

History of the People Associated with Dartington

This document, put together by Ivor Stolliday, gives an overview of the numerous people who have come to Dartington to live and work, and contribute to the work of the Trust.

'A Salon in the Countryside'

Orbits and constellations

George Bernard Shaw knew Dartington well, and wrote of it as 'a salon in the countryside.' Whether or not he meant it as a compliment, it stands as an apt summary of its early years. It has changed, as all things must, but it remains a place hospitable to the assembly of talents, creativity and energy.

Dartington Hall has long invited, attracted, encouraged and supported those who show talent and creativity. This has been true since Dorothy and Leonard Elmhirst began their remarkable experiment at Dartington in 1925, and continues today. The Fellowship Programme is a major - and the most recent - manifestation of that continuing impetus.

Whilst Dartington has the structure and the corporate organisation essential for a charity of some scale, owning land, property and other assets, its true legacy and genius is individual rather than corporate. In most cases, its projects, ventures, businesses and activities have happened and been supported because interesting individuals came with good ideas. In addition, there is a history of direct support for those who had some important work to do, yet had neither the resources nor the environment in which to do it. The principle of recognising the individual, and of giving support where possible, remains one of the elements of the Trust's mission, as stated in the Aims of the Trust.

There are various histories of Dartington or aspects of it. However, they all tell the stories of the founders, Dorothy and Leonard Elmhirst, and of the ventures and structures they created. Whilst important - and internationally important in a number of fields - those stories are but one slice of the reality. Through a different lens we may see the story of Dartington as one of the achievements of a long line of remarkable individuals, drawn there not born there, supported, welcomed, given hospitality and a unique opportunity to pursue their aims. Some stayed only briefly, others for years. Some made their impact whilst at Dartington, others later. In almost every case we find that the time at Dartington gave them what was needed and thus made a difference. That story is summarised here.

It is a busy and complex patchwork. From the earliest days of Dartington the founders were liberal and generous in their invitations. However, some who came, who performed, lectured, wrote or showed their work, were only brief visitors, while others came frequently and yet more came and stayed for some time, or even for many years. The sheer variety of the talents and activities of those who came adds to the colour and density of the patchwork. There were musicians and economists, writers and potters, educationalists and architects, dancers and psychologists, artists and agriculturalists, poets and painters, sculptors and social theorists. The texture was increased further by the consistent internationalism of the approach. In the early days there were visitors from the USA, India, China, South America and the European continent. Before the war Dartington was one of the first places to welcome refugees freed from Nazi oppression. The diversity of origins and activity, and the internationalism of outlook, continues to this day.

Some of the visitors who came to Dartington came for specific events rather than simply as invitees. Those events and activities have, of course, changed. In the early years there were active and busy weekend house parties. However, unlike most of those who owned great country houses the Elmhirsts did not invite their guests to hunt, shoot or fish, but rather to talk, lecture or perform. Many were frequent returnees. Some of the weekends and their guests were extraordinary. For example, on one weekend in February 1934, Artur Schnabel played the piano on the Saturday evening for anyone who wished to come, and on the Sunday Aldous Huxley gave a lecture to the Estate community. Later, some came for the School and later still for the College of Arts, the Summer School, Schumacher College or as Artists-in-Residence.

The following sections give some flavour of those people; who they were and what they did. It shows a constellation of bright figures that have, at some time, come into Dartington's orbit; some to circle it repeatedly and others, like comets, just passing through.

Tagore – an inspiring spirit

Before the Dartington 'experiment' began, Rabindranth Tagore had inspired Leonard Elmhirst and shaped his thinking. Born in 1861, Tagore was a poet, playwright, artist, and apostle of artistic sensitivity, of the personal and the individual, of modernity of thinking (unlike Gandhi, with whom his relations were cool) and of international brotherhood. He was a towering figure in his time. He was received by statesmen, was feted by the society of many nations, moved effortlessly among their upper classes, and was seen as an inspiration by many in way that is hard to conjure in a more cynical age. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1913. Tagore came from a wealthy Bengali family that owned estates and businesses. He became known as Bengal's greatest writer, and is still revered there and elsewhere. Leonard was clearly under his considerable spell. Dorothy was not, and disliked the adulation that surrounded him. There exists a lively early correspondence between Leonard and Dorothy in which he tries to justify, against her evident scepticism, the way in which those in audience with Tagore would kiss his feet in greeting and sit on the floor while the great man had a chair. Dorothy; egalitarian, democratic, and American, was unimpressed.

