



Return of the HHR Travellers

Five weary but very satisfied travellers returned at the end of October from our literary pilgrimage to HHR sites in England, Wales and Germany.



Five Fearless Travellers

From left: Graeme Charles, Maureen McCarthy, Janey Runci, Dot Charles, Helen Macrae

Our journey went far beyond our expectations not least because of the enthusiasm, generosity and hospitality shown by our members and others in those countries. We'll be sharing our experiences and discoveries with you over the next 3 or 4 issues of the newsletter.

This issue will concentrate on the highlight of our stay in Leipzig – the celebration of the completion of the translation of 'Maurice Guest' into German on October 10, which was the initial impetus for this trip.

150th Anniversary Plans in 2020

2020 is the anniversary of HHR's birth on January 3 in Melbourne, a time to celebrate and promote what she created. Important dates to keep in mind are:

January 3 – birthday picnic tea at Lake View, Chiltern.

April – launch of Brenda Niall's book: *Friends and Rivals: The Writing Lives of Ethel Turner, Barbara Baynton, Henry Handel Richardson and Nettie Palmer*.

June 20 – Annual Oration by Clive Probyn at PLC on the topic, *HHR goes to the Movies and comes home with the Pianist*, a treat for HHR fans and film buffs alike.

October – surprise event in the pipeline!!!

Join us for the 150th Birthday celebrations at Lake View – January 3, 2020

from our President, Graeme Charles

Friday January 3, 2020 will be a significant day in the life of Chiltern's Lake View house, one of HHR's childhood homes. This date happens to be the 150th anniversary of her birth, which occurred in Melbourne on Jan 3, 1870; the 50th anniversary of the official opening of the house by the National Trust on January 3, 1970; and the 50th consecutive year that her birthday has been celebrated at Lake View by the holding of a picnic tea in its lovely garden overlooking Lake Anderson.



Lake View, Chiltern

Lake View is important for a number of reasons, but possibly chief amongst these is the fact that it remains the only public memorial to her anywhere in the world. For example, she has no grave site, as her ashes together with her husband's, were scattered at sea off Hastings, England, where she had lived for many years until her death in 1946.

The very informal BYO picnic tea gets underway around 6pm and there are usually one or two speakers talking about various aspects of her life and writings. A birthday cake and rousing rendition of 'Happy birthday to You' are always features of the evening.



Cutting the cake 2011

A very warm welcome is extended to anyone who would like to join in the picnic tea, and the Henry Handel Richardson Society of Australia, which was formed over ten years ago following the picnic tea, hopes that people who may have attended this event over the years, but not done so in recent years, may decide to do so on this particularly significant occasion.

Online now – 2019 HHR Annual Oration by Stefan Welz

The 2019 Annual Oration delivered this year at PLC on March 16 - ‘On Proud Irish, Clumsy Saxons and Provincial Englishmen: Henry Handel Richardson’s cultural knowledge and tolerance’ – is now on the HHR website, www.henryhandelrichardsonsonociety.org.au

under ‘Orations and Papers’. For those who attended the event, this offers a chance to read and reflect further on this fascinating work, and for those who were unable to come it’s a treat in store.

Online now – paper on HHR’s Germany by Dr Richard O’Sullivan

As part of the ‘Words in Winter’ Festival in Trentham where we considered HHR’s Strassburg stories, we had the pleasure of hearing from Dr Rachel Solomon who spoke on ‘Two Tales of Old Strassburg: Pictures in Prose’.



Dr Rachel Solomon and Dr Richard O’Sullivan

Rachel’s paper is on the HHR website under ‘Orations and Papers’. Dr Richard O’Sullivan also presented a fascinating and detailed paper ‘HHR’s on Germany’ which is now online under ‘Orations and Papers’

Another book featuring HHR - Review by Heather McNeill of:

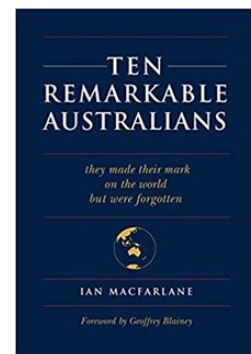
‘Ten Remarkable Australians: they made their mark on the world but were forgotten’ by Ian Macfarlane (Connorcourt, \$49.95 hb)

(Ian Macfarlane AC is an Australian economist and was Governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia from 1996 to 2006.)

