

# IN AND OUT OF THE DOG HOUSE

By David Jones

David Jones has been involved with AHP(B) and S&S for over 20 years. He was 70 in Autumn 2004 and has been made Honorary Member of AHPP and of AHP(B).

His account of this involvement describes changes within and between these humanistic bodies that reflect changes in the wider culture which itself has become more humanistic.

I joined AHP(B) in 1985 when I was a lecturer in psychology at LSE. The previous year I completed an immersion in humanistic psychology offered by the two year diploma course of the Institute for the Development of Human Potential (IDHP) and was seeking ways of extending my commitment to humanistic ideals. The human potential movement, along with the encounter movement, was on the wane but the AHP(B) still showed many of its features - great enthusiasm and confidence that the counter culture would defeat the constraints of 'society' leading to unimpeded individualism, greater autonomy and freedom from the oppression of organisations and professionalism - and where the expression of feelings and the needs of the 'true self' would be more important than competition and forced compliance.

AHP(B) was called the Association for Humanistic Psychology in Britain to distinguish it from the American AHP which considered itself to be the prime mover and true bearer of the humanistic approach to life and looked on other countries' AHPs as chapters of its own organisation. France, Germany, Holland, Hungary, Italy and Spain, had their AHP's which flourished during the 70s and 80s.

Founded in 1971 as a result of enthusiasm created by popular workshops led by prominent American practitioners and held at places like the Hilton Hotel in London, AHP(B) ran big and successful annual conferences, weekly events, a newsletter, an alternative disco called the Whirlygig and special meetings, some of them in universities. Typical of the humanistic psychology of the day, AHP(B) also had poor boundaries including lax sexual boundaries, role confusion, lackadaisical accounting and a tendency for one person - usually the Hon. Sec.- to seek ever more jobs to do and to have ever more responsibility heaped upon them until the committee, feeling powerless and threatened threw them out. Rob Brown and Mary Fee in their own ways fell foul of this pattern.

AHP(B) also had its official publication, *Self and Society* in order to consolidate and promote its message. The first issue had appeared in March 1973 edited by Bob Jones and Vivian Milroy. An A5 journal of 32 pages. Bob, a lecturer in Journalism at what is now the City University decided not to continue and Vivian Milroy who ran Jobson and Beckwith, a family firm he inherited and which marketed pumps, continued on his own. A loose advisory committee met frequently to look at copy and to discuss

ideas. Prominent among these was John Rowan who took charge of book reviews.

Many of the leading lights among the British humanistic fraternity joined the *Orange People* or *Rajneeshis*, at least for a short time. In 1975 *S&S* had given much space to Rajneesh and his followers and their attempt to form a counter cultural community with a transpersonal or psychospiritual base derived from eastern religion and philosophy. I enjoyed the atmosphere at the Rajneesh centres and got a lot from their groups. However, I always wore a blue tracksuit to distinguish myself from Bhagwan's followers, the sannyasins who wore orange. And I found the training I did at the Karuna Institute in Core Process Psychotherapy, which is based on the Buddhist model of the mind, a much better use of Eastern stuff for a psychospiritual approach to personal development and psychotherapy, though a lot less 'fun'. My children loved staying at the Rajneesh centres. (For other reactions to Rajneesh see articles in *Self & Society* September 1987 Bhagwan; Trick or Treat).

Like other committee members I took on some of the administrative tasks for AHP(B) notably Events Coordinator and then Membership Secretary. In 1985 I was elected Chair and with subsequent Chairs, Margaret Novakovic and Sue Mickleburgh and with the co-operation of Mary Fee we appointed a paid administrator, Ruth Feiner. AHP(B) became a more properly constituted formal organisation. AHPP, founded in 1980 as a section of AHP(B) for those who want it recognised that they use humanistic psychology in their work, especially social work, therapy and management consultancy, went through a similar process with its Hon. Sec. leading to the appointment of its paid administrator Ian Doucet. Both organisations were richer and stronger when they were part of one another but, inevitably perhaps, AHPP was keen to assert its individuality and,



'David's Peak Experiences while editing *S&S* are well known'

perhaps, its superiority and formed a separate organisation about 5 years ago, the UKAHPP.

For nearly 20 years from 1973 Vivian had typed out and pasted up *S&S* copy with cow gum ready for the printers and saving money (sales were only 400 copies per issue) by doing as much as he could himself. A labour of love, for in today's money he must have got around £150 profit per issue for his hours of work. If ever anyone deserved to be an honorary life member of AHP(B) it was Vivian Milroy and he was duly made one 10 years ago. He published a very wide range of articles on humanistic psychology and therapies such as Co-Counselling, Gestalt,

Client Centred, Primal and Rebirthing as well as on other compatible systems such as NLP, hypnosis, TA and various 'growth' techniques cults and movements that were important during this period. Gaie Houston's *Little Red Book of Gestalt* first appeared as two issues of *S&S* in 1980. Vivian did not commission articles but put the word around that articles would be welcome. Much of what came in was published. The DIY production method (desktop publishing had not been invented) gave *S&S* a scruffy appearance with pages out of place, missing or even upside down. AHP(B) members mostly loved it though the more professionally minded were irritated. The scruffiness probably led to *S&S* being generally underrated as a publication.

