

The Incorporated

# SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH



## ANNUAL REPORT of COUNCIL

**1<sup>st</sup> October 2023 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

Council, Officers, Staff and Advisers .....	2
President's Report .....	3
Research	
Research Grants Committee .....	4
Buckmaster Oversight Committee .....	4
Spontaneous Cases Committee .....	4
Survival Research Committee .....	5
Library .....	6
Archives .....	6
Education and Publicity .....	7
Website Manager .....	8
The <i>Journal</i> .....	8
The <i>Magazine</i> .....	9
Annual Conference .....	9
Secretary's Report .....	10
Data Protection Officer's Report .....	10
The Financial Position .....	11
Agenda for 2025 A.G.M. ....	13
Minutes of 2024 A.G.M. ....	14
Notes on Candidates for Election to Council .....	15

# COUNCIL, OFFICERS, STAFF AND ADVISERS as of 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024

**President:** Prof. A. D. Parker, MA, PhD

## Vice-Presidents

Dr R. S. Broughton, BA, PhD  
Prof. B. J. Carr, MA, PhD  
Prof. D. L. Delanoy, BA, PhD

Dr A. O. Gauld, MA, PhD, DLitt  
Prof. J. C. Poynton, MSc, PhD  
Prof. C. A. Roe, BSc, MSc, PhD, AFBPsS

## Elected Members of Council

Mrs M. E. Barton  
Dr R. S. Broughton, BA, PhD  
Prof. B. J. Carr, MA, PhD  
Dr B. G. Colvin, BSc, PhD  
Prof. C. E. Cooper, BSc,  
MRes, PhD, CPsychol.,  
FHEA  
Mr C. J. Farrell, BSc, GRSC  
Mr J. Fraser, BA

Dr G. T. B. Kidd, MBBS,  
MRCPsych  
Mr R. G. McLuhan, BA, BLitt  
Mr A. D. Murdie, LLB  
Prof. C. A. Roe, BSc, MSc,  
PhD, AFBPsS  
Dr D. N. Rousseau, BSc, PhD  
Mrs J. A. Rousseau, BSc

Dr T. H. Ruffles, BSc, BA, MA, PhD,  
ARPS  
Dr L. Ruickbie, BA, MA, PhD, Assoc.  
of King's College  
Mr A. P. Ryan  
Dr M. J. Willin, BMus, MMus, PhD,  
LRAM

*(for the purpose of the Companies Act 2006 the elected members of Council are directors)*

## Co-opted Members of Council

Dr D. L. Erickson, MBA, PhD  
Mr A Knibb  
Mr S. T. Parsons  
Dr M. B. Schofield, BSc, MRes, PhD

Dr D. J. Vernon, BSc, PhD  
Dr Z. Weaver, BA, PhD  
Dr A Winsper, PhD  
Mrs T. Tuijl

## Council Appointments

### Officers:

**Hon. Secretary** – Dr Kidd

**Hon. Treasurer** – Dr Broughton

### Other appointments:

**Hon. Editor, Journal & Proceedings** – Dr Schofield

**Editorial Assistant** – Dr Tammy Dempster

**Associate Editor** – Dr Weaver

**Hon. Editor, Paranormal Review** – Mr Gordon Rutter

**Hon. Communications Officer** – Dr Ruffles

**Hon. Archives Liaison Officer** – Dr Willin

**Hon. Website Manager** – Dr Erickson

**Website Content Manager** – Mr Nemo Mörck

**Data Protection Officer** – Mr Farrell

**Hon. Book Review Editor, JSPR** – Mr Nemo Mörck

**Secretary:** Mr Peter Johnson

**Librarian:** Mrs Karen Patel

## Council Committees

Committee	Chairman	Members
<b>Education &amp; Publicity</b>	Prof. Carr	Dr Erickson, Mr McLuhan, Mr Nemo Mörck, Prof. Roe, Dr Ruffles, Mr Gordon Rutter.
<b>Research Grants</b>	Mr Ryan	Dr Broughton, Prof. Carr, Prof. Delanoy, Dr Gauld, Prof. Caroline Watt
<b>Buckmaster Oversight</b>	Dr Broughton	Prof. Carr, Mr Fraser, Mr Murdie, Dr Kidd, Mr Ryan, Dr Weaver
<b>Library</b>	Dr Ruffles	Dr Kidd, Mr McLuhan, Mr Mörck, Dr John Newton, Mrs Patel, Prof. Poynton, Dr Willin
<b>Spontaneous Cases</b>	Dr Kidd	Dr Colvin, Prof. Cooper, Mr Paul Cropper, Mrs Beth Darlington-Bailey, Mr Farrell, Mr Fraser, Dr Matthew Hopkins, Mr Ashley Knibb, Mr Randy Liebeck, Mr Aaron Lomas, Dr John Newton, Dr Ruickbie, Dr Malcolm Schofield, Mr Nick Terrell, Dr Weaver.
<b>Survival Research</b>	Prof. Cooper	Mrs Barton, Mr Dennis Bury, Dr Matthew Colborn, Dr Gauld, Dr Rousseau, Dr David Saunders
<b>Conference Programme</b>	Prof. Cooper	Prof. Carr, Dr Gauld, Mr Murdie, Prof. Parker, Prof. Roe, Dr Ruffles

## Professional Advisers

Independent Examiners & Accountants: Kreston Reeves  
Investment Manager: Newton Investment Management Ltd.  
**Registered Address: 1 Vernon Mews, London, W14 0RL**

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# ANNUAL REPORT

## Report (as of April 2025) of the President - Professor Adrian Parker

The work of the SPR has been extremely productive during the year 2025 so much so that I shall not attempt to summarise or comment on the individual attainments other than those I think are requiring some special focus. It is indeed a good sign that it is no longer feasible with this task because the activities have become so intense and involve too many individuals as to make a fair summary. The reports below stand as a testimony to the intensity of engagement of individuals in the success of the various committees and enterprises.

