

THE TEILHARD NEWSLETTER

(published by the British Teilhard Association. www.teilhard.org.uk)



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Charity No 313682

NO. 19

March 2005

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Editorial

This Newsletter contains a selection of material about Teilhard, appropriate as we approach the 50th Anniversary of his death in New York on Easter Sunday, the Day of the Resurrection, 10th April 1955.

We are also in the run-up to our Annual Conference. A leaflet with the full programme is enclosed (or attached for those receiving this by e-mail), along with a registration form. Forms to be returned to the Secretary, Peter Cox, 12 Falconer's Field, HARPENDEN, Hertfordshire, AL5 3ES.

In the Association News section please *take note of the date of the Annual General Meeting*, and the items relating to the Annual Accounts and the Revisions to our Constitution which will be on the agenda. We will be pleased to send out full copies of the documentation for these items, and to receive written questions and comments for consideration at the AGM.

(Questions/comments to Secretary, p.6)

Tributes to President Siôn Cowell

From the European Teilhard Centre:

It is very difficult to focus on one aspect of this versatile, talented man; but he most certainly was a total European. A brilliant linguist, whose gifts were honed at Cambridge, Siôn moved naturally into the world of European inter-agency co-operation. It was therefore natural that he would find a home in the European Teilhard centre of which he was twice President. That body at the 18th meeting of its Council paid tribute to Siôn as follows:-

‘The members attending the meeting learned some days ago of the death of Siôn Cowell. They expressed

and shared their sorrow and they recalled the memory of this friend, who attended the meetings of the

Council unfailingly when he was Chairman and for as long as he was in good health. All appreciated his warm temperament, his sense of humour and his excellent knowledge of Teilhard's thinking. He showed it especially when he wrote a lexicon of Teilhard's concepts and more recently when he began a new translation of the *Oeuvres Complètes*, following that by Sarah Appleton-Weber of *Le Phénomène Humain*. He shared her opinion that the first translation edited by

Collins contained many mistakes. He started with *Le Milieu Divin*, published by Sussex Academic Press, but unfortunately he left us before going further. It is a big loss for us all.'

From member Mildred Reynolds

I met Siôn (then John) at his first Teilhard British conference in the early 1970s, at St Pancras Assembly Rooms (Camden Town Hall), London. At that time our Association was called 'The Teilhard Centre for the Future of Man' and the conference attendance was over 500! I was with a friend and this young Englishman came up and spoke to us without introduction. We learnt that he had come from Brussels especially for the conference.

I was not surprised that, in due course, he became Chairman, and then President, of the Association. What amazed me was his level of energy and dynamism sustained from there on! His numerous translations and publications (including the Lexicon) were truly astonishing. But Teilhard de Chardin was not the only one he could quote at will!

I went to Belmont Abbey in October 1998 for a weekend meeting "Led by Siôn Cowell." It was called "Rediscovering the Vision: A Spiritual Workshop on the Celtic Saints and Rhineland Mystics." He not only gave all the sessions himself but supplied every member with (i) very full background notes, (ii) a chronology of Hildegard of Bingen, (iii) a poem by himself written in the ancient Celtic style, and (iv) a reading list. He gave other Spiritual Workshops at Belmont Abbey, every one on a different theme.

I met him also at a conference in 1992 in Durham on "Creation Spirituality." The principal speaker was an American Dominican—Father Matthew Fox. It must have been hard for Siôn to remain silent at some of the things Father Matthew said, but he managed it. He also attended a day conference on the same topic in St James' Church, Piccadilly, London. I cannot remember whether he spoke in the discussion.

When later I met his wife Caroline I thought I could see why he could achieve so much!

He was sometimes infuriating but always gave the example of pouring himself out in intellectual effort for the common good—without ever showing signs of being tired. I shall miss him. May he rest in peace.

From Michelle Le Morvan, former editor of the Teilhard Review

The death of Siôn in September has left a gap within the British Teilhard Association which will not be readily filled. He brought two great gifts to the Association. In the first instance he spoke French fluently having lived and worked in France for many years. As a result he read Teilhard with ease in French and was able to make the texts and ideas more

readily available to us who spoke less French (or none). He kept in touch with the French Association and had the energy to attend conferences in France and brought some of their members to England a couple of years ago.

His second gift was his passionate commitment to Teilhard, and to the Association. In the early 1990s our financial situation became serious and radical action was needed. Sion took the Association in hand and offered a new leadership to it. Even though he lived on an island far from the centre of the country he held it together. Without his contribution I doubt that we would have survived.