From 1973 to 1978 *S&S* came out as a 32 page A5 monthly before it was enlarged and came out bi-monthly. In July 1979 it was adopted as the official Journal for the (now defunct) European Association of Humanistic Psychology which was made up of AHP(F), AHP(I), AHP(D) and the other European Associations. Articles were published from leading European writers such as Jean-Claude See, Aurelio Peccei, Jaques Salzer, Jaques Donnars and Arnold Keyserling.

I began helping with the production of *S&S* in the late 80s. I enjoyed working with Vivian and his innovative approach to the editing and production of *S&S* and I appreciated the permission he gave me to do things my way. Not least I enjoyed his raffish company. We began to think of ways of developing *S&S* in the light of the new desktop technology and changes in the humanistic culture. An enormous focus had begun to develop on psychotherapy and counseling to the exclusion of almost everything else that was humanistic. There was a movement away from the human potential approach to personal development, in which free

expression and experimentation were encouraged and even demanded. The last time that the AHP(B) annual conference, for example, was led with ritual drumming and chanting to go naked to the swimming pool was in 1987. The very idea! The movement now was towards structured professional development along with a potentially stifling propriety. Humanistic work was becoming mainstream but the mainstream had also become much more humanistic.

In 1990, when I left LSE to concentrate on running groups and to give more time to my psychotherapy practice, Vivian said he was keen to sell the *S&S* title. Well into his 70s he now looked forward to retirement, as I do now. Wendy Rose-Neil, her late husband Frank Kelvin, Elsie Gale and I met to look at ways of running *S&S* as a successful business. Frank did not want to get involved on a day to day basis so Elsie and I bought the title for £500. At first all went well. Elsie did the production and business side which she knew a great deal about from her work with Gale Publications which she ran with her husband Derek. I looked after the editing. We committed ourselves to a 64 page A5 bi-monthly.

We decided to be proactive. I talked with authors about what we wanted before they wrote a word. I commissioned conference reports, profiles of the training centres and of organisations different from but relevant to humanistic psychology such as various green organisations and also INFORM which collects and distributes information about religious cults. I tried to stimulate the letters section. We were the only publication to discuss the professionalisation of psychotherapy and the emergence of UKCP, of which we were highly but usefully critical, stimulating splendid articles by UKCP enthusiasts such as Courtenay Young. This was noticed by a group of Jungians who were also debating these issues, among them Andrew Samuels

who joined our advisory board.. All of this gave the content a more recognisable and modern shape and appealed to a wider readership. I was still the membership secretary, unpaid, for AHP(B) and it also fell to me to print the address labels for each bi-monthly mailing. Elsie used the desktop package of the day and although our *S&S* looked a bit amateurish they were no longer scruffy. Sales went up 50% which increased AHP(B) membership. AHP(B) was happy indeed. After a year we paid ourselves £150 pounds an issue – each – or about £4 an hour. The job of membership secretary soon became the main task of the newly appointed paid administrator.

After a couple of years a fault line developed. Elsie and I began to annoy one another, often on small things. The root cause seemed to be a difference of opinion about the link with AHP(B). I believed that neither *S&S* nor AHP(B) could survive on their own. Indeed I thought that AHP(B) was really the moral owner of the title and that Elsie and I were custodians of it, running it as a business. Elsie, with her experience of publishing, took a different view and wanted to develop the journal quite independently of AHP(B). In November 1991 I downed tools until the dispute was settled and produced no more copy. This confirmed my reputation as a difficult bastard (no editor isn't). We went to mediation facilitated by David Wasdell, a respected humanistic practitioner of long standing, and in the end we agreed to sell the title to AHP(B). They would appoint editors and a production team. AHP(B) went into turmoil. AHP(B) thought they owned the title anyway and balked at paying even a penny for it. Only 4 issues appeared in 1992 and members expected 6. In the end they paid £500. The post of editor was advertised. There were 3 applicants: a pair of Jungians, Mary Fee whose strength was that she knew the AHP(B) and its publication from her days

as Hon. Sec. and a couple of humanistic people from Gloucestershire.

Cometh the hour, cometh the man – and a woman – from Gloucestershire. With enormous tact and much oil to pour on troubled waters John Button and Fran Moseley drew up a clear business plan and policy statement. They asked me to join them as commissioning editor. I agreed, we were appointed, and the future looked good again. The new team got into its stride in 1993. John and Fran, with much experience in printing and book production produced a journal that did not appear amateurish in any way. They also supported me and kept me on my toes as commissioning editor. We planned 3 issues ahead and held discussions with AHP(B) who greatly appreciated John's know how and open approach. They liked John's and Fran's skill at promoting the journal too. Leafleting campaigns helped double sales which got to around 1200.

Eight years later, in 1998 I began to get restless and irritable with *S&S*. Little things that I would have shrugged off began to annoy me and I resigned, having ensured that copy would be ready for the next 3 issues. This caused much displeasure and I was in the dog house again. But *S&S* went from strength to strength, first with the appointment of Maxine Linnell to replace me as commissioning editor, and later on with Alexandra Chalfont taking over production from John and Fran. The 21<sup>st</sup> century *S&S* took shape. I did not stay in the dog house for long and was soon enjoying myself proof reading for Alexandra and discussing content with Maxine.

As a postscript: Vivian Milroy who started it all and ran *S&S* skillfully for 20 years is now well into his 80s. He was widowed, has remarried and still enjoys a daily swim.

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