

## **PART 9.6 MINISTRY IN RETIREMENT, 1994-2014**

### **Dates**

Part-time Senior Research Fellow, Westminster College, Oxford, 1994-99

Tutor MA (Evangelism) postgraduate course at Cliff College, 1995-2001

Course Tutor, Postgraduate Diploma/MA courses in Consultancy, Mission and Ministry, Cliff College, 1999-2004

Assistant Tutor Postgraduate Diploma/MA Course, Consultancy, Mission and Ministry, Cliff College, 2004-2006.

### **Chapter Outline**

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  - Exploring the feasibility of cooperation
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  - Importance of my appointment
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This part describes my ministry in retirement from 1994 until the time of writing, May 2014. It covers the period from the beginning of my second year in retirement. During this period Molly and I continue to live in our Beckenham home until 1998 when we moved to Leeds principally to be near Janice, our daughter and her family. That is where I still live but, sadly, on my own; Molly died in April 2012. Until 1998 I remained an associate minister of the Chelsea Methodist Church; until 1996 I enjoyed the continued consultancy help of my research support group; until 2006 I held the following part-time academic posts:

- Part-time Senior Research Fellow, Westminster College, Oxford, 1994-99
- Tutor MA (Evangelism) postgraduate course at Cliff College, 1995-2001
- Course Tutor, Postgraduate Diploma/MA courses in Consultancy, Mission and Ministry, Cliff College, 1999-2004
- Assistant Tutor Postgraduate Diploma/MA Course, Consultancy, Mission and Ministry, Cliff College, 2004-2006.

Financially speaking, this meant I received honoraria and fees but I was not salaried; I was a retired minister in part-time employment; essentially I was self-employed and free to determine the work in which I engaged. The income from these posts, The Leverhulme Trust, a bequest from the Battens and from consultancy and preaching fees funded my work. Any shortfall we were able to meet personally.

My ministry in retirement has been a highly productive, most fulfilling and deeply satisfying period in my vocational life. It is all of a piece with what has gone before. A major influence upon its nature and shape was my appointment as a senior research fellow, Westminster College Oxford from 1994 to 1999. The research and work that I did during this period led me to focus on non-directive consultancy to ministry and mission in church and community development work in Christian churches and organisations: on researching and developing it as a discipline; establishing and codifying its praxis and theology; training ministers and lay people to practise it as a primary or allied vocation; writing textbooks; defining its relationship to other models and modes of consultancy praxis. For some twelve years I worked in these ways at making explicit and accessible what had been learnt from working with people non-directively on their work in *Avec* and before that in *Parchmore* and *Project 70 – 75*. In short it was an extended examination of the application of the non-directive

approach to consultancy based upon, and closely related to the experience of working with people for human and spiritual development in church and community. In fact, during this period of my ministry I was developing forms of consultancy praxis which would help those applying the non-directive approach to a wide range of church and community work: thus forming a circle of research and work spanning almost fifty years.

Throughout this period I was practising as a consultant to a wide range of work. One of the notable projects in which I became engaged was the in-service training of preachers from 2000 to 2012. This was particularly satisfying because it took me full circle back to my primary call to preach.

For the last three years or so I have been deeply involved with a co – consultancy group in reflecting upon our experiences of our supernumerary life and ministry.

From 2000 to 2014 I have been writing *My Notes From Retirement*.

All of this has contributed in different ways to harvesting Avec's assets and making them more generally available and accessible.

Undoubtedly, a crowning honour to my ministry was the award of a DD (Lambeth) by the Archbishop of Canterbury in 2006. I am pleased that Molly lived to share in this event as she had done in the work for which it was awarded.

## I. WESTMINSTER COLLEGE, OXFORD (1994-9)

### **The School of Theology**

Soon after I had become a supernumerary minister and was struggling to discover how best to pursue my vocational work in the field of church and community development and ways and means of pursuing the commission to harvest Avec's assets, I read a remarkable article by Bernard Farr, Head of the School of Theology at Westminster College. Stimulated and excited by the article I was moved and constrained to respond to the 'Invitation' which the article concluded<sup>1</sup>:

Anyone who is excited by this vision and who might be interested in working with the College is invited to contact the author of this article...

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1 As this article was pivotal to the development of my ministry in retirement, a copy is presented in Appendix I

On the 26<sup>th</sup> October 1993, I wrote as follows<sup>2</sup>:

Dear Dr Farr,

It was with great interest that I read your article “Accounting for Growth: Theology at Westminster College, 1981-91” in the British Journal of Theological Education Volume 5/2 Winter 1992/93. It is a fascinating story which resonates with my approach to the work in which I have been engaged for some considerable time. I was particularly struck by the first full paragraph on p12 with the references to critically reflective practitioners and action-research. Last year I gave a lecture which took up both of these themes. I take the liberty of enclosing a copy. In response to your “invitation” I would very much like to meet you to discuss your work and mine.

I have taken early retirement in order to research the work in which I have been engaged. A project for which I have a Leverhulme Emeritus Fellowship. I enclose a bald statement of the research proposal that I submitted to Leverhulme.

Some years ago I had very profitable conversations with the Rev Dr Kenneth Wilson. Were there any chance of meeting him also that would be a very happy arrangement.

With every good wish,

Yours sincerely,

George Lovell

## **Exploring the Feasibility of Cooperation**

Subsequent events led me to believe that I had been prompted and guided by God to write this letter and that what followed was for me and for the movement providential.

Bernard Farr’s<sup>3</sup> response was immediate and enthusiastic. Soon after

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2 The original letter is on file

3 I downloaded this note about Bernard from a website about his current post:

Bernard Farr (PhD Birmingham, UK) is a respected scholar and educational administrator. Former head of the School of Theology at Westminster College, Oxford, then Director of Research and Head of the School of Humanities, Dr Farr organized the first degree course in theological studies to be approved by the University of Oxford through distance learning. He is co-editor (with R. Joseph Hoffmann and Laurence Brown) of *Modern Spiritualities: An Inquiry* as well as many articles on the subject of educational design and quality assurance. Dr Farr is currently an executive officer of the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies where he supervises research and pedagogy for postgraduate students.

he had received my letter he rang to make arrangements for me to visit Westminster and meet him. That I did on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November. This proved to be a most interesting and exciting meeting. To my surprise and joy he had convened a small group to meet me. One was an Anglican priest and a Gregorian Friar, Michael Elliot. I knew him! During the early years of *Avec*, when he was working in the Community and Race Relations Unit of the British Council of Churches based in London not far from our offices in Chelsea, we had animated discussions about church and community development and the work of Saul Alinsky to which he was quite committed. And here he was the ‘Tutor for Applied and Community Theology’ at Westminster College. I think I knew or was known of by the other two members of the group – Heather Walton might have been there but I’m not sure. Michael was a most interesting person with an incredible C.V. Whilst I was at Westminster I worked quite closely with him so I have put a copy of his obituary in Appendix II. Two days after the meeting I received the following letter from Bernard Farr, which I reproduce in full because of its significance.

Dear George

It was very good to share ideas with you yesterday. As promised, I am writing to indicate what we see as ways forward through which the very great knowledge, skills and contacts which you have, could continue to be of benefit to the Christian community with and through Westminster College. I hope you will forgive me if I look at this in terms of the institutional imperative of the College but I have tried to do this in ways which are sensitive to what I understand to be your point of view.

#### 1. Proposal: Applied Theology Consultancy

We would be interested to explore ways in which we might together be able to lay the foundation for a Westminster College consultancy service in Applied Theology. As I explained to you, this is an area which we have had for some time at the back of our minds but have not proceeded owing to commitments to other forms of activity. I believe you would be able to help us begin to build a significant service to the Christian community through consultancy. We would be very pleased to receive from you (as previously we received proposals which led to the creation of Westminster College Education Consultancy) a specific proposal along this line to include

Statement of aims  
 Strategy  
 Staffing  
 Business plan

May I suggest that this be drawn up on a 3-year basis, subject to six monthly reviews? You may wish even at this early stage to propose the names of one or two persons who might be interested to help form this new dimension to our work.

2. Research:

Further to our discussion about the need for an Applied Theology Research and Development Centre, we would also be interested to hear from you as to the vision that you would recommend to us for such a Centre, specifying what role you would be interested to take in helping us to realise that vision.

3. A third opening where we envisage that you would be able to make a very significant contribution to our work is to cooperate with James Penney in bringing into being the Certificate/Diploma in 'Theology and Development Practice'.

4. More particular points where we would wish from time to time to utilise your services, would be in areas as follows:

Acting as area tutor in MTh/PG Diploma

Helping us develop the Situation Analysis aspect of our work in various programmes

Writing materials for some Open Learning programmes

Working with Tim Macquiban and Michael Elliott in defining initial ministerial education practice.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Dr Bernard C Farr

<sup>4</sup>By way of preparation for the meeting I had asked myself why I was going (to introduce myself and to describe the work in which I was engaged, to see if there were any possibilities for cooperation, to ascertain whether they could help me to get my work published, to see if they could make use of any Avec papers); articulate noxiants (avoid getting into anything I cannot handle and over committing myself); and I had speculated on ways of opening the conversation (repeat what I had written and establish mutual interests, leave it to them to open the conversation). (See my journal notes dated 22.11.93 on file.) In the event, the discussion simply evolved and we

were deeply engaged with each other. The outcome was other than I had anticipated. The impact was electrifying. Soon after receiving the letter I wrote the following journal note.<sup>5</sup>

I received this letter on Sat morning. It took my breath away. It lifted me up. It excited Molly and me and we started immediately to cast up our future in this way and that. We were both very pleased but not sure how best to respond. All kinds of ideas and possibilities occurred to me and yesterday, not very successfully, I tried to draft a letter. Today I tried to have a St Beuno's Ignatius Spirituality type prayer session on the whole situation that had evolved.

I went back to my St. B's notebooks and especially to the ideas

- That God has a plan for me he will unfold
- That He is doing something new and that I have a part but not *the part* in this.

And I went back to the texts which led me to these thoughts Is 43:16-21; 48:66f and Jeremiah 29:11-14.

I cannot say that I had as deep a session as in St. B's there was not the same feel as there was about the best sessions. What happened: I used the Lord's Prayer as a mantra. The Coventry Cathedral nails which were to my left – but out of sight, became a symbol to me. They are a symbol of something new: I was given to understand that the task at the moment is to critically examine the possibilities – not to make a decision: I was not going to get a clear and simple 'yes' or 'no'. But there was a strong feeling that I must examine the possibilities. Take the next step along this road. And that to do that I need to use my method of laying things out as I am want to do.

A day or two later on the 19<sup>th</sup> November I gave myself to 'laying things out as I am wont to do' by addressing two questions: Why is the overture/are the possibilities so attractive and stimulating? And why, in view of all this, do I have some hesitation or feel that I/we must approach the possibilities with some caution. What I wrote was informed by the outcome of consulting people who knew me and my work and whom I trusted. Rather than trying to summarize the points made or type them up they are reproduced in Appendix III to allow them to speak themselves as they were an input past in discerning my vocational future. Then as a foil to my thinking about this one possibility I hypothesized about other ways in which I might pursue my vocation: deploy myself as a freelance trainer/consultant; see a part-

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5 Even considered moving to Oxford or nearby!

time job on an Ordination course or in a theological college; give myself to writing and preaching; seek an appointment as an active supernumerary in a Circuit; offer my services to MCOB or some other Division; retire completely! Then I considered ‘choices within choices’: do I wish to be a consultant to the college or a part-time member of staff? Do I want to throw my lot in with this college? How much time do I want to give to this work? What would be my role/status? How does this possibility fit with my existing work? Where would I make my best contribution? I was quite clear that I did not want overall responsibility for major projects, to have to raise money, to have excessive administrative responsibilities.