Academically he produced a lexicon of Teilhardian terms, retranslated *The Divine Milieu* and even began to write a PhD thesis on the influence of the Greek Fathers of the Church on Teilhard. (These Teilhard would also have studied during his years at Hastings studying theology in 1908 -1912.) Siôn also initiated and produced the Newsletter for several years.

I will always be grateful that I had the privilege of his friendship. When I needed his comments or thoughts on any Teilhardian topic I knew that he would always

Teilhard the Geologist in Jersey (1901 -1905) by Ms Michelle Le Morvan

Pierre Teilhard arrived in Jersey in the summer of 1901. He was to spend the second year of his Juniorate in the Society of Jesus at the Jesuit House of Bon Secours. This was followed from 1902-1905 by three years as a scholastic at the Maison Saint-Louis where he studied philosophy before going to teach in Cairo in 1905. As he records in *The Heart of Matter* (Collins hardback, 1950, p.46) he seriously thought of giving up geology (or petrology) as not being 'supernatural' enough, but was dissuaded by his novice master, Pere Troussard, from taking this step.

When he commenced his philosophical studies, he was in a position to begin a serious study of the geology of Jersey. On the staff of the Maison Saint-Louis was Fr. Charles Noury, who held the post of Professor of Geology. The Jesuits had set up a community at the Maison in 1880 and the college became "an important centre of teaching and research especially in geology and later in archaeology" (Mourant, 1984). Noury, who died in 1906, must have guided and inspired Teilhard. He had published, in 1886, *La Geologie de Jersey* which according to Mourant "though now greatly out of date, is still the most complete account of the geology of the island" (Mourant 1984).

Teilhard was involved in four publications concerning the geology of Jersey. These were written

help if he could do so. He gave so much to us all as Chairman and it was fitting that when he was no longer able to act in this role he became President of the Association. I remember particularly a very pleasant few hours we had in Chichester when he had come down to see his daughter Danny in Southampton and took a few hours off to come and see me.

To Danny and Caroline I offer my deepest sympathy on their loss. It was a great sadness to me that I wasn't able to attend his funeral. May he rest in peace and join Teilhard, Père Leroy and many others of that august company in the banquet of heaven.

Thank you Sion for all you gave me and the whole British Teilhard Association.

From Margaret Williamson, 2005 Conference registrant

Seeking details in response to our advertisement in the Tablet, Margaret recalled a Friday evening meeting five years ago at her house in North-East England, where Siôn addressed a group on Teilhard. Such was the enthusiasm engendered that an impromptu week-end conference followed, drawing in further attendance.

either during his time in Hastings (1908 -1912) or in the years immediately after the First World War. Two are listed in the contents of the l'Oeuvre Scientifique published under the editorship of Professor Karl Schmitz-Moorman, while the other two were published by the Societé Jersiaise. I have copies of the latter two written jointly with a fellow Jesuit Fr Felix Pelletier and published in 1911 and 1921. According to the l'Oeuvre Scientifique Teilhard had published a paper in 1910 entitled 'Notes complementaires sur les roches eruptive de l'Ile de Jersey'. This paper may be the second part of the 1911 joint paper with Pelletier, which has this title. The 1920 paper 'Sur le structure de l'Ile de Jersey' was published in the Bulletin of the Geological Society of France. A very interesting letter concerning this was written by Teilhard to Dr. A. E. Mourant, a Jersey geologist, from Peking in 1933 (Mourant, 1986). Dr. Mourant later met Teilhard in New York in 1953 and during a long lunch hour they spoke of the geology of Jersey. He mentions that Teilhard's paper 'Sur la structure de l'Ile de Jersey'(1920) was the most significant paper to be published up to that time on the stratigraphy and tectonics of Jersey, which greatly facilitated Mourant's own paper of 1933 (Mourant 1986).

The two papers that Teilhard and Pelletier published in 1911 and 1921 are entitled 'Notes Mineralogiques et

Geologiques sur l'Île de Jersey'. The second paper is a supplement to the first one. They are divided into two parts, the first written by Pelletier is a list and description of the minerals, numbering thirty five in total and listing the chief localities in which they were found. The second paper lists a further ten minerals, including a rare specimen of Wulfenite. In the second part of the papers Teilhard discusses the geology, including the petrology and structure of the rocks. What is most interesting is not only the evidence of Teilhard's acute powers of observation, later remarked on by colleagues in the field, but also his grasp of 'hard rock geology' (the geology of igneous and metamorphic rocks and structural geology) which was his first specialization before his work on Tertiary/Quaternary sediments and their mammalian faunas for which he is most famous. In the letter mentioned above to Dr. Mourant in 1933 from Peking, the discussion is about the hard rocks of Jersey and his recognition of similar structures and sequences among similar rocks he has seen in China.

