

Order! Order!

The Official Journal of the Association of Former Members of Parliament



SUMMER 2024

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THE LORDS – A SYSTEM ‘VERY HARD TO JUSTIFY’

By Andy McSmith

Alf Dubs doesn't mind if you don't call him by his official title, The Lord Dubs. He even thinks there should be a rule that prevents him using that moniker for as long as he is an active member of the House of Lords. And he is still active, at the age of 91, with firm views on a range of matters, including the absurdity of an unelected House of Lords.

It shocks him that after a day out canvassing in an election, hearing people raise the things that matter to them – housing, transport, the NHS, crime, litter, and the rising cost of food and heating – he returns to a building surrounded by people who are immune from the pressure of public opinion.

“I find it very hard to go anywhere in the world and justify the present system,” he told the spring meeting of the Association. “It is to do with accountability. I don't have to answer to anybody for what I do how I vote. I do in practice, because I have got friends in the wider world, but I don't have to.”

He believes that there should be an upper chamber elected on the same day as the Commons, but under a different voting system, making it unlikely that any political party would have an outright majority in both houses.

Meanwhile, as a stopgap, he thinks that serving members of the House of Lords should not be using their grand titles. “If people want to keep their titles, they should leave the Lords, and if they want to stay in the Lords, they should drop

their titles,” he suggested.

His political reputation rests primarily on his relentless campaigning on behalf of the world's dispossessed. In particular, there is Section 67 of the 2016 Immigration Act, known as the ‘Dubs amendment’, which protects unaccompanied children, and his denunciation of what he called the ‘shameful’ plan to send asylum seekers to Rwanda.

This concern for refugees is rooted in his own extraordinary childhood. He was born in Czechoslovakia, when that country was menaced by the Nazis, and came to England as a six year, in the now famous ‘kinder transport’ organised by the self-effacing Nicholas Winton. He spoke Czech and German but no English, which he had to learn in the playground.

“Nicholas Winton was an amazing character,” he said. “I got to know him many years later. We became pretty good friends. What was interesting is that he saw a problem and - while many people would say ‘this is awful: someone should deal with it’ - he said ‘I'm going to deal with it’. His tenacity was incredible.

“I said to him once, when he was 102, ‘Nicky, how are you?’ and he said ‘I'm fine - from the neck upwards.’ He began to fade mentally when he was about 106.”

“My father was Jewish, my mother wasn't. He said to his cousin that if the Nazis came to Prague, he would leave. His cousin said he would take a chance, which was a tragedy because in 1942 he was taken to Auschwitz.

“My father got here. He died when I was young, so my Mum brought me up. She had a pretty difficult time. I wasn't aware how difficult it was until some years later.

“My mother asked for permission to leave Czechoslovakia, but they threw her down the stairs and said permission was refused. She landed in a heap at the bottom of the stairs, but the one thing that meant that she still had a chance was that they threw her passport after her. She did manage to get out at the last minute – how I don't know.”

A hazard of being ‘Lord Dubs’, rather than Alf Dubs, is that he can be easily confused with ‘Lord Dobbs’ aka Michael Dobbs, who was guest speaker at the Association's December meeting. Recently, Lord Dubs had a message to ring Downing Street, which was obviously meant for his Tory counterpart. He joked that he hoped the confusion had not cost Lord Dobbs the chance of a job in government.

He added: “*I am told there is a book we're not supposed to see that is called Confusable Peers and that he and I were included. My claim to eternal fame is to say that there should be a companion volume called Confused Peers.*”



ASSOCIATION NEWS

Laura Blake

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

ALL MEMBERS MEETING CANCELLED

Although our Summer Reception is still able to go ahead, we have with regret had to cancel the All Member's Meeting this Summer. We were very much looking forward to hearing from our guest speaker, Andrew Roberts, historian and writer. For security and logistical reasons access to Committee meeting rooms has been restricted prior to the State Opening of Parliament on the 17th July and all other rooms have been secured to house new members post-Election.

The next All Member meeting will take place in the Autumn/Winter, details of which will be forwarded to you in due course.

Monday 15th July 2024 6–8pm SUMMER RECEPTION

State Apartments, Speakers' House

We look forward to welcoming two members of the Irish Association of Former Parliamentarians, Mary Flaherty, President and Pat Breen, as our guests at this year's Summer Reception. You may remember that the Irish Association of Former Parliamentarians came to London to meet with our Executive in September last year to hold an initial "get to know you" exchange of ideas and experiences.

We would like to thank our Patron, Mr Speaker, for kindly allowing our reception to go ahead in the Speakers House at this busy time for Parliament, with the State Opening happening only two days later. Our reception is a ticketed event. The charge is £40 per head to cover costs. If you have not done so, can you please let me know if you wish to attend as names have to be submitted for security reasons. Partners are welcome, but no guests please due to number restrictions.

Once I receive your confirmation and payment I will send you the official invitation to ensure entry.

I can't ignore the impact the announcement of an early Election has had on the Association. I have been kept somewhat busy writing to all the MPs who have said they are standing down and inviting them to join our venerable organisation. Our existing members are our best ambassadors, so if you know any of the MPs who are standing down personally, and you feel that you can, please do encourage them to join our ranks.

We are still working closely with Member Services on assisting with mentors for those defeated MPs post election, and there will be more news on that in the next newsletter.

WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS

DEBRA SHIPLEY



Debra was Labour MP for Stourbridge from 1997 to 2005 when she stood down.

Debra's initiative of the Protection of Children Act passed with cross-party support. Debra was also responsible for the Children's Food Bill, calling for the removal of unhealthy food from school vending machines and improvements to school meals, which latterly had the support of Jamie Oliver.

Debra served on the Culture Media and Sport Select Committee and was Parliamentary Ambassador to the NSPCC.

Since standing down in 2005 Debra has become a full-time artist. She is enjoying the opportunity to be creative and spend time doing painting, printing and photography. Until 2018 Debra's studio in Suffolk was open to the public, but following

Covid now exhibits only in museums and cathedrals. Her most recent collection of work "Bowls in a Fragile World" is a comment on pollution and climate change affecting the poorest around the globe the most - so still politics, but in a very different way! Debra's other passion is walking - anywhere and everywhere.

MICHAEL STEPHEN



Michael was Conservative MP for Shoreham, Sussex 1992-97.

He was PPS at the Ministry of Agriculture, and a member of the Trade and Industry and the Environment Select Committees.

He was Vice-chairman of the Backbench Legal and Home Affairs Committees, and was the author of s. 36 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 (which allowed appeals against over lenient sentences). In 1993 he introduced a Ten-minute Rule Bill which became the Bail Amendment Act (appeals against grants of bail by magistrates).

He held an Industry and Parliament Trust Fellowship with British Rail, and an Armed Forces Parliamentary Trust Fellowship with the Royal Navy.

Before election to Parliament he practised at the English Bar for 20 years specialising in commercial and international law.

He was assistant legal adviser to the British Ambassador to the United Nations for the 26th General Assembly, and was a founder-member of the International Leadership Seminars at the School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, Washington DC.

He currently lives in Chelsea and is Vice Chairman of the Chelsea Society.

THE EXODUS

By Andy McSmith

A record number of MPs decided this year not to stand again. The majority were Conservatives – 73 elected as Tories, and one who joined them. Add in five classed as independents because they broke with the party or lost the whip, plus 14 by-elections in Tory seats, 12 of which they lost, and more than 90 of the 365 Conservatives elected in the 2019 landslide were not running again. Here is a complete list of those who stood down voluntarily on 30 May, with their constituency, and the date on which they first entered Parliament.

Conservatives (73)

Sir David Evennett (Bexleyheath and Crayford, 1983) MP for Erith and Crayford in 1983-97, he lost his seat but came back in 2005 and served as a government whip.

Sir Greg Knight (East Yorkshire, 1983) A government whip, 1989-96 and 2012-13, he lost his seat, Derby North, in 1997, returning to Parliament in 2001.

Sir William Cash (Stone, 1984) He won Stafford in a by-election, switching to Stone in 1997. He campaigned for 40 years to prevent the EU undermining British sovereignty.

