

ACTUALITY



ISSUE 01

April 2017



The Magazine of
The Charles Parker
Archive Trust

**A Word
from the
Chair
of The
Charles
Parker
Archive
Trust**

Mary Kalemkerian:
*Pioneering producer
Charles Parker was,
for me, a radio hero
- and when I first
heard the Radio
Ballads he made with
the genius of Ewan
MacColl and Peggy
Seeger, I was blown
away.*

Therefore, I felt privileged by an invitation in 2011 to become a CPA Trustee, subsequently taking over as Chair in 2014. My radio career began in Scotland, making a daily series for pre-school children. Later, in London, I was appointed Chief Producer, Youth Magazine Programmes, launching the original BBC Radio 5. Following a stint with BBC Worldwide, as Senior Commissioning Editor for Comedy and Drama, I returned to broadcasting in 2000 to launch the new digital archive station which became Radio 4 Extra, where I was Controller until my retirement.



☞ ☞

Welcome to **Actuality** the new annual magazine from the Charles Parker Archive Trust!

The CPA Trust was established in 1982, and since then the Trustees have published an Annual Report of key information. This has grown over the years to include more general articles of interest from the worlds of radio, folk music and oral history, plus news of events.

At our last AGM, the Trustees unanimously agreed that the time had come for a more professional publication to promote the Charles Parker Archive and the aims of the Trust more effectively, in conjunction with the CPA website and our developments in social media.

The magazine style would also allow space for new contributors and more features. **Sara Parker** will continue as Editor with **Simon Elmes**, and she is keen to receive any ideas and suggestions (editor@cpatrust.org.uk).

The ethos of **The Charles Parker Trust** of course remains the same.

The Trustees have always explored ways of generating interest in Charles' work, not only from the many brilliant BBC radio programmes he created in the 50s, 60s and early 70s but exploring and discussing the relevance of his work, particularly in the context of today's uncertain world.

Charles was ahead of his time in so many ways. His pioneering work in radio, and theatre (he was a founder member of Banner Theatre), and his interest and influence in folk music, politics and education, has laid the foundation for a range of projects, continuing to inspire the programme makers of today and tomorrow.

The Trust meets the original objectives of the CPA through various events and achievements:

Charles Parker Day, celebrates the radio feature, past present and future, and was initiated in 2004 by Professor Sean Street, at Bournemouth University.

Charles Parker Prize for Radio Features, an annual award, open to UK students studying creative audio feature-making offering opportunities to the next generation of programme makers.

Digitisation of the Parker Archive, in partnership with the Library of Birmingham, safeguarding over 5000 original recordings, production files and letters.

Availability: advising and encouraging the use of the archive material in projects with companies such as Falling Tree, Cast Iron Radio and Rural Media.

Friends of the CPA are tremendously important and valuable to the Trust.

Becoming a member entitles you to a free copy of the new magazine and back copies of the Annual Report, a special concessionary rate for Charles Parker Day,

plus the opportunity to have a say in the future of the Charles Parker Archive.

You can become a Friend by completing the form on the final page of this magazine. The form is also available on the Charles Parker website - www.cpatrust.org.uk

The Trustees - We are fortunate in our Trustees to have a wide range of experience and skills. You can find out more about them in the following pages.

Sadly, this year we are saying goodbye to Matthew Parker who, after 35 years as a Trustee and 10 years as Treasurer, has now decided to retire from the Trust. We are grateful to Matthew for his contribution and commitment to the CPA over the years.

My heartfelt thanks to the **Library of Birmingham** for providing the CPA with a home, and to all of you Friends, Trustees, and Archive users for your continuing support.

I look forward to hearing from any of you who have questions about, or suggestions for, the future development of the CPA.

May Kalemkerian



Sara Parker, award-winning radio producer, daughter of Charles and original Trustee.

Co-editor of Actuality, the magazine of the Charles Parker Trust

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One of the truly great things about my dad was his generosity and when it came to his work, he'd share recordings, songs, written material with whoever expressed an interest. He would have been thrilled to know that this year his recordings for the **Travelling People (1964)** have been used by production company Rural Media to inform an arts funded project with a new young generation of travellers. He also would have been delighted that Cast Iron Radio requested access

when they were producing a BBC Radio Archive on 4 celebrating 50 years since the introduction Britain's first Race Relations Act.

As a radio producer myself, I also trawled the archive for a programme I was making about the creation of the Radio Ballads and discovered a treasure trove of recorded lectures. Not only were these invaluable to my programme but they also gave me a new connection to my father both personally and professionally. I encourage you all to view the Archive as a valuable resource as relevant today as it ever was - whether you're an educator at a university or college, programme maker, oral historian, folk singer/musician or have a general interest. This is what Charles would have wanted ... this is his legacy.