Not only this year has been conflict-free but one major very favourable event occurred in the form of a major donation and testimony to the SPR which will do much to secure its future. I will leave our treasurer Richard Broughton to provide further details. The funding should in the first instance encourage research in area once central to the SPR, of possible post-mortem consciousness. Lasting thanks are due to Richard Broughton and Peter Johnson for seeing this process through.

The Journal of the SPR, now under the editorship of David Vernon, merits a comment since it is currently being adapted to modern standards which in the long run will enable digital on-line access via libraries and internet searches to be made. This involves giving the journal and its articles identification codes and David has provided in his report an excellent concise guide to the various codes that are expressed the form of acronyms.

The Magazine continues to be a success, and the editor Gordon Rutter has more than fulfilled the hopes that the Council had that we would continue the high standard set by Gordon's predecessors.

The Annual Conference was held at Derby, again in November, and was deemed another success thanks to the efforts of many individuals but of course principally due to work of the programme leader, Callum Cooper, and to the organiser, Peter Johnson.

The work of the Spontaneous Cases Committee is still central to the SPR, and the report here provides a comprehensive documentation of how the SPR continues to provide advice and understanding, as well

as in appropriate instances conducting investigations. There occur also some new expressions of apparently psychic phenomena.

We have had recently some deaths of persons who made major contributions to the SPR, in particular: Peter Fenwick, Alan Gauld, and Dennis Bury. I will also record the death in recent days of Charles Tart who, while not specifically involved in the SPR, has been during many years a major contributor to psychical research and parapsychology.

One area that may be of some concern is that of membership numbers, which have declined somewhat in the post-Covid years. In particular, an argument can be made for recruiting more student members. In this context, the work of David Vernon and Callum Cooper for organising study days and that of Steve Parsons for his educational courses, becomes vital.

Furthermore, I believe the efforts of those publishing outside the usual scientific journals deserve recognition. I am thinking here of the Council members who publish articles in the Magazine of the SPR, the Paradigm Explorer, and Fortean Times. There are clearly many unsung heroes in the following reports but Tom Ruffles and Nemo Mörk should be mentioned for their book reviews and blogs and news updates.

The role of the SPR president should ideally provide some vision and inspiration for positive change. One aim here, which will add to publicity for the SPR thereby potentially adding to membership numbers, is to promote the SPR as a news hub for providing information about international events related to our subject matter. Many of these events occur through other European SPRs and consciousness research organisations. Ciaran Farrell has provided us with a current assessment of the vicissitudes of Data Protection laws in how they restrict giving this information directly to members. We have as yet made a very limited use of "News" on the SPR website and our social media in lieu of membership access. My suggestion is that we expand this section to be more all-inclusive and that we inform members of this change.

# RESEARCH

## Report of the Research Grants Committee

Chairman: **Adrian Ryan**

The committee received ten grant applications in the period, and after careful deliberations the committee decided to fund four of these. We send our congratulations to the successful applicants and wish them every success with their research. The successful applicants are as follows:

**Alex Escolà-Gascón** - Quantum-like psi learning: Neuromodulating extraocular vision in blind individuals - £5,666.40

**Chris Roe, Matthew Hopkins and Deborah Patton** - Testing the theory of 'First Sight' using the Bem 'feeling the future' paradigm – funding request for phase 3 - £7,000.00

**Rodrigo Monetenegro** - Neurophysiological and Phenomenological Effects of tPBM on Synchronized REM States: A Comparative Analysis of REM Lucidity - £7,000.00

**Malcolm Schofield** - I feel, therefore I am:

Investigating what emotions underly the variables that correlate with paranormal belief and experience - £6,982.95

The total value of grants awarded this year is £26,649.35.

I would like to encourage SPR members to consider making donations and/or bequests specifically to the SPR's Research Fund, so that we can continue to support this important work far into the future.

## Report of the Buckmaster Oversight Committee (BOC)

Chairman: **Dr Richard S. Broughton**

The role of the Buckmaster Oversight Committee is to oversee the projects approved by Council that are funded by a legacy from Mr Nigel Buckmaster.

The SPR's online Psi Encyclopedia, the flagship project of the Buckmaster fund continues to provide an unmatched online information source for Psychical Research under the direction of Editor Robert McLuhan. This year has seen a host of new topics added along with editorial improvements and enhanced web links across the site. The team is also progressing on a major upgrade of the underlying web platform that has been made necessary by the technical obsolescence of the existing one. Details of its activities this year are in the report of the Education and Publicity Committee.

The two printed volumes of the *Is There Life After Death?* book project that are associated with this project remain delayed although editor Leo Ruickbie reports that progress has been made this year and that publication is 'within sight'.

Dr David Rousseau has reported that the Systems Methodology for Exploratory Science project is again on track after an unavoidable pause due to family matters. He expects to complete the remaining product of this project, the practical handbook for applying Systems Methodology to the problems of psychical research by summer of 2025. In the interim he has added an important paper to his collection of published papers arising from this project that is available in the SPR Library.

The Psi Open Data Systems project under Adrian Ryan has continued to accumulate data sets for the use of other scientists, but, as with the Psi Encyclopedia, it is also facing the need to upgrade its web platform, and Adrian is reviewing options for continuing this service in the future.

The BOC regrets the few delays mentioned above but is pleased that the bulk of the benefits from Mr Buckmaster's generosity have been and continue to be delivered to our scientific colleagues as well as to our members and the general public.

## Report of the Spontaneous Cases Committee

Chairman: **Graham Kidd**

We have had the usual busy year with some 200 people from every corner of the world reporting their experiences. Of these some 55 have been taken up for investigation by members of the SCC. This of course leaves some 150 available for further investigation, most of whom have agreed.

Beth Darlington is currently the hard-working Case Coordinator and Ciaran Farrel the likewise secretary.

We have expanded the SCC membership by three. Kirsty Allan introduced us to a new measuring device, the

Wyrdoscope, which is random number generator which comes with sophisticated software. We surmise that it may be able to indicate changes in fields correlating with possible psychic effects and demonstrating a field of consciousness outside the skull. Our treasurer kindly agreed to the purchase of a machine, and we hope to use it soon in the first instance with the investigation of those experiencers who purport to have the gift of PK, as well as in poltergeist field investigations. Kirsty is arranging training in its use.