Sir John Redwood (Wokingham, 1987) A former head of Margaret Thatcher's policy unit, and veteran Eurosceptic, he was appointed Welsh Secretary in 1993, but resigned in 1995 to challenge John Major for the party leadership.

Sir Paul Beresford (Mole Valley, 1992) A practising dentist, he led Wandsworth council in 1983-92, and was MP for Croydon Central, then Mole Valley. A remainer, he called for Boris Johnson's resignation in 2022.

Sir Oliver Heald (North East Hertfordshire, 1992) A former barrister, he was a social security minister in 1995-97, Solicitor General in 2012-14, and a justice minister, 2016-17.

Sir Gary Streeter (South West Devon, 1992) A solicitor specialising in company law, and former Plymouth councillor, he was a junior Minister in John Major's government, and a Remainer. In 2022, he submitted a letter of No Confidence in Boris Johnson.

Sir Graham Brady (Altrincham and Sale West, 1997) As Chairman of the 1922 committee since 2010, he held the letters from Tory MPs calling for Prime Ministers May, Johnson, Truss or Sunak to resign. His memoirs will be out soon.

Nick Gibb (Bognor Regis and Littlehampton, 1997) During 10 years as Schools Minister, he saw reading standards in England rise to fourth in the world. Sacked by Johnson, he was reappointed by Sunak.

Dame Eleanor Laing (Epping Forest, 1997) She campaigned for years to get more Tory women into Parliament. She was a Deputy Speaker from 2013, and in 2020 was elected as the first woman Chairman of Ways and Means.

Tim Loughton (East Worthing and Shoreham, 1997) A former banker, he was Children's Minister in 2010-12. In 2021, the Chinese government accused him of spreading "lies" and banned him.

Theresa May (Maidenhead, 1997) A former banker and Merton councillor before 1997, she was the Tory party's first female chairman. The Home Office has been the graveyard of many political careers, but she was Home Secretary for over six years before becoming the UK second female Prime Minister in July 2016. Her premiership, which ended in July 2019, was undone by a fateful decision to call an early general election in 2017, and by the complexities of Brexit.



UK Parliament

Richard Bacon (South Norfolk, 2001) One of only 15 Tory MPs to vote against the Iraq war in 2003, he was 'Backbencher of the Year' in 2006.

John Baron (Basildon and Billericay, 2001) He also opposed the Iraq war, and the intervention in Libya in 2011, and was one of the anti-EU rebels who pressured David Cameron to hold a referendum.

Jonathan Djanogly (Huntingdon, 2001) A former justice minister in the coalition government, he decided to stand down when he faced a reselection battle.

Chris Grayling (Epsom and Ewell, 2001) He was in government 2010-19, latterly as Transport Secretary, his decision to stand down followed successful treatment for prostate cancer.

Adam Afriye (Windsor, 2005) Brought up in Peckham by a single mother, he entered Parliament after a successful business career, as the first black Conservative MP.

Greg Clark (Tunbridge Wells, 2005) The BBC's former head of Commercial Policy, he was a minister in 2011-22, latterly Secretary of State for Levelling Up under Boris Johnson, then chaired the Science committee.

Sir James Duddridge (Rochford and Southend East, 2005) A vocal supporter of Boris Johnson, he held numerous government posts until Rishi Sunak sacked him in 2022.

Philip Dunne (Ludlow, 2005) The chair of the Commons Environmental Audit committee is aged 64, and decided it was time to quit this "younger person's business."

Sir Robert Goodwill (Scarborough and Whitby, 2005) A farmer on the 250-acre Yorkshire farm his family has worked since 1850, he held government from 2006, latterly as an Environment minister.

Michael Gove (Surrey Heath, 2005) A former *Times* journalist, adopted as a child, he was a leading Brexiteer, in Cabinet from 2010, first as Education Secretary, lately as Levelling Up Secretary. One of the last to announce his departure, he said “a new generation should lead.”

Stephen Hammond (Wimbledon, 2005) A former minister for Transport, and for Health, and a Remainer, who submitted a letter of no confidence in Boris Johnson. Leaving for family reasons.

David Jones (Clwyd West, 2005) A solicitor, first elected as one of three Tory MPs in Wales, with a majority of 133, he was a minister from 2010 and Welsh Secretary from 2012.

Sir Mike Penning (Hemel Hempstead, 2005) He joined the army as a school leaver, then worked as a fire fighter, then as a media adviser for the Conservatives, and held a series of ministerial jobs in 2010-17, latterly at Defence.

Sir Charles Walker (Broxbourne, 2005) The step son of Chris Chataway. In a Commons speech in 2012, he described having obsessive-compulsive disorder. In October 2022, he called upon Liz Truss to resign, calling her administration “a shambles and a disgrace.”

Ben Wallace (Wyre and Preston North, 2005) A former officer in the Scots Guards, and Scottish MSP, he held several government posts, and as Defence Secretary, in 2019-23, played a lead role in responding to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

Sir Bob Neill (Bromley and Chislehurst, 2006) He was Chair of the Justice Committee from 2010. A Remainer, in 2022 he submitted a letter of no confidence in Boris Johnson.

John Howell (Henley, 2008) A former tax inspector and tax adviser, and a Remainer, he was quoted in 2017 as saying that Boris Johnson should “keep his bloody mouth shut.”

Edward Timpson (Eddisbury, 2008) From the family who own the Timpson shoe repair shops, he won a by-election in Labour-held Crewe, was unseated in 2017, but won the neighbouring seat in 2019. As minister for children in 2014, he increased the age of leaving foster care from 18 to 21

Chloe Smith (Norwich North, 2009) Having won a by-election arising out of the expenses scandal, she held government posts for nine years in 2010-23, latterly as science minister. She rebelled against the government to speed up compensation for blood contamination victims

Steve Brine (Winchester, 2010) Chairman of the Health Select committee since 2022, and before that a junior health minister, he just saw off his Lib Dem challenger in 2019.

Dame Tracey Crouch (Chatham and Aylesford, 2010) She was minister for sport in 2015-2018, and reputedly was the first Tory minister to take maternity leave. She resigned when the government delayed a crackdown on fixed-odds betting machines.

Sir Michael Ellis (Northampton North, 2010) The former Attorney General claims to have been “the first Northampton MP of any party to have been appointed to Cabinet in 100 years.”

George Eustice (Camborne and Redruth, 2010) The Environment Secretary in 2020-22 was a strawberry farmer before he entered politics, and has left to pursue a “final career outside politics”.

Mike Freer (Finchley and Golders Green, 2010) The Justice Minister decided to quit after his office was burnt down, and he narrowly escaped being killed by the man who went on to murder Sir David Amess.

Robert Halfon (Harlow, 2010) He was in government 2014-17, and from 2022 as Minister for Skills, and chair of the Education Committee, 2017-22. His Jewish grandfather was forced out of Libya in 1968.

Matt Hancock (West Suffolk, 2010) Having handled the Covid pandemic as Secretary of State for Health in 2018-21, and held other government posts from 2012, he had the whip suspended temporarily when he announced he was going on *I’m a Celebrity...Get Me Out of Here!*

Chris Heaton-Harris (Daventry 2010) He took over as Northern Ireland Secretary in 2022, when power sharing had collapsed, and saw the return of the Stormont executive.

Gordon Henderson (Sittingbourne and Sheppey, 2010) A Brexiteer and former councillor, he started work in Woolworths in 1964, and was over 60 when he became an MP.

Sir Sajid Javid (Bromsgrove, 2010) A Pakistani bus driver’s son, he had a successful career in banking, then in government from 2012, becoming Chancellor of the Exchequer in 2019. He resigned in 2020 over a dispute with Boris Johnson’s adviser, Dominic Cummings, returning as Health Secretary in 2021-22.

Kwasi Kwarteng (Spelthorne, 2010) The son of highly accomplished immigrants from Ghana, he was Chancellor of the Exchequer for 38 days in 2022 whose radical tax-cutting budget spooked the markets.

Pauline Latham (Mid Derbyshire, 2010) A former councillor, and Mayor of Derby 2007/8, she entered Parliament in her early 60s, as the first MP for a newly created constituency.