One other investigation that Teilhard made but never published were the caves of Belle Hogue and la Cotte de Saint Brelade. In 1913 Teilhard discovered deer fossils in the first cave but never published his findings. The following year Fr. Morin, another Jesuit, apparently ignorant of Teilhard's discovery, found the

cave and excavated it and published his findings. The second cave mentioned above which contained a great deal of Palaeolithic material was only visited by Teilhard in 1919 and so far as we know he never had any special interest in it.

I would like to thank the Secretary and Librarian of the Societ e Jersiaise for their help in locating and sending me copies of the papers used in this article.

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Teilhard de Chardin, P., Pelletier, F., *Notes mineralogiques et geologiques sur l'ile de Jersey*. Bull. Ann. Soc. Jer., Vol. 7, 1911, pp. 99-111.

Notes mineralogiques et geologiques sur l'ile de Jersey; Liste supplementaire. Bull. Ann. Soc. Jer., Vol 19, 1921, pp.293-4.

Teilhard – Citations from WWI



Teilhard (top right), Corporal Stretcher-bearer, 1917

His citation for the *M daille Militaire* was as follows:

'A first rate N.C.O. His sterling character has won him confidence and respect. On 20th May 1917 he deliberately entered a trench under heavy bombardment to bring back a casualty.'

Later in 1921 he was made *Chevalier of the L gion d'Honneur*:

'An outstanding stretcher-bearer, who during four years of active service, was in every battle and engagement the regiment took part in, applying to remain in the ranks with the men, whose dangers and hardships he constantly shared'

Review by Ms Le Morvan: **The Story of Peking Man**; Jia Lanpo and Huang Weiwen, OUP China, 1990

This book is a reminder that not all palaeoanthropology is centred upon Africa even though the earliest hominid fossils appear to come from there. The senior author, Jia Lanpo, began his work at Chou Kou Tien (now known as Zhoukoudian) and first met Teilhard there when he (Jia) was a trainee at the Geological Survey of China and was assigned to work at the site. The story is told in a series of short chapters which include copies

of many documents relating to the setting up of an agreement between the Chinese Geological Survey and the Rockefeller Foundation with regard to the financing of the excavations and later on the setting up of the Cenozoic Laboratory.

The very disturbed conditions in China before the Chinese-Japanese war in the mid 1930s and during the subsequent occupation of China are clearly brought out

in the story. The effect of the Communist takeover in the late 1945 in bringing stability to the war ravaged country with its innumerable warlords, comes through strongly. One result was that work was renewed at Zhoukoudian, and has continued since, apart from the years of the Cultural Revolution. The work has also been extended into other parts of China so that there are now a number of sites of great antiquity. The Xihoudu site in Shanxi Province for instance is perhaps 1.8 million years old, at least a million years older than the Peking Man site. Other sites and tool traditions are described and discussed. There is also a long discussion about the loss of the Peking Man fossils—with the final conclusion that they will probably never be found. Fortunately we still have the original plaster casts and descriptions, plus new material which has been found since the site was reopened after the war.

For students of Teilhard, his story, and that of other foreigners working in China in the 1920s and 30s is well and fairly documented in the book. Their role is well described and in the appendices are two accounts, one of Davidson Black and the other of Teilhard. Their commitment and their relationships with their Chinese colleagues were a great example which unfortunately had often been lacking among Europeans working abroad. We can share their excitement in the work they did, as well as the hardships they often had to endure in their travels. The contribution of Black and Teilhard to the work was vitally important as was their training of their Chinese colleagues. The relationships established were based on sensitivity and mutual respect. One possible area of confusion for Teilhardians reading this account is the fact that most of the Chinese mentioned by him have now reverted to their full Chinese names and confusion is easy. On a personal note, one of the geologists mentioned in the story is George Barbour whom I had the privilege of meeting in the mid-sixties at Rene Marie Croose-Parry's home in London—a precious link back to Teilhard.

The book brings vividly back to life the years that Teilhard spent in China from 1923 to 1943 (when Jia saw him for the last time). It is very moving in places, especially when Jia describes the conditions associated with fieldwork in China in the early years, particularly when he describes Teilhard's response to the death of three Chinese workers from Chou Kou Tien at the hands of the Japanese military in 1937. This is a book with a unique angle on Teilhard. It should be read by all who are interested in the man and his scientific work.



The Chou-Kou-Tien Team in 1929.

From left to right: Pei, Young, two students, Teilhard, Black, and Barbour – from Teilhard Album (Editions du Seuil, Paris 1966) – Jia Lanpo may be one of the students.

