took on extra work (74%) and/or applied for additional grants (61%) with 58% of those applying for additional grants being successful. A significant number of respondents reduced their living expenses (41%), borrowed from family (31%) or took out more formal loans (11%) to make ends meet. Only 5 students were forced to reduce their study to part time.

Of students responding, 81% said the funding was essential while 8% would have been able to complete their course without the grant.

The grants had a positive impact in a variety of different ways. For the majority of students the funding meant that they could

focus on their study (91%). Financial worries were reduced and therefore so was personal stress (85%). There was less need to take on extra jobs (54%) or to borrow from family and friends (37%). For some the extra finance enabled time for extra curricular activities (21%) or for them to support someone in need (8%)

One again students receiving grants from the Sir Richard Stapley Education Trust have reported amazing achievements. Not only were they successful in exams but many obtained high grades. Publications and presentations were made by 58% of respondents, 47% were involved in sharing skills and educating others, 25% gave lectures or informed meetings and 14% gave concerts and exhibitions. A few were recognised within their disciplines through awards.

These achievements have led to a variety of outcomes with some students achieving more than one. 63% are continuing their course of study, 11% are now employed in the private sector, 6% in the public sector and 8% are aiming to study at a higher academic level. 8% have been employed within academia. 20% are developing artistic careers in music or the arts. All are to be commended.

The Trust is aware that despite our support, for some the past year has been a struggle requiring them to take on night-time work or combine several jobs just to afford to study, especially in London. Unfortunately for some this extra work load has seriously impacted on their ability to do as well in their studies as they had hoped. A few students have been faced by unexpected challenges which have made life difficult for them, but all are getting back on track.

The Sir Richard Stapley Educational Trust receives many more applications that it is able to fund and in some cases is only able to cover a relatively small proportion of a student's financial shortfall. The survey has demonstrated the impact that our grants make in helping students to achieve their goals. We want to continue to support as many students as we can and are therefore grateful to the 50% of respondents who said that they would be prepared to make a donation or to help with fund raising. Thank you again to those who completed the survey and have helped to validate our grant provision.

### Supporting the Trust

Donations help us to support the work of mature students in the UK pursuing further degrees in medicine, veterinary studies, and postgraduate degrees in all other subjects. The Trust takes this opportunity to extend its sincere thanks to its regular and occasional donors.

If you would like to make a donation, please contact the administrator via e-mail at [admin@stapleytrust.org](mailto:admin@stapleytrust.org), or write to us at:

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Gift Aid forms are available from the administrator and from our website: [www.stapleytrust.org](http://www.stapleytrust.org)