THE EXODUS

Conservatives (73), continued

Andrea Leadsom (South Northamptonshire, 2010) She held ministerial offices in 2014-20, latterly as Business Secretary and was the last contender to drop out of the contest to become Tory leader in 2016, leaving the field to Theresa May.

Sir Brandon Lewis (Great Yarmouth, 2010) A barrister, he started his government career in 2012, and was Northern Ireland Secretary in 2020-22, and briefly Justice Secretary.

Stephen McPartland (Stevenage, 2010) He was a Home Office minister for two months in 2022, until dropped by Liz Truss. In January 2023, he attacked proposed legislation that would force emergency workers not to strike as 'shameful'.

Dr Matthew Offord (Hendon, 2010) Pro-Israel and anti-EU, he campaigned in support of faith schools, and praised Boris Johnson's 'incredible' success over covid and Ukraine.

Mark Pawsey (Rugby, 2010) Son of Jim Pawsey, Rugby's MP, 1979-97. Having spent 25 years running a small company, he was a vigorous campaigner against restrictive regulation.

Andrew Percy (Brigg and Goole, 2010) A former teacher, and junior minister in 2016-17, he was a frequent rebel, who admitted on GB News that rebelling gave him a "little thrill".

Dominic Raab (Esher and Walton, 2010) A former business lawyer, and Brexiteer, in 2016 he piloted the 'Magnitsky' legislation to sanction Russian criminals. He was Brexit Secretary in 2018, but resigned to oppose Theresa May, Foreign Secretary, 2020-21 and Deputy Prime Minister and Justice Secretary 2021-23, except for a few weeks during Liz Truss's premiership.



Sir Alok Sharma (Reading West, 2010) A banker for 16 years, he has been President of COP 26, the 26th UN Climate Change Conference since January 2021. Previously he was Business Secretary in 2020-21 and held other ministerial posts from 2016.

Henry Smith (Crawley, 2010) A businessman, he led West Sussex County Council aged 34. He campaigned for justice for Chagos islanders, and to support Gatwick's economy.

Bob Stewart (Beckenham, 2010) He began officer training at 17, served in Northern Ireland, and in 1992-93, he commanded the British forces in Bosnia. In Parliament he was a vocal opponent of cuts to the defence budget.

Robin Walker (Worcester, 2010) Son of the former Cabinet minister, Peter Walker, he was an internet entrepreneur and City financier, a minister in different government departments, 2016-22, and chair of the Education Committee, 2022-24.

Craig Whittaker (Calder Valley, 2010) A boiler maker's son, and retail manager, and a government whip, 2017-2019 and 2021-22, he took the Labour seat that Liz Truss previously failed to win.

Nadhim Zahawi (Stratford-on-Avon, 2010) "How is it that a boy from Baghdad who came to these shores, fleeing persecution and unable to speak a word of English, was able to do as much as I have?" he asked, when announcing he would stand down. A Cabinet minister from 2021-23, he was Chancellor of the Exchequer for two months in 2022.



Jo Churchill (Bury St Edmunds, 2015) Having held a series of government posts from 2018, latterly as minister for Work and Pensions, she is stepping down for family reasons.

James Heappey (Wells, 2015) A former army officer who had served in Afghanistan and Northern Ireland, and was Armed Forces minister, he quit to "prioritise his family"

Craig MacKintley (South Thanet, 2015) He once led UKIP, but beat Nigel Farage in South Thanet in 2015. In May 2024, he was given an emotional ovation as he returned to Parliament as the 'bionic MP' having lost all four limbs to sepsis.

Huw Merriman (Bexhill and Battle, 2015) A barrister working in financial law, he oversaw the winding up of the Lehman Brothers after the 2008 crash. A transport minister since 2022.

Will Quince (Colchester, 2015) He held a series of ministerial jobs throughout 2019-23, including as a Health Minister, except that in July 2022, he resigned after he had defended Boris Johnson, only to learn that he had been misled.

Paul Scully (Sutton and Cheam, 2015) He held ministerial posts in 2020-23. In March, he said that the Tories cannot win an election if there is "an ideological shove to the right."

Royston Smith (Southampton Itchen, 2015) He led Southampton Council, after 10 years in the RAF, and 16 years with British Airways. In 2011, he disarmed a sailor who had gone on a murderous rampage aboard ship. In 2022, like Nigel Farage, he was 'debanked' with no reason given.

David Duguid (Banff and Buchan, 2017) A Scottish minister and whip, 2020-22, was in intensive care for four weeks, but is recovering and meant to stand again, but was not selected.

Trudy Harrison (Copeland, 2017) “Not a career politician”, her election was the first time in 35 years a governing party had gained a seat in a by-election.

Alister Jack (Dumfries and Galloway, 2017) A businessman who achieved rapid promotion as Scottish Secretary since 2019, as one of Scotland’s six elected Tory MPs.

Nickie Aiken (Cities of London and Westminster, 2019) She is leaving Parliament because her husband, Alex Aitken, a high-ranking civil servant, has taken a job overseas.

Aaron Bell (Newcastle-Under-Lyme, 2019). As a former employee of Ladbrokes and Bet365, he opposed tighter regulation of gambling. Having followed Covid regulations during his grandmother’s funeral, he was very critical of Boris Johnson.

Dehenna Davison (Bishop Auckland, 2019) The first Tory MP in a seat that was Labour for 97 years, she is aged only 31, but has been so steeped in politics that “I haven’t had anything like a normal life.”

Jo Gideon (Stoke-on-Trent Central, 2019) The owner of a small business, she won a ‘Red Wall’ seat that had been Labour for 69 years.

James Grundy (Leigh, 2019) Raised on the family farm near Wigan, he overturned a 9,554 majority to capture Leigh, a Labour seat since 1922.

Nicola Richards (West Bromwich East, 2019) At 24, she was the UK’s youngest MP, winning a ‘Red Wall’ seat that had always been Labour. After university, she worked for a Tory MP. She is leaving because of a “change in domestic circumstances.”

Dr Jamie Wallis (Bridgend, 2019) A company director, he captured a seat held by Labour for 32 years, but decided not to contest it again because of boundary changes. He is the first MP to come out as transgender.

Independent ex-Tories (5)

Crispin Blunt (Reigate, 1997) A former army officer, Justice minister and Chairman of the Defence committee. Suspended in October 2023 when he was arrested on serious charges. The actress Emily Blunt is his niece.

Lucy Allan (Telford, 2015) The first Conservative and the first woman to represent Telford, her party membership was suspended on 27 May 2024 for backing the Reform candidate in Telford.

Julian Knight (Solihull, 2015) A former journalist, and chair of the Culture and Media committee, he was suspended in December 2022 over an allegation of sexual harassment, though a police investigation was dropped.

Mark Menzies (Fylde, 2010) He resigned from the party in April 2024 after allegations of misuse of party funds - which he denied - were published in *The Times*.

William Wragg (Hazel Grove, 2015) He was a councillor aged 23 and an MP at 27, a Brexiteer, and opponent of the December 2020 Covid lockdown. In 2022, he called on Boris Johnson and then Liz Truss to resign. He resigned the whip in April 2024, after admitting passing information to a blackmailer.

Party Switchers (4)

Dr Lisa Cameron (East Kilbride, Strathaven and Lesmahagow, 2015) A clinical psychologist, she voted against legalising abortion in Northern Ireland, and against restricting demonstrations outside abortion clinics. She switched from the SNP to the Conservatives in October 2023, complaining of a “toxic and bullying atmosphere.”

Dr Dan Poulter (Central Suffolk and North Ipswich, 2010) A consultant psychiatrist, he was a junior health minister in 2012-15, and worked part time in the NHS while an MP. He switched to Labour in April 2024 saying that the Conservatives no longer valued public services.

Natalie Elphicke (Dover, 2019) An expert adviser on housing, and head of the Housing and Finance Institute she was selected unopposed as Tory candidate in Dover, after her MP husband was accused – and later jailed – for sexual assault. She defected to Labour just before Prime Minister’s Questions on 8 May 2024.