Jimmy Ewing - Trustee



I became a CPA Trustee after winning the Charles Parker Prize in 2012

for my feature about Leeds mortuary staff on 'Ward 13'. I was encouraged to enter by my radio lecturers because my piece reflected 'ordinary people with extraordinary stories' and that's what I love about the work of Charles Parker.

The prize has been a talking point at every job interview/freelance meeting, proving its high regard in the industry. Inspiration from the likes of Charles has helped me both as a BBC and prison radio producer unearth amazing stories and give voice to those often unheard.

Now I am a radio production lecturer at Media City, in the 'Dirty Old Town' of Salford. I look after the prize website www.charlesparkerprize.com - promoting the work of the CPA to a younger/student audience.

I'll be there on Charles Parker Day and look forward to meeting you. Please say hello, especially if you're studying radio!



Helen Lloyd - Trustee



A Trustee since 2009. I am currently the CPA Friends Membership

secretary. Following years as a reporter for BBC radio programmes such as *Woman's Hour*, I changed career in 2000 after winning the *Race in the Media Award* for my involvement in the BBC's oral history series, *The Century Speaks*. I realised recording peoples' memories was my perfect job and now as an oral history consultant (www.oralhistoryconsultancy.co.uk) provide audio recordings for archives, museums, websites; and training for Heritage Lottery funded projects. I am Regional Network Representative for the Oral History Society and have lectured all over the UK, Europe and USA.



Ian M Parr - Trustee and Honorary Secretary



I have been honorary secretary since 2004 and a Trustee since 2009.

My contact with Charles Parker stemmed from an assortment of Radio Ballad scripts he sent me in 1966 when I was heavily involved in folk music and folk song clubs. Since then in folk song and poetry I've been writing and performing and making the occasional radio programme. I retired from full time employment in 2010 as a Consultant Engineer having previously been with ICI for thirty years.



Pam Bishop - Trustee



A Trustee since the Trust was set up, I now look after its website and

social media. I first came across Charles Parker when he addressed a university dinner in 1962, and was hooked on his enthusiasm. He inspired a group of young people in Birmingham to set up the Birmingham and Midland Folk Centre, the Grey Cock Folk Club and many political activities including Banner Theatre. This was a great legacy - I still play the concertina and now lead a folk band, song sessions and music workshops.



Peter Cox - Trustee



A Trustee since 2008, I have always had an enthusiasm for the Radio

Ballads. In 2006 I met Peggy Seeger for the first time and asked her if anyone had written about them. Nope, she said, why don't you. Two years later I published *Set Into Song*, the story of the Radio Ballads, embedded in a brief triple biography of Charles Parker, Ewan MacColl and Peggy. It became the second (and favourite) book of the five I've written since I retired from proper work as a director of Waitrose in 2004.



Phil Maguire - Trustee



I was honoured to become a CPA Trustee in 2016. The Charles

Parker Day had been a highlight of my calendar for several years, a perfect way to celebrate my joint passions for folk music and narrative audio storytelling. I worked in the fields of social work and education before gaining an MA in Broadcast Journalism. I joined the BBC as a radio producer, later becoming a project manager. In 2006 I became founding Chief Executive of the Prison Radio Association - an award-winning charity that uses radio to support prisoner rehabilitation. We are proud winners of ten Sony Radio Academy Awards.



Andy Cartwright - Trustee and organiser of the Charles Parker Day



I have organised the annual Charles Parker Day since becoming a Trustee of the Charles Parker Trust in 2010. It is a great privilege each year to coordinate this celebration of the radio/audio feature.

Coming from a railway family I remember my father talking about *The Ballad of John Axon* and hearing this programme was part of the inspiration in becoming a radio producer. Joining the BBC, originally in Birmingham, I worked in several radio jobs before becoming weekend editor at BBC Radio Sheffield. I founded Soundscape Productions in 1993 producing programmes for BBC network radio and I also teach at the University of Sunderland where I run the MA Radio course.

The Charles Parker Day 2017

Friday 7th April 2017

The HUBS, Sheffield Hallam University Students' Union, Paternoster Row, Sheffield, S1 2QQ

10:30
Registration and Coffee / Tea

10:50
Introduction: Mary Kalemkerian Chair of the Charles Parker Trust and Andy Cartwright organiser of the Charles Parker Day 2017.

11:00
Hearing and Who We Are: Charles Parker Day founder, Professor Sean Street, explores some of the ideas in his new book about listening and identity.

11:15
Hearing Local Voices: Celebrating the 50th anniversary of local radio in the UK Michael Barton, the first Manager of the BBC's second local radio station, BBC Radio Sheffield is in conversation with Rony Robinson.

11:45
Hearing Locally Crafted Features: BBC Local Radio used to employ feature producers - telling local stories. Former Radio 1 manager and producer at BBC Radio Nottingham Trevor Dann joins Duckrabbit's production director Benjamin Chesterton, formerly of BBC Radio Merseyside, in remembering the features they and others made before the budget cuts!

