

Welcome to the RSA Fellowship newsletter - 21 September 2009

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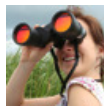


Join us for the biggest celebration of the year!

In honour of the **255th Annual General Meeting**, we invite Fellows to visit the House on **Wednesday, 7 October 2009** when the RSA will be alive with activity, including a series of open sessions delivered by our Projects teams!

To coincide with activities taking place across the world, a number of exciting programs will be held inside the house throughout the day; including the launch of a Fellowship exhibition. The exhibition will represent a contemporary interpretation of our past, the present, and the future of Fellowship. The day will also feature the first meeting of the new **Fellowship Council**, as well as the **Chair's Inaugural Lecture** where RSA Chairman, **Luke Johnson**, will deliver his lecture on "The Importance of Invention".

[See the full itinerary and register your interest!](#)



Looking ahead to 2010

As well as preparing events in honour of the **AGM** and first meeting of the **Fellowship Council**, the month of September has also seen a number of regional AGMs held across the UK. Not only have these have been opportunities to welcome new Fellows and Committee Members, but they have also provided a timely forum for discussion centred on the future of the Fellowship and how we can strengthen and promote FRSA activities as we look forward into 2010. To get involved and find out what's happening in your region, visit the [regional web pages](#). Don't forget that the **Fellowship team** is on hand to answer any queries you have about how to get involved as well as to give advice on setting up local networks.



The Fellowship unites to mark the occasion

In recognition of the diversity and scale of the Fellowship, during **3-10 October**, Fellows will be marking the **255th AGM** in their own unique ways. A wide array of events have been scheduled that will allow Fellows to celebrate this historical moment, and reflect on contemporary challenges and our shared vision; *the promotion of new ways of thinking about human fulfilment and social progress*. For a brief taster of what's happening throughout the week of the RSA AGM, [read more](#).



Youth Engagement at the RSA: A new chance for Fellows to get involved

The RSA continues to have a major role in the design and implementation of programmes for young people, but much of what we have achieved in terms of youth engagement so far has been more 'top down'.

In an effort to change this, the creation within the Fellowship department of a Youth and Young Persons function will help Fellows who want to engage make better use of the skills and interests of the Fellowship. The aim is also to develop areas where the RSA might further engage with young people. To find out how you can help, [read more](#).



Fellow's Profile - David Dickinson

David Dickinson is due to start as a member of the **Fellowship Council** on **7 October**. He talks here about his hopes for the RSA and his FRSA experience so far:

I suppose that using the modern idiom, I would be described as a

South

Are you missing out?

Join the [South Central](#) online space or [South East](#) online space now!

For further information about activities in the South East and South Central region please contact [Olivia Rainford](#).

RSA

The next RSA event to be live streamed is [Cities and Citizenship: Surviving the 21st Century](#) tonight, **21 September** at 18.30. Please see [our website](#) for further event information.

Don't forget that if you cannot attend, you can always [listen live](#) to events. Alternatively, you can subscribe to our [podcast](#) for past events and watch filmed events on [RSA Vision](#).

North

You can find details of the **Durham and Newcastle Encounter** on the Events section of the [Virtual Coffeeshouse site](#). These are free informal gatherings to meet, exchange ideas and chat with other Fellows, their friends and colleagues in the local area.

For further details about the region please contact [Judith Friedman](#).

East

There are now bi-monthly events in Cambridge and Norwich and monthly meetings in Chelmsford to discuss local projects. Please contact [Clare Reilly](#) or [Gladys Jones](#) with questions about any of these events.

Wales/West

For activities in the region please contact [Chris Luffingham](#) or see [here](#) for more events and contacts in the area.

to suppose that using the metaphor, I would be accused as a portfolio worker. My area of interest is human-capacity building (not just constituent parts such as learning, employability, health; but the way they each interrelate). With clients in the private sector, local government and higher education, I am director of a couple of companies and, because I believe corporate social responsibility should be a part of business practice rather than a bolt-on, I also work with charitable trusts and keep my hand in as a visiting lecturer on a university MA programme.

My first exposure to RSA was through the Education for Capability programme and Charles Handy's 1987 inaugural lecture addressing education for discontinuous change. I suspect that I first became a Fellow for the same reason as most people - self interest. Then with time and growing confidence, one arrives at the JFK moment, ask not what the RSA can do for you but what you can do for (and by using) the RSA. I am only just beginning to understand the potential role for the RSA in local and regional development. It could be pivotal, it's certainly exciting and has transformed my rationale for Fellowship.

I want to play my part in connecting the RSA into local initiatives across the region. Many people with whom I come into contact view the RSA as a "learned body", a credible commentator on societal and aesthetic matters, occasionally proposing a "grand project." Of course this perception represents only one facet of the RSA I know. Programmes like the **RSA Academy** in Tipton have dramatically signalled a state of change. I'm keen to do what I can to follow this lead locally, assisting Fellows in the regions to leverage their interests and energies. This is as much about connecting the RSA with formative and extant projects as finding a home and indeed funding for a new RSA project.

A year on, £145bn down and still counting (and with no real metric to gauge the human cost) I am dismayed by the unrepentant hubris evident in a systemically dysfunctional financial sector. I find talk about how soon it will be "business as usual" depressing. I would still like to see a serious rethink about the societal role of the financial system, ideally aligned to the rethink about broader issues of sustainability and service.