In this collection of informative and engaging biographical essays, Ian Macfarlane brings together diverse and gifted Australians born in the pre-Federation era who each excelled in more than one field. His subjects were part of the first wave of Australian expatriates, well-known in their time but seemingly forgotten today by the general public. The sole woman in the collection is HHR and Macfarlane has researched her achievements both as a novelist and musician. He reflects also on HHR as a person (“the last two words you would ever use to describe her are light-hearted or frivolous”) and briefly considers her place in Australian literature.

The biographical essay is necessarily selective and the writer has chosen to avoid footnotes, although his bibliography indicates that he has consulted numerous biographies on HHR. Reference is not, however, made to the work of the extensive HHR Project at Monash University, nor specifically to newer editions, such as Text Classics.

Macfarlane has noted there is a HHR Society, but makes no mention of the wide ranging activities of HHRSA to celebrate and promote the writings and music of HHR. It would seem that the Society and Macfarlane have a shared aim - to advance knowledge of this remarkable Australian.



***Murder of an HHR Academic –
read all about it in ‘Gerard Hardy’s
Misfortune’!***

On Saturday October 26 about 70-80 enthusiastic readers gathered in the Bay Room of the Uniting Church in Queenscliff for the much anticipated launch of ‘Gerard Hardy’s Misfortune’, the third in the series of Dorothy Johnston’s crime novels featuring the local detective, Chris Blackie. In this third novel, the victim of the crime is Gerard Hardy, an HHR academic.



Dorothy Johnston at the launch of ‘Gerard Hardy’s Misfortune’

Readers of previous newsletters and Dorothy’s blog will know that she has long been intrigued, even disturbed by her walks past HHR’s house at 26 Mercer Street in Queenscliff. The book is peppered with details familiar to HHR readers.

This is a perfect Christmas gift for anyone interested in HHR. You can order it at: <https://www.forpitysake.com.au/store/gerard-hardys-misfortune-by-dorothy-johnston-print>

Janey Runci’s launch speech can be read on the HHR website, www.henryhandelrichardsonociety.org.au under ‘News and Events’

Welcome to new members:

Catherine Ryan from Canberra, Australia

Lesley Crosland from Cambridge, England

Alex Cliff from Hastings, England

Catherine Ryan



I am a keen reader, who is interested in Henry Handel Richardson and her life. Recently I read ‘Maurice Guest’, and also Michael Ackland’s captivating biography about the author. After a career in the Australian Public Service based in Canberra, I am enjoying the time to read and pursue other interests, such as learning German and playing the piano.

Lesley Crosland



I live in Cambridge, UK and was introduced to HHR through my husband, Roger Buckley. As a lifetime lover of music by the composer, Frederick Delius he was intrigued by details of contemporary Leipzig described in ‘Maurice Guest’, which was around the same time Delius was studying there.

It was also connecting with the HHR Society that encouraged both of us to join the trip to Leipzig, revisiting one of our favourite cities through a different lens. In preparation, I read ‘Maurice Guest’, finishing it whilst in Leipzig. I was keen to make the most of being where the novel is set so that I could imagine the characters moving around and the ambience of the city.

During our time there, we explored the streets where some of the characters lived in the novel – Louise in Brüderstrasse and Schilsky in Talstrasse – and we were also fortunate to go to Rochlitz which is an important location for Maurice and Louise.

I had been warned that some readers find ‘Maurice Guest’ a difficult read but this was not the case for me. Almost immediately I was immersed in the characters and the action and found the latter part of the novel harrowing as the relationship deteriorates but continues to torture the protagonists. And although we were led to it over several chapters, nonetheless Maurice’s suicide came as a shock.

Personally, I was not convinced that the ‘Epilogue’ showing Louise and Schilsky years later was a fitting conclusion to the novel. I wondered if the scene where Louise’s cloak is rescued by a young admirer was a mere suggestion of another Maurice in the making and a final comment that she remained a temptress for the next generation.