We have also been joined by Sabrina Davis, a psychotherapist and also an expert in forensic psychology, and by Corrine Gretton-West, a much-needed photography expert.

We continue to meet every six weeks to review cases. We are continuing to anonymise cases as they come in and file them, investigated or otherwise, in a system that in due course will be available to Council members and, via a process of basic vetting, to members of the SPR and academics.

Bearing in mind the vast overlap and clustering of types of experience, for the record cases over the past 12 months include 12 apparitions, 5 after death

## **Report of the Survival Research Committee**

Chairman: **Callum Cooper**

I would firstly like to offer my appreciation and thanks to Mrs Marian Barton, having led the Survival Research Committee (SRC) as Chair 11 years and having stepped down in this role in mid-2024. The role was immediately offered over to me by the SRC, and I am proud to take on this position. We are also grateful to Dr David Rousseau, who also had to stepdown due to family circumstances, but we await his return when such circumstances become more comfortable for him. I am thankful to the committee members: Mrs Marian Barton (who remains on the committee), Dr Matthew Colborn and Dr David Saunders.

Sadly, Dr Alan Gauld passed away in December 2024, so too, Mr Dennis Bury. However, Mr Bury was able to join an online SRC meeting regarding the recruitment of new members in July 2024, which he gladly approved. These new members are Dr Rachael Ironside and Mr Matthew Arnold.

Despite the various changes to the SRC in the last year, Drs Colborn, Saunders, Rousseau, Mrs Barton and Mr Bury, all carefully considered various applications received for grants, and where possible, Dr Gauld was visited and informed of the incoming projects between 2023-2024. Applications included topics areas of: after-death communication experiences, terminal lucidity, past life memories, photography and the afterlife, mediumship, experiences in the funeral industry and

communications, 5 astral projections 31 poltergeists/hauntings, 9 Pk abilities, 7 JOTTs, 25 premonitions, 8 OBEs, 33 telepathy / psychic abilities, 4 cryptid sightings, 5 UFO sightings, 1 reincarnation, 5 possessions, 1 reincarnation, 1 prebirth memory, 19 photos / videos, 4 clairvoyants, and 2 healers. Clearly many are judged to be mistaken as to the paranormal nature of their experience, but all in my view are worth attempting to understand.

The ongoing poltergeist case in Essex seems to be subsiding, if that is the right word, after some five years of activity involving bangs, apports of coins, the falling of large objects off shelves, and electrical interference with messages on the television, and will be reviewed and written up in the coming months.

The Protocol and Procedure document of the SCC is being revised in the light of recent experiences involving a member undergoing a private investigation. This will advise that all those who are undertaking an investigation should agree any relevant conditions that may be deemed to apply, albeit negotiable at a later time, and sign a document accordingly so that there is no misunderstanding.

archival work and associated travel.

The following are the awards we have made this year:

**Professor Chris Roe and Professor Callum Cooper** - Investigation of the phenomenology and Impact of perceived direct and spontaneous After-Death Communications (continuation) - £7,518.92

**Dr Maryne Mutis** - Luciveille: Phenomenological study on the spectrum of terminal lucidity University of Lorraine - £3,000.00

**Elaine Rycroft** - Evaluating the premise that Past Life Memories indicate that 'personality' survives death - £3095.00

**Aaron Lomas** - The Phenomenology of Anomalous Experiences Reported during the Covid Pandemic - £2795.00

**Corrine Gretton-West** - Communicating Exceptional Human Experiences through Photographic Art' Continuation - £3150.00

**Prof. Callum Cooper** - for his research on Scott Rogo and correspondence with Raymond Bayless - £260.00

**Patrizio Tressoldi** (Italy) - Living in the AfterLife clues from direct experiences'. (To obtain detailed information about it, and how they live there from participants who claim to be able to visit or contact people there.) - £3,000.00

**Professor Chris Roe, Ashlee Lewis-Earl,**

Research Assistant, Northampton - The Truth in the Light: Conducting a systemic analysis of the Fenwick collection (continuation) - £2,964.00

**Kirsty Allan** - A New Bridge between the Physical and the Psychical Detecting synchronicity in the field of consciousness during physical mediumship - £3089.00

**Felicity S Kinnersley**, Northampton - Psychic or Spirit? A phenomenological investigation into the process whereby developing Spiritualist mediums learn to attribute received information to ostensible psychic or discarnate sources - £3,000.00

**Corrine Gretton-West**, Northampton - Communicating Exceptional Human Experiences through Photographic Art (continuation) - £2,695.00

**Natalia Mae Lavin**, Northampton - After-Death Communication Experiences in the Funeral Industry - £3,000.00

It should be noted that the Gwen Tate Lectures have now run their course, as funds from the Gwen Tate legacy have since been used for various projects over time. However, we are pleased to report we have

## **Report of the Library Committee**

Chairman: **Dr Tom Ruffles**

The Library Committee approves acquisitions for the Vernon Mews library. The members are: Graham Kidd, Robert McLuhan, Nemo Mörk, John Newton, Karen Patel (Librarian), John Poynton, Tom Ruffles (chair) and Melvyn Willin.

We have seen a steady increase in library usage since the end of the Covid restrictions. During the current reporting year, 140 loans were made (compared to 107 the previous year). Eighteen books were purchased at a cost of £379.60. A further 35 books were donated, and we are grateful to donors for their

## **Hon. Archives Liaison Officer's Report Dr Melvyn Willin**

The work of cataloguing and conservation has continued, as have regular visits to Cambridge University Library (CUL) where relations with the staff are very positive. Having completed the cataloguing of Donald West's Research Files, I am now cataloguing the hitherto unpublished SPR 'Hauntings and Poltergeist Files' which should be completed in 2025.