Mark Logan (Bolton North East, 2019) Born in County Antrim, he worked in the Foreign Office before winning a seat held by Labour since 1997 for the Conservatives. On 30 May, 2024, he announced that he was supporting Labour.

Continued on page 10

WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

We asked a selection of ex-colleagues to say what they have been doing since they stood down or lost their seats

SIR ALAN DUNCAN Rutland and Melton, 1992-2019



PARTING IS SWEET SORROW, but knowing when to leave the Commons by choice is a massive decision, especially after 27 years. Phew! I got it right in 2019, and would have been driven to distraction by the last five years. As if Covid wasn't bad enough, the factionalism, turmoil, and infighting are not my idea of politics.

For ten years before being elected in 1992 I was an oil

trader, first with Shell, and then with one of the pioneering companies which created the free market in supplies following the mayhem in the Middle East caused by conflict with Israel, the OPEC embargo, and the fall of the Shah. The big oil companies lost their comprehensive hold on international markets, and in stepped the traders. They were adventurous years.

It was to that sector that I returned in 2020. I knew it would be different 30 years later, and it most definitely was. I was no longer suited to old-fashioned trading, it having become much more technical. The long lunches with deals made on a handshake at the end, have been replaced by algorithmic genius overseen by those with a PhD in applied maths.

So for 4 years I have chaired companies in hydrogen, solar, and other renewables. It has been fascinating to be part of the energy transition the country, and the world, so desperately needs. But I finished them all in December, and now advise companies and countries in the Gulf.

Retirement is a socialist concept. Never stop: just change gear as your life moves on.

MADELEINE MOON Bridgend, 2005-2019



THE TRAUMA of clearing your offices and making staff redundant is huge, leaving a giant gap in your life and unfinished business. The arrival of Covid helped. Meetings went online, so you could travel the world from home in Wales. As both a labour woman with ten years on the defence

committee and former President of the NATO Parliament I had many invitations. Newly emerging democracies wanted to understand how select committees provide democratic oversight of governments finance, procurement and decisions in security and defence sectors. Becoming an unpaid associate of City Forum meant accessing the insight and skills of academia, defence, policing, civil servants, business, and retired senior

security personal to examine problems across policing and defence. Membership of the European Leadership Network, RUSI, Foreign Affairs, and Chatham House provides to quality analysis and discussions.

During lockdown I walked a local beach listening to podcasts and returned home to read sub-stacks, research papers, and meetings. From all of this I compiled lists of research, news, and insights for John Healey to pull together in a defence newsletter.

As a patron of Suicide Bereavement UK, I helped develop Service Guides to support military families, their friends and colleagues and Veterans bereaved by suicide. The guide for servicing personnel will be launched at SBUK conference in September.

Joining the Ramblers brought new friendships while exploring Wales. Time with my grandchildren is delightful. Meetings in London are combined with theatre and dinner with friends. Life is never dull.

BILL GRANT Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock, 2017-2019



HAVING HAD A DELIGHTFUL but brief spell of 2.5 years at Westminster, I stood down prior to the General Election of December 2019, though my hand was forced by the local association, who chose to bin a winner and back a loser. But that's politics.

At first it was quite challenging to find a purpose for my now free time.

However, I have managed to clock up some eight cruises, three with my wife, three with my grandchildren, one solo cruise to the Faroe's and Iceland, and one with a friend, as neither wife nor grandchildren wished to cruise Japan, the Bering Sea and Alaska.

Time with my grandchildren has been precious, watching two of them undertaking engineering apprenticeships in aviation, and my granddaughter graduating and becoming a staff nurse.

As a long term member of Alloway Rotary, I was their President during Covid-19, assisting with fund raising for both local and international good causes, with a recent emphasis on supporting Ukrainian refugees who have settled in South Ayrshire.

I have also been instrumental in establishing "The Toon Tidy Team" of around 12 members, who meet weekly to indulge in litter-picking and other adventures such as recovering supermarket trolleys from the river and removing redundant cable ties from lampposts and street furniture.

And I continue to contribute articles on social and economic history for the local publication "The Doon Valley Gazette"

In my case the cloud did have a silver lining. I have found a purpose in retirement, engaging with family, re-connecting with old friends and making a difference in my community. Retirement can be fun.

SANDY MARTIN

Ipswich, 2017-19



I HAD ALREADY DECIDED at the count in December 2019 that I would not be seeking a further candidacy. Politics seemed to be broken, and I wanted the space to campaign within my party for a better way of doing things. I have always been passionate about electoral reform, and raised it at my university interview in 1975. As a vice-chair of the

Labour Campaign for Electoral Reform I identified the need for skills which I could bring to that organisation, and as Chair since spring 2020 I have contributed to something of a transformation.

In particular, we have worked far more closely with other democracy-sector organisations, including Unlock Democracy (directed by Tom Brake, another MP who lost his seat in 2019), through the Labour for a New Democracy campaign. The campaign has had a profound effect on the Labour Party, and I am hopeful that after the forthcoming general election that effect will transform politics for our country.

I was also elected to the Executive of the Socialist Environment & Resource Association (SERA), Labour's affiliated environment campaign, and have made use of my knowledge and passion, especially in the field of waste and recycling, to raise issues which I hope will be of benefit to the forthcoming government. Labour's affiliated socialist societies have a vital role to play, in enabling debate amongst party members and in providing support and contacts for our front-benchers.

Politics needn't stop for an ex-MP – you just get to choose what you do.

FAISAL RASHID

Warrington South, 2017-2019



Losing an election was like losing a job, of course.

I have never been out of a job, and my wife, in December 2019, was four months pregnant with our son Aariz (third child). She was a housewife, and I was the only income earner. This was a shocking experience as two months' wages wouldn't go far enough to support our family with a big mortgage and household bills, etc.

I immediately applied for a few jobs and gave a couple of interviews; however, it wasn't working. At the same time,

I registered a management company to start a consultancy business. Again, being a new company with no experience, no one was ready to give me a chance.

My 18 years of experience was in banking, and at the end of January 2020, I decided to start a finance brokerage where my skill set and experience were. I launched Westminster Finance Limited at the end of February 2020, and we went into Covid lockdown immediately.

It was a challenging time. However, business organically started growing, and in September 2020, I started another company, FR Mortgages Ltd, to provide residential mortgages. We are now a one-stop shop between both companies for all our clients' finance needs. I am now successfully running both companies and working on launching a charity (Little Stars Foundation) tackling child poverty, a cause close to my heart.

Life changes teach you a lot, and one must be positive, dedicated, and committed; positive things will happen.

THANK YOU NICK

By Sally Grocott

Back in 2003 when the Association was officially launched, the then Serjeant at Arms agreed to provide assistance with sending out a Welcome newsletter to members – then just 170 in total. The Serjeant enlisted the help of a parliamentary member of staff, Nick Battley, an experienced graphic designer. That was the start of what for the Association has been a tremendous collaboration.

At just about every meeting of the Association's Executive Committee there was always a comment that our magazine "Order Order!" was the most important part of what we do in terms of keeping former Members in touch, informed, and entertained. And over the years, thanks to Nick's expertise, *Order Order!* progressed from a Newsletter to what it is today, a glossy, professional magazine to be proud of, going out three times a year to our members and to every sitting member of both Houses. Nick produced the layout, helping to source appropriate pictures, and he always provided an excellent and eye-catching front cover. Not only that, but all in his own time, he oversaw the magazine's printing and distribution, taking a load off a busy administrator. Distribution over the years has gone from 170 to 2,000.

Nick has had to contend with different editors over the years, firstly the late Joe Ashton, then myself for many years, followed by Andy. He had infinite patience with us in discussing content and presentation and was unfailingly reassuring and helpful. He is a great loss to the Association, but we recognise that after 21 years he has earned a rest from us. THANK YOU, Nick.



THE EXODUS

Labour (32), continued from page 7

Margaret Beckett (Derby South, 1974) The last of the MPs elected in either of the 1974 elections, she is the UK's longest serving female MP, though she lost her original seat, Lincoln in 1979, returning to Parliament in 1983. She was Labour's first woman Deputy Leader in 1992-94, and Leader in May to July 1994, and the first woman Foreign Secretary, 2006-7.