Leonard worked as Tagore's secretary for several years in the early 1920's, including the time while he was courting Dorothy Whitney Straight. He travelled with Tagore, in Europe, to China (three times) to the USA and to Argentina. He spent much time at Tagore's community settlement and school, built on a small arid area of Tagore family land at Santinikaten in Bengal. Leonard there created a centre for rural regeneration, which was in some ways a precursor of the experiment at Dartington. That centre later became a college, was taken over by the Indian state, and then became a University and was alma mater to, among others, Indira Gandhi and film-maker Satjyit Ray. It was Tagore who suggested to Elmhirst that he create a rural experiment in England, and indeed he specifically suggested that it be in Devon. Tagore had visited Devon once, as a young man, when he was living rather unhappily in London and had gone to Torquay to visit his sister who was staying there. Of such small things are great ventures born.

Tagore's story, and his links with and visits to Dartington, are well recorded elsewhere. What matters is that, whatever the final evaluation of his life and work - and even his weighty biographers remain still unsure - he influenced the early formation of Dartington. He gave it its abiding internationalism and its continuing themes of reconciliation and understanding between the East and the West, of modernity and innovation combined with the practice of the arts and a respect for the individual spirit.

The Musicians

Those who are very familiar with Dartington know that it is many things, but some only know of one big thing. For many, across the world, that big thing is music. Indeed there are those who have known of, or engaged in, its musical life for many years who do not realise that there is any other activity. It is not uncommon to be asked, during the crowded weeks of the International Summer School each summer, whether 'anything else happens here for the rest of the year'. If only they knew.

However, music, and particularly the making and creation of music, rather than just passive listening, has been constant and central to Dartington from its inception.

The pattern of musical involvement has varied, from those attending briefly to those who were much more engaged. A key impetus has been the Dartington International Summer School, now more than 50 years old, which has sustained and extended Dartington's place in the music world.

Composition has always been central. Benjamin Britten was a frequent visitor. He dedicated the 'Flower Songs' to Dorothy and wrote the Rape of Lucrecia with a first performance in the Barn Theatre at Dartington in mind. Stravinsky came, albeit more briefly, and stayed in a house in Warren Lane - one where Fellows might live - and did some work at Dartington. Philip Cannon came to Dartington at the age of fifteen as a pupil of Imogen Holst, who organised music at the Hall at that time. John Tavener was actively involved in Dartington's Summer School, as was Peter Maxwell Davies, who was, for a time, its Artistic Director. Others who visited and contributed included John Cage, Michael Tippett, Alan Rawsthorne, Constant Lambert, Edmund Rubbra, Witold Lutoslawski, Wilfred Josephs and Luciano Berio. In more recent times composers who have worked at Dartington include Jonathan Harvey, Milton Babbitt, David Bedford, Edward Cowie,

Helen Glatz, Lou Harrison, Peter Sculthorpe, Peter Wiegold and John Woolrich, the Russians Elena Firsova, Dimitri Smirnov and Vladislav Shoot (Artists-in-Residence at Dartington) Orlando Gough and Sir Harrison Birtwistle. It is an extraordinary list, and composition continues as a major theme, within the Summer School, Dartington Plus and the College of Arts.

If two other musical contributions stand out, among many, they would be the influence Dartington has had on conducting and on the development of the string quartet and string ensemble playing.

The Summer School, in particular, has been critical in the development of conducting and conductors, giving them opportunities to work, in a safe and supportive place, with other conductors and musicians of the highest quality. Key among those who developed the teaching of conducting at Dartington was George Malcolm, and others who taught, took classes or developed their own work include Daniel Barenboim, Robert Craft, Ivor Bolton, Simon Rattle, Scott Stroman and Diego Masson.

Dartington has an inerasable place in the modern history of the quartet because it was, in 1947, the place where the members of the Amadeus Quartet met, where the quartet was formed and where it prepared its first London concert. With some of them still under the shadow of their wartime internment, Martin Lovett, Norbet Brainin, Sigmund Nissel and Peter Schidlof created the quartet that was to define the genre for two generations' was considered the last inheritor of the great Viennese quartet tradition, and continued to perform for forty years until the death of Peter Schidlof in 1987. Their influence at Dartington was considerable, but their influence in their field was incalculable.