Correspondence and meetings with a number of academics, members of the SPR and the general public have been undertaken with contacts including the Freiburg Institute for Frontier Areas of Psychology and Mental Health and the College of Psychic Studies. Close co-operation with the latter resulted in the purchase of artworks from the Society for conservation and display at the College.

received (after the end of this reporting period) a substantial donation to the Society from Professor Yew-Kwang Ng 黄有光 (Monash University, Australia). Part of the agreement for this is that grants awarded by the SRC in future are to be given in his name, from the renamed **Yew-Kwang Ng (黄有光) Fund for Survival Research**.

Professor Ng has indicated that the fund should be administered as it is now, by the Survival Research Committee, and that the funds should be managed to provide support in perpetuity. Much like the Gwen Tate Lectures, we may begin to hold Yew-Kwang Ng 黄有光 Lectures, occasionally, for successful applicants to report back to the SPR on their research.

We continue to support the Hon. Archives Liaison Officer, Dr Melvyn Willin. We also respond to survival themed questions from the Hon. Communications Officer, Dr Tom Ruffles through the website and various media outlets which he also manages.

generosity. The Librarian operates a sale of second-hand books, available via the website as well as in the library.

The Library continues to be open on Wednesday afternoons, attracting both regular and occasional users, and interested non-members. Requests to visit at other times are arranged with the Secretary.

For members unable to visit, there is a postal loan service; details can be obtained from the Librarian. The library catalogue is on the website.

There are on-going conversations with the film company that produced the Enfield Poltergeist documentaries last year – the company received three BAFTA nominations for their work – which will involve further research of the archives.

The 'SPR Archive Office' at my premises in Norfolk contains the complete audio-visual collection as well as artefacts from the Enfield Poltergeist case and numerous other items awaiting deposit at CUL. Visits by members are possible by direct contact with me to fix mutually convenient times. Three mainline stations are all approximately ten miles away.

I finish with a request repeated from previous years. Some members receive financial and archival support from the SPR. Please send me copies of these

dissertations, photographs, correspondence and articles for inclusion in the archives when they are of relevance to psychical research. We need more contemporary material to add to the enormous amount of research deposited in the past. Items given to the SPR archives will then be available in the future for the education of

## **Education and Publicity Committee**

### **Chairman: Professor Bernard Carr**

The Education and Publicity Committee (EPC) coordinates the SPR's educational activities and develops strategies for publicising these. The promotion of our events is now primarily via the internet and our website, so our members include Deborah Erickson (Honorary Website Manager) and Nemo Mörck (Website Content Manager). Other members are Chris Roe, Robert McLuhan, Tom Ruffles (Honorary Communications Officer) and Gordon Rutter (editor of *The Magazine*). Some of these members report their activities more fully in their individual reports.

This year our educational programme has again mainly comprised of Zoom events, although we're beginning to hold physical meetings again. David Vernon continues to organize and host regular Wednesday webinars. In the reported period, these were given by Debra Katz, Jon Barker, Damien O'Dell, Sean Richards, Arnaud Delorme, Roger Nelson, Thomas Rabeyron, Erika Pratte, Mario Varvoglis, Karen Muter and Kyle Hankee. Although we miss meeting physically, webinars have the advantage of attracting speakers and participants from all over the world and it also reduces the expenses involved.

Our educational role also includes overseeing evening discussion forums, organized by Dennis Bury and Ciaran Farrell, and study days, organized by Cal Cooper and David Vernon. A zoom forum on 'Healing' took place in January 2023, chaired by Bernard Carr. In October 2023, instead of the usual study day, Rodrigo Montenegro led a physical workshop on vibrational states entitled "Self-Tuning to Higher Consciousness: A Neuroscience-Based Approach". A hybrid study day in April 2024, entitled "From the Mouths of Babes: Children and Psychical Experience", was chaired by Cal Cooper with contributions from Donna Thomas, Natalia Lavin, Kate Adams, Kirsty Allan and Elaine Rycroft. The same week the Royal Society was the venue for Ed Kelly's Myers Memorial lecture and Chris Roe's Presidential Address, which had been postponed because of the pandemic.

The Committee also plays a part in the annual conference, with Carr, Roe and Ruffles serving on the Programme Committee. However, this year's conference (held at Derby) was in November 2024 and so will be covered in next year's report.

the public and academics alike. When collections are deposited in universities they are, of course, made available to the staff and students therein, but once they are part of the SPR archive collection their availability is increased worldwide.

Steve Parsons' excellent *Guidance Notes for the Investigation of Spontaneous Cases*, financed by the Buckmaster Fund, continues to establish the SPR's crucial role in this area. In the past year he has built on this foundation, working towards a common approach by all major UK organisations, as well as independent groups and individuals. Further support in this area is provided by the freely downloadable 'Quick Guides' and these are being promoted by the EPC. Additional 'Quick Guides' are planned to increase the scope of this material. Steve's main focus is promoting ethical and critical approaches for investigators of spontaneous experiences. He has implemented a standardised training package, based on the *Guidance Notes*. ASSAP has now adopted this for their investigator training and this is frequently cited as a reason for people joining that organisation. He hopes to offer SPR members a similar provision and is developing an SPR training package appropriate for both in-person and online delivery. Steve's latest book, *Paravision, Sight & the Paranormal*, co-edited with Cal Cooper, will be published by White Crow books in 2025. It examines the visual aspects of a wide range of paranormal experiences and follows the success of their previous collaboration in examining sound and acoustic aspects of paranormal experiences.

New articles continue to be published in the *Psi Encyclopedia*, which is funded by the Buckmaster bequest and now contains 650 articles and almost two million words. It is currently undergoing an upgrade necessitated by the switch to a new software platform. This will see some changes to the design and navigation, and new features such as pdf files of key research papers that can be downloaded, along with links to online articles, books and videos that are free to view. Another Buckmaster project, two volumes of essays on aspects of survival, has unfortunately been delayed through factors beyond our control, but progress continues to be made.