This exhilarating and intensive period of considering our options resolved itself quite quickly. Molly and I became convinced that the possibilities at Westminster offered outstanding ways of pursuing the next stage of my vocational life and the training, consultancy and research programme to which I was deeply committed. So on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1993 I wrote the following letter to Bernard Farr.

Dear Bernard,

Thank you very much for your letter and for setting out the possibilities for cooperation between us so fully as a basis for further exploration. It was clearly right for you to consider the possibilities from the institutional imperatives for the College with a sensitivity to my situation.

As I left Westminster College I found myself rejoicing in what you and your colleagues are doing and the success you are having. Also I was struck by the convergence of our respective purposes, approaches, interests and needs. Your letter confirmed that. The possibilities you outline span areas of work in which I want to be engaged during in the next few years. Prior to visiting you I thought the outcome was most likely to be a continuing exchange of ideas and experience. Your proposals extend the possibilities enormously and have given me much food for thought.

I would very much like to have an active association with Westminster College and to work with you and your colleagues along the lines proposed. All of the possibilities interest me, whether they run in sequence or in parallel, the timetable you have in mind and my present commitments to my research programme and to the local circuit. I have written brief notes of my responses to the proposals which are attached – they are very much first thoughts.<sup>6</sup>

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6 Unfortunately I do not have a copy of these notes. However, what I do have is a rough draft of the points I intended to make. My response to the paragraph on ‘proposal applied theology consultants’ was (1): I said that I would be most happy to be involved in forming such as centre and for Avec’s occasional papers



Further discussions would help to see just what is feasible and to take steps towards making decisions about choices. They would also enable us to consider possible ways in which you would see me relating to the College and the nature of the working relationships we would want to enter into. I would be very happy to visit you again to pursue these questions. If you find this acceptable perhaps you will suggest a date when I could discuss the possibilities as a whole with you and possibility 3 with James Penney and 4(d) with Tim Macquiban and Michael Elliott.

## Appointment as a Senior Research Fellow

Soon after receiving my response Bernard Farr rang me to say he too wanted to take things forward and agreed that the next stage should be discussions with the Principal, Kenneth Wilson (in the 1970s I had spent a most interesting and helpful day discussing the nature of participation with him, Jim Stringfellow and David Deeks) and their finance people. Over the next few weeks various possibilities were discussed imaginatively, realistically and amicably. There was no doubt that they wanted me to be engaged in various ways in the work of the School of Theology and the more we talked the more I wish to be involved – as Henry grant is wont to say, ‘It was mutual on both sides’!

At one stage in the discussions consideration was given to my role and status. It was suggested that I be appointed a research fellow, a position I had held at Roehampton Institute of Higher Education (RIHE). This was

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and books to be housed at Westminster. In response to the paragraph on ‘research’ (2): I said that I envisaged a centre which would focus on research into applied theology and development work of various kinds in relation to fieldwork, training and education and consultancy with especial reference to the non-directive approach to church and community development. I said I would talk to my research group about this and other related matters. On the ‘inauguration of a certificate/diploma in ‘theology and development practice’ (3)’: I said that I would be most willing to cooperate with James Penney on this project and make available relevant resources from Avec. On the ‘more particular points’ (4): I have no notes but I think that I indicated in relation to acting as an area tutor (a) that I will not too keen; that I was very interested in helping to develop the situational analysis of their work (b); that I would very much want to be involved in writing materials for open learning programmes (c); that I would want to be involved in working on defining initial ministerial educational practice (d).

This section tells the story of my involvement.

See later sections on postgraduate courses in ministry and mission.

to be the first appointment of its kind that they had made in the School of Theology. Gillian Stamp said that a senior research fellowship would be more appropriate to my qualifications and experience. (I rather think that I had given her name as a referee.) Eventually agreement was reached and I received a letter (dated 10 February 1994) offering me a position as a senior research fellow (non-stipendiary) for five years. Copies of the letter and my response are in Appendix IV. I was thrilled and felt that my vocational future was opening up in an amazing providential way for which I was deeply thankful to all involved and to God. In the event I served in this position for five years.

## **Importance of the Appointment and the Working Context**

This appointment was very important for many reasons. I will mention some of them. First it gave me an academic post and position in a highly regarded denominational theological institution engaged in wide ranging ecumenical and inter-faith academic and training of lay and ordained people. The status this gave me was very important to my subsequent work and ministry. I felt reinstated and well-positioned in a place from which I could operate more effectively than I would have been able to do as a freelance consultant/Trainer.

Second, it provided excellent opportunities to work with others collaboratively to establish a consultancy service in applied theology. And it, in doing so, to use in relation to applied theology what we had learnt from providing consultancy services to practitioners and their work situations through Avec.

Third, it gave me an opportunity to do this in an extraordinarily stimulating academic and religious context. The breadth and diversity of it was breathtaking. Its academic programme included: it proffered BEd, BTh, M Ed, M Th, M Phil and PhD degrees which were variously validated by the University of Oxford and the Open University. The MTh course in Applied Theology, a postgraduate part-time course, was attracting large numbers of able and distinguished lay and ordained practitioners of many denominations from several countries apart from Great Britain – Australia Canada, India and New Zealand. Students came to Westminster for some of the residential sessions and tutors travelled to these other countries to conduct seminars.

Fourth, it gave me the opportunity to pursue my work and research in an extraordinarily wide ecumenical, interfaith context. To develop the facilities

for students' research and to broaden its work in other ways, the College was actively engaged with the work and development of the following research centres.<sup>7</sup>

1. *The Religious Experience Research Centre (RERC).*

(This centre was based on the work of Sir Alister Hardy into all forms of religious and psychic experience.)

2. *The Centre for Faith and Culture (CFC)*

(This centre promoted the understanding and development of Roman Catholic theology and its application to contemporary cultural, social and ethical issues.)

3. *The Wesley and Methodist Studies Centre (WMSC).*

(This centre promoted research into the study and practice of Methodism, its history and the way in which the Methodist Church today forms its theology and informs its ministry.)

4. *The International Faith Centre (IIC).*

(This centre existed for the exchange of information, to encourage interreligious understanding and cooperation, respect for religious freedom and research into interfaith dialogue. It aimed to establish a Centre for meeting, study, research and spiritual reflection.)

5. *The Institute for Social Research and Education (ISRE).*

(The purpose of this centre was:

- to promote social and structural analyses amongst community organizations (on the model of Paulo Freire);
- to assist organizations and educational institutions design their own programmes in social transformation;
- to research published and sponsor conferences in this area.}

6. *The Centre for Critical Studies in Religious Ethics and Society (CCSRES).*

(The aim of this centre was to encourage the use of scientific, social

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7 The centres and the associated projects are described more fully in a Westminster College Oxford occasional paper, *School Of Theology: Research Centres* (undated but I think was published c 1994/5), a copy is on file.

scientific, philosophical and literary critical approaches in the non-parochial study of religion, values and social institutions ... with the intention of promoting a broadly humanistic understanding of culture.

Alongside these centres there was what was described as 'Associated Projects'.

7. *The Pan – African Church History Project (PACHP).*

(Purpose was to consolidate a range of materials relating to the origins, growth and development of Christianity in its African context.)

8. *The Centre for Development in Religious Education (CDRE).*

(Its task is to promote the development of religious education in schools, in the wider society, and include international perspectives.)

9. *Discernment.*

(*Discernment* was an *Ecumenical Journal of Interreligious Encounter* its purpose was to encourage creative theological reflection on interfaith encounter and on the relationship between religions.)

The work of these centres and the associated projects variously related to church and community development and therefore to the work in which I was engaged. Consequently it was an extraordinary rich context in which to do my research. It expanded the contexts with which I engaged previously: the working context for Project 70 –75 and *Avec* was, for instance, ecumenical; the Westminster context was ecumenical plus interfaith plus all forms of religious experience. This proved to be a most interesting context for this stage of my vocational life. The ways in which I interacted with it are described below. I thanked God for the opportunities presented.

My five years at Westminster were very interesting, fulfilling and had some most important outcomes but regrettably it did not live up to the idyllic beginnings. Tragically, towards the end of my term the School of Theology was in disarray: the future of the MTh programme was in doubt; Bernard Farr left suddenly under a cloud; the college could not sustain the programme of work that I was developing. Political intrigue seems to have undermined the life and work of the school of theology. Eventually Westminster was taken over by Brookes University and the School of Theology was restructured and programmed. Much was lost of enormous value in the work of the School of Theology which I deeply regret; thankfully The Wesley and Methodist Studies Centre remained.

Notwithstanding, I am deeply thankful for my time at Westminster. As will be clear, there is no doubt that it was most rewarding to me personally and to the church and community development movement as a whole.

## **My Life and Work in the College and the School Of Theology**

Now I describe various aspects of my life and work as a Senior Research Fellow in the School of Theology under the following headings.

College life  
 My Research Programme  
 Research Fellows' consultations  
 Consultancy services;  
 CASS/DAS/MTh courses in vocational consultancy  
 Avec's library and archives  
 Virtual insidership  
 Conclusion of my appointment  
 Reflections

### *1. College Life<sup>8</sup>*

Most weeks I spent at least one day a week at College. I did not have a room of my own but there was always somewhere to work. A central feature of the College was the Glasgow Room, a large room set out so that people could sit in small groups in semi privacy. Coffee was always available! Staff members met there for coffee and tea breaks, to meet each other for consultations, to entertain and discuss with their guests or to read. This extensively used gathering place enabled me to meet up with people, keep in contact and to be known. I attended School of Theology staff meetings and away days which provided opportunities to learn about the work of other and to share mine and get important feedback. I greatly valued the academic fellowship and stimulation.<sup>9</sup>

Gradually I came to have a place in college life and felt accepted but I never felt that I was fully integrated. This is not surprising because whilst staff members were accepting and welcoming, I was part-time, very much so and lived a considerable way from the College. (We thought about moving nearer quite seriously but never felt sure enough that it would be a

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<sup>8</sup> 12.6.14

<sup>9</sup> See the impressive list of staff members and Area Tutors on file. They comprised a rich academic community and fellowship.

good move to take any action. Amongst other things it would have meant moving further from Janice and John.) At times it took some courage and determination to go to the College and to establish and re-establish contacts not least because I never knew what I was going to find and how comfortable I would be. Not being at the College more frequently caused difficulties when I was involved in introducing a new course as will become clearer below. But I did enjoy a desirable measure of independence. Things got better as I started to work with one or two full-time staff members, especially Tim Macquiban, more part-time research fellows were appointed and we became an organised group and I became a course tutor.

I greatly valued the access I gained to the library. Amongst other things the library and the staff were important research resources and they enabled me to keep much more abreast of current thinking through the journals which were readily available. This was a resource I had enjoyed whilst studying at the University of London and greatly missed during my Avc days.

Those with whom I worked most closely were: Bernard Farr, Michael Elliott, Tim Macquiban, Heather Walton (I am not quite sure when she joined the staff. Coincidentally her mother and father were members of Lidgett Park Methodist Church when we came to Leeds. We became good friends. Her father died a couple of years ago.), Peggy Morgan and Angie Pears (Again, I do not know when she joined the staff, I think she followed Heather Walton.).