Great quartets have succeeded one another at Dartington, each having their time. They have included the Kreutzer, the Lindsay, The Brodsky, the Duke and Dartington's own quartet, the Dartington Quartet, which had some years of national prominence. The Dartington Trio survives and performs to this day.

The soloists and instrumentalists who have worked and performed at Dartington are too numerous to list. A sprinkling of names will suffice. With Benjamin Britten was Peter Pears, but other singers include April Cantelo, Emma Kirkby as a soloist and with Anthony Rooley and The Consort of Music, the young Katerina Karneus, who then won the 'Singer of the World' at Cardiff in the following year, Evelyn Tubb, Mary Wiegold, Julie Driscoll, Benjamin Luxton and many more. In earlier years names included Paul Robeson, Hans Oppenheim, Ivor Newton and Viola Mitchell.

Pianists who were significant in their contribution at Dartington include Artur Rubinstein, Clifford Curzon, John Lill, Stephen Kovacevich, Joanna MacGregor and jazz pianist Keith Tippett. As well as Dartington's fine modern concert grand in the Great Hall, and a number of other good pianos in studios, the Trust still has its old concert Steinway, bought by the Elmhursts from Paderewski, then Prime Minister of Poland, who had acquired it from Rachmaninov, who toured with it. It has been restored and is much loved by generations of concert pianists.

There are almost too many other soloists of note to mention. They include the guitarist Julian Bream, harpsichordist Colin Booth, Piers Adams, often regarded as the greatest recorder player of modern times, trombonist and creator of the 'Bone lab' training scheme Roger Argente, organist David Titterton, violinists including Ruggiero Ricci and cellists including Jacqueline Du Pre, who gave her first concert at Dartington, before her famous Wigmore Hall London debut.

Dartington's long interest in the East has always been represented. For a number of years Ravi Shankar was a regular visitor and performer, and made a welcome return in 2004. Other artists from other traditions included Iwomoto Yoshikazu from Japan, Imrat Khan and Uday Shan-Kar.

There have been many other musical specialists who deserve mention. Thomas Hemsley has contributed hugely to opera development by his work at Dartington each year. Early music has flourished with teaching from the Consort of Music, the Rose Consort and the Dufay Collective. Ensemble playing has varied from Kokoro and Ensemble Bash to the regular visits of the plainsong ensemble Schola Hungarica from Budapest, led by Laszlo Dobszay.

Keith Tippett, internationally famous for his jazz improvisation work, has taught regularly each summer, as has fellow jazz musician Lewis Riley. Paul Oliver, a seminal figure in his field whose books and writing on the blues enabled it to reach a new audience, worked for many years at Dartington College of Arts. Also at the

College of Arts, David Ward was a key pioneer in developing the use of music for those with learning difficulties

The Summer School's artistic direction has been a key to the development of Dartington's music in modern times. It has been in remarkable hands, including those of John Amis and William Glock who directed it for a quarter of a century (while, remarkably, Glock was running the Proms in London, from Dartington, at the same time) Peter Maxwell Davies and currently Gavin Henderson.

The Artists and Sculptors

As with musicians, so with artists; - well, that is true up to a point, but there are differences. Dartington has attracted and supported some remarkable and unusual talents in the visual arts; it has commissioned and collected significant works; it remains a place where the visual arts are shown and celebrated. However, the decision of the College of Arts in the late 1980s to give up the teaching of the conventional visual arts, and the lack of any equivalent of the Summer School to sustain an impetus of engagement has meant that there have been fewer names of note in recent years – something for which the Fellowship Programme could restore the balance.

It must also be observed that those who were central to Dartington's engagement with the visual arts, those who came and stayed, taught and worked, were figures who stood at a tangent to the modernist mainstream of the twentieth century. The more famous names came too, but their involvement was briefer and less deep. Tagore came first, and the Trust still possesses a collection of his paintings and drawings. In the 1930's (from 1931 to 1938) Mark Tobey, the American painter, taught and worked at Dartington and had a studio in the Upper Gatehouse. He greatly shaped the visual arts at Dartington and developed a close friendship with Bernard Leach who was teaching pottery at Dartington at the same time. Tobey was always interested in the arts of the middle and Far East and having converted to the B'ahai faith, encouraged Leach also to become a convert. While this did not take root at Dartington, it confirmed and continued a tradition of interest in the East, and in a spiritual underpinning to life, at odds with the dominant and growing secular scientific materialism of the twentieth century. The tension between those two world-views, the spiritual and the material, was evident at Dartington from its inception. Leonard was a practical man of science and a modernist who was nevertheless a disciple of the more spiritual Tagore. Dorothy was a pragmatic, modern, American woman who disliked religion, but who kept diaries of private prayers. That creative tension, evident in the founders and in the institution they founded even to the present day, was also manifest in those whom they invited and the work they produced.