Tom Ruffles regularly responds to enquiries via the website and social media. Frequent references to the SPR, both in print and online, can be followed on our Facebook page and Twitter feed, both of which are overseen by Tom. At the end of the reporting year the Facebook page had 18,874 'likes' and the general Twitter (X) feed had 11,948 followers. These sites

publicise SPR events and carry news about the field in general. Tom also runs a Twitter feed dedicated to *Psi Encyclopedia*, which had 2,870 followers. Posts on all three are circulated by readers and thereby reach a very large audience. ASSAP's regular e-bulletin includes forthcoming SPR events. Significant information relating to the SPR appears on our website as news

## **Report of the Hon. Website Manager Dr Deborah Erickson**

The SPR website has continued smooth operations this reporting period. Content Manager Nemo Morck published 18 book reviews in 2024, including reviews of popular books in addition to the academic. Reviewers are thanked for their time and expertise. Nemo would also like to remind members/readers that he and Tom Ruffles, Hon. Communications Officer, appreciate tips about new

items posted by Nemo Mörck, who also adds information about new books and their reviews. SPR members frequently make media appearances, and these are mostly reported on our website. We continue to build bridges with other organisations since this allows news of our activities to reach a wider audience.

books, surveys, lectures and events. We are happy to give attention on the SPR website and on social media when it is appropriate.

David Vernon, Editor, will report on the move of the Journal of the SPR to another technology platform.

## **The Journal of the Society for Psychical Research Editor: Dr David Vernon**

I took over the Editorship of the Journal of the Society for Psychical Research in January 2024 from Dr Malcolm Schofield. I would like to begin by thanking Malcolm for all the work he has done for the Journal and for the smooth handover and his support during that period and since.

During the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> September, we have produced and published four issues of the Journal: those for October 2023, January 2024, April 2024, and July 2024. The aim, as always, is to have these issues distributed to subscribers in their designated month of publication but this is in part dependent on the amount of sufficiently high-quality material ready for publication and on ensuring its production to the highest quality. Additionally, in order to keep distribution costs down, mailings are sometimes delayed so as to include other materials being prepared for members. Taken together, these five Journal issues included 8 refereed articles, 20 book reviews, one obituary and two Society notices. The Journal continues to have international reach, which is reflected in contributions from Brazil, the USA, as well as the United Kingdom. Prospective contributors are reminded that the email address for submissions is [journal@spr.ac.uk](mailto:journal@spr.ac.uk) and we encourage electronic submissions as Word files.

The published material continues to reflect the breadth of interest within psychical research, ranging from experimental research (both quantitative and qualitative), field investigations, case studies, theoretical contributions, reviews and historical perspectives. I trust that this diversity assures members

that the Editorial Board will consider any empirical approach or topic of relevance to psychical research so long as it is original, provides a significant contribution to the field and is underpinned by a highly rigorous methodology.

Looking ahead, in an effort to enhance the visibility of the Journal and bring it more into line with similar journals, we will be working to link the Journal content to various persistent identifiers (PID). The initial aim will be to link the Journal with Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) and author ORCID data. A Digital Object Identifier, or DOI, represents a persistent identifier (PID) for a piece of online content, such as a journal article, research note, book review etc. Whereas ORCID stands for Open Researcher and Contributor ID, and is a free, unique PID for authors. Hence, a simple way to think of these is that the DOI is a PID for Journal *content* whereas ORCID is a PID for the *author* of that content. Once these have been obtained and are in place the aim will then be to try again to secure indexing of the journal.

Editing and producing the JSPR is both a time consuming and demanding task, and not one carried out alone. Hence, I would like to offer my very special thanks to both the Associate Editor, Dr Zofia Weaver, and the Editorial Assistant, Dr Tammy Dempster, for their excellent work and very much appreciated support. Thanks also to Julie Gorman from Helius (<https://helius.co.uk/>), our typesetter, for her prompt and scrupulous attention to detail when helping to shape the articles. A big thank you to our Book Review Editor, Nemo Mörck, for his help and guidance with the



book reviews and more. Last, but by no means least, my sincere thanks to all those who help to make the JSPR possible by submitting manuscripts and to those that help review them, providing a high level of useful

and effective feedback to help ensure that the JSPR remains a useful and valuable publication within the field of psychic research.

## **The Magazine of the Society for Psychical Research**

Editor: **Gordon Rutter**

During the reporting period only three issues of *The Magazine* were produced. Partly this has been due to the learning curve of getting to grips with the software. As I write this one more issue has been produced and another is almost ready to go, this coming year will see an inroad into reducing the backlog.

The issues are all full colour and twenty-eight pages, and all are submitted as a print ready PDF and a compressed version for electronic distribution. Due to the time taken to print the physical copies the online version appears first and is available from the SPR website members' section.

During this year *The Magazine* has continued its wide range of articles. Each issue contains a piece from the President, Adrian Parker. Over the course of the year, we have had interviews such as that with Danny Robins who promotes the paranormal through his BBC Podcast, stage show and TV series *Uncanny*. Another interview has been with David Vernon giving us some behind the scenes views on the popular series of online talks. This is the first of a series of articles about and with personages of the SPR, giving us a look behind the curtain of the SPR. Within this vein we also had Tom Ruffles and "The SPR on Social Media" and Nemo Mörck "Opportunities and Challenges: the SPR Web Pages". Paul Lee provided us with "A Ghostly Gazetteer".

"Food and the Psychic Investigator" by Mike Daws provided a different approach to our subject. We have also had some historical overviews such as Trevor Harley "Parapsychology in Cambridge in the 1970s", and some forward-looking articles such as Sean Richards "Furthering Research into Electronic Voice Phenomena". And there have been several event reports including the 2023 annual conference and Ashley Knibb on "The Myers Memorial Medal, the Presidential Address and the Royal Society".

Add in some news items, some letters and a wealth of newly received materials for the SPR Library.

And there was one other article from David Ellis. "A Paradigm for the Paranormal". David has been proofreading *The Magazine* and before that *The Paranormal Review* for many years and several editors. As usual I offer my heartfelt thanks to have for the excellent work he does.