## 2. *My Research Programme*

A letter I wrote to Bernard Farr in October 1994 provides a base line for the research I did at Westminster, see Appendix V. Then towards the end of my first year as a Senior Research Fellow, I made a summary of my research programme which is reproduced on the next two pages. In October 1995 I revised the paper to make a submission as required to a Research Assessment Exercise at Westminster of the work of the College by Professor Frank Whaling of the University of Edinburgh. In this revised paper I added the following point and submitted a copy of *Analysis and Design and Parchmore Partnership*.

**3. Research Plans for the Future.** I wish to complete some work on the practice theory and theology of work and vocational consultancy and to do some work on the training of consultants and consultors. In the longer term I plan to critically review the non-directive concept.

Whaling was very impressed with *A & D* and asked if there was any further

such excellent pieces of work as he considered it most important, to continue this kind of research.

What evolved from pursuing point 3 is described below.

### CONFIDENTIAL

#### A NOTE ON GEORGE LOVELL'S RESEARCH PROGRAMME

##### Church and Community Development through Non-Directive Action

From 1966-72 I was the minister of the Parchmore Methodist Church, Youth and Community Centre in Croydon. I researched the applicability of the non-directive approach to the development and work of this centre. This formed the basis of my doctoral thesis. From 1970-76 I was the principal research worker of an action-research project to test out whether this was applicable to the churches of other denominations. This project centred on a typical council of churches area in North London with sixteen churches of seven denominations. The results were published in Churches and Communities: An Approach to Development in the Local Church. Both projects demonstrated the validity of the approach and the importance of using it.

This work led to the formation of Avec, an ecumenical agency to promote this approach to church and community development. I was the director until 1991 and then the research working with responsibilities for the post-graduate diploma until 1993. A brief summary of the work in this agency is given overleaf. During this period Avec did in-depth work studies with 3,500 people.

There are four aspects to the research I have been doing over the past few years, partly through a Leverhulme Emeritus Fellowship.

**Researching the Methodology.** I have been researching the methods we have used in the work done from 1966 onwards in relation to (a) the analysis and design of church and community work (b) work and vocational consultancy. I have just published a book on Analysis and Design: A Handbook for Practitioners and Consultants in Church and Community Work. One on work consultancy is in rough draft.

**Researching Avec as an Ecumenical Service Agency.** I have researched what enabled Avec, a small underfunded independent agency, with only two full-time staff members, to provide a wide range of courses and consultancy services. I identified ten primary enabling factors and ten disabling ones. I have written up my findings in an extended report which is being used as an internal discussion document. I hope eventually to publish part of this.

**Researching the Effects upon Practitioners of Using the Non-Directive Approach.** This aspect of my research involves exploring just what happens, positively and negatively, when people have good creative experiences of the non-directive approach through someone using it in relation to them and their work and through them using it themselves. I have had structured conversations of a reflective nature with nineteen people who have had such experiences in various settings: courses, consultancy sessions, church and community work situations. They represent five denominations, very different theologies and lay, ordained (diaconal and presbyteral ministers) and religious. Some of them had experienced the approach for only a few months others continuously for periods up to twenty three years. The recordings have been transcribed. Most of them have been edited. I am well into a book entitled Telling Experiences: Stories About a Transforming Way of Working, for which I am seeking a publisher. This emphasis on the effects upon the working lives of practitioners will help to fill a gap in the literature.

**Getting the Research More Widely Used.** Various opportunities present themselves for serious discussions about the application of the research findings to specific situations. These are treated as part of the on-going research. When Telling Experiences is available my Research Support Group and I plan to hold one or two seminars for people with responsibilities for church and community development work in the U.K. The aim will be to get them to examine the implications for them and their work of the research outlined above and the experience upon which it is based.

Action-research approaches and methods have been used throughout in relation to each piece of work and project and in relation to the various phases of the work.

George Lovell

1 May 1995

Throughout the time I was at Westminster I dedicated myself to doing research and consultancy work until I started to teach on the consultancy course. The idea of cooperating with James Penney on a certificate/diploma in 'Theology and Development Practice' did not get very far. And I resisted invitations to act as an area tutor in Min/PG Diploma.

### ***3. Research Fellows' Consultations***

By 1995 a most interesting group of senior and junior research fellows had been appointed, five in all, including some with impressive academic



backgrounds. Peggy Morgan, a lecturer in the study of religions, was appointed to liaise with the research fellows. Periodically we met to discuss my work. I found these meetings most helpful and supportive. She also convened regular lunchtime meetings of the Research Fellows and Head of Centres for serious discussions about our research work. These were extraordinarily interesting meetings bringing together people from several disciplines and engaged in wide-ranging research. The group comprised:

Research fellows:     George Lovell  
                               Elisabeth Harris  
                               Justin Megitt  
                               Marcus Braybrooke  
                               Kitty Datta

Centres & projects:  
 CFC                     Stratford Caldecott  
 CCSRES & PACHP     Joseph Hoffmann  
 RESC                  Laurence Brown  
 WMSC                 Timothy Macquiban  
 IIC                     Robert Traer  
 ISRE                  Michael Elliott  
 CDRE                 Andrew Bolton  
 Discernment         Clinton Bennett

<sup>10</sup>I found these meetings very interesting, educational and enriching: they helped me to set my work and my thinking in a much wider context. Also, I attended lectures given by two outstanding scholars, Marcus Braybrooke and Kitty Datta. Importantly, these meetings and the life of the group made me feel much more part of college life: I was one of a group of staff members not a solo research fellow; I belonged.

#### ***4. Consultancy Services***

One of Bernard Farr's suggestions about the work in which I could be engaged was exploring with him and other staff members laying foundations for a consultancy service in applied theology. This was a suggestion I had responded to enthusiastically. Early in the 1994-5 academic year I applied myself to exploring the possibilities of such a service with Bernard Farr and other members of staff and how it might be implemented. Support and interest increased when I drew their attention to the way in which,

in addition to helping MTh students and ex-students to put into practice what they were learning about the praxis of applied theology, it could also provide educational and training feedback loops to tutors and to the college. Such feedback loops would help tutors to evaluate: the relevance of applied theology and its impact upon practitioners and their work and the approaches to teaching and training methods they were using. In turn this would help them to determine aspects of the MTh programme which were efficacious and those which were not and indicate which aspects of the courses to maintain and develop and those which needed to be modified or replaced. All-round agreement about the value of such services was obtained and the desire and will to provide them increased.

Having established the need for consultancy services and the desire to provide them, attention turned to staffing them. Whilst we were doing this it suddenly came to me (in the middle of the night I think!) that it would

be extremely difficult if not impossible to staff such services because people adequately equipped to do so were simply not available. (A similar problem had been encountered in staffing courses and consultancy services in Avec.) Clearly, a cadre of trained consultants was a prerequisite to providing viable consultancy services. I shared my thinking with Bernard Farr and Michael Elliott and subsequently we discussed it with the staff of the School of Theology. The importance of and the need to train consultants to staff such courses was accepted and, in the absence of any courses to provide relevant training, it was decided to inaugurate courses at Westminster.



● THE new open learning programme in "Work and Vocational Consultancy for Mission and Ministry in Today's Church" has been launched at Westminster College, Oxford, with 11 students enrolled. Representatives present from the theological institutes whose collaboration has made the course possible, were (from the left, standing): the Rev Christine Jones (director of studies at the Urban Theology Unit), the Rev Dr Martyn Alkins (postgraduate tutor at Cliff College) and the Rev Dr Richard Ralph (principal of Westminster College), together with (seated): the Rev Dr George Lovell (course tutor) and Dr Angie Pears (course leader).

● For details of the course, contact Dr Pears at the School of Humanities, Westminster College, Oxford OX2 9AT (tel 01865 253464, e-mail a.pears@ox-west.ac.uk).

*Methodist Recorder 5<sup>th</sup> Nov '98*

As far as I can remember we did not consider training members of staff to provide the consultancy services required through short induction courses. Roughly speaking this was how we built up a viable training and consultancy staff in Avec. I am bemused and surprise that we did not consider this option. Our experience in Avec was that a few hours of experiential training enabled practitioners to begin to act in a consultancy way quite effectively. Adopting this approach to induction into consultancy would have enabled us to start to provide the consultancy service quite quickly. However, with hindsight, pursuing this approach alone would not have had the same long-term benefits and impact that accrued from choosing postgraduate certificate/diploma/MA type training. In the light of subsequent developments, the choice we made now seems to have been the right one. But, also with hindsight, it need not have been *either* experiential induction courses *or* generic training courses: both could have been provided in parallel or in sequence. That would have been a most effective way of proceeding. On the other, had we simply gone for induction training alone, this would have come to the same sad ending as the MTh course which is described below. But we could not have foreseen any of this. Subsequent events show that the right decision was made, howbeit, by default rather than design. Good practice would have been to consider the other options but this may easily have deflected us from making the right decision! Malpractice can sometimes by default be good practice!

As I write I realise that during this period I was also pursuing another agenda, the need for consultancy services generally for those engaged in any and all forms of church and community work alongside the specific needs for such services in relation to applied theology. My awareness of this generic need goes back to project 70 – 75 in the mid-1970s. It is the subject matter of one of the major conclusions of the Report of that Project (see *Churches and Communities* pp 209 – 11). Also I highlighted the need for consultancy work in *Analysis and Design* in 1966 (see p 275). In 1996, whilst I was deeply involved in the discussions about consultancy services in applied theology, I wrote an occasional paper in the *Westminster Wesley Series* (No. 6, Autumn, 1996) entitled, ‘Work Consultancy: A Resource Required by Laity, Religious and Ministers’.

In October 1996 we organised a day conference at Westminster to consult widely about the need for *any and all* forms of consultancy help in churches and religious organisations and agencies.<sup>11</sup> It was attended by

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11 The full documentation of this Consultation is to be found in the Avec Archives, see *Avec Archives Annotated Catalogue* pp 50 – 51 and Avec archive boxes [174] and [183];

about thirty church leaders widely representative of the work of all the major denominations. They concluded that: there was (and still is of course) a great need for consultancy services;<sup>12</sup> there is a terrible shortage of people able to deliver them; urgent action is needed to rectify this situation. Whilst this consultation reinforced our conclusions about these various unmet needs and gave them important publicity, I was somewhat disappointed in aspects of it: Gillian Stamp did not chair it terribly well; Bernard Kilroy was most unhelpful by an early interjection asking if the consultation was a covert means of trying to revive Avec; Catherine Widdicombe was unable to respond adequately to a very important point raised by Leslie Griffiths and I was unable to answer it without upstaging her. Nonetheless it was a very important consultation which set the needs and the work in which we are engaged in a broad context and undoubtedly helped us in the recruitment for future courses.

What I now realise through writing this section is that the decisions to provide training in consultancy inaugurated a seismic shift in the focus of my work:

*from* church and community development praxis and training and the provision of consultancy services

*to* the praxis, theory and theology of work consultancy for church and community work and means moments of training consultants and consultors.