Barry Sheerman (Huddersfield, 1979) The last of the 1979 Commons intake to leave, he was a shadow minister, 1988-94, founded the Policy Connect think tank in 1995, and chaired the Education Committee, 2001-07.

Harriet Harman (Camberwell and Peckham, 1982) Known as the 'Mother of the House', she is the Longest continuously serving woman MP, having won a by-election in 1982. In 1997-98, she was Social Security and the first Minister for Women. In 2007, she was elected Deputy Leader of the Labour Party, and was appointed Leader of the Commons. She led Labour briefly during leadership elections in 2005 and 2010.

John Spellar (Warley, 1982) He won Birmingham Northfield in a by-election – a rare success for Labour under Michael Foot, but lost in 1983, returning as MP for Warley in 1992. A political officer in the electricians' union, 1969-92, he held ministerial posts in 1997-2005, and was a whip in 2008-10.

Sir George Howarth (Knowsley, 1986) He was an engineer, then head of the Welsh Co-operative, won a by-election in 1986, and was a Home Office minister 1997-1999 and Northern Ireland minister to 2001.

Dame Margaret Hodge (Barking, 1994) Born in Cairo, to Jewish refugees, her family moved to the UK in 1948. She led Islington Council in 1982-92. She held ministerial offices, 1998-2010, and chaired the Commons Public Accounts committee, 2010-15.

Sir Ben Bradshaw (Exeter 1997) A former BBC radio journalist, he faced a vitriolic campaign in 1997, because he was openly gay and his Tory opponent was rampantly anti-gay. He was Culture Secretary in 2009-10.

Karen Buck (Westminster North, 1997) A transport minister in 2005-06, as a Westminster councillor, she helped expose the council's corrupt leader, Shirley Porter. In 2018, she introduced a Bill to enable tenants of unfit properties to sue landlords.

John Cryer (Leyton and Wanstead, 1997) A son of two Labour MPs, he was a journalist and union officer who won Hornchurch in 1997, lost in 2005, and returned to Parliament in 2010. In 2015-24, he chaired the Parliamentary Labour Party.

Steve McCabe (Birmingham Selly Oak, 1997) A former social worker and councillor, he was a government whip in 2006-10. Having chaired the Labour Friends of Israel from 2020, and faced protests in his seat, which has a large Muslim population.

Dr Alan Whitehead (Southampton Test, 1997) He led Southampton council in 1984-92, and was a transport minister in 2001-02, but voted against the Iraq war in 2003. He was a shadow minister, 2015-21.

Dame Rosie Winterton (Doncaster Central, 1997) Brought up in Doncaster. She worked for John Prescott in 1980-86 and 1994-97, held ministerial posts in 2001-10, was Labour chief whip in 2010-16, and a deputy Speaker from 2017.

Kevin Brennan (Cardiff West, 2001) He was a government whip and held three ministerial posts in 2005-10. As children's minister, in 2007, he introduced pilot projects to allow children in care to stay with foster parents beyond 18.

Jon Cruddas (Dagenham and Rainham, 2001) A Royal Navy sailor's son, he worked for the Labour party, 1989-97, and was Tony Blair's Deputy Political Secretary, 1997-2001. He believed that Blair's administration began well but came to a 'dismal end'. He was Labour's Policy Co-ordinator in 2012-15.

Wayne David (Caerphilly, 2001) Grandson of a miner, he was a teacher, an MEP in 1989-99, a Welsh minister in 2008-10, and a shadow minister 2010-24.

Kevan Jones (North Durham, 2001) a miner's son, he was veterans' minister in 2008-10. He campaigned for years on behalf of sub postmasters. In 2012, he spoke in Parliament about having suffered from depression 16 years earlier.

Lyn Brown (West Ham, 2005) Appointed a government whip in 2009, she was a shadow minister in 2015-24.

Barbara Keeley (Worsley and Eccles South, 2005) A former systems engineer, she was a government whip in 2008-09, then Deputy Leader of the Commons, and a shadow minister, 2010-20 and 2022-24. Recently out of hospital, she stood down for health reasons

Virenda Sharma (Ealing Southall, 2007) Born into a Punjabi Hindu family, he worked as a bus conductor when he arrived in the UK, and rose to be Mayor of Ealing. He won his seat in a by-election.

Paul Blomfield (Sheffield Central, 2010) He joined the Anti-Apartheid Movement as a schoolboy. He went from managing the students' union at Sheffield University to representing the seat with the greatest number of students.

Alex Cunningham (Stockton North, 2010) A former journalist, he was a shadow minister, 2015-2024, but resigned after breaking the whip to vote in favour of remaining in the EU customs union.

Julie Elliott (Sunderland Central, 2010) The daughter of a colliery worker, and the former regional organiser of the GMB union, she was a shadow minister in 2013-15.

Yvonne Fovargue (Makerfield, 2010) A former housing officer for Manchester council, she was one Labour's front bench 2011-19, but was sacked by Jeremy Corbyn for voting against holding a second referendum on EU membership. In 2022 she was appointed the Prime Minister's Trade Envoy to Libya and Tunisia

Ian Mearns (Gateshead, 2010) A Gateshead councillor from 1983, he turned Gateshead's education service from "one of the worst in our region to one of the strongest". He backed a ceasefire in Gaza, and has criticised Israel, though his seat includes one of the UK's largest communities of Orthodox Jews.

Colleen Fletcher (Coventry North East, 2015) Her mother, Dot Dalton was a councillor. She also was a Coventry city councillor for 10 years, and a Labour whip, 2017-24

Margaret Greenwood (Wirral West, 2015) A former teacher and web consultant, she was a shadow minister in 2016-20, but resigned in opposition to legislation that allows covert police and intelligence agent to break the law.

Holly Lynch (Halifax, 2015) Daughter of a police sergeant and a nurse, from Halifax, she was a shadow minister in 2017-23, and Labour's deputy chief whip in 2023-24) Standing down because she has a young son and another due.

Christina Rees (Neath, 2015) She was a shadow minister under Jeremy Corbyn, but was prevented from standing again when she lost the Labour whip in 2023, though she was reinstated in February 2024.

Sam Tarry (Ilford South, 2019) A former Chair of Young Labour, he directed Jeremy Corbyn's leadership campaign in 2015, and won the Ilford South selection after his rival was Jas Athwal was suspended. In 2022, he was sacked from his role of shadow transport minister for joining a picket line, and lost to Jas Athwal after a selection contest was triggered.

Lloyd Russell-Moyle (Brighton Kempdown, 2017) Before 2017, he worked in Fair Trade cafes and other co-operatives, and chaired the Woodcraft Folk. A vocal supporter of Jeremy Corbyn, he was suspended suddenly in May 2024, and barred from standing.

Mick Whitley (Birkenhead, 2019) A former car plant worker and regional secretary of Unite union, a supporter of the Corbynite left and - in his words - "one of the few members of the industrial working class" in Parliament, he lost a reselection to the Starmer loyalist Alison McGovern.

Beth Winter (Cynon Valley, 2019) A community worker, who accused NATO of 'eastward expansion' when Russia invaded Ukraine, when her old seat disappeared under boundary changes, she stood for reselection "on a platform of solidarity with striking rail workers, nurses, and teaching staff" but lost narrowly.

Independent ex-Labour (3)

Nick Brown (Newcastle upon Tyne East, 1983) Among other posts he held, he was Labour's Chief Whip under Tony Blair, Gordon Brown and Jeremy Corbyn, but was suspended in September 2022 over an unspecified event alleged to have taken more than 25 years earlier.

Geraint Davies (Swansea West, 1997) First elected in Croydon Central, he lost his seat in 2005, returning to the Commons in 2010. He was suspended by Labour in 2023 over sexual allegations, which he has disputed.

Conor McGinn (St Helens North, 2015) The son of a Sinn Fein councillor, from Northern Ireland, he was Labour's deputy campaigns co-ordinator during 2021, but was suspended in December 2022 over an allegation whose details are not known, which he said was "entirely unfounded".