In the 1940s the artist who made the greatest impact at Dartington was Cecil Collins, who taught painting, lived in the East Wing of the Courtyard with his artist wife Elizabeth, and had a small studio in the rooms behind the Barn Theatre, which now house Dartington Arts. Collins epitomised Dartington's stance in the visual arts. He is, increasingly, seen as a significant figure. However, he was for long considered more marginal. His obsession with the spiritual value and role of art, of its place within an integrated, 'Blakeian' worldview in which the sacred is seen as permeating the everyday, made him an outsider against the ascendancy of modernism. Nevertheless, his place now seems assured, and the Trust has one of the most significant collections of his works.

A contemporary of Collins who also taught at Dartington for some years was the sculptor Willi Soukop. As well as being a prominent sculptor in his own right, and widely commissioned, Soukop was a great teacher. After his Dartington years, his pupils at the Chelsea School of Art included Elizabeth Frink. Soukop became a respected figure, and was made a Royal Academician in 1969. He gave Dartington some of its most loved features; - the sculptures of entwined swans and the bronze donkey in the gardens.

In the 1930s Dartington opened its doors to refugees from the growing Nazi terror in Europe. Among them was the artist Hein Heckroth, who, in 1935, fled to England and to Dartington, where he was employed to teach, having already developed an association with the Kurt Joos dance company, which also fled to Dartington, and for whom he designed a number of ballets over two decades. Heckroth went on, after a period of internment, to become one of the most influential film designers of his time, designing films for Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger, including 'Black Narcissus' and 'Red Shoes' for which he won an Oscar.

Dartington's intermittent engagement with the 'landmark' art figures of the twentieth century is reflected in the Trust's collection. As well as the works of Tagore, Tobey, Collins and Soukop there are major works by other visitors and habitués. These include Christopher Wood, Alfred Wallis, Winifred Nicholson, Ben Nicholson, Barbara Hepworth, John Skeaping (Hepworth's first husband), Clifford and Rosemary Ellis and Henry Moore. It was Moore who created what is, perhaps, Dartington's greatest work of art, the stone reclining figure of a woman in the gardens, carefully placed in that position by the sculptor, as a memorial to Christopher Martin, the first Arts manager at Dartington. However, the links with Moore were deeper than this. The Elmhirst's son-in-law, Maurice Ash, who was a long-term Trustee of Dartington, a patron of the arts and friend of Moore's, was for many years also a Trustee of the Henry Moore Foundation.

In more modern times, there are fewer names, but the tradition continued. The Trust's involvement with composer John Cage and the dancer Merce Cunningham brought their Black Mountain College colleague, the artist Robert Rauschenberg, to visit Dartington.

The recent past may have seen fewer visual artists at Dartington but there are some whose presence and work should be noted. The English painter Cyril Reason lived and worked at Dartington for a year as Artist-in-Residence. Andy Goldsworthy, the celebrated landscape and environmental artist, has taught at Schumacher College. Tom Phillips had an exhibition, and Indian artist Ansuman Biswas has had a residency and taught at Dartington, as has installation artist Ruth Novaczek. More recently still, sculptor Peter Randall-Page has been commissioned, as a result of a generous gift, to create a major work of sculpture for the gardens - the first since the Henry Moore.

Pottery and Crafts

For many, one of the best-known faces of Dartington is as one of the first centres of studio pottery in Britain, and indeed in the Western world, and as major centre of the other crafts. Paradoxical as ever, Dartington embraced and encouraged the 'arts and crafts' movement as enthusiastically as it adopted internationalist modernism, despite the fact these two movements were often seen as in some opposition.

In pottery, Dartington is always associated with the name of Bernard Leach. After a childhood and early life in the East Leach, who had already met the great Japanese potter Shoji Hamada, set up his pottery at St Ives in the early 1920s. However, in 1927, at the invitation of the Elmhirsts, he created a new pottery at Dartington, where he taught at the School and ran classes for adults. The Elmhirsts also paid for Leach and Tobey to travel to Japan to study Japanese pottery and other arts, and to bring Hamada to Dartington.