Over many years, with others, I had given myself to developing and refining the praxis of working non-directively with lay and ordained practitioners for the interrelated development of local churches, agencies, organisations and communities; I had established ways of helping people to do this and in doing so I had learnt how to proffer consultancy help and establish elementary rubrics for doing so *but* I had not seriously attempted to theorise about and codify consultancy praxis nor had I given serious attention to extended professional training of practitioners to be consultants. Doing just that was to occupy large swathes of my subsequent energy over the next ten years or more, and happily continue to do so, as subsequent sections of these Notes will show. Gradually, with others I

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<sup>12</sup> It was noted that Avec, now closed, had made significant but limited progress in meeting these needs and establishing the efficacy of the ways and means of doing so which they had been researched and developed over a long period of time. This work is well documented. Consequently there is much evaluated experience, resources and a body of knowledge upon which to draw. And George Lovell is actively involved in 'harvesting the assets of Avec'.

established consultancy for ministry and mission as a particular application of the non-directive approach and as a discipline in its own right.<sup>13</sup>

Regrettably, I did not return to the provision of consultancy services – except that is through training and providing consultancy support to individuals who could proffer them in and through their own churches, organisations and agencies.<sup>14</sup> I have just realised a significant aspect of this in a way that had not occurred to me previously. It is, that training consultants contributes to my long-standing commitment to working with churches, organisations and agencies as institutions in their own right in such ways that they themselves are better able to pursue *their work themselves* and resourced it. Also, it helps them to staff their own consultancy services internally or on an inter-church/organisations/agency basis and train *their own personnel* in consultancy for ministry and mission. (Somewhat painfully, this principle was established through Project 70 – 75. At an early stage in this Project I/ we deviated from our commitment to working with churches as institutions through pursuing the rogue idea of promoting a community development task force to serve the churches. A mistake vigorously challenged by Reg Batten!<sup>15</sup>) This gives added significance to the development of consultancy training facilities for ministry and mission. But the need for the provision of independent consultancy services remains.

## ***5. CAS/DAS/MTh Courses In Vocational Consultancy***

Michael Elliott and I were duly commissioned to design postgraduate CAS/DAS<sup>16</sup>/MTh vocational consultancy courses, to apply for course validation, to prepare distance learning material and lay plans to recruit the first intake. (I am not going to attempt to date the stages.) Initially, making progress with designing the course, in getting it validated was extraordinary and inexplicably difficult; in fact I felt that the process was bedevilled. Eventually I discovered that Michael Elliott simply was not applying himself properly to the work he had undertaken – apparently willingly. For example work he had agreed to do to facilitate the next stage he simply did not get round to until the morning of the day we had set aside to work at it.

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<sup>13</sup> See *Consultancy For Ministry and Mission* and *Consultancy Modes and Models*.

<sup>14</sup> An example of this is the work that I am now doing with Deacon Maggie Patchett has been appointed consultant to a group of Methodist circuits.

<sup>15</sup> See *Churches and Communities* pp 38 – 39, 200 – 204. See also these Notes pp 9.1.180; 9.2.40-41.

<sup>16</sup> CAS/DAS courses were postgraduate certificate and diploma courses respectively. I cannot remember what the abbreviations or acronyms stood for.

Invariably that was too late.

Also, I was given many assurances by Michael and Bernard Farr that things were ‘in place’ when in fact they were not. Consequently we didn’t make any progress; journeys were wasted; I became frustrated and lost my confidence in the working partnership. Eventually I shared my frustration with Tim Macquiban who told me that I was one of the victims of that kind of action and political intrigues between Michael Elliott and Bernard Farr: being unaware of this was one of the downsides of my not being full-time member of staff. This information helped me to understand what was happening and to take it into account.

I am not quite sure how it came about, but fortunately Heather Walton replaced Michael Elliott and immediately things changed dramatically for the better. A person from outside of Westminster, Tim Harris, was recruited to work with us on the course. Now I had two excellent colleagues of great ability and integrity. Progress was made; it was decided not to inaugurate an MTh course but to concentrate on postgraduate CAS/DAS courses. Course designs were produced and validated and we started to produce distance learning material. Westminster had pioneered and perfected the writing of such material for various courses. For some years I had wondered if it would be possible to prepare written material on the praxis of church and community development which would have the potential to introduce people effectively to the non-directive approach to working with people and its subtle nuances. So I was very keen to explore whether it was possible to do so and whether I could write it. My first attempt was a very steep learning curve. I was greatly helped by Brenda Hoddinott, a full-time member of the staff of the School of Theology, who was very knowledgeable about writing this kind of material and something of an expert in the art. I was delighted to discover that it was possible to write about my subject and that I could do it!<sup>17</sup> What I learnt from this stood me in good stead when I came to write *Consultancy, Ministry and Mission* and *Modes and Models Of Consultancy*.

Three things happened around this time which greatly influenced the way in which things developed. First, in September 1997 I had an interview about my work at Westminster with Dr Richard Ralph who succeeded the Rev Dr Kenneth Wilson as Principal in September 1996. (I think the idea

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17 Copies of an early set of distance learning material and ones used later on the MA in consultancy Ministry and mission courses at York St John’s will be placed in my Archives. Earlier in these Notes I indicated difficulties in locating copies. Recently I found the early ones amongst my papers and Ian Johnson gave me the later ones. However, there are complete sets of the distance learning material with which I was associated in the Avec Archives.

for this meeting was suggested by Tim Macquiban and Heather Walton.) It was an extraordinarily good meeting. The discussion was open and most amicable. It healed some of the hurt of the earlier period. My confidence and trust were restored in the College under this new administration. I felt accepted and valued and reinstated in a pattern of good honourable working relationships. I felt I had the status to get on with the work and that I was in a good position to do so. Dr Ralph wrote an excellent memo about the meeting. As it gives such an accurate balance and objective picture of the situation at that time I include it in full in the next two pages.

Second, the Chair of the Methodist Council (his name escapes me at the moment) made an official visit to the College. Apparently he was impressed by the work that I was doing. One of his concerns was that Methodist Colleges should seek opportunities to cooperate. The course in vocational consultancy, he said, lent itself admirably to inter-college cooperation between Westminster, The Urban Theology Unit (UTU) and Cliff College. He recommended this to the Methodist Council, Westminster, UTU and Cliff. Meetings were arranged and the parties agreed to work together on the course. As will become clear this became an important strategic move.

The third thing has already been described above: a day conference at Westminster to consult widely about the need for *any and all* forms of consultancy help in churches and religious organisations and agencies.

Unfortunately Heather decided to leave Westminster in order to take up a lectureship at the University of Glasgow. Thankfully the preparation for the courses was well underway. As I recall it we were not able to launch the course before she left because the first attempt at recruiting students produced only four firm applications.

Dr Angela Pears, the new member of staff, replaced Heather as course leader (I was the course tutor) she was a very able, loyal and a good colleague. She worked assiduously at the course and contributed significantly to getting it up and running. Angela was an atheist and quite open about this – so different from Heather, a cradle Methodist and a local preacher. On the whole we worked together very well but I felt uncomfortable about the appointment of an atheist to lecture on theology; it didn't seem to be a very good idea to me. (An incident that occurred later when we were running the course confirmed my judgement. She had an unpleasant spat with Martyn Atkins who came to lecture on missiology. She objected violently to him opening his lecture which was quite brilliant with prayer! This was common practice at Cliff College which became one of our partners in the course where he was the postgraduate tutor. Fortunately she did it after the lecture

in private and Martyn was more than capable of making a good response.)

Perseverance paid off. A good number of suitable students were enrolled. And the first course got underway in 1989. (All the papers are in the Avec Archives) It was delivered through two one week teaching blocks at Westminster and distance learning material. The work of the students was assessed through essays and seminar papers they produced during the year. The students' evaluation was most encouraging. All the students qualified for a certificate in vocational consultancy; some were very keen to continue to the second year and to a diploma; most of them decided for various reasons not to proceed further.

In the event it was not possible for Westminster College to continue the course because the school of theology was in crisis and the future of these courses uncertain. As I noted earlier Bernard Farr left and eventually the College was taken over by Brookes University with far-reaching changes to the work of the school of theology.

My conviction about the importance and value of the course had increased through the experience of the first year. Determined in one way or another that the course should continue I gave myself unreservedly to finding a way forward. At this point the inter-college collaboration came into its own and secured a future for the course through Tim Macquiban, Howard Mellor and Christine Jones who were also committed to finding a way forward. Before the crises it has been agreed that each college in turn would host the residential teaching blocks. UTU and Cliff continued to be committed to that arrangement. Howard said Cliff point be prepared to become the lead college in place of Westminster. This was warmly accepted by the other two colleges. Agreement was reached about how to proceed: Howard Mellor and I would remodel the course which would be taught at Cliff and UTU and validated by the University of Sheffield (conveniently Sheffield validated Cliff and UTU courses); whilst this was being done I would lead a bridging course based at UTU for the 4/5 students who wished to continue (which included Ian Johnson who was to play such a key part in future courses); as soon as possible recruitment would begin for the revamped course.

What emerged was a post graduate two-year MA course in consultancy ministry and mission, administered by Cliff and validated by the University of Sheffield. Westminster, through the good offices of Tim Macquiban, generously donated all the resource material they had produced including the distance learning papers and handouts without any charge. I well remember a session at UTU when Howard came to describe the MA



course which was to replace the Westminster CAS/DAS courses. There was much relief, joy and excitement. The story of that course is taken up in the next section.

## ***6. Avec's Library and Archives***

One of the enormous benefits that came through my being a Fellow at Westminster was that the Rev Dr Timothy Macquiban generously found space in the Wesley & Methodist Studies Archives for our papers, records and books. He, and his colleague and successor, Dr Peter Forsaith, has been an unwavering and constant source of help and advice. Catherine and I acknowledged this in *Avec Archives Annotated Catalogue* (p. xix). The story of the Archives has been documented and I have referred to them and their formation in these Notes. The Archives have been carefully documented and we hope our work on them will be completed during this year.

## ***7. Virtual Insidership***

Another benefit that I gained from being a Fellow at Westminster was the concept of 'virtual insidership'. I first met this concept through an article by Philip Meadows in the Westminster Journal, *Discernment: An Ecumenical Journal of Inter-Religious Encounter*. Philip and the Editor, Clinton Bennet, were colleagues in the School of Theology so I was able to discuss it with them and its application to the work in which I was involved and particularly to consultancy and to the processes of getting into the work views of consultants. Subsequently I used this extensively in my work and in training courses. There is a section on it in *Consultancy, Ministry and Mission*, pp 59-60 and 148.

## ***8. Conclusion of My Appointment***

Towards the end of the five year contract of my appointment as a Senior Research Fellow, Tim Macquiban discussed with me whether my tenure should be extended. We were both of a mind that it should not: the School of Theology was going through a period of radical transformation; the vocational consultancy course was to be located elsewhere; I had moved from London to Leeds; the working situation had changed radically and was not amenable to the research programme integral to my appointment. It was a sensible and amicable arrangement we came to: that no attempt should be made to extend my Fellowship.

## *Reflections*<sup>18</sup>

Problematic it might have been but this phase of my ministry was highly significant. It gave me five years' experience and stimulation of being a member, howbeit a part-time one, of a lively academic community. It was the fulcrum of my transition into a serious and extended programme into the exploration of the consultancy discipline and professional training of people to practise it. In so doing it established the core work of my 'retirement'. My appointment and the working relationship I developed with Tim Macquiban enabled Catherine and me to rescue the Avec Archives and library. Also, I met Peter Forsaith and Helen Cameron, both of whom played very important parts in my subsequent work. I regained my sense of self-worth and my appointment gave me status I badly needed at that time. For all this and so much more I am thankful to God and to Bernard Farr whose work attracted me to Westminster.