Book availability: Second-hand copies of **The Story of Peking Man** are available through amazon.co.uk ranging in price from £14 to £35 (not including postage)

Association News

Subscriptions - Thankyou

Thanks to all members who have responded to the subscription notice sent out in January, along with the first notification about the Annual Conference. A substantial number of members have responded to the appeal to make donations in addition to the normal subscription.

Thanks also to those who corrected their address details and gave us their e-mail addresses.

Student Bursaries for conference attendance

We are still feeling our way in respect of bursaries.

For this year it has been decided that students should be asked to consider paying at least part of the cost, with a minimum payable of £10, and that they should obtain a tutor's recommendation. Also that bursaries would not be awarded to any individual two years running, unless there are special circumstances,

In answer to a frequently asked question, there is no age restriction for these bursaries

Membership Review

A comprehensive review has been made of our membership lists. The final stage has been to dispatch letters addressed to the occupiers at addresses where contact could not be made by telephone and there had been no response to two mailings. We asked the occupiers to give us information, or inform us that they had none. This has 'resuscitated' a number of members we had given up for lost.

As a final 'last gasp' effort, here are the names of people we have been unable to contact.

Mrs Marjorie Anstey, Hampstead, London; Rev Peter Bryant, Usk, Monmouthshire;
Ms Vera Chapman, Kingston upon Thames; Mrs Hyacinth Flawn, East Preston; Dr Noor Mazhar, London SW16; Mr David Poole, Worthing; Dr James Stewart, Gosforth, Newcastle.

Please notify the Secretary (address p.6) if you have any information about any of these former members.

The following deaths have been reported to us:

Rev. Ian Stratton (2000); Dr John Waring (2001); Mr Edmund Preston (2002); Kathleen Vaughan (Life Member) (2003); Dr Edward Connellan, Australia (Life Member) (2002); Mr Francis Watson, South Africa (Life Member) (2003). Reported in Newsletters 13 and 14 were the deaths of Betty Lamb (2001), John Woodcock (2003), Joanna Kelley (2003), and Sr. Francis O'Kelly (2003). Finally, we received late news only some weeks ago of the death in April 2004 of Rev. K. M. Mathew, SJ, St Joseph's College, Tiruchirapalli, India. He died of a heart attack, which was entirely unexpected. May they rest in peace.

We formally welcome aboard the following who have recently joined us over the last two years:

In 2003: Dr Joseph Milne; Mr John Hands. In 2004: Mr David Lewin; Mrs Margaret Attlee; Mrs Mary Gorman; Mr William ('Bill') Holt; Mr Stephen Horsfall; Dr Rodney Shoter; Sr Katharine Holmstrom; Mrs Lydia Levington; Mrs Marie Miller; Mrs Henriette Pelham; Sr Pat Graham; Mr Roderick White; Mrs Sue Kenrick; Mrs Janice Mordue; Mrs Elizabeth Townsend. In 2005 (so far!); Dr Alec McAndrew; Mrs Patricia Leavy; Professor Celia Deane-Drummond. (Twenty in total)

Our total paid up membership (taking those who paid in 2004 as paid up) is now over 100. We have a further list of around 15 individuals who receive the newsletter. Several 'newsletter' members have been proposed to us by existing members. So if you know of anybody who might be interested, ask them, and if they agree to our sending Newsletters and other announcements let the Secretary know. (For the record, we already have two 'Newsletter' members who have 'converted' to full membership)

Grants to organisations

We have recently made two grants to organizations. Firstly a grant of £1000 from the Betty Lamb Bequest has been made to St Deiniol's Library in Chester, to which Siôn Cowell bequeathed his large library of Teilhard volumes.

This grant will provide bursaries to students who wish to visit St Deiniol's for the purpose of studying Teilhard's works. Members may themselves wish to make contributions to this fund. Donations (made payable to St Deiniol's (Siôn Cowell Bursary Fund) should be sent to:

Peter Francis, Warden, St Deiniol's, Church Lane, Hawarden, Chester, Flintshire, Wales, CH5 3DF

A further grant of £100 to purchase Teilhard books has been made to the 'Living Wisdom Library' in New South Wales, Australia. This library aims to provide a 'spiritual resource' in a 'strongly secular' environment. We have asked for a report a year from now about the level of interest taken in these books.

Treasurer's Reports and Accounts for 2003 and 2004 – Key points

The accounts will be presented to the Annual General Meeting which will take place during the Conference at London Colney, starting at 2.15 on Saturday 30th April. All' members are free to attend. See conference programme for directions.