12:30
Hearing Future Storytellers - The Charles Parker Prize 2017: Chair of this year's judging panel, Simon Elmes, introduces the five short-listed nominees and announces the Gold, Silver and Bronze Winners of this year's prize for the Best Student Radio / Audio Features.

13:00
Lunch outside in the bar area.

14:00
Hearing the Hammer Again: A unique 'live' analysis of a radio programme as producer, John Leonard and musicians John Tams and Barry Coope melt-down and re-cast their acclaimed 2006 Radio Ballad *The Song of Steel*.

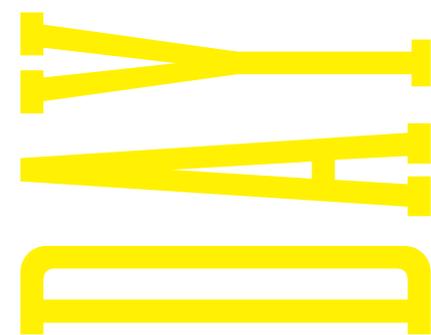
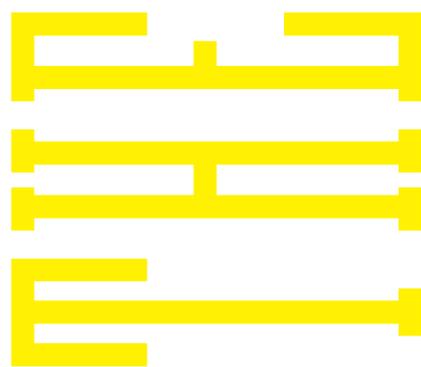
14:45
Hearing Our Own Voice: The BBC Asian Network evolved out of BBC local radio - but is this where it all began? Dr Gloria Khankar (Southampton's Unity 101) the author of a study into the origins of Asian radio in the UK joins Khaliq Meer, Head of Programmes, BBC Asian Network discuss the importance of hearing Asian voices and stories on air.

15:15
Refreshment break

15:30
Hearing Sheffield: BBC natural history producer Sarah Blunt (Rivers of Steel), Pennine Productions Clare Jenkins (Children of the Scattered Homes) and Frances Byrnes (I Love You Bridge) examine Sheffield as crucible of great storytelling.

16:15
Listening 'In the Dark': In 2010 Nina Garthwaite set up a new way to listen to radio features together, 'In the Dark'. As more of us consume radio personally on our smartphones, is there a benefit in listening together?

16:45
Conference ends.



THE CHARLES

The Charles Parker Prize

The Charles Parker Prize has established an unparalleled reputation for excellence in audio feature production by young people. In 2005, the first winner Mark Williams - a young man with a troubled past but a huge talent for radio - told the intimate and graphic story of his own release from prison. Subsequent gold prize winners may have stemmed from perhaps less *personally* traumatic circumstances but have nonetheless made gripping and brilliant radio: Hana Walker-Brown's Four Metal Plates told of a horrific head injury suffered by a young man on a night out, while Life on the Edge, by Adam Allinson, uncovered the tragic stories behind suicide attempts at Beachy Head cliffs. In 2012, Jimmy Ewing met mortuary workers who talked frankly

about their life and work, yet there have also been more gentle, less troubling stories, like the poetic account of the Hampstead Heath bathing pool and its denizens (Mair Bosworth, 2011).

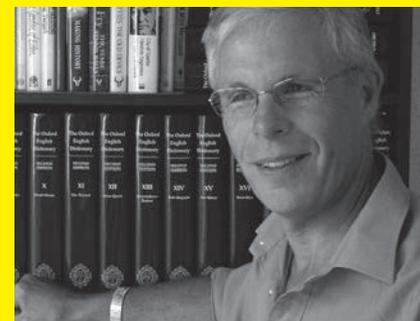
Over the 12 years since Sean Street launched the first award, the judges have been repeatedly and gratifyingly astonished by the levels of invention, creative imagination and sheer production intelligence shown by entrants. So it's not surprising that many of our winners have gone on to carve out successful professional careers in radio.

Simon Elmes - Trustee and Chair of the Charles Parker Prize Judging Panel

Q

I've been a Trustee since 2014 and judging panel chair since the Charles Parker Prize was set up 12 years ago. I'm a programme-maker and writer who was until 2015 Creative Director of the BBC's Radio Documentary unit. In my four decades at the Corporation I was responsible for BBC documentary series such as Voices in 2005 and *The Routes of English* at the Millennium with Melvyn Bragg, and supervised the long-running Radio 4 magazine *Word of Mouth* from its inception. Among my books are *And Now on Radio 4*, the UK's favourite radio station, and *Talking for Britain*, about the nation's dialects.