However, I found myself having to deal with the psychological and spiritual effects of a second 'closure' so soon after that of Avec. Howard and Cliff College were enormously helpful in enabling me to overcome the disappointment that things did not work out better at Westminster.

## II POSTGRADUATE MA IN MISSION (EVANGELISM), 1995-2000

I was a tutor on this course from its inception in 1995 to 2000. It was/is a Cliff College two-year part-time course validated by the University of Sheffield. Howard Mellor (Principal of the College at the time), Kenneth Cracknell (Professor of Theology and Global Studies, Brite Divinity School, Texas, a Methodist Minister, we were at Richard together who become amongst other things a distinguished missiologist) and I designed the course and staff it for the first year or possibly two.

How well I remember working with Howard and Kenneth late into the night after a full days teaching the first intake at the first residential shaping and re-shaping the course content and structure as it evolved. Exciting heady days.

### **The Course**

Howard's achievement in conceiving such a course, getting it validated and inaugurating with it a good cohort of students, about twelve I think, was

incredible. Further, his approach to the course was courageous, visionary and theologically expansive. This can be seen in the core staff he brought together to design and initiate the course. Whilst we were at one on in relation to Christianity fundamentals and ways of working with people, knew and respected each other and got on well together, we held different theological positions and had pursued significantly different approaches to ministry, mission and evangelism. Howard's approach was missiologically inclusive; this was so different to former approaches at Cliff which had been to varying degrees exclusive. (Ken and I were amazed at the way in which we were accepted and in no way 'theologically abused'. This broad-based theological and spiritual approach was written deep into the substance and ethos of the course. Consequently, the different and approaches and inputs complemented each other in designing, planning and delivering the course. I count myself greatly privileged to have been involved for five years in this course. It was with reluctance that I resigned from the staff because it was difficult to continue when I became responsible for the MA in consultancy – the main difficulty was being away from home for the residential weeks which became a greater strain on Molly.

## **My Contributions: Church and Community Development Studies**

My contribution was twofold. I introduced students to church and community development and to working with people non-directively as a form of mission and to research methods.

My input on community development was generally well received but I met some reserve and resistance about the non-directive approach. This was not surprising because it did not fit easily with the evangelical stance of the students with its emphasis on converting people to Christianity and a particular theological interpretation of it.

However, some did find this approach attractive because of the emphasis and getting people to think for themselves and come to their own conclusions and their experience of my using it in tutorials. They adopted it and used it somewhat selectively.

## **My Contributions: Action – Research Theory and Methodology**

Most of my work was on research methods and the dissertations they had to do to complete the MA – an aspect of the course they felt most

unhappy about and incompetent. From the outset when we were designing the course my concern was that the emphasis should be that the dissertations should be based on action – research and preferably qualitative rather than quantitative methodology rather than ‘pure’ research i.e. research into some doctrine or other. The reasons why I wanted more if not most of the dissertations to be based on qualitative action – research were: generally speaking this form of research is an ideal way of examining, evaluating and developing the praxis of mission and evangelism of the students who do the research and through them that of those with whom they work; most students were on the course to become better practitioners not academic missiologists; my impression was that there was a dearth of action research material on the praxis of mission and evangelism (I had the vision of shelves of completed dissertations on these subjects to match those on church and community development, consultancy etc!); the skills associated with qualitative (and also quantitative) research were important to the work of mission and evangelism as they enabled practitioners to obtain and process data as they went about their work generally and in the planning and design of missions, campaigns and projects. Acquiring such skills, therefore, was important. They could be used in many different ways to gain the information required through short or long term ‘research’. I am thinking of such abilities as those related to active and passive participant observers, recording and evaluating data. Of course, pure research may be what practitioners and students need to do at a particular point to enhance their ability to do their work.

In order to make the processes of research, particularly action-research, more accessible and manageable to students and therefore less intimidating, I broken them down into steps and stages, arranged them in sequence and prepared flow charts. Over the years I refined these. Students found this approach enormously helpful. It was a piece of work of which I was and still am proud. I do not know anything like it. Eventually it was included in a collection of occasional papers on research methods by Richard Jackson and used widely by Cliff and beyond. (Its origins were not acknowledged which annoyed me. It was in fact plagiarized). Later, I used it in the MA on consultancy courses.

## **My Contribution: Tutorial Help**

Students were offered tutorial help in relation to their studies in general and their research and dissertations in particular but staff members did not supervise their research in the traditional ways. By and large I offered tutorials on church and community development and research

and dissertation. As things worked out most of them were on research and dissertations. I loved this aspect of my involvement with the students normally on a one to one basis; it gave me enormous pleasure and deep satisfaction. In my joy I found that I had a flair for it; a natural gift honed by a wide experience of working non-directively with lay and ordained works and ministers on their church and community work in and through Avec, Project 70-75 and Parchmore.

What was new and significantly different was proffering a similar kind of help to people who were evangelical, theologically conservatives rather cautious or suspicious of the non-directive approach; people who were committed to broadcasting and proclaiming gospel truth as they knew it rather than researching. I presented research to them as a way of helping him to pursue their evangelical ministries more effectively and as skills and methods which have many applications to Christianity ministry and mission in the modern world. They warmed to this approach.<sup>19</sup>

Generally speaking the evenings of the residential weeks were dedicated to tutorials. For three or four hours each evening I found myself giving half hour tutorials. People made appointments. It was exciting and fulfilling. Having established with a student what it was he/she wanted to discover, ideally things which if known and understood would enhance their ability to achieve their purposes, I found that spontaneously I could produce there and then with the student two or three outlines of alternative research programmes – approaches, methods, processes. In most cases I set these out in flow charts on A4 sheets in a landscape form. These presentations stimulated and facilitated critical examinations of the alternatives and coming to a decision about the most suitable and acceptance programme that students themselves felt they could and wanted to do.<sup>20</sup> Invariably, they asked for a copy of the notes. In many cases they used the diagram of the chosen research programme to guide them through it stage by stage. I kept the notes and intend to put them in my Archives. A representative sample is reproduced on the next page. As I write this I am nostalgic for those heady days and experiences.

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19 My lecture notes and handouts – or copies of them are in the Avec Archives or in mine.

20 Diagrams help us to talk about things which are hard to described economically for instance, it is so easy to make points by pointing to stages in a process on a flow chart; much easier than having to describe the stage and its place in sequences. See *Analysis & Design* and particularly pp 179-84 and *Diagrammatic Modelling*

## **Martyn Atkins:** Director of Post Graduate Studies

Some two years into the life of this course, the Rev Dr Martyn Atkins was appointed as the Director of Post-Graduate Studies at Cliff College and became lead tutor to this course. An excellent appointment. He is an outstanding academic and missiologist <sup>21</sup> and a brilliant lecturer. We got on extremely well and become close colleagues. I learnt a lot from him. He was most supportive of me and my work. I could not have wished for a better colleague. I considered myself greatly blessed. It was my privilege to introduce Martyn to action-research of which he had no previous experience – he had done serious ‘pure’ research. He was a quick learner of the theory of it all but remained inexperienced in the ins and outs of putting it into practice. A measure of the man was that he rejoiced in my contributions to the students’ research and wrote to say so after the residenceals.

### **Missiological Studies**

During the first two years or so of this course it was both policy and practice for core staff members to attend all the lectures and plenary sessions. We were concerned to promote holistic inter-disciplinary learning and engaging in its various parts enabled us to make our best contributions to doing so ourselves and by example and through interventions to encourage and help the students to adopt this approach. Connections were made between the subject matter quite naturally as opportunities to do so presented themselves. As would be expected, the impact on the students varied considerably; to some the concept and process was more important and significant than others. Throughout the six years I was a tutor on the course I pursued this practice. It had many advantages. One of these was very rewarding. The lectures on missiology were mind-blowing for me and most exciting.

For six years I attended lectures by outstanding missiologists engaged in seminars about the subject. An enormous opportunity, tantamount is pursuing a degree course in the subject. Prior to the course I was unaware of the existence of missiology as a much researched and codified discipline in its own right. Members of the tutorial staff introduced me to various aspects of the discipline through the lectures they gave and the books which they wrote. <sup>22</sup> Here I refer to them briefly.

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<sup>21</sup> By way of preparation for taking up this post during the year after he was appointed but before he took up the post he read and digested – two ‘big’ books a week on missiology! Incredible.

<sup>22</sup> Their handouts and the notes I took are in a file which will go into my Archives,

## Howard Mellor and Timothy Yates

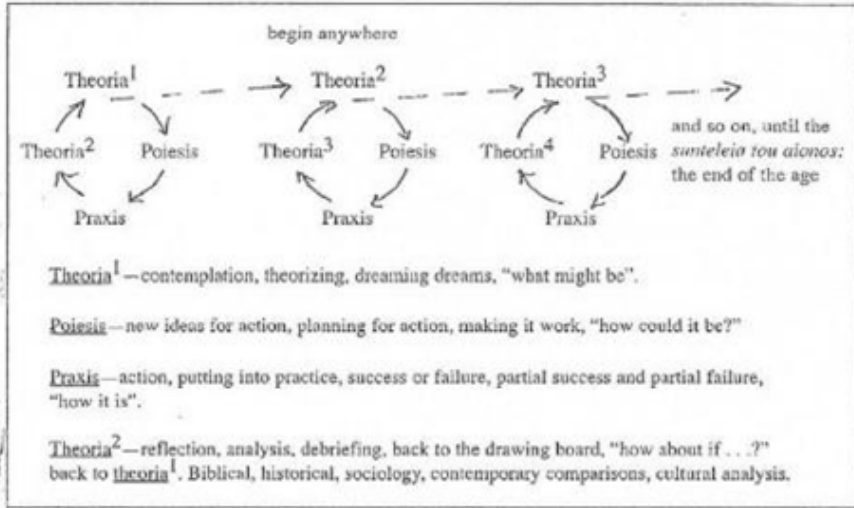
Timothy Yates was an Anglican priest at a nearby parish and a leading figure in British Mission Studies. The orderly systematic way in which he presented his material helped me greatly. We had some good conversations privately about our respective work and connections between them. The following books helped me to study their findings etc further.

- *Christian Mission in The Twentieth Century*. Timothy Yates (Cambridge University Press, 1994).
- *Mission – An Invitation to God’s Future*, Ed Timothy Yates (Cliff Publishing House, 2000). This was a collection of the papers read at the bicennial conference of the British and Irish Association for Mission Studies at St Stephen’s House, Oxford, June 28-July 1, 1999. Amongst the distinguished contributions were Profs Jürgen Moltmann and Christopher Rowland (later chair of the Avec Resources Trust!)
- *Mission and Spirituality: Creative Ways of Being Church*. Editors Howard Mellor and Timothy Yates (Cliff Publishing, 2002). This was a collection of papers contributed to the Association which met in Cardiff in 2001.

## Kenneth Cracknell

Undoubtedly Kenneth was the most original and creative of those who contributed to those courses. His thinking was very broad and comprehensive. The impact upon me was the most profound and far reaching; he understood my work in a way that the others didn’t; moreover he thought it was important and a vital aspect of the mission of the Christian church, he was as concerned about missiological praxis as he was about its theory and cyclical processes which enabled practitioners through theory-practice sequences which he presents as follows as a missiological circle. (From *Consultancy Ministry and Mission* p255)

His earlier work had greatly impressed me particularly *Towards New Relationship: Christians and People Other Faiths* (Epworth, 1986) and the various papers on which it was based. I describe his impact on me and my work below.



