



# Maiden Road News

**Audited Circulation:**  
Very Probably. Honestly,  
we were going to apply.  
I've got it written down  
somewhere, here...

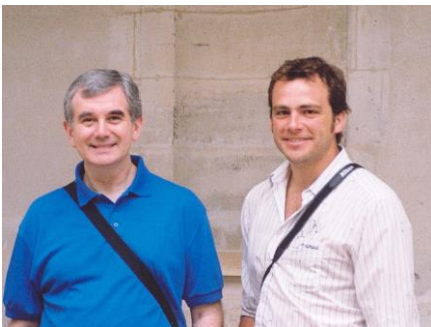
2003 – So many wrong decisions to make, so little time



## Editorial Coup! Philip Takes Over as Former Editor Resigns Due to Overwork!

Greetings once again from Maiden Road, London. It's hard to believe another year has gone by. It has been an eventful one, dominated by the war in Iraq. Bush and Blair decided to go it alone, but had to drag the rest of us into it. The worst part of the year for me was the death of my brother Trevor. He had been poorly but his passing away was unexpected and I still cannot believe he has gone. He was a wonderful man and crowds turned out for his funeral.

On a happier note our friend Mark, the father of my god daughter Hannah, visited Europe from Melbourne Australia in July/August. He flew to Milan where a friend lent him his motor bike. He then drove to Venice and on to Paris where we met him on July 14. We stayed in a hotel near the Bastille which was very friendly and comfortable. Right opposite was a very nice fish restaurant, although they served humans too. We visited the Louvre, the Picasso Museum and the Rodin Exhibition. Mark then came to London to stay with us for a week. It was Martin's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday on July 20 so Mark, Sheila, Matthew, Darius and I celebrated at Martin's favourite restaurant, *Savoir Faire*, near the British Museum. Martin even tore himself away from his computer for the occasion.



Philip & Mark at the Louvre

Martin and I celebrated our 31<sup>st</sup> anniversary this year. It's so great to find that one special person you want to annoy the rest of your life. Of course Martin's younger than I am. In fact he's five years younger than he thinks I am. People say how do you keep your relationship fresh. Well, every week we go to a charming restaurant for a romantic meal by

candlelight, followed by soft music and dancing under the stars. He goes on Mondays and I go on Thursdays.

The Pink Singers have been busy this year. Our big concert in May was a night at the opera. The trouble is, operas are so unlike real life. I mean do you know someone who has been impregnated by a god? Oh, all right, Victoria Beckham. The December concert features music from the movies.

## Martin Lives on his Wits – Starvation Predicted

That's enough of the guest editorial, It should all be about ME!

My year has been a mixture of incredible highs and lows, goods and bads. I finished the first draft of my PhD dissertation (400 pages, 200,000 words) and handed that in: good. I got accepted on the PGCE course to retrain as a teacher: good. I had to live off my savings for a year: bad; but I have enough to be comfortable, and what's money for if not for spending?

I started the PGCE in September, and so far I've enjoyed the academic stuff. However, I started my teacher practice in November, and I'm not at all sure that this is the age range I want to teach. I keep getting told to dumb it down for the little darlings. I can do it, but I want to talk about the tetrachotomy of author, narrator, character and reader, while they need to know what simile means. I'll keep at it, but I'm definitely going to try for an A level college job (ages 17-18). Fortunately, I just need to keep busy for a few years until retirement, so I can ignore the demands to jump on the teaching hamster-wheel.

I had my first official assessment on Friday. I thought it had gone badly, but the tutor thought it went rather well. Mind you, his first comment was "Did anyone jump out of the window?" Yeeesss... My second lesson of the day was almost perfect: I can do it, but do I want to do it?

Ah well, 4 lesson plans to do for next week, parent's day to write up, and a student observation, the filing to be done, the Personal Development file to be tackled, Big Read day to organise, Fibonacci poems to

work on... I'll be ready for next week in a couple of week's time...

## A Quick Trip to Avebury

We did manage to make a Saturday visit to Avebury in November. I've been so busy with my courses that this day trip figures significantly in my social calendar this year. I have got a life, it's just not my own.

As well as Avebury, I was able to show Philip several of the monuments in the area (Silbury Hill, Maude Cunningham's circle, and West Kennet chamber tomb – which I had not seen before). The weather was cold but pleasant; and, as it was the day after Halloween, all the strange folk were out, making an exhibition of themselves. I talked about astronomical alignments and quoted John North, while they followed the ley lines, chanted, danced and made a carnival of it. My anthropology professor would have approved of them.



Philip, holding John North, getting stoned at Avebury

## Coming Soon...

All that remains is to wish everyone a happy Yuletide and a successful new year. "The secret of life is enjoying the passage of time."

## That Tchie Stuff

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The website is now at:  
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Deck the Halls!