Simon received the BBC's Gold Award for services to radio in 2005.



HANA WALKER-

BROWN

2013 Charles Parker Prize Winner - Hana Walker-Brown

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I never set out to make radio - that's the truth - and I'd never actually heard the term "radio feature" before starting my MA at Goldsmiths. I just had an almost compulsive desire to illuminate the world and all it represents; people, places, things.

Coming from a theatre background I started making soundscapes around recorded monologues as part of a drama module but found there was something missing.

After three years of drama training I'd gotten bored of pretending. It wasn't authentic in the same way my normal conversations are. I still wanted to create, as most drama students do - something stirring, immersive, affecting and cinematic, but above all I wanted to create something that was real - to tell real stories.

My approach to this "storytelling" is animating the tension between raw document and art. Applying the tools of fiction to facts, documenting the World, *artfully*.



It's very hard to figure out your own way of working, your own style, your own perspective if you get too bogged down in what everyone else is doing. You're not that person, you're *YOU*. You need to figure out your own way.

What the Charles Parker Prize did for me was reassure me that what I was doing was important, that it meant something to someone else - not that it was "right" or even "the best" but that it made an impact, was engaging and above all that people *believed* in it.

Since winning the Prize I have gone on to make award-winning audio and visual features and documentaries for a number of production houses and for networks and platforms all over the world.

Most recently I won Best Documentary Maker at the Audio Production Awards. That's not because I'm the best - you can't measure that - it's because I was confident in my style, in my way of doing things and I made sure I absolutely nailed that.

The Charles Parker Prize was the start of that. It taught me that what I was doing had a name, that you could forge a career from it! (Much to the delight of my parents...) But above all it was that boost of confidence which told me to keep going - to go make something incredible - I'm not sure where I would have been without that.

**Friends of the
Charles Parker
Archive Membership
subscriptions**

We invite you to join the Friends or to renew your subscription. Membership entitles you to an Annual Report, to concessionary prices for publications in print or sound, and to be actively involved in the future of the Archive.

The subscription rates are:

**Organisations and families
£15.00**

Individuals £10.00

Unwaged £5.00

Additional donations are much appreciated, and there is added benefit if UK taxpayers contribute under the Gift Aid system.

Please complete the form below and return it to the Treasurer of the Trust,

**Mark Newman
Flat 28, 585 Moseley Road
Birmingham
B12 9BL**

Anyone interested in paying by standing order should contact Mark at the above address or by emailing him at mark.newman@bbc.co.uk

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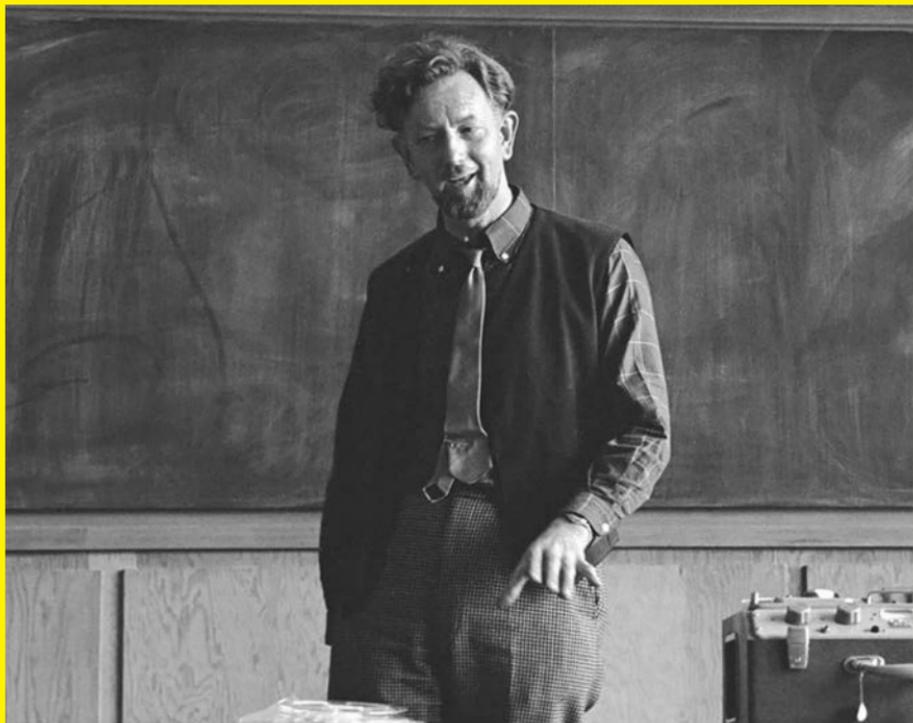


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“A real creative genius in radio, a passionately romantic radical, acutely sensitive to oral history. His editor’s razor blade was like a sculptor’s chisel, releasing hidden poets in people.”

Michael Mason