**Figure 6:1 Cracknell's Missiological Circle**

## Martyn Atkins

Martyn was an outstanding lecturer, exciting and stimulating. I don't think he was an original thinker, he was exceptional in his ability to describe the work and thinking of significant missiologists, movements and developments and to set them in a very broad framework. His knowledge of the field was phenomenal and his powers of recall of material was most impressive.

In addition there were a number of visiting lecturers all distinguished in the field and some from other countries. Here I simply name them to give some idea of the breadth of coverage: William Abrahams, Fran Beckett, Brian Duckworth, Ken Guanakan, George Hunter III, John Finney, Phil Meadows, Rosie Noxa, Dan Pickard, John Munsey Turner. Together, they introduced us/me to a wide range of perspectives and approaches to the mission and evangelical and ways and means pursuing these disciplines in practice and researching them.

## Impact upon me of the missiology studies<sup>23</sup>

Participation in the sessions on the missiology (the theory, theology and practice of the Christian mission) affected me profoundly in several



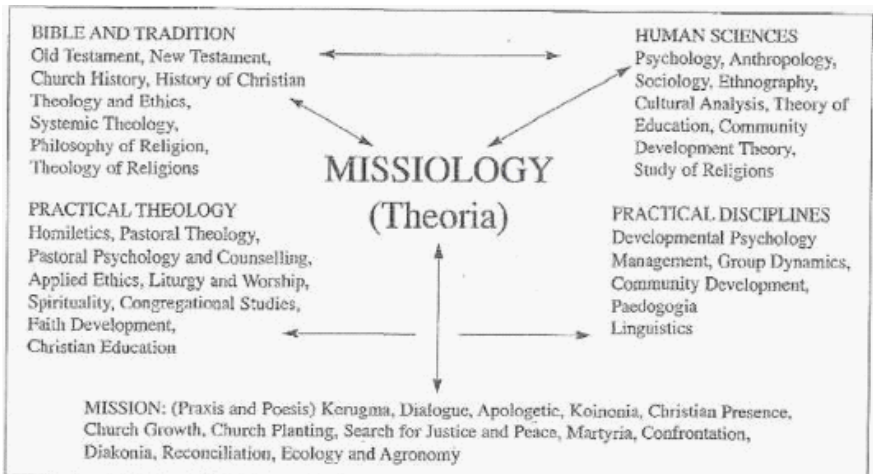
ways. It gave me new understandings of and insights into the missiological significance of church and community (CCD) and the non-directive approach to it. Subsequently I wrote pieces about these understandings in Consultancy Ministry and Mission. All I need to do here is to indicate these understandings and give the references to the pieces I have written.

First, I came to see that the nature of CCD is 'a divine-human enterprise in creative and redemptive activity (op cit pp 254-257).

Second, I was introduced to Cracknell's missiology circle which I described earlier. His use of the word 'poiesis' resonated with that of Humberto Maturana and helped me to understand it .

Third, Cracknell's conceptual map of the interrelated bodies of knowledge and disciplines necessary to good effective practice of the profession of missiological ministry was a revelation to me. It gave me a better way of conceptualising the vocation of the Christian Church (op cit pp 320-21). For ease of reference I have reproduced it below. It was a defining moment for me in my long search for a theology of CCD and the non-directive approach to it which I embarked upon with others during my Parchmore ministry. Aspects of this search are discussed in these Notes. I came to the conclusion that it's theology was to be found in missiology as I was coming to understand it.

*Missiology As a Substantive Discipline*  
*A Diagram by Professor Kenneth Cracknell*



Fourth, discovering and studying the work of David J Bosch and especially through his book, *Transforming Mission: Paradigms Shifts in Theology and Mission* (1991) was a revelation. *Transforming Mission* is an amazing exciting epoch making book. I have drawn heavily upon it in my work and preaching. Here i refer to just one of the insights that I valued. It is Bosch is dictum, ‘the church in mission is, primarily the local church everywhere in the world’. This resonated with my long-standing conviction about the importance of local churches in promoting their own development and working with communities for their betterment. This dictum added missiological value to it. (See *Consultancy Ministry and Mission*, pp 269 F71 for a discussion of this.)

[I feel compelled to add a further note about David J Bosch, Professor and Head of the Department of Missiology at the University of South Africa and his premature and possibly avoidable death at the comparatively early age of sixty-two years. A reputable source relates how, sadly, in 1992 he was involved in a serious motor accident in the days of apartheid in a remote area a considerable distance from the nearest hospital. The response to the call for emergency medical help was held up for some time because those who received it could not decide whether to call on the ambulance services dedicated for white people or the ones allocated to black people. The delay cost him his life and the rest of the world was deprived of a saintly scholar who had so much more to contribute. God forgive us.]

I find the irony of this difficult to cope with. He was born in Kuruman, Cape province, South Africa. He was raised in a nationalist Afrikaner home with little regard for his nation’s black citizens and in 1948 when the National Party (South Africa) came to power and began implementing its programme of apartheid Bosch welcomed it. That same year, however, he began studying and teaching at the University of Pretoria, where he joined the Student Christian Association and was more exposed to black members of the community. This began a life long involvement in Christian mission and he was soon questioning the apartheid system (Source Wikipedia).]

Turning now from these four specific ways in which studying missiology influenced my thinking about my own discipline, the non-directive approach to church and community development, I set out to describe the ways in which it affected me personally and my overall approach to the ways in which I conceptualise the CCD aspect of my vocational ministry. Yesterday, after writing pp 30-36, I organised my background notes for this section before going to bed. Early this morning spontaneously a stream of words and phrases came to mind related to my attempt to encapsulate the overall impact upon me of my six years exposure to missiological thinking. Each

of them expressed aspects of what I was feeling; but try as I might I could not find a word or phrase which expressed my overall feelings completely and definitively. Frustrated by this I decided to write down an annotated list of the words and phrases which expressed one aspect or another of the impact and see where that took me!

**Coherence and cohesion:** I experienced a profound sense of vocational coherence of things coming, holding and being put together meaningfully in a new pattern; a feeling I still have.

**Vocational integrity:** 3 sense of vocational integrity was induced by the way in which five aspects of the bodies of knowledge and disciplines which informed my vocational life - Bible and tradition, practical theology, mission, human sciences and practical disciplines - fitted together to form a missiological system of which CCD was a proper and honoured subsystem of the whole. (This is reminiscent of St Paul's use of the analogy of the human body in I Corinthians 12 to convey the interrelationship between the variety of gifts.) Inter alia this gave me a reassuring sense of systemic integrity and vocational dignity.

**Theological authenticity.** I experienced new insights into the theological authenticity of the discipline of CCD to which I had given a major part of my ministry. I saw it as an aspect of pastoral ministry and its theology because in professional ways it facilitates ministry to all kinds of people in various ways: through effective programme variously aimed at human care, well-being and development; through getting people of any and all religious convictions and dispositions engaged in their own human and spiritual development, especially in that which they must do for themselves, and that of others; through carefully planned non-directive interventions. As such, it is closely related to two other cardinal aspects, ministry of word and sacrament. This may appear to be a strained, laboured or even specious understanding; I think not. Non-directive CCD praxis facilitated proper attention to critical aspects of peoples' deep human needs, their well-being, development, individuation (as understood by Karl Jung), salvation and eternal well-being. Also, it correlates with other forms of professional pastoral such as counselling which make significant contributions to pastoral ministry - evidence the work of the Westminster Pastoral Foundation.

**Contextual repositioning of CCD.** For some twenty-five years up to this point in my ministry the nondirective approach to CCD had been central to my professional and vocational life; it dominated it; absorbed all my attention; I saw and positioned other aspects of ministry in relation to it; it occupied me and my energy completely and stretch me to my limits

as I practised it, theorised about it and tried to find ways to communicate it orally and through the written word; it had taken me over. Necessary as this might have been to achieve the high purposes I had set myself, it tended to distort my view of the place of CCD in the ministry of the church as a whole and its relationship to interrelated bodies of knowledge and disciplines. Whilst I cannot remember mapping my mental picture of all this, looking back I can see is that, subconsciously if not consciously, I put CCD where he put missiology - dead centre! What my studies in missiology did in general, and Cracknell's diagram in particular, did was to radically reshape my conceptual map, positioning CCD as he had done and thus in a much more realistic and wholesome place in the system of things. Doing this cut it down to a much more appropriate position in the system of disciplines and bodies of knowledge that facilitate and serve missiological theory and practice.

**Personal Vocational repositioning.** Through repositioning CCD as a subsystem of missiology, I found myself being contextually and vocation repositioned in my ministerial stance; being re-centred on the missiology task of the Christian church and my place in it.

**Vocational reassurance.** Substantively I had always been convinced that I was called and equipped of God to engage in the non-directive approach to CCD but there were times when I found myself thinking about what I was doing in relation to my original call to preach and circuit ministry. My conviction remained and I was never seriously tempted nor did I contemplate changing the focus of my ministry; as I have said earlier in these Notes I felt constrained and held by the hand of God in the work in which I was doing. However, I now think that the search for a theology of CCD was possibly a need for added personal theological and vocational reassurance if not justification for the work in which I was engaged. What I have said above belatedly gave me that a deeper sense of vocation reassurance and justification. My subsequent life and work have been all the richer for it. Thanks be to God.

In no way did I anticipate writing at such lengths about these things – I set out to use the words to describe the impact in one or two sentences! I have been taken by surprise by the effect of my exposure during those six years to Christian missiology; it effected radical changes in me; I had not previously realised the significance of it all. Discovering missiology and what it revealed to me about CCD impacted upon me holistically, conceptually and affectively. I felt theologically much more at home with myself; theologically at peace after long search for a theology of CCD. I found myself much better positioned and equipped for the next round of

my ministry. It was my good fortune to be involved in this course: with hindsight I see it to be a profoundly providential experience. My gratitude to those who introduced me to missiology, a newly emerging discipline at the time, is enormous.

The effect upon me was far reaching. In addition to the ways already described it influenced my preaching, informed my understanding and approach to other faiths and, as already explained, made significant contributions to Consultancy Ministry And Mission. My time as a tutor on the MA in mission and evangelism, 1995 - 2001, overlapped both my time at Westminster, 1994 - 99, and the work I did on the MA in Consultancy Ministry and Mission, 1994 - 2006. Consequently it provided a missiological context for my work at Westminster and on the MA consultancy course. And it is to that course that we now turn.

### III POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA/MA IN CONSULTANCY, MISSION AND MINISTRY, 1999 – 2006

For twelve years, 1994 to 2006, much if not most of my creative energy was given to establishing, developing, teaching, researching and writing about the praxis and theology of consultancy for Christian ministry (lay and ordained) in general and particularly for those working for the interrelated development of churches and community. The first phase of this work, carried out at Westminster College, Oxford, is described in Section I above. Now, in this section I turn to the second phase, 1999 to 2006, which was centred at Cliff College and the University of Sheffield. During this period I pursued this extensive programme of work and helped to develop a postgraduate Diploma/MA in Consultancy Mission and Ministry.