Alex Cliff

(Alex is the great- great niece of Marie Hansen, HHR’s friend at PLC and in Leipzig and subject of Rachel Solomon’s oration in 2018).



My sisters and I were introduced to ‘The Fortunes of Richard Mahony’ as teenagers, as my mother and her sisters, growing up in Williamstown, Australia had been by their mother Alma Coutts (nee Hansen). Apart from the musical talent running through the family my mother and her sisters had no knowledge of their Great Aunt Marie Hansen (Aunt Mimi) or her friendship with Henry Handel Richardson or the fact that they both studied at the Leipzig Conservatorium, until much later in life. Their research was triggered by completely separate coincidences leading to further reading of HHR’s literature. The publication of HHR’s letters confirmed the friendship.

My mother married an English doctor and spent the bulk of her married life in Hastings, England, another HHR connection.

Following a visit to Chiltern, Victoria in about 1996, which happened to coincide with a tea party, I wrote to Rachel Solomon asking if she knew anything about Marie Hansen. I have no recollection of doing this and was overjoyed when she rang me out of the blue in August this year having come across my letter. She told me that members of the HHR Society were travelling to the northern hemisphere to include a visit to Hastings at the end of September. That is how I came to meet 5 wonderful people who warmly absorbed me into their group. I have since read their gifts to me - ‘Myself when Young’ and ‘Henry Handel Richardson in Maldon’ - which have inspired me to further reading. I was only too delighted to be invited to become a member of the Society. Thank you all.

Following HHR in Germany, 2019 – First Instalment – An Evening at the Literaturhaus

On the first HHR Society trip to Germany in 2017 we made an agreement that we would return for the launch of the translation of ‘Maurice Guest’ into German by Stefan Welz and Fabian Dellemann. Although the novel is still in the process of being published we were thrilled to be part of the wonderful celebration of the completion of this work at the Literaturhaus in Leipzig on October 10.

Our evening began in the the Augustplatz, the grand square with the Opera House at one end and the Gewandhaus (concert hall) at the other in this most musical of cities. The first familiar faces we saw were those of fellow Society members, Susan Schaale and Sebastian Fink who visited us in Australia in 2018. Susan greeted us each with a traditional gift of the small Leipzig cake, the Lukas, before we boarded a tram to the Literaturhaus.



Susan and Sebastian

As we stepped off the tram near the Literaturhaus another familiar face greeted us in the person of Christine Carrot, wife of Stefan Welz who visited us in Australia with their children earlier this year. So many happy reunions!



Christine Carrot

The next familiar face, the one that had drawn us all together in this foreign city was HHR herself, looking down at us from the poster advertising the event we were about to attend.



HHR Society, President Graeme Charles beside the poster



A closer view of the poster

We had plenty of occasion during our time in Leipzig to reflect on the way our own deep interest in HHR has made this city so familiar to us and especially on this night when we gathered in the name of HHR. As we walked through the entrance to the Literaturhaus and up the stairs there at the top was Fabian Dellemann, joint translator with Stefan Welz and looking just as we remembered him (in his ever-present beanie) from 2017 when he gave such memorable readings from 'Maurice Guest' outside the place where the old Gewandhaus was, and outside the Conservatorium.



Fabian Dellemann

After a very happy reunion with Fabian we went into the large, pleasant room with a bar in one corner, about 70-80 people sitting at tables throughout the room sipping wine and beer, and along the long window wall a piano and a reading stand. We felt like royalty as friendly, curious faces nodded and smiled at the visitors from Australia. More familiar faces greeted us in the persons of Society members, Irmgard Heidler from Munich and Roger Buckley and Lesley Crosland from Cambridge in England, and of course, Stefan Welz, the co-translator of 'Maurice Guest' and organiser extraordinaire of our fabulous (in the true sense of the word) time in Leipzig.