Over the year I have received some positive comments from the membership about *The Magazine*, and I am very grateful for them all and I am glad that people are enjoying it. I am also grateful to all who have contributed articles or letters, and I hope to continue to receive many more of both.

The continued use of Open-Source software to produce *The Magazine* saves the SPR quite a large fee in licensing.

## **Annual Conference**

Programme Chairman: **Prof. Callum Cooper**, Conference Organiser: **Peter Johnson**

The 47<sup>th</sup> SPR International Annual Conference took place 8<sup>th</sup>- 10<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at the Derby Mickleover Hotel. This was an in-person only event and online attendance was not provided. We had just over 70 people registered throughout the weekend.

Speakers joined us from throughout the UK, across Europe and from the United States. A total of 25 talks were scheduled over the weekend, including 2 invited talks from Dr Richard Broughton and Dr William van Gordon, as well as a guest after-dinner talk from , Prof. Paul Gilbert, OBE.

Talks were arranged into themed sessions such as 'observing the exceptional', 'the latest from the labs', 'experimental and theoretical', 'death, dying and beyond', 'history and legacy', 'case studies, collection and method', 'spirit and the end of the tunnel' and 'beliefs and perceptions'. Video recordings will be available via the SPR website. The abstracts of the papers are available on the website.

A note of thanks is due to the SPR Conference Programme Committee (Prof. Carr, Mr Nemo Mörck, Mr Murdie, Prof. Parker, Prof. Roe and Dr Ruffles). Thanks are also due to Mr Johnson, especially, for

assistance in scouting out locations, and all the admin hours that go into setting up contracts with venues, creating and the booking packages, editing and printing the book of abstracts and badges, etc., etc. The hard work all paid off as I have never seen and heard so much positive feedback for a conference before. It was thoroughly enjoyed by all. My thanks to all involved

Secretary’s Report  
Peter Johnson

In the table below, you will be able to see that our membership numbers have reduced this year, in line

and the speakers for giving their time to create such an event.

with the experience of many other membership organisations during these difficult times for everyone.

	Members & Associates			Student Associates			TOTALS		
	2024	2023	Change	2024	2023	Change	2024	2023	Change
UK	437	480	-8.96%	51	39	30.77%	488	519	-6%
USA	133	153	-13.07%	23	21	9.52%	156	174	-10%
Other	135	151	-10.60%	17	24	-29.17%	152	175	-13%
TOTAL	705	784	-10.08%	91	84	8.33%	796	868	-8%

Note that, in addition to the Members and Associates, we also send copies of our publications to over 100 subscribers. An increasing number of members are opting to take advantage of the £15 discount for digital-only publications.

when visitors may come without an appointment.

We held our 2024 Annual General Meeting in person at Vernon Mews in April.

Audio recordings of all our events are available free of charge for members only, and for purchase by non-members. Thanks to David Vernon for finding so many interesting speakers for our online Web Events during the year. Thanks to Melvyn Willin for maintaining our archive catalogue of recordings. Please note that, in addition to borrowing physical recordings, members may also listen to recent talks directly from our website.

The following six members of Council retired and were re-elected at this meeting to serve for three further years:

- C. J. Farrell, BSc, GRSC.
- J. Fraser, B.A.
- R. G. McLuhan, B.A., B.Litt.
- C. E. Cooper, BSc, MRes, PhD, CPsychol., FHEA,
- C. A. Roe, BSc., MSc., PhD
- A. P. Ryan

The Office and Library have continued to operate mainly from home, with Karen Patel (Librarian) attending the SPR Library on Wednesday afternoons

All other motions on the agenda were passed unanimously.

Data Protection Officer’s Report  
Ciaran Farrell

During the course of the reporting year the SPR’s General Data Protection Implementation Team, GDPRIT, continued to monitor and evaluate the SPR’s operation to ensure that the systems that had been put in place were the correct ones and that they were functioning as they were intended to do.

This work has now been completed and the new policy has been adopted and placed on the SPR’s website. It was concluded during the review process that the provisions of the 2023 Online Safety Act did not essentially affect the SPR’s operation in any material way so its provisions did not need to be incorporated within the policy.

In order to do this GDPRIT held physical and Zoom meetings online and exchanged correspondence within GDPRIT, the SPR, and with other organisations as we continued our work reviewing and updating the SPR’s overarching Privacy and Data Protection policy.

In addition to this we again reviewed the operation of the SPR’s website and administrative and events email mailing lists. This was to ensure that SPR members can take up the benefits of SPR membership

by way of the information services and other services the SPR has to offer, as well as publicising SPR events.

A general Data Processing Agreement, DPA, for the SPR which was discussed in the last reporting year was developed within GDPRIT during the current reporting period, finalised, and installed as a policy for internal guidance. The DPA contained guidance on the use of emails by SPR Council members, staff and volunteers as well as the use of WhatsApp which is being used internally within the SCC for discussion rather than decision making processes. We wanted to ensure that current SPR practice conforms to the standards used by government as set out in government guidance for the use of WhatsApp and other messaging Apps. The DPA also contained an integral Bring Your Own Device policy.

A BYOD policy is recommended for small charitable companies like the SPR by the Charity Commission and the UK's data regulator, the Information Commissioner's Office, ICO. This is because the SPR is a 'distributed' organisation with many key SPR personnel, Council members, staff and volunteers working from home using their own computers and other communications devices. A BYOD policy is a means by which an organisation like the SPR can ensure that common standards are worked to by all concerned in relation to the safety, security and management of data across the organisation even when people are using their own equipment at home.

GDPRIT also reviewed the use and operation of the SCC's Policy and Protocol policy from a data protection point of view after a number of changes were made to it to update the policy following a review of the policy in connection with fresh requirements for on-site investigations.