#### **Objective for This Section**

Most of my papers relating to this course are in the Avec Archives ([171/2/3]) and my memory of the details is fading. Clearly this would make it very difficult for me to write this section if my purpose was to describe and analyse the content of the course, its evolution, the sessions and the work done by the students. Fortunately, that is not my purpose and it would not be even if the papers were more easily accessible: having put the material necessary for that task in archival order I leave such a major task to others; I simply have neither the desire nor the energy to undertake such an extensive piece of work at this stage of my life.

My objective is to reflect more generally: about the course, its evolution, key features, significance and impact and how it affected me in relation to my thinking about the praxis of the non-directive approach to work consultancy, ministry and mission. Happily the sources of information required to do that are readily available through my memory, personal papers and through the books I have published about relevant subject matter, two of which were written in relation to the course and during the time I was leading it which are described below.

## **The Course**

The Cliff College course built on the work already done and the course inaugurated at Westminster College (see section I). During that time the course had become a joint venture between Westminster and Cliff Colleges and UTU. In 1999 Cliff College became the lead institution with the support of UTU and Westminster College mainly through the person of Tim Macquiban. Unfortunately, UTU gradually dropped out of the partnership: their lecture rooms and residential accommodation proved to be inadequate; their teaching input was not apposite nor at the required academic level; there was all round good will but there were unresolved differences in our approach to and our understanding of the nature of the subject matter and the course; the principal did not turn up as some key meetings without explanation; whilst rotating the teaching sessions could have contributed much to the value of the course, experience of this arrangement quickly showed that it was not conducive to the need for continuity of administration and making background material and library facilities available and easily accessible to the students.

Westminster College most generously gave all the distance learning material, occasional papers and course handouts to Cliff College free of charge but was not involved in designing and teaching it. Tim Macquiban continued to support Cliff College and the course for some time but eventually by default became a sleeping partner.

The Westminster Graduate Diploma Course was remodelled as a postgraduate diploma/MA course in mission and ministry validated by the University of Sheffield. The content was very similar to the Westminster course with the addition of a module on missiology based on the significance described above of the significance of this discipline to that of the non-directive approach to church and community development work and consultancy (see section II above). This also meant that the course in part resonated with Cliff College's emphasis on mission.

## Nature and Scope

In my introduction to *Consultancy Ministry And Mission* I describe how I thought the present need for work consultancy had arisen and why it was a largely unrecognised and unmet essential resource to those engaged in contemporary church and community development work of any kind (see pp 1-4<sup>24</sup>) and my providential discovery that it could be proffered and provided through engaging non-directively and analytically with practitioners on *their* work and concerns (pp 4-6). A few people were finding help which varied in quality through various forms of consultancy, line management and support groups. I had found help with my work over an extended period of time through the consultancy services provided to me by Reg Batten (see op cit pp 388-390) and I considered this to be a most appropriate form of help for ministers and lay workers generally.

The purpose of these courses was to contribute significantly to making non-directive church and community development consultancy help more readily available and more accessible to lay and ordained people variously deployed and positioned and deployed in the ministry and mission of churches and Christian organisations of different denominations. generally speaking, provision can be—and to a limited ex-entent is—made in two principal ways: through specialist/expert/professional consultants and through ministers and lay people giving and receiving from each other consultancy help in the workplace in various ways.<sup>25</sup> Amongst other things this involves consultants and consultants acquiring the requisite abilities to engage creatively in formal or informal consultancy sessions.<sup>26</sup> In *Analysis and Design* I argued that it is imperative that these two modes of provision are developed concurrently as interdependent consultancy services (p 274).

The course aimed to develop the provision of consultancy and multiply those capable of providing it through courses aimed at providing training of a good professional and academic standard for people engaged in or who intended to be the practice and/or promotion of both of these forms

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24 \*Cf *Analysis and Design* pp 127, 27-77.

25 See *Consultancy Ministry And Mission* pp 47-49,104-5.355--70. And *Analysis And Design* 274-77. Some of the ways in which it can be offered in the workplace are through: internal or external specialist consultants; work consultancy courses; co-consultancy or reciprocal consultancy dyads or groups; consultancy conferences; self consultancy. Colleagues can offer it to each other or bishops to their priests. See *Consultancy Modes And Models* p 160-61.

26 For abilities some consultants need see *Consultancy Ministry And Mission* pp 25 to 27; and for codes of good practice for consultants and consultor see op cit 143-45.

of consultancy. The postgraduate Diploma/MA which codified critical aspects of the discipline, indicated that those awarded the qualification had successfully engaged in an academic course of study (with research and experiential training modules) in consultancy for Christian ministry and mission validated by a reputable university. Also, it registered the academic standard reached by students but it did not indicate the level of their competence as practitioners. Nor was it a professional qualification.

## **Basic Structure and Delivery**

The course was delivered through 35 day residentials (Monday to Friday) during each of the two academic years of the course; distance learning workbooks; tutorial sessions. Residentials comprised: lectures; group work; seminars; experiential learning exercises; tutorials; opportunities for private conversations, study, reflection and research.

## **My Role**

From 1999 to 2004 I was the part-time course tutor to this post-graduate Diploma/MA course with overall academic responsibility for it and the teaching programme by which it was delivered. First principle of The College (Howard Mellor) and then the Director of Postgraduate Studies (Martyn Atkins) and his staff were responsible for recruiting, organising and administering the course. In 2004 I retired from this post, Helen Cameron was appointed as course tutor and I was appointed assistant tutor to the course, a post I held for two years. My brief during this period was to support Helen and those who took over other tutorial responsibilities for the course and also ease the transition into a new phase of the life of the course.

## **Staff Members**

From 1999 to 2004 staff members for these courses were: myself as part-time course tutor; Martyn Atkins, a Methodist minister; Philip Meadows, a Methodist minister who succeeded market and as Director of Postgraduate Studies; David Dadswell, an Anglican priest; Helen Cameron, a member of the Salvation Army; Ian Johnson, a Methodist minister; Theresa Phillips, a Methodist lay person. Martyn lectured on missiology; David and I on consultancy praxis; Helen on organisational studies. Theresa administered the course. Ian and I were present at all sessions to facilitate a holistic approach to the course and provide continuity. For the most part Martyn was present only when he was lecturing. Helen attended each residential session for two or three days. Theresa was a full-time member of Cliff



College staff and available to service all the residential sessions. She was most able, superefficient and a lovely person to relate to and work with. She made my work manageable. Helen and Martyn were outstanding academics and lecturers: both were widely known and respected for their scholarship and important contributions to their disciplines. Helen is a multidisciplinary widely published consultant. David was a distinguished consultant widely experienced in providing consultancy services to individuals and organisations in public bodies, industry, the voluntary sector, churches and religious agencies. Together, therefore, we formed a widely experienced, interdisciplinary ecumenical staff group. Most of the time Philip Meadows was quite marginal but will eventually he became highly critical of the course and was instrumental in its closure at Cliff College. Disappointingly, by common agreement, his lectures on mission were at a very poor standard.

All staff members acted as tutors and offered tutorial sessions on their subjects as requested and required. Additionally, they shared responsibilities for acting as tutor mentors to the students in relation to their participation in the course generally and their studies in particular.

Distinguished visiting lecturers supplemented staff input. Generally there was one if not two lecturers during each residential. One of those who made a great impression upon us all was Ms Vicky Cosstick and her lecturers on the work she was doing with Roman Catholic priests and her research into ‘consulting at the edge of chaos’ (see *Consultancy Modes and Models* pp 229 – 235].

## **My Contributions**

I made various contributions towards: designing the course; planning, programming, running the residentials; lecturing and tutoring. My especial contributions included making a large collection of occasional background papers, building up a databank and writing the following textbooks.

The first of these publications, *Consultancy Ministry and Mission*, describes in great detail the praxis of the form of consultancy I had/was developing, practising and promoting. When I came to check the date of the publication I was amazed to find that it was published in 2000, that is, in the first or second year of the MA course at Cliff College. How I managed to do this I do not know – it was 441 pages long! I remember writing parts of it during the time I was immobile from breaking my leg in the summer of 1999. (In reviewing it David Deeks said that it was a veritable encyclopaedia of the subject!) The second book, *Consultancy Modes and Models*, 2005, describes

six modes of consultancy and twelve associated models. These two books and *Analysis and Design* provided key texts for the course. Together, *Analysis and Design* and *Consultancy Ministry and Mission* present in some considerable detail my understanding of my own approach to and praxis and theology of analysis and design of and consultancy. Whilst *Consultancy Modes and Models* presents other approaches and provides a way of modelling any form of consultancy praxis. Comprehensively these texts describe the thinking that I brought to the course.

Conducting courses, lecturing on my subjects, the feedback I received and writing *Analysis and Design* and *Consultancy Ministry and Mission* led me to be confident and secure enough in my own praxis of consultancy and knowledgeable about it to be able to study in depth with objective freedom the praxis of others and to set my own approach in the spectrum of a wide range of consultancy modes and models. Stimulated by the need of students to have a guide to other disciplines, I discovered a way of codifying other approaches and that enabled me to write *Consultancy Modes and Models*.

## **Approach and Method**

Staff members were committed to encouraging and helping students to identify, describe and model their own mode of consultancy praxis for mission and ministry and the theology upon which they based it. They did this in various ways: by adopting and adapting a well tried model and tweaking it to suit them; by designing their own model; by combining aspects of two or more models; by designing their own model. However they formed the model and whatever shape it took, considerable emphasis was placed upon the value of each student understanding and owning it and defining it in a way which facilitated them to practise, evaluate and develop it. Overall therefore, our approach as lecturers and tutors was a form of the non-directive consultancy to students about the formation and development of their consultancy praxis and theology and of themselves as consultants and consultors. We pursued this approach through the following methods.

1. Lecturing about: the nature of consultancy praxis in general and that of the members of staff in particular; the different forms it can take; its theology; the organisational, community and sociological context in which consultancy operate.
2. Stimulating the study of consultancy from the respective perspectives of consultors and consultants and the skills required for both roles. (The abilities required by consultants and consultors are described

in *Consultancy Ministry and Mission* pp 25-27 and the codes of good practice and discussed on pp143-145.)

3. Providing workbooks which help students to study the set subject matter and reflect on it.
4. Producing background and vocational papers.
5. Organising experiential learning sessions to enable the students to act as consultors and consultants to each other in turn and to reflect between themselves on what happened and subsequently to discuss their experiences in plenary sessions. (In these plenary sessions we established the agenda and issues emerging from the dyads and examined them carefully. They proved to be some of the most profound and exciting learning sessions during the residenceials.)
6. Through providing a model of the five basic elements of modes and models of consultancy as an aid to analysing consultancy models in general and constructing their own. (This model is described in *Consultancy Modes And Models* pp 23-27 and Dadswell's *Consultancy Skills For Mission And Ministry*, 2011, pp 130-137 for descriptions of the model.)
7. Through encouraging and helping the students to study models which differ from theirs in such ways that they understand them intellectually and vicariously.
8. Through getting the students to evaluate critically their experiences of the ways in which staff members acted as consultants to them in plenary and tutorial sessions.
9. Through helping the students to learn about action research approaches, methods and skills and to use them in carrying out the fieldwork for their dissertations.

Consequently the staff used a range of didactic, instructional and experiential adult educational methods and encouraged and stimulated students to help students to studying the subject matter intellectually and vicariously and to research aspects of it.