Irmgard Heidler



Lesley Crosland and Roger Buckley



Stefan Welz

And so the evening began. Our host for the event was renowned Leipzig cabaret artist and political satirist, Gunther Bohnke who gave the introductory speech, in German of course. The reaction of the enthusiastic audience suggested that the speech was highly entertaining.

(For more details of what Gunther said you can read the article that appeared in the local press about this event and has been kindly translated for us by Dr Richard O'Sullivan. His translation and notes follow this report).

It was notable and encouraging to see as many young faces as old in the audience, all united in their interest and pleasure by what has been achieved by Stefan and Fabian, and all of this coming so long ago from the pen of HHR!



Gunther Bohnke addresses the crowd at the Literaturhaus

Gunther's introduction was followed by words from Stefan and Fabian and then came the climax of the evening – the dramatized reading of three very different extracts from the newly translated 'Maurice Guest'.

The brilliant young actress, Noemi Krausz gave an enthralling reading of three passages with appropriate accompaniment on the piano by Graham Welsh.

The first passage was the one where Maurice first sees Louise, then the very different scene where Schilsky and friends drink and carouse, and finally the sombre scene where Maurice and Louise go to see Avery's body in the morgue. The actress added to the drama of the second reading by downing a beer as the character did and even a whisky!



The atmosphere during the dramatized reading was electric. To be united with so many people from different countries, all concentrating intensely on the words calling up the lives of these young music students in Leipzig, originally written by HHR so long ago and now so painstakingly and sensitively translated by Stefan and Fabian has to be one of the most moving experiences of our trip.

Thank you Sebastian, Fabian, Neomi, Graham, and thank you, HHR!

Leipzig Press Report of the Evening at the Literaturhaus

On October 12 an article, quite jovial in tone, about the evening appeared in the Leipzig press, written by Benjamin Heine, sourced for us by one of our Leipzig members, Sebastian Fink (thank you, Sebastian), and kindly translated for us by Melbourne member, Dr Richard O'Sullivan. Richard has also provided some helpful footnotes as well. The original German article is available on our website under 'News and events'.

An Almost Recovered Treasure - Musical Reading from Leipzig Novel of 1908

It's called 'Maurice Guest'; Henry Handel Richardson wrote it. And now it's even been translated: the Leipzig novel from the year 1908. It's not yet for sale, however. But the actress Noëmi Krausz has already read from it at the Leipzig *Literaturhaus* (House of Literature).

Gunter Böhnke is amazed. You don't see a queue at the bar in the Literary Cafe of the Leipzig *Literaturhaus* every day. But here, where the youth audience is often absent, on this Thursday evening almost all the seats are taken, some by young people drinking organic iced tea.

This is perhaps due to the fact that a Professor of English, in the person of Stefan Welz, is sitting on the (non-existent) stage. During the past seven years, this Leipzig specialist in Australian Literature, together with Fabian Dellemann, has translated the novel 'Maurice Guest' by Henry Handel Richardson, which they are now introducing, along with Noëmi Krausz and Graham Welsh.

Cradle of Australian Literature

When two very busy experts spend years in a quasi-honorary way translating a 600 page novel, without a publishing deadline or a publisher, it must be a pretty special book. 'Maurice Guest' is that without a doubt - a Leipzig novel, which is at the same time something like the cradle of Australian Literature. It appeared in 1908 in English and in 1912 in a somewhat mutilated German version, which was so far beyond rare and unknown that it is not even in the German *Nationalbibliothek* (National Library). Welz heard about it for the first time as a student in 1980, but only as a rumour. Then in the 90s he met a fan of the book, in the person of Peter Hinke of the Connwitz Publishing House. Hinke had found the original critical edition some time ago in the large collection of Australian Literature in Wuppertal. And hey presto! Only 25 years later the book is almost here ...

Study at the Royal Conservatorium

Three passages from the completed translation are read by Noëmi Krausz, who appeared as a snow-boarder in "James Bond 007: Spectre" (which Gunter Böhnke is not supposed to mention in his introduction).

Krausz, a Viennese born in 1995, studied at the HMT (2) in Leipzig - as did Henry Handel Richardson, 120 years before her.

Richardson led an amazing life from 1870 to 1946.