Leach's contribution to pottery, throughout his years at Dartington and St Ives, is incalculable. By his teaching, writing and, above all, by the example of his work, he created a new tradition, whereby the craftsman potter was seen as an artist-maker. He inspired generations of other potters, many of whom came to have strong Dartington connections, including Lucie Rie, Sam Hale, Marianne de Trey, and Edmund de Waal.

As well as supporting Leach financially, the Elmhirsts added to that support by the generous commissioning of pots. Thus the Trust still has a major collection, not only of what is perhaps the largest collection anywhere of Leach's own work, but also with major works by Hamada and others.

In 1952 the Trust organised a major international conference for 'Craftsmen in Pottery and Textiles' accompanied by a major exhibition. It lasted almost two weeks, and brought to Dartington crafts people from all over the world, including post-war Japan. The exhibition subsequently travelled around to the major cities in Britain. It and the Conference changed the landscape for crafts. It was a defining moment when the value of the crafts was both re-asserted and recognised after the rather bleak post-war years. From it can be traced the origins of the Crafts Council; - just as Dartington had also created a Regional Arts body for the South West, which became the predecessor of the others throughout Britain. Its proceedings have been translated into a number of languages, including Japanese.

The other crafts have continued at Dartington, have attracted key people and good work. The fine banners in the Great Hall were commissioned from Elizabeth Peacock, and depicted, symbolically, the Estate activities at that time. Bobbie Cox, wife of College of Arts Principal Peter Cox, became a distinguished and widely

commissioned weaver. Jane Fox Strangways created ceramics, and her tiles and other work decorate many houses on the Estate. Sue Bosence, who died in 1996, taught at Dartington for many years, as well as at Camberwell, and had a tremendous reputation and influence as a craftswoman and teacher. Her printed and dyed textiles may be seen not only at Dartington but also in the Victoria and Albert Museum and at the Crafts Council gallery. The work continues. Dartington still has an active craft education centre where, among others, Michael Honor teaches printmaking and Mary Bartlett bookbinding.

Theatre, Dance and Film

In 1935, Dorothy's daughter, the actress Beatrice Straight (who, much, later won an Oscar for her performance in *Network*) cabled her mother excitedly from New York to say that she had found just the person to establish a theatre school at Dartington. She had seen a powerful production by a Russian company of Gogol's 'The Inspector General', with Michael Chekhov in a leading role. Chekhov it was to be.

Michael Chekhov, nephew of the playwright Anton Chekhov, was a member of the First Studio established by Stanislavsky in Moscow in 1911, and in 1923 he became the director of the Second Moscow Art Theatre. Although he studied under Stanislavsky, he veered away from Stanislavsky's teaching, rejecting its analytical approach. In 1928 Chekhov fled Russia. After time spent on the Continent, he went to America in 1935, and then to Dartington, where he developed the Chekhov Theatre Studio, and worked for the next six years.

Chekhov was a huge influence on Dorothy, on the arts at Dartington, and, above all, on the acting profession. Yul Brynner came to Dartington to study under him. Earlier, in Europe, Ingrid Bergman had been one of his students and, later, in Hollywood, his students included Gregory Peck, Anthony Quinn, Jack Palance and Patricia Neale. Perhaps most famously, another of his pupils, Marilyn Monroe, wrote "...As Michael's pupil I learnt more than acting... with Michael Chekhov acting became more than a profession to me. It became a sort of religion."

In America, Chekhov also acted. He was nominated for an Oscar for his role opposite Ingrid Bergman in Alfred Hitchcock's 'Spellbound'.

Chekhov was not alone in finding a sympathetic home and support for his work at Dartington. Kurt Joos and Sigurd Leeder were invited to bring their Dance School from Essen to Dartington to escape Nazi persecution, and the whole company of the Ballet Joos followed. They were housed at Dartington, and a dance school and studios were built for them. The designer to the Joos Ballet, Hein Heckroth, has already been mentioned, and an extraordinary creative ensemble was thus created. Sadly, war brought it to an end, as the members left for America to avoid internment, but not before Rudolf Laban had come to Dartington, as the guest of the Elmhirsts, to work with Joos and Leder. He was to make a unique contribution to dance in Britain, and the Laban Centre in London, now in a new award-winning building, flourishes still. It has received substantial and generous support from the founders' son, William Elmhirst.