In addition to this, GDPRIT reviewed the SPR's internal processes and procedures for Subject Access Requests, SARs following further SARs which were made during the course of the year. A Subject Access Request is an official request under The Data Protection Act 2018, known as UK GDPR for the applicant(s) to have a copy of the data that is held on them by an organisation. The data was provided to the applicant(s) within the timescales laid down by the ICO, and in accordance with ICO guidance. It was acknowledged that people may make SAR applications for a verity of reasons some of which might diverge from the original intended purpose of the legislation to ensure the data held on them is correct and accurate. Furthermore, GDPRIT also considered how complaints

might best be handled from a data protection point of view, to ensure that confidentiality and impartiality of the existing SPR complaints procedure is maintained in the run up to a prospective review of the complaints procedure itself.

The previous government's Data Protection and Digital Information Bill which was making its way through Parliament when the then Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak, called the general election did not complete its parliamentary hurdles in time to be passed into law. The incoming Labour government has seen the need to build on some of the work done by the previous government and has announced through the King's Speech that they will introduce a Digital Information and Smart Data Bill into parliament. This will focus on the need to ensure that people and organisations will have secure digital identities for the safety and security of all concerned online in order to protect the nation against fraud and cyber-attacks. Hopefully they will also see the wisdom in relaxing some of the more onerous restrictions and requirements of GDPR. In particular, they want to reduce the burden of red tape for small companies and charities like the SPR including the burden of work associated with SARs and the operation of email mailing lists.

During the course of the year, I have continued to work with the Policy Advisory Panel, PAP in order to develop SPR policy that is relevant and related to the data protection work of the DPO and to liaise with the SCC in their work to develop their own policies and protocols.

I have also made regular reports to the SPR Council on data protection and policy matters related to this as well as communicating with my colleagues within the SPR on data protection matters. This is in keeping with the requirement under the Data Protection Act 2018 for corporate boards of Trustees/Directors to be kept informed and involved with the requirements of data protection work as it applies to their own organisations including ICO guidance.

The DPO looks forward to working with GDPRIT and the PAP in the future as well as the SPR Council over the forthcoming year.

The Data Protection Officer would like to thank the other members of GDPRIT for all their hard work. They are Peter Johnson - SPR Secretary, Richard Broughton - Honorary Treasurer and Adrian Ryan.

## **The Financial Position**

Honorary Treasurer: **Dr Richard Broughton**

I am pleased to report that the Society has concluded the fiscal year in reasonably good financial health. Our reserves are up slightly on last year, thanks in part to our own income-generating activities, but mostly to a healthy investment market. We were able to provide substantial financial support to a good number of research projects as detailed elsewhere in this report, but we are in a position to do more, and our research committees are being encouraged to seek good quality projects worthy of support. Support from the Society is vitally important for both early career researchers and students as well as established scientists who are unable to obtain financial support for research from the usual sources.

The general economic environment remains challenging for the Society and its members as costs continue to rise on all fronts. Our membership numbers have dipped a bit but income remains steady. We are enormously grateful for our members who can continue to support the Society through membership in these difficult times.

Most of our programmes for academics and the public are being conducted on-line or in a hybrid format. Our Annual Conference offered both on-site and video participation and drew a good attendance. Our Study Days are migrating to a hybrid format as well, and our completely on-line discussion group evenings remain popular. The Society's *Journal* and

the *Magazine* continue to be produced to a high standard, but skyrocketing mailing charges have led the Society to encourage on-line receipt of our publications.

The Society continues to weather difficult financial circumstances in reasonable shape thanks to the continued hard work of our staff and volunteers to provide our services as economically as possible. We continue to see the effect of the cost-of-living crisis on our membership which, for many people, especially for students and young people, is a matter of discretionary income. More than ever, it remains vitally important that the Society receives donations to the general fund that can provide the additional income required to offer our scientific and educational services at the lowest possible cost to our members. Those who are in a position to be generous now can help future generations of psychical researchers develop into productive scientists.

The Society has engaged a different accounting firm this year and you will notice that the Annual Financial Statement looks different, however all the essential information is present. The accounts have been subject to an Independent Examination and no issues of concern have been noted. The full report of this examination is included in the financial statement.

**THE INCORPORATED SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH  
1 Vernon Mews, London, W14 0RL**

**For full Members of the Society.**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** of The Incorporated Society for Psychical Research to be held at 1 Vernon Mews, London, W14 0RL on Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup> April 2025 at 5.15 p.m.

**AGENDA**

- 1) To approve and sign the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2024**
- 2) To receive the Report of the Council and the Annual Statement of Accounts made up to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024.**
- 3) To elect six members to the Council**  
Six members of the Council are due to retire from office and all six offer themselves for re-election. No further nominations having been received, there is no requirement to hold a vote on this matter:  

Mrs M E Barton	Dr B G Colvin
Mrs J A Rousseau	Dr L Ruickbie
Mr A D Murdie	Dr M J Willin
- 4) To appoint Kreston Reeves LLP as Reporting Accountants for the period prescribed by the Companies Act 2006.**
- 5) To authorise the Council to determine the remuneration of the Reporting Accountants.**

**No other business will be transacted at this meeting.**

**THE INCORPORATED SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH**  
**1 Vernon Mews, London, W14 0RL**

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**HELD ON Saturday, 27<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 5.15 p.m.**

Dr Richard Broughton (Hon Treasurer of the Society) opened the meeting at 5.15 p.m., welcoming 10 voting members to the Annual General Meeting of the Society.

**The President was not present; Dr Broughton was unanimously appointed as the Chairman.**

**1) To approve and sign the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2023, which was adjourned and reconvened on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2023.**

Dr Broughton proposed that the Minutes of the AGM held on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2023, adjourned for Item 2 only and reconvened on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2023 should be approved. **This was seconded by Mr Farrell and was agreed unanimously.**

**2) To receive the Report of the Council and the Annual Statement of Accounts made up to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023.**

Dr Broughton explained that the Report of the Council and the Annual Statement of Accounts made up to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023 were not ready to bring to the meeting. This item would be adjourned to a date to be agreed. It was agreed that this date should be Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2024, at 2.00 p.m.