The novel is set in Leipzig towards the end of the nineteenth century at the then Royal Conservatorium. And because Richardson studied piano here, Welsh is able to play a couple of her compositions on the piano to accompany the readings.

Krausz reads with a mature voice, unflustered and with a good feeling for the text. When beers are being drunk in the text, she drains a glass of beer (which Dellemann has put before her seconds in advance); when there is singing, she sings; when nothing is happening, she holds back. When she gets to *meadows and a gently trickling brook* (3) Welsh takes to the piano keys. A little fun, which only the translation provides.

"Deliberate Carelessness in Dress"

Gewandhaus and Conservatorium lay close together, in a new quarter of the town.

Many things change. Others don't: *With all of them a quite deliberate carelessness in dress was noticeable*, she says of the Leipzig students of the 1890s (4). Maurice Guest is one of them, and we hear about his first meeting with Louise Dufrayer, see her with his eyes, are enchanted, pick up from the ground the yellow rose which has fallen from her belt and blush as our eyes meet.

The scene is so appealing that it doesn't occur to us to ask ourselves how, why and wherefore anybody ever wore a rose in their belt. Or what word, later in the second passage, as a couple of lads cruise from pub to pub (from the *Brühl* to the *Bayerischer Bahnhof* (Bavarian Station), might have appeared in the English original in the place of *Kinkerlitzchen* [translator's note: probably "trifle" (5)].

May Stefan Welz, Fabian Dellemann and Peter Hinke obtain enough money to be able finally to print this book - and preferably have the recorded version voiced by Noëmi Krausz straight away. Next year Henry Handel Richardson would be 150.

By Benjamin Heine and translated by Richard O'Sullivan

Translator's notes from Richard O'Sullivan:

(1) The German original has *Englische* instead of *Deutsche* by mistake.

(2) *Hochschule für Musik und Theater*, i.e. University of Music and Theatre.

(3) Cf. Henry Handel Richardson, *Maurice Guest*, Capuchin Classics, London, 2010, p. 196.

(4) The German translation is less harsh (more polite) than Henry Handel Richardson's English original. She actually wrote: "All alike were conspicuous for a rather wilful slovenliness" (*Maurice Guest*, Henry Handel Richardson, Capuchin Classics, London, 2010, p. 30). The translators have not used the usual German word for "slovenliness", viz. *Schlampigkeit*. *Lässigkeit in der Kleidung* means "carelessness in dress". Perhaps the translators were influenced by the idea that the dress of the Leipzig students would be less shocking to the modern reader than to an English newcomer in the 1890s.

(5) The passage referred to is between pages 187 and 196 of Henry Handel Richardson, op. cit. Without being able to compare the translation by Welz and Dellemann with HHR's English original, it is difficult to answer Benjamin Heine's question, but the most likely answer seems to be the word "trifle" in the sentence: "Over every trifle she has got up a fresh scene." (Henry Handel Richardson, op. cit., p. 192). Heine's question is justified, because *Kinkerlitzchen* is a colloquial word unfamiliar to most second language speakers of German, so the audience in the *Literaturhaus* might also have expected the corresponding English word to be unfamiliar to them. In fact, however, "trifle" and its usual translation *Kleinigkeit* are more common words than *Kinkerlitzchen*, which one might back-translate as "tomfoolery". *Kinkerlitzchen* was probably considered a more authentic usage in the context of the character's diatribe than *Kleinigkeit*.

Membership of the HHR Society

You can pay your annual subscription (\$20) by a direct deposit into our bank account:

BSB: 803070

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appears on the deposit.***

Or you can send a cheque made out to the

**Henry Handel Richardson Society of
Australia, c/o The Treasurer, HHRSA,
86/80 Trenerry Crescent,
Abbotsford, Victoria 3067**

New members

If you're not a member and would like to join, you will need to fill out a membership form.

The form can be downloaded from our website:

www.henryhandelrichardsonssociety.org.au

or you can email

helen.macrae@bigpond.com

and ask for it to be sent to you.

If you have any questions about membership, please call **Helen Macrae** on **0401 901 558**