I recently met one of the team involved in the RiverSimple hydrogen powered car. To me, everything about this programme is inspirational, an holistic treatment embracing the sustainability agenda in the broadest way and fundamentally challenging the traditional value chain: when the car is launched it will be available only on lease and not for sale. It must have been so tempting to use the same-old same-old high tech product launch.

There are so many interesting Fellows I have met, but let me tell you about Stephen, one of the mainstays of the **Manchester Network**. Stephen contributes to and draws from the Fellowship and its network in equal measure. He set up and manages the social networking sites we use and for the more adventurous Fellows, he has developed a virtual meeting centre on SecondLife. He joined the Fellowship in 2002 when he won an RSA-managed product design prize. Stephen is also a portfolio worker, doing a bit of university lecturing alongside more speculative ventures. Just recently he enrolled with Lancaster University on a Ph.D. programme. He is quick to acknowledge the influence of the RSA and the **Manchester Network** in his life.

[On connecting with another Fellow] I am delighted with the use of the word "connect" here. I believe that a sense of connection is absolutely what we are about. We have a strong region with a large number of active Fellows and a committed organising team. Many of them share my view that we want to "walk the talk" in the North West with the RSA brand being associated favourably by people whose lives are being improved by RSA initiatives. A good example, now embedded in a number of schools across the north west, is the **RSA Opening Minds curriculum** (locally known as the **Manchester Curriculum**). We want to see more of the same, more connections, more positive and transformational outcomes.

[On being asked what he would like to get from the Fellowship] I would like to extend the answer to this question to include what I would like from RSA staff. We owe a great deal to the energy and enthusiasm of **Vivs Long-Ferguson** in supporting the team here in the Northwest to catalyse the network. I would like to lobby for more support: help with National Lottery bids and assistance with bringing RSA branding and resources to outstanding local projects for example. There is a whole piece of work to do on identifying or initiating such beacon projects, the Fellowship in its broadest sense (RSA staff, Fellowship and Council) is a superb resource pool to do this.

Scotland

The City network in **Edinburgh** will take place as usual on the last Thursday of the month which falls on **Thursday 24 September**. Please come and join us from 17.00 at **Le Monde**, 16 George Street.

The quarterly newsletter for the Scotland region has just been published. For a detailed summary of events and projects taking place please [view the newsletter](#) on the Scotland regional pages.

Please email [Judith Friedman](#) if you would like to attend or with any queries about regional activities.

International

USA

Following the whistlestop tour of **Chicago, Chattanooga, Washington DC, Boston, New York** and **San Francisco** Belinda writes, "*Michael, Lynn and I have had a great trip. Fellowship numbers are not huge in the USA, but Fellows themselves are extremely impressive. There seems to be something in the water here that means people turn great ideas into great impact - there is an emphasis on innovation, on community partnerships, on civic leadership and personal responsibility. We have met a lot of people that we can learn from.*" But what next?

Full reports will follow. Keep the ideas coming and we'll post them on the **American Coffee House** for reaction, comment and collaboration. Let's find ways to join up some of the thinking and to connect individuals and communities locally and globally for the best possible outcome.

Please contact [Lynn Broadbent](#), for further information.

Australia

RSA Australia and New Zealand are establishing several new City Networks; the next of these meetings is in Melbourne on **Wednesday 30 September** and Michael Devlin, Head of Fellowship Networks, RSA will be attending. For more details please see the **A&NZ web pages**. For more information on any activities in Australia or New Zealand please contact [Leigh-Ann Shannon](#).

Singapore

Local Fellows are invited to

If you know any inspiring Fellows who would be suitable for a profile please [contact us](#) and let us know their name and details.



Who to contact at the RSA

To find out exactly which staff member you should contact at the RSA please see the [contacts page](#) on the RSA website.

And finally...

We hope you enjoyed this issue of the newsletter. We want this to work for you so please let us know your thoughts about the content and format.

Nominate a Fellow

Fellows are passionate about joining forces to achieve positive change. Do you know more like minded people – optimistic, innovative and engaged – who can help us build a better society together? Please [nominate them](#) to join! You will need to log-in and have your membership number handy to complete the form.

Any news?

Communicating the activities of the Fellowship is the first step to creating the Fellowship network. As an RSA Fellow if there is anything you are doing in your area which other Fellows should know about and can get involved in, [please contact us](#).

We will only include items which relate to the goals of the RSA, where Fellows can get actively involved. Any decisions will be at the editor's discretion.

You have received this email as a Fellow of the RSA.
[Unsubscribe](#) from the Fellowship Newsletter.

an informal City network on **Friday 25 September** with Michael Devlin Head of Fellowship Networks and other Fellows of the RSA in Singapore to hear about the work of the RSA.

The meeting starts at 18.30 and is being held at the Divine Club, Parkview Square, 600 North Bridge Road, Singapore 188778. The venue is close to Bugis Junction and your hosts will be Professor Ken Chang and Dr. Jonathan H Robbins FRSA. Please confirm your attendance by [emailing Jonathan](#).

Ireland

The RSA networking events in Dublin, Republic of Ireland are organised by [Marion Witton FRSA](#) and take place at El Bahia, 37 Wicklow Street, Dublin 2. The participants in the recently formed Republic of Ireland RSA group enrich the conversations from their diverse backgrounds and expertise.

Dublin Fellows meet the first Tuesday of each month at 18.45. The next meeting will be on **Tuesday 6 October**. Should you wish to join in please contact [Marion](#) to indicate your interest.