The Elmhirst's own interests in theatre were not confined even to these activities. They also brought to Dartington Louise Soelberg, the dancer, the theatre director Ellen van Volkenburg, and Maurice Browne, the theatre producer, whom the Elmhirsts' backed to produce the play 'Journey's End, by R. C. Sheriff in London – by buying a West End theatre in which it could be performed, other support not having being found. It proved a profitable investment. That was an unexpected, and unusual, bonus.

In dance, they brought Uday Shankar and his troupe from Calcutta, Merce Cunningham from the USA, and Margaret Barr, as Director of the School of Dance Mime, and who created many works at Dartington, many with original music composed for her by Edmund Rubbra. She later went on to become a key founder of modern dance in Australia. Frederick Ashton, founding choreographer of the Royal Ballet, visited and stayed at Dartington with dancer Margot Fonteyn and composers Constant Lambert and Benjamin Britten.

In more recent years the distinctive theatre work has continued but, inevitably, not with the breathtaking confidence and resources of the pre-war years. Collete King, the much-loved former Director of Theatre at the College of Arts, brought to Dartington the highly influential dancer and dance teacher Mary Fulkerson.

Dartington is not usually thought of in relation to film, but it had a pioneering film unit and many of the early Estate businesses and activities were recorded in film that now provides rare and vital archival material. It

also had a student film unit, created by an ex-student of the school, Richard Leacock, who went on to become a major documentary film-maker, essayist and writer of film theory. Later, the screen-writing workshops held at the Hall for a number of years attracted many who are now prominent in the industry.

Architects, Designers and Makers of Gardens

As the Elmhirsts set about rebuilding and extending the Dartington estate and its property for their great experiment, so they employed architects and designers. In addition, more came, as refugees, or drawn by the creative energy of the place and its people.

The architects who were engaged reveal much of that paradoxical nature to which reference has been made. The international modernist architect William Lescaze designed the many modernist buildings for which the Estate is so well known, and which stand close to the medieval Hall. However, at the same time, the Elmhirsts were having Arts and Crafts movement institutional buildings and houses built, designed by Oswald Milne and others, cheek by jowl with the new modernist structures. They saw no contradiction in creating something that stands as an extraordinary architectural experiment, almost a playground of styles. William Weir, from that same craft tradition, led the restoration of the Hall itself.

The remarkable gardens, which are for many visitors the greatest joy of Dartington, were shaped into the existing landscape and planted by Beatrix Farrand, working with her friend, Dorothy Elmhirst. Farrand did little other work in Britain. She was an American, and leaves the gardens of Dunbarton Oaks and Harvard University as part of her legacy. Percy Cane and Avery Tipping did further work on the Dartington gardens. One of the more modern additions is the Japanese garden, which is one of very few in Britain and was designed by Phillip Booth.

As well as those architects and designers who came because of commissions to work, as with the other arts, some came to seek refuge. Most notably Walter Gropius, founder of the Bauhaus, fled to Dartington from Breslau, and was followed by Maholy Nagy. Before Gropius left again to go to the USA – a standard route for Dartington's refugees – he designed some elements for the refurbishment of the Barn Theatre, which remain the only examples of his work in Britain. In addition, he left the Trust with a series of drawings for the reshaping of the garden into a clean, Bauhaus design. These are beautifully executed and fascinating in their ideas. However, it may be a mercy that no attempt was made to implement them.

Writers, Poets, Philosophers, Social Innovators and Thinkers of the Unthinkable

Writing of Dartington in the early 1930s, the (then) famous writer and thinker Gerald Heard, a friend of the Huxleys and of H. G. Wells, and a regular visitor, wrote "Dartington is striving to build up a complete, purposive, fully conscious social organism, a thing which has never existed before." Such a lofty ambition required a full complement of writers and thinkers not only to write about it, but also to fuel its progress and sustain its impetus.

Many thinkers were invited to talk and lecture, and some came repeatedly. In the early years these included George Bernard Shaw, Bertrand Russell, (The Russell children were at the School) the Huxleys (Aldous and Julian), the publisher Victor Gollanz, Nobel Prize winner Norman Angel, Lionel Curtis, R. H. Tawney, Ellen Wilkinson and many more. In-house, the school's first headmaster, Bill Curry, was a significant contributor to educational theory and practice. Ernest Shackleton visited only briefly, but T. E. Lawrence, 'Lawrence of Arabia', came to tea regularly from Dorset on his motorcycle – the same 'Brough Superior' on which he had his fatal accident. Bronislaw Malinowski lectured on social theory and Kingsley Martin on the worsening political situation in Europe. A few years later, as war loomed, the military historian Basil Liddell-Hart - one of the greatest historians of the First World War - came to give a number of lectures and outlined his theory that, in the coming war, the Germans would invade near Torquay and sweep up through Devon. Sadly, but perhaps not surprisingly, a number of Dartington's distinguished artistic refugees packed their bags for the USA shortly thereafter.