SNP (9)

Stewart Hosie (Dundee East, 2005) A business man, he was one of only six SNP MPs elected in 2005. In 2014-16, he succeeded Nicola Sturgeon as the SNP's Deputy Leader

Mhairi Black (Paisley and Renfrewshire South, 2015) When first elected, at 20, on a swing against Labour of almost 27 per cent, she was the youngest MP since the 1832 Reform Act. She was the SNP's Deputy Westminster Leader, 2022-24

Ian Blackford (Ross, Skye and Lochaber, 2015) A former investment banker, he led the SNP in Westminster, 2017-22

Douglas Chapman (Dunfermline and West Fife, 2015) He took this seat at the third attempt, on a swing of almost 40 per cent.

Angela Crawley (Lanark and Hamilton East, 2015) She took what had been a safe Labour seat, that included her home town, when she was 28, and very narrowly held on in 2017.

Patrick Grady (Glasgow North, 2015) Having taken this off Labour on a swing of nearly 29 per cent, his political career was effectively ended by allegations of sexual conduct, though the police investigation was dropped.

Peter Grant (Glenrothes, 2015) He fought Glenrothes in a by-election in 2008, but lost to Labour, then took the seat on a 35 per cent swing.

John McNally (Falkirk, 2015) A barber, he achieved the highest majority -19,701 - of any Scottish MP in 2015, and a record tally of votes for any SNP candidate - 34,831.

Dr Philippa Whitford (Central Ayrshire, 2015) A former consultant breast surgeon, and medical volunteer in Gaza and the West Bank, she took the seat off Labour on a swing of nearly 28 per cent.

Democratic Unionist Party

Sir Jeffrey Donaldson (Lagan Valley, 1997) a member of the Orange Order, he was elected to the Northern Ireland Assembly in 1985, aged 22. A critic of the Good Friday agreement, he switched from the Ulster Unionist Party to the DUP in 2003, and was DUP leader in 2021-24, but resigned in March 2024 when faced with historical sexual allegations, which he denied.

Green Party

Caroline Lucas (Brighton Pavilion, 2010) a former press officer for Oxfam, she was the Greens' second elected councillor, on Oxfordshire council, in 1993, and for 14 years was the party's first and only MP, but in June 2023 said that the pressures of the role preventing her from focusing on the climate emergency.

Plaid Cymru

Hywel Williams (Arfon, 2001) a former social worker and lecturer on social policy, he led Plaid in Westminster in 2015-17. In 2023 he was on the Bangor University team in a Christmas Special edition of University Challenge.

Ex Plaid

Jonathan Edwards (Carmarthen East and Dinefwr, 2010) He was asked by the party leader, Adam Price, to quit PC after he had received a police caution for assaulting his wife,

Sinn Fein (3)

Michelle Gildernew (Fermanagh and South Tyrone, 2001)

Francie Molloy (Mid Ulster, 2013)

Mickey Brady (Newry and Armagh, 2015)

A GOOD READ

LABOUR'S LOST LEADER

Denis MacShane

John Smith. Old Labour's Last Hurrah

Edited by Kevin Hickson

Published by Biteback

THIRTY years ago, John Smith died before his time. I was the last MP he introduced to the House of Commons as Leader of the Opposition after I won a by-election in Rotherham in May 1994.

Overnight he became Labour's lost leader. A new generation not even born when Smith was a student at Glasgow University took over Labour. The party was rebranded as New Labour and wordsmiths invented the Third Way which in its first post-war iteration was used in the 1950s to describe the efforts by the French and Italian left between Russian state capitalism and American bankers' capitalism.

Labour's Third Way owed more to German social democracy's Bad Godesberg programme after 1960s, which rejected state ownership for a regulated market economy based on social partnership, an alien concept to British bosses and trade union leader alike. The German slogan was "As much market as possible. As much state as necessary."

The almost complete failure of British regulators to control the greed and stupidity of Thames Water, rail companies, or even broadcasting, has increased calls for government, the state, something representing a wider interest than profit for off-shore funds and millions for CEOs to come into play.

So, does this mean the rehabilitation of John Smith, who stood as a rock against the verities of Tony Benn or the Little England Socialism in One Country ideas of Denis Healey, Peter Shore or Bryan Gould and the rejection of European partnership of Michael Foot, Barbara Castle and, whisper it not, most Labour MPs elected in the 1970s and 1980s?

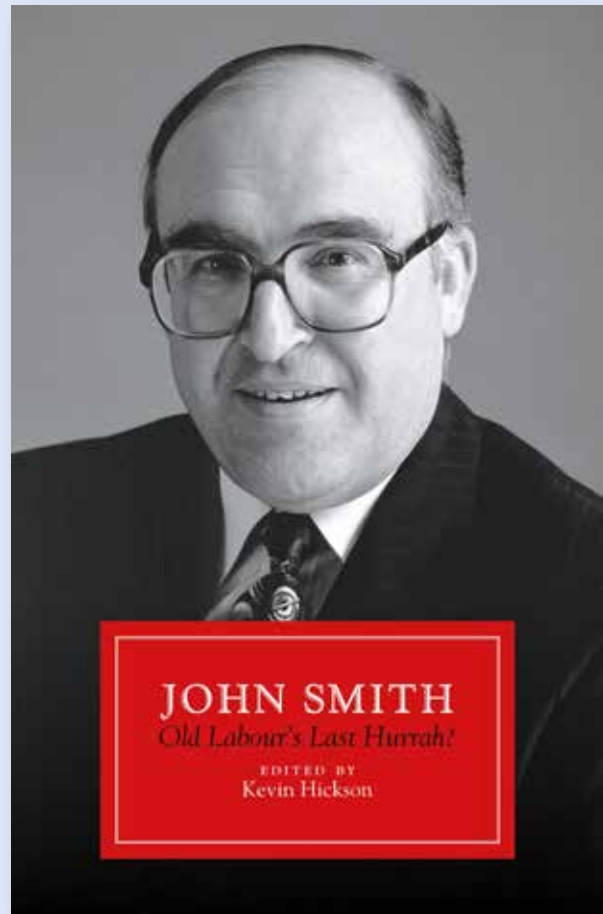
A seminar was recently held on Smith's political thinking, and now a solid collection of essays by academics and former Labour MPs including Andy Burnham and Ann Taylor and Smith's key policy aide, the estimable David Ward, has been produced on the 30th anniversary of his death.

Everything you wanted to know about John Smith is here – his warmth, his encouragement of young MPs and researchers, his brave refusal to adopt the anti-Europeanism that infected so many after 1970 including cabinet ministers after 1997 which helps explain why New Labour Britain remained a not-fully committed EU member state, thus opening the door to Brexit.

There are even glancing references to John's fondness for a dram. The worst hangover I ever had was after a whisky fuelled discussion on Europe with Smith in Blackpool that ended up in the small hours. John was up for a breakfast briefing of journalists before going down to London to work as a lawyer on a complex case. I stayed with my uncle, a doctor in Manchester who was also a Glasgow University graduate and a great Smith fan.

"If he's drinking that much after a heart attack he's not long for this world," was Uncle Joe's grim prediction.

Smith was a House of Commons man through and through. He came down on Mondays and stayed until taking the train back to Glasgow on Fridays. He was fixture in the team room and Members' Dining Room, making the friendships that are



so vital to a successful political career. He was firm of view but such good company and a such a good listener he never generated the kind of personal animosity that so easily poisons parliamentary politics.

There was an unnecessary denigration of Smith after his death by the Tiggers around Blair. None of his successors as Labour leader have generated the same mix of admiration, loyalty and enjoyment in their company that Smith created. As with Hugh Gaitskell's early death in 1962, Labour venerates its lost leaders.

Smith's proudest Labour party reform was to bring in OMOV, one member one vote, for selection of Labour candidates and the Leader. At the time it was seen as the foundation stone for New Labour and Tony Blair's ascension to power.

Twenty years later, OMOV established Jeremy Corbyn, not once but twice, as Labour leader and the Conservative Party's embrace of Smith's OMOV has produced the last three Conservative Party leaders, plus who knows who will emerge to lead the Conservatives after the election? The law of unintended consequences remains now as ever an iron rule of politics.