**3) To elect six members to the Council**

Six members of the Council are due to retire from office and all six offer themselves for re-election. No further nominations having been received, there is no requirement to hold a vote on this matter:

C. J. Farrell, BSc, GRSC.

J. Fraser, B.A.

R. G. McLuhan, B.A., B.Litt.

C. E. Cooper, BSc, MRes, PhD, CPsychol., FHEA,

C. A. Roe, BSc., MSc., PhD

A. P. Ryan

**4) To re-appoint PK Audit LLP Chartered Accountants as Reporting Accountants for the period prescribed by the Companies Act 2006.**

Dr Broughton reported that, along with Mr Johnson, he was still considering alternative options for appointing new Accountants. Mr Farrell proposed that PK Audit LLP Chartered Accountants should be reappointed as Reporting Accountants for the period prescribed by the Companies Act 2006 and such other Accountants as Council determines during the coming year. **This was seconded by Mr Fraser and was agreed unanimously.**

**5) To authorise the Council to determine the remuneration of the Reporting Accountants.**

Dr Cooper proposed that the Council should be authorised to determine the remuneration of the Reporting Accountants. **This was seconded by Mr Farrell and was agreed unanimously.**

No other business was transacted at this meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

**RECONVENED ON Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 2.00 p.m.**

Dr Broughton welcomed 5 members to the reconvened meeting.

The President was not present; Dr Broughton was unanimously appointed as the Chairman.

**Item 2) held over from the meeting on Saturday, 27<sup>th</sup> April 2024. To receive the Report of the Council and the Annual Statement of Accounts made up to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023.**

Dr Broughton proposed that the Report of the Council and the Annual Statement of Accounts made up to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023 should be received. This was agreed unanimously.

No other business was transacted at this meeting. The meeting closed at 2.10 p.m.

**NOTES ON CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION AT THE  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING TO BE HELD ON 26<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2025  
IN THEIR OWN WORDS**

**MRS M E BARTON**

Marian Barton joined the Society in 1963. Her grounding in psychical research was by attending courses given by other members of the SPR in the 1960s. In the early days she helped investigate spontaneous cases with her late husband Arthur Ellison. She acted as the Society's Social Secretary for some years, providing a welcome to new members and introducing them to others in the Society at SPR events.

Marian worked at the Institute of Psychiatry for 5 years helping with the research on twins via Hans Eysenck's twin register, where she was also the contact name for the twins when they needed help and advice. Marian worked for over 13 years as Admissions Officer at St Christopher's Hospice, London and considers that survival is an important aspect of research into the paranormal, believing that a knowledge that we may survive bodily death can help the bereaved.

Marian has been on the Survival Research Committee for some years, and was co-opted to the Council and appointed Chairman of the Committee in 2013. She oversaw the reprint of the Scole Report and is a member of the Conference Planning Group. Marian has also given Workshops and lectures on the paranormal at the Theosophical Society Summer Schools and other meetings. She resigned as Chair of the SCC in 2024 but remains on the committee.

**DR B G COLVIN, BSc, PhD**

Barrie Colvin joined the SPR in 1973 and was co-opted to Council in 2007. He was appointed by the Council to fill a temporary vacancy in the list of elected members of Council in January 2014, following the resignation of Dr Sommer. He has been actively involved in the investigation of mental and physical mediums, including direct-voice, transfiguration and materialisation mediumship. Past projects have included the investigation of haunted houses, the human aura, X-ray analysis of hair reported to be taken from the head of Katie King and evaluation of evidence presented by Gerard Croiset in a missing person case. His principal interest in recent times has been the physics of poltergeist activity, including the development of instrumentation for this branch of the subject. He developed and successfully trialled infra-red absorption equipment as well as a bespoke mid-frequency infra-red camera for poltergeist field work. His most recent projects have been a study of the acoustic properties of poltergeist rapping sounds and the analysis of voices generated at a materialisation séance.

**MRS J A ROUSSEAU, BSc (Hons)**

Julie Rousseau joined the SPR in 1994 and has been a member of Council since 2002. She served as the SPR's Hon Website Manager from 2006 to 2014, introducing online subscription and membership management, and providing tools for non-technical volunteers to add editorial content to the website easily. She is currently an e-commerce strategy consultant helping businesses to optimise their online operations, having provided mathematical decision support in areas as diverse as fisheries management, aeronautics and new business development. She promotes interdisciplinary and systems approaches to the study of anomalous phenomena and has a particular interest in the mechanisms by which new ideas catalyse social transformation. She is a co-founder of the Library of Exploratory Science, which houses the SPR's Online Library.

**DR L RUICKBIE BA (Hons), MA, PhD (Lond), AKC (Associate of King's College)**

Dr Ruickbie has been a member of the SPR since 2010 and was co-opted to the Council in 2017 and was appointed by the Council to fill a temporary vacancy in the list of elected members of Council in June 2022. He is the author of several books on witchcraft, magic, and the supernatural. His published articles, covering such subjects as theories of magic, the historical development of personalised conceptions of evil, folk beliefs in the external soul, and the representation of angels in modern media, show his broad interest in the history and sociology of belief and anomalous phenomena. Dr Ruickbie served for a number of years as Editor of *The Magazine* of the Society for Psychical Research.

**MR A D MURDIE, LLB, Barrister**

Alan Murdie has been a member of the SPR since 1997 and was co-opted to the Council in 1999. He was appointed by the Council to fill a temporary vacancy in the list of elected members of Council, replacing Chris Roe in 2005. He is a lawyer by profession, has investigated spontaneous cases both in Britain and abroad and is

the Chairman of the Society's Spontaneous Cases Committee. He served for several years as Chairman of The Ghost Club.

#### **DR M J WILLIN, PhD**

Dr Willin has been a member of the Society since 1992, was co-opted to Council in 1997 and became an elected member in 2000. He currently serves as the Society's Hon. Archives Liaison Officer, working on the archives held in Cambridge University Library. He holds two PhDs, both about music. The first is in connection with the paranormal and the second studying its place in pagan and witchcraft ritual and culture. Melvyn previously taught parapsychology and psychical research at a college in Essex. He has led investigations into alleged haunting and poltergeist cases and continues to support the serious research of all such phenomena.