## **Content**

The nature, scope and focus of the prescribe subject matter is described and discussed in the distance learning workbooks. I am not going to discuss

it in detail here. Basically the syllabus was designed to facilitate the study of:

- the praxis (i.e. practice and theory) and theology of the nature of work consultancy (with an emphasis the non-directive approach to it) for Christian ministry and mission;
- the provision of apposite consultancy help for those engaged in the work of churches, religious organisations and agencies and of the communities in which they are set;
- the socio-religious context in which ordained and lay workers pursued their ministry and mission in the Christian church and beyond;
- each student's praxis as a consultor and a consultant.

The interrelated study of missiology, communities and their development, organisational theory and consultancy was a critical feature of the design of the course.

Earlier I describe the importance to me personally and to the consultancy in general of my studies in missiology at Cliff College. Consequently, missiology became an important part of the syllabus of these courses.

Organisational studies were also an important part of the syllabus. During the first phase of my work in this field in Parchmore and Project 70-75 I had been conceptualising and acting towards churches as though they were only communities. When I came to understand their sociological duality as communities *and* organisations I saw how vitally important it is to conceptualise and analyse churches as both communities and organisations and to take this into serious account in analysing and designing work programmes, interventions and projects. Clearly this is highly significant to consultancy praxis. I took this seriously in the Avec/RIHE diploma in church and community development. I studied as extensively as I possibly could literature on organisations and lectured on it but soon came to see that Avec needed input from someone more competent in the subject and I was. Whilst working at Westminster College I discovered such a person in Helen Cameron. (I feel I have written about this already but cannot locate it – so much for all my indexing!) David Dadswell also had worked extensively with secular and religious organisations and studied them as such. Together Helen and David made enormous contributions to our understanding of organisations and organisational theory and how to act in relation to them and therefore to taking this aspect seriously in consultancy work.

## Courses, Staff and Students

If my arithmetic is correct forty-five people attending courses during the time I was a staff member. Together they represented ordained (30) and lay workers (15) diversely involved in eight denominations; the staff represented three denominations; visiting lecturers five or more. Consequently the courses were ecumenical although there were more Methodist students than of any other denominations. Disappointingly, despite all our efforts to recruit equal number of men and women, only nine of the students were women. Of forty-five students nineteen went on to take MA degrees, two with distinctions; most of the others qualified for diplomas. Details of all this are in the files in my archives. Also there are seminar papers, dissertations and notes on my tutorial sessions in my Archives.

*A group of staff and students c2002*



## APPENDIX I APPOINTMENT AS A SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW OF WESTMINSTER COLLEGE, OXFORD



Westminster College  
Oxford OX2 9AT  
Tel 0865 247644  
Fax 0865 251847

Revd Dr G Lovell  
7 Reddons Road  
BECKENHAM  
Kent  
BR3 1LY

10 February 1994

Dear Dr Lovell,

### SENIOR RESEARCH FELLOW (NON-STIPENDIARY)

Further to the conversations you have had with Dr Farr, Head of School of Theology, I am pleased to invite you to be a Senior Research Fellow (non-stipendiary) of Westminster College. The position is for five years, reviewable annually.

The purpose of this appointment is for you to research and publish in the area of applied theology, such research and publication to be credited to the College. The College may include these publications in its research returns to the Funding Council. A research allowance of up to £300 is available to defray approved costs, sums being payable on production of receipts. As a Senior Research Fellow you will be responsible to the Head of School of Theology.

I understand that as a Senior Research Fellow you will also during the first year of appointment join a planning team to prepare a proposal for a Theological Consultancy Unit for which there will be an honorarium of £500 payable on submission of the plan and also undertake some teaching at MTh/PG Diploma in Applied Theology residential Schools which are remunerated at the standard fee-paid rate (currently £22.09 per hour).

I look forward to hearing from you as to whether you will accept this appointment.

Yours sincerely

W H Fearon  
Director of Academic Affairs

Revd Dr George Lovell  
7 Reddons Road  
Beckenham  
Kent, BR3 1LY  
Tel. 081 659 0270

28th February, 1994

Dear Mr Fearon,

**Senior Research Fellow (Non-Stipendiary)**

Thank you for your letter of the 10th February 1994 inviting me to become a Senior Research Fellow (non-stipendiary) of Westminster College. I am pleased to accept this invitation. I understand that the position is for five years, reviewable annually. During the first year I will be pleased to join a planning team to prepare a proposal for a Theological Consultancy Unit and to undertake some teaching at the MTh/PG Diploma in Applied Theology residential schools. These things I will do as I pursue what you have referred to as the primary purpose of my appointment, to continue to research and publish in the area of applied theology. Perhaps we can now discuss the date at which I could take up this appointment and start the work you envisage for the first year.

The research in which I have been engaged since 1991 and which is not yet completed, has been funded by various donors including Avec, (A Service Agency for Church and Community Work) and the Leverhulme Trust (through a Leverhulme Emeritus Fellowship). Clearly this work must be credited to them. Certainly any research that I undertake as a Senior Research Fellow could be credited to Westminster College and may be included in the returns to the Funding Council.

I note the payments I will receive. Could you please let me know the kind of expenses which would be considered "approved costs" in relation to the £300 research allowance? Also, could you please clarify for me what expenses I would be able to claim in relation to work on the Theological Consultancy Unit and in the residential schools. From earlier conversations I understood that my travelling expenses would be met. Also, would the college, I wonder, be able to provide overnight accommodation for me should I need to be there for two or more consecutive days?

I very much look forward to taking up this appointment and to meeting you.

Yours sincerely,

Revd Dr George Lovell

Mr W H Fearon  
Director of Academic Affairs  
Westminster College  
Oxford, OX2 9AT

## APPENDIX 2: AN OVERVIEW OF MY RESEARCH,

Revd Dr George Lovell  
7 Reddons Road  
Beckenham  
Kent BR3 1LY  
Tel. & Fax. 081 659 0270

10th October 1994

Dear Bernard,

Congratulations on your new appointment as Director of Planning and Research. It will give you extended scope for you many gifts and your extraordinary creativity. I hope that you will find great satisfaction in the job. I am glad for you and for the college.

As a Senior Research Fellow will I continue to be responsible to you? However that might be, as I take up this post it seems to be a good time to give you a brief review of my work programme.

The Leverhulme Trust agreed that the Emeritus Fellowship they awarded me in 1993 can run for two instead of one year. So it will finance my research up to August 1995.

There are three aspects to the proposed research as set out in my application for a Leverhulme Fellowship: a selective review of the records and assessments of the work done with Avec during the period 1976-91; structured conversations of a reflective nature with a limited number of key participants in Avec's programme and with people with responsibility for church and community work and with people in institutions similar to Avec in the UK; writing up the results of these two stages. In the event I have worked at all three aspects concurrently.

Organizing and reviewing the records enabled me to prepare notes on the origins of Avec and critical stages in its development and to produce a discussion paper on a thirteen year series of work consultations with senior staff in church and community work.

The review also helped me to examine two important questions: What enabled Avec, a service agency with slender resources, to provide a wide ranging and effective training programme and consultancy service? What disabled it? I identified ten enabling and ten disabling factors and wrote up my findings fully. I saw it to be important resource material for the structured conversations associated with the second stage of the research.

It was of strategic importance that I had done this work before the Trustees announced that Avec would cease to trade after August 1994. The material is informing the discussions underway about the most effective way to re-deploy Avec's resources and serve the movement that Avec staff sought to promote and service - a movement which is vitally and vibrantly alive. It is also informing my discussions with a group in Ireland planning to set up an Avec type organization.

So far I have been using this aspect of my research as ~~research~~<sup>source</sup> material. However, I am beginning to think that it could be helpful to make some of it more readily available to those considering Avec's future. Does the College, I wonder, publish occasional papers?

cont'd/...



My research and the closure of *Avec* have brought into sharper focus the nature of the current need. In 1976 it was to induct clergy and laity into the non-directive approach to working with people and to get them to work on equal terms with community groups and other organizations for their interrelated development. As I perceive it, the present need is to train clergy, religious and lay workers how to design programmes of church and community work by which they can and will promote overall human and spiritual development. To do this, and the analytical and practical tasks associated with it, they need work and vocational consultancy services in addition to courses. Pursuing this as a generic need leads to other needs including the original ones. Centering on equipping people to design their own work programmes opens out on to a more comprehensive development programme. And the way in which the need has been revised and formulated has a much wider appeal.

Progress has been made with the second stage of the Leverhulme research, the conversations with key participants who had benefitted from *Avec*. Thirteen people have been interviewed at length and in depth, three of them twice. The tape recordings have been transcribed and analysed and I have discussed them with my research support group. (Revd Dr Michael Bayley, Revd David Deeks, Revd Dr Leslie Griffiths, Revd Peter Russell, Miss Moira Sleight and Miss Catherine Widdicombe.) Members of that group are quite excited about what is emerging. They have encouraged me to edit the conversations for publication and that I am in the process of doing. This work is proving to be much more time and energy consuming than we had anticipated.

One of the things that these conversations have revealed is that considerable advantages accrue when consultants act as non-directive work and vocational consultants to consultors. The two activities intertwine to good effect: correlating work and vocation helps people to hold to their calling as they explore its evolving meaning; work studies inform vocational development; attending to vocational development helps to determine what work consultors should do and helps them to avoid opportunism, careerism and ministries of convenience. Already this insight is being put to good use in discussions about the development of consultancy and appraisal schemes.

Later this month I will be considering with my research support group the second part of stage two of the Leverhulme research programme, viz structured conversations with people with responsibility for church and community work and with people in institutions similar to *Avec* in the UK.

My researches have enabled me to set out in some detail ways of meeting the work consultancy needs of clergy, religious and lay workers. The basics are set out briefly in a book to be published this year, Analysis and Design: A Handbook for Practitioners and Consultants in Church and Community Work. But I am looking for an opportunity to edit and publish further work I have done on this subject.

A related, significant development is that I was instrumental in June in getting the Methodist Conference to direct "The Division of Ministries to report to the 1996 Conference on the kind of work and vocational consultancy resources and services needed by ordained and lay workers engaged in the work of the Church at all levels and on the means of providing them, so that they complement counselling services, appraisal schemes and other support systems (already in place)".

Catherine Widdicombe, my erstwhile colleague in Avec, and I, in association with the Grail, a Roman Catholic lay community, have set up a small group to make available books and papers on Church and Community Development. The group is called "Resources" and amongst other things, it will be a way of promoting the results of this research programme. I enclose a booklet about this.

Also I am engaged in some interesting consultancy work.

It was agreed when I became a Fellow that, in addition to my research, I would "join a planning team to prepare a proposal for a Theological Consultancy Unit" and "undertake some teaching at the MTh/PG Diploma in Applied Theology residential Schools" - priority being given to the first of these. Are you, I wonder, in a position to give me some idea when you would expect me to join the planning team? In relation to the teaching at the Schools, as we agreed, I have been in touch with Michael Elliott about attending Management Meetings. He is going to let me have dates of meetings when they are available.

Every good wish for the new academic year.

Yours sincerely,

George Lovell

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### APPENDIX III ARTICLE ON THEOLOGY AT WESTMINSTER COLLEGE

Bernard Farr (1992) Accounting for Growth: Theology at Westminster College, 1981–1991, *British Journal of Theological Education*, 5:2, 5-15, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1352741X.1992.11673999>