Members will recall that the accounts for 2003 were only provisionally approved at last year's AGM. Due to some difficulties they had not subject to scrutiny by an examiner. Following the AGM new accounts were drawn up using a computer accounting package which operates in accordance with recommendations drawn up by the Charities Commission. This has required the use of different headings and layout.

To assist members two sets of accounts have been drawn up for 2003. The first has the layout used in previous years, enabling comparisons to be drawn between 2002 and 2003. There is then a set of accounts using the new headings and layout, which just contains figures for 2003.

The 2004 accounts have also been drawn up using the computer accounting package, with the figures for 2003 incorporated for comparison in the normal way.

The 2003 accounts have already been scrutinized by an independent examiner and the 2004 accounts are currently with the examiner.

Both the 2003 and 2004 accounts will be submitted for approval to the AGM, along with written reports and notes. To avoid a large printing cost, it is not proposed to circulate copies to all members, though we will be pleased to send a copy on request. Key points from the written report for 2004 to the AGM will be included in the next Newsletter.

During last year, on the advice of one of our members, we transferred just over half of our reserve funds into the Charity Property Fund. It gives a higher rate of interest, along with possibility of capital appreciation (and a corresponding risk of depreciation). This investment will be for the long term, reflecting our confidence in the future of the Association.

Proposed changes to Constitution.

These were outlined in Newsletter No 18 – Part 2

To again avoid a large printing cost it is not proposed to circulate copies of the detailed changes to all members, though we will be pleased to send copies on request.

Copies of the revised Constitution will be available to all members in due course.

Future Events

Friday 29th April – Sunday 1st May (to 2 pm) – BTA 2005 Conference – A Celebration of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. See programme on next page....

Friday 16th September – Sunday September 18th 2005 – **Joint BTA / AHS two-day Conference in Lampeter – Revelation and Evolution: What are Spiritual/Religious Experiences Telling us Today and how do they relate to Scientific perceptions?** Together with optional Pre-conference Workshop, *Coming Together*, Thursday 15th September to Friday 16th September. Details from David Greenwood, e-mail: d.greenwood@lamp.ac.uk.

Saturday 29th October **or** Saturday 10th November 2005 **One day event in Glasgow** programme being arranged

Friday 5th May – Sunday 7th May – **BTA 2006 Conference** – topic to be announced

The Next Newsletter is planned for June 2005, and will contain Conference reports

Communications and enquiries should be addressed to the Secretary: Peter Cox, 12 Falconer's Field, Harpenden, Hertfordshire, AL5 3ES. Phone: 01582 761955 Fax: 01582 621526 E-mail: peterjohncox@lineone.net.

BTA 24th International Teilhard Conference – A Celebration of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin.

Friday 29th April – Sunday 1st May 2005

All Saints' Pastoral Centre, London Colney, Nr. St. Albans, Herts,

PROGRAMME

Friday 29th April

- 15.00 Registration
16.00 Tea
17.00 Welcome and introduction to the Conference by Alan Nugent: **'Teilhard, Complexity and Democracy'**
17.30 Fr James Skehan SJ: **'Towards a Spirituality of Scientific Research'**
19.00 Supper
20.00 **The Heart of Matter** – the Teilhard video and the CD of Teilhard talking in English about Energy. Then discussion groups.
21.30 Evening Prayer

Saturday 30th April

- 7.45 Eucharist
8.30 Breakfast
9.30 Fr Bob Faricy SJ – **'Teilhard and Globalisation'**
11.00 Coffee
11.30 Group work – expressing the relevance of Teilhard for today
13.00 Lunch
14.15 Annual General Meeting of the British Teilhard Association
16.15 Tea
17.00 Prof. Ursula King – **'Faces of the Feminine: the phenomenon of love in Teilhard de Chardin'**
18.30 Supper
19.45 Plenary session with speakers focusing on the question **"How do we carry forward Teilhard's essential message?"**
21.30 Evening Prayer

Sunday 1st May

- 8.30 Breakfast
9.30 Fr William Hewett SJ – **'Mass on the World'** Context & participation
11.00 Coffee
11.30 Celebrating the Eucharist
12.30 Sherry
13.00 Lunch then depart

How to get there

All Saints' Pastoral Centre (tel. 01727 822010) can be reached:

- (1) by car by leaving the M25 at Junction 22 and following signs for "Radlett" and then "Pastoral Centre" (B5378);
- (2) by rural bus services from St Albans to "London Colney" and "All Saints";
- (3) by taxi from St Albans;

(4) by Thameslink train service to St Albans or Radlett (and then by bus or taxi).