The list of those involved was, as ever, international. Tagore has been mentioned, but little attention has been given to the links between Dartington and China, which brought to Dartington the Chinese poet Xu Zhimo ('the Chinese Shelley'), the translator of Chinese literature and poet Arthur Waley, and other leading modernist Chinese writers and intellectuals. It has only recently come to light that Leonard planned to create

a college in China, to follow Tagore's in Bengal, but the plan was thwarted by the Japanese incursions into China.

In more recent years, Dartington was home and workplace to Michael Dower, a member of the Trevelyan family and now a leading academic and writer about the countryside and rural affairs. Other visitors and regulars have included the psychologists R. D. Laing, James Hillman, Thomas Moore and Anthony Stevens.

Schumacher College has brought many important thinkers to teach at Dartington, including the creator of Gaia theory, James Lovelock, scientists Rupert Sheldrake and Fritjof Capra, who has written in glowing terms of his repeated visits, environmentalists Hazel Henderson, Amory Lovins, Jonathan Porritt, Helena Norberg-Hodge, Paul Hawken and Reith Lecturer Vandana Shiva. In an earlier generation, David Lack, living and working at Dartington, had written his classic book on the life of the Robin, based upon the birds he observed around the Foxhole site. It has become a classic and is still in print. Satish Kumar, the writer, environmentalist and activist, is the Director of Programmes at the College.

Among creative writers, Sean O'Casey came and lived at Dartington and in Totnes. He was active in the Dartington community, but developed a considerable dislike of Michael Chekhov, of whom he wrote in virulent terms. W. H. Auden came, and was considered for a job, but was turned down because Dorothy was concerned about his "personal habits"-there was alleged to have been an unfortunate incident in the gardens. More successfully, more recent poets and writers include Alice Oswald, a winner of the prestigious T S Eliot prize for poetry, and her husband playwright Peter Oswald, who live on the Estate with their family.

In the past decade the list of writers who have attended, spoken and given workshops at the annual Ways With Words literary festival is simply too great to allow individual mention. Despite the fact that their attendances are usually brief, and that for them Dartington is a venue rather than a place of work, it has, nevertheless become a fixed feast in the literary and publishing year. It has a loyal following among writers and audiences, and is widely reported. Again, for many in that world there is an assumption that this is the main activity at Dartington – which indeed it is for an intense and glorious ten days every summer. However, as soon as it is over, the Summer School moves in.

Among the strands of thought and work encouraged and developed at Dartington, special note should be made of its role in child protection and the studies which have helped create policy in this field. More than thirty years ago, a unit devoted to this work left King's College Cambridge to move to Dartington, where it remains. Royston Lambert and Spencer Milham led it then, with input from Peter Townsend and others. In more recent years Roger Bullock and Roy Parker have led it as it has moved into more international work while, in the UK, having a key role in the drafting of the current Childrens' Act.

Michael Young- a Dartington life

Finally, something must be said of Michael Young, (1915-2002) Lord Young of Dartington.

If any life exemplifies some of the virtues of Dartington, its willingness to innovate, to cross boundaries, to initiate and support action for the common good, then it is that of Michael Young. Having being brought to Dartington as a boy, and virtually adopted by the Elmhirsts, he went on to have a remarkable and highly creative career in public life. This included drafting the radical Labour manifesto of 1945 (the Labour hierarchy met, of course, at Dartington), writing major works including (with Peter Wilmot) 'Family and Kinship in East London', 'The Rise of the Meritocracy' and 'The Elmhirsts of Dartington'. He created the Consumers' Association and 'Which' magazine, advised Prime Minister Harold Wilson on the creation of The Open University, where he is remembered as its founder, created the Institute for Community Studies, the School for Social Entrepreneurs and much more. Yet Michael Young never lost touch with Dartington. He returned very frequently throughout his long life, was a Trustee for many years, built a house there, and it remained a vital source of energy and inspiration for him, as it has done for so many others, and can do still.

Ivor Stollidayay 2004

<http://www.dartington.org/>