This book draws on the fine biography of John Smith written in 1993 by Andy McSmith. It could be usefully read by Labour shadow ministers. If you don't know a party's history you don't know where it may end up heading.

Denis MacShane was Labour MP for Rotherham for 18 years and served for eight years in the Foreign Office.

His latest book is *Labour Takes Power. The Denis MacShane Diaries 1997-2001*. (Biteback).

COULD IT BE JUST A PRIMAL SCREAM FOR HELP?

Jerry Hayes

Ten Years to Save the West:

Lessons from the only Conservative in the room

By Liz Truss

Published by Biteback

I HAVEN'T quite worked out what the purpose of this book really is. Is it a genuine attempt to set out a workable blueprint for the right to save Britain and the Western World from the wokery of self-loathing ratchet socialists and the anti-growth alliance?

To undermine the 'deep state'? To banish group think? To break up the Treasury, the OBR and any sort of orthodoxy that that the IEA disapproves of? To pander to the Trumpian far right, which would give Truss a residency at the Mar a Lago political zoo?

Or is it just a primal scream for help?

Perhaps all of these things.

To be fair, not unlike the quirks and eccentricities of Truss herself, this book resembles a Stockhausen concert. It's not always as bad as it sounds. She is right about the need to encourage growth, the aspiration to cut taxes, and to be tougher with China. But it did stir an emotion in me that I never expected that I could be capable of: it made me feel sorry for Boris Johnson.

There is absolutely no doubt that when 'human hand grenade' Liz wants something she is quite prepared to go totally ape to get it. Take for example the time that she was International Trade Secretary accompanying Boris to America, only to discover that she had not been invited to meet the President. In the Truss brain, sirens wailed, red lights flashed and klaxons demanded action this day.

"As was the wont of the deep state Boris was the only politician listed to attend from the British side accompanied by Foreign Office officials....so after attending an early morning business reception with Boris....I chased him down a fire escape, grabbed him by the shoulders and demanded to come". Quite why he was escaping down a fire escape is sadly not revealed.

And then she nearly killed the poor sod. "I finally managed to get Boris to sign off starting trade talks when he was holed up at St Thomas's Hospital while recovering from Covid. I knew he would have his mobile phone on him and be free from nefarious Downing Street influences".

And then there was her encounter with Sue Gray, now a senior member of the nest of Socialist vipers despised by the right.

"To my surprise she took it upon herself to commiserate with me by giving me a hug, before telling me that as a result of my demotion my salary was being cut. I didn't welcome her unsolicited embrace. I am not a hugger". Poor Sue Gray. What a silly hugger.

But Liz's visceral hatred is not reserved just for the Treasury. The department that really gets the bees buzzing in the Truss bonnet is the Ministry of Justice. "There is going to be some in-flight turbulence once I had found my feet as Lord Chancellor..."



She hated the place and all it stood for. Particularly the judges. After all, these ghastly people were able to challenge the legality of dodgy decisions made by democratically elected ministers.

"The sheer level of snobbery, the power of vested interests and the disdain for the democratically decided will of the people" was decidedly pre New York jury Trump conviction. The judiciary are an undemocratic blob that puts the disrupter in chief in hand grenade pin pulling mode. She wants to abolish the Judicial Appointments Board and return the power of judicial appointments to the Lord Chancellor. Oh, and abolish the Supreme Court. More radical than that she favours the election of judges. Perhaps we might smell the burning rubber of the U turn of this policy when there is a change of government.

But we did learn some valuable insights about Brexit.

"The Brexit referendum had unleashed and normalised infighting" within the Conservative Party. You don't say? And, "EU commodity codes 504 different classifications of biscuit".

Poor Boris, who just wants a quiet life without any fuss, had the disrupter in chief on his back again. Becoming Foreign Secretary, in place of that oik Dominic Raab who had been demoted to Justice Secretary, entitled to the use of Chevening, a grace and favour country house. But she didn't get all of her way. She had to share. "I'd arrive at the weekend and find protein shakes labelled Raab in the fridge". Poor thing.

I'm not going to trouble you with the mini budget. Spoiler. It didn't end well.

"...probably the happiest moment as PM...we delivered what we said we would". Not quite.

A GOOD READ

Sally Keeble

Breaking the Code: Westminster Diaries

By Gyles Brandreth

Published by Biteback

Even though losing is an occupational hazard of democracy, a change of government is a big deal. So, reading Gyles Brandreth's republished memoirs is a timely reminder of what makes things go wrong for a party in power.

Faction fighting after too long in government, exhaustion, both personal and political. Europe. And once the electoral starting gun is fired, an inability to control the narrative. Or in the language of Gyles' time in office to "get a grip."

It's easy to see why these memoirs are up among the best. They're a brilliant combination of salacious gossip, political insight and general hilarity, covering 1992 to 1997, with an additional chapter up to 2007 and a new introduction.

Gyles gives the impression that history is what is created by his friends. And he has many. Everyone who was anyone in the era is there: Margaret Thatcher and John Major, of course, pretty much the entire Cabinet and shadow Cabinet, the Queen, Prince Phillip, Charles, Camilla and Diana, Anika Rice, Jim Davison: even William and Harry get walk-on parts. The only person missing is David Beckham.

There are warnings about life as one of 500 backbench MPs "milling about Westminster, looking for something to do." A warning for whips, "Inevitably, some of them get up to mischief." Killer analyses of the most lethal political failings: as in the vanity of David Owen quoting "a couple of opinion polls showing that the public would rather have him as Prime Minister than either Margaret Thatcher or Neil Kinnock." And the brutality of knowing your fiercest enemies are on your own side. On the eve of the 1997 General Election Gyles writes, there were "at least four campaign teams in an advanced state of readiness" to fight for the leadership of the Conservative Party.

But in one thing Gyles is wrong. "Does history repeat itself?" he asks in the introduction to both his 2015 and 2024 editions of his diaries. It might look so, yes, in that the political foibles and the patterns of disintegration are the same.

But the country has changed. In some ways for the better. Gay MPs are no longer trapped in the closet, as so miserably depicted in the diaries. The UK is no longer run by men – at least not exclusively and not without challenge.

Most of all, there are far fewer of his friends around. And it's likely that after 4th July they won't be the ones making history.

PS A personal thanks to Gyles Brandreth. We accidentally mislaid our daughter, aged six months, on a train from London to Macclesfield in 1994. When my husband tracked her down, she was sitting in her baby seat on a table in first class being watched over by the then MP for Chester. x



NEWS FROM THE PARLIAMENTARY OUTREACH TRUST

An update from the Chair, John Austin

THE TRUST was planning to hold its AGM to coincide with The Association's all member meeting in July but now that the General Election has been called it will be postponed until the autumn. The Association can expect a significant increase in its membership following the General Election and we anticipate recruiting a number of the new former MPs as volunteer speakers. This will be a challenge for our administration which is wholly reliant on volunteers and we have approached the House Authorities for assistance.

In the meantime, work continues as normal. The spring/summer period

is always a quiet time in terms of invitations to universities due to the pressure of exams but we expect a flurry of invitations for the autumn and are in touch with a number of universities.

Our programme with Speakers-ForSchools, however, has seen a number of invitations for our members to speak at State Secondary Schools.

In May, Stephen Twigg spoke to students at the North Liverpool Academy where the highlight was the discussion about the routes of entry into politics when the students recognised that Stephen's background was similar to many of theirs.

Our programme for June includes a virtual online session with Sir David Hanson at the Swanick Hall School, Derbyshire; Hilton Dawson will be speaking in person at Whitley Bay High School, North Tyneside and Victoria Borwick will be addressing pupils at Brentside High School, Ealing.

We are still keen to hear from members who may have contacts at universities and colleges – details should be sent to John Austin admin@parlyoutreach.org.uk

For more information contact John Austin at admin@parlyoutreach.org.uk.

TRIBUTES

LORD (ANDREW) STUNELL

24 November 1942 – 29 April 2024

Liberal Democrat MP for Hazel Grove, 1997-2015

By *Adrian Saunders*



DESCRIBED by a colleague as perhaps the most understated politician of his generation, Andrew Stunell's contribution to Liberalism, campaigning, and electoral success over half a century was highly significant.

Andrew was a Baptist lay preacher, later Methodist, with a keen sense of social justice, an active member of the local government officers' union

NALGO, and in 1968 he joined Liberal Party who opposed Harold Wilson's government reneging on a promise to Kenyan Asians to have the right to come to Britain if Jomo Kenyatta's government pressured them.

He built his political reputation within the Liberal Party as a Councillor first elected in 1979 on Chester City Council and later the County Council where he led a small group that held the balance of power. This experience led him to write a blueprint guide for councillors on authorities with no overall party control.

This made him an obvious choice to be a member of the Liberals' negotiating team on the merger with the SDP that resulted in the creation of the Liberal Democrats. He stood three times in Chester before contesting Hazel Grove for the first time

in 1992. Prior to his successful election in 1997 he worked for the Party's Councillors Association as a Political Advisor and later headed the organisation during a period that by 1996 had resulted in over 5,000 Liberal Democrat councillors, including himself, now a member of Stockport MBC.

His record of success led him to being one of the four Liberal Democrat negotiators that prepared the Coalition Agreement, where he claimed surprise at how far the Conservatives moved

Andrew was teetotal making him a powerful Chief Whip, 2001 to 2006, popping into the bars of the Commons for a late evening chat. Here and at party conference his ability to gather information about what was really going on was legendary.

He entered Government as the first ever Liberal Democrat Local Government Minister from 2010 to 2012, playing a significant role in the 2011 Localism Act. He was knighted by the Queen in 2013.

In 2015, he stood down from the Commons and was made a Life Peer, where he remained an active member of the Liberal Democrat team in the House of Lords, continuing to speak on local government and other issues.

In 1967 Andrew married Gillian Chorley, a music teacher. She survives him, along with their five children, Judith, Kari, Peter, Mark and Daniel, six grandchildren, and his brothers, John, Peter and Philip.

ROY ROEBUCK

25 September 1929-17 December 2023

Labour MP for Harrow East, 1966-70

By *Nicholas Bennett*



ALTHOUGH Roy Roebuck was an MP for only four years and never rose beyond being PPS to George Wigg, he was a notable name in the second Wilson Government of 1966-70. His victory in Harrow East by 378, together with Ben Whittaker's capture of Hampstead - presaged the gradual erosion of Conservative hegemony in the London suburbs.

A short, clubbable man, Roy was a founder member of the Association, his death at the age of 94, leaves Stratton Mills, Lord Rodgers of Quarry Bank, Alan Lee Williams and Fred Silvester as the last members who served in Parliament with him.

Roy was born to Leah, a theatre performer, in 1929 and never knew his father. His early years were marked by poverty. Labour's landslide in the 1945 Election enthused him and shortly afterwards he joined the Labour Party and - at the invitation of Laurie Pavitt, later MP for Willesden West - Co-operatives party, in the Wythenshawe constituency.

After a brief stint as a young reporter on the *Stockport Advertiser* he was called up for National Service in the RAF and served in Ceylon. His career as a journalist on the national newspapers imbued him with a keen eye for the headline, and his

election to parliament instantly made him a 'name' and gift for the parliamentary sketch writers. He used his skills to campaign on issues about which he cared deeply. An opponent of joining the EEC he opposed decimalisation, called for the introduction of child-proof tops for medicine bottles, the establishment of an independent police complaints body and campaigned for press freedom when the law of contempt was used to prevent press comment whilst the Aberfan Disaster Official Inquiry was taking place. He was a firm supporter of Barbara Castle's 1969 'In Place of Strife' white paper for union reform.

His independence of mind made him an irritant to the whips' office. "When John Silkin, Labour's Chief Whip tried it on me after I made some disobliging comments about Richard Crossman over the Common Market debates," he wrote, "I replied in language learnt during national service saying I would raise the matter as one of privilege in the House. There followed a flurry of placatory phone calls, the withdrawal of the threat and my dispatch on a jolly foreign trip." In 1969 he shared an office with the young Irish Republican Bernadette Devlin. Fortunately, she rarely attended and his son Gavin often used her desk to do his homework.

After his defeat, he trained as a barrister and thereafter he concentrated on the Bar.

Roy married Dr Mary Ogilvy Adams, a virologist, in 1957 and he developed thereafter an interest in health, matters and served as a governor of Moorfields Eye Hospital for 24 years. She died in 1995. In retirement Roy was a frequent attendee at our meetings and always a pleasure to chat to. A man of many interests he was a keen reader and Latinist and enjoyed ballet and opera. He wrote for *Order! Order!*. His book *A Crusade or Nothing* can be found on Abebooks.

LORD (DOUG) HOYLE – 17 February 1926–6 April 2024



LORD (DOUG) HOYLE

17 February 1926-6 April 2024
Labour MP for Nelson and Colne
1974-1979, Warrington 1981-1983,
Warrington North 1983-1997

*By Sir Lindsay Hoyle, Speaker of the
House of Commons*

There are few people who get to my age with their father still around – but I have been one of the lucky ones. His death has left me bereft, and with a huge hole in my life.

After all, it feels like we have always been together.

In 1957, when I was just a babe in arms, he took me to my first Labour Party conference. Soon after that, in Scarborough, I was throwing bacon from my highchair at Hugh Gaitskell, then leader of the Labour Party.

By the age of six, Dad put me on the campaign trail, delivering leaflets to help in his first attempt to stand for Parliament in Clitheroe in 1964. We kept on going, determined Dad was going to get a seat, particularly in Nelson and Colne, which he won in the third time of trying back in 1974.

Even defeat at the General Election of 1979 did not put off my strong-minded father. Who can forget the hard fought and bitter Warrington

by-election in 1981 where he overcame strong opposition from Roy Jenkins and the newly formed Social Democratic Party to secure a much-needed Labour victory!

To say he fired up my interest in politics is an understatement. But what I learnt more from my father was the importance of service – and if you want to make a difference and create change, you must be a part of it.

Born in February 1926, Dad was educated at Adlington School and Horwich Technical College. He then trained as a draftsman at Horwich Loco Works, moving to AEI, then as a design sales engineer for Charles Westons – but politics and sport was always his passion.

Forever mad about cricket, he even named me after the Australian batsman Lindsay Hassett, from the 'Invincibles' – the 1948 touring team that went undefeated in all 34 matches it played in England that summer.

During his political career, my father was Chair of the Parliamentary Labour Party from 1992-97 where he served as a member of the Shadow Cabinet. He was President of the Manufacturing, Science and Finance Union in 1990-91 and served on the Labour Party's National Executive Committee.

He was also an outspoken member and President of the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs (ASTMS) trade union, from where he tried to get the Conservative government to act as an innovator with the private sector to provide workers with highly skilled jobs.

In 1997, Tony Blair asked him to take a seat in the House of Lords. After initially being reluctant, he made the move from green benches to the red benches in the Lords, where he served as a government minister from 1997-1999.

Another big distraction to us both during that time, was our joint love of rugby league, so I was beyond proud when Dad became chairman of Warrington Wolves from 1999-2009, following which he was appointed President of the Club.

Equally, as supporters of Bolton Wanderers, we often endured the highs and lows of sporting drama.

As he slowed down in later years, my wife Catherine spent a lot of time looking after him, making sure he was comfortable and happy. They formed a tight bond, and I am truly grateful for the tenderness of her care.

Quite apart from everything I have mentioned, what I will miss the most about my father is his love and support, particularly to me as an MP and now as Speaker.

Like me, he was very fond of animals, and always had dogs in his life. He was a kind, old school gentleman, with a sharp mind, great sense of humour and cutting wit. Everyone who met him was touched by his warmth and generosity which helped foster firm friendships.

Above all he was a family man, and he will be greatly missed by myself, Catherine, Emma, Will, the great grandchildren and the whole family.

He was easy to talk to and always willing to listen. He was my wing-man, and I was his. Not only have I lost my father – but today I realise, I have also lost my best friend.

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