

Happy Memories! – CLS revisited.....

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CLS 1996-1998 cohort

On this occasion of the 10th Anniversary of the Centre for Leadership Studies, I managed to contact some of the founder members of the Centre to ask them for some recollections of those early days. Here are their responses:

From John Adair, Founder member - "The Centre for Leadership Studies could not have come into being without the complementary teamwork of Sir Geoffrey as Vice Chancellor, Alan Hooper as the first Director and myself. Collectively we were the senior founding members – there were junior ones too.

May I add, that as a partnership, it was one of the happiest and most fruitful ones in my entire career"

Moving Day – from Sue Murch, CLS Graduate Studies Co-ordinator

"The big day had arrived, four of us staff members of the Centre for Management Studies were leaving to set up the new Centre for Leadership Studies based in a suite (well corridor) of offices at Crossmead Conference Centre on the other side of the city. This was the culmination of a very busy period of organising the accommodation, ordering furniture and equipment, informing everyone of the opening of the new Centre and all the other frantic activity that goes with setting up a new venture.

I arrived for my last day at the Management Centre with mixed feelings – excitement at the new venture ahead, and sadness that I would be leaving my colleagues, some of whom I had spent the last ten years working with. I imagined fond farewells, with perhaps a discreet dabbing of a hankie or two and messages of good luck and support. I put the final few items into boxes, waved off the removal men, and the four of us were ready to embark on the big farewell. But, where was everyone? A search of the building revealed all the staff but two gathered under a small glass atrium in the inner hallway. The remaining two staff were stretched in a very precarious manner across the glass panelling beneath which was a 15ft drop into the hallway below. Surely our departure hadn't affected them this badly. No, the cause of this concern was a cat which was lodged in a piece of guttering in the centre of the glass roof meowing pitifully. Now I know we Brits are a nation of animal lovers, but the two lecturers who were risking life and limb were German and Russian. I mumbled a hasty, quiet, (so as not to frighten the cat) farewell and departed.

On arrival at Crossmead all was well. Our offices had been beautifully decorated, carpeted and curtained, the furniture had been delivered and so had all our shiny new IT equipment. We spent the morning unpacking and deciding on the best place for the filing cabinets and other items of furniture. By the afternoon all had been sorted out and we congratulated ourselves on the speed and efficiency with which we had organised everything. All that remained for me to do was to put all of my 500 or so files into the Filing Cabinets which were lined up in a narrow corridor next to my office. I printed tags for each drawer to maximise efficiency and ease of filing, and headed off with my first batch of files, only to discover 8 filing cabinets beautifully lined up with the drawers facing the wall! Alan Hooper made his first leadership decision as Director of the Centre and we all went home.

PS. The cat made its own way down from the roof, the lecturers may well still be up there”

From Di Ewing (CLS Secretary) – “I have very happy memories of those early days at CLS with Alan, Paul and Sue – being part of the team was great fun and the Crossmead cookies were an added bonus! I am still working at the University (Peninsula College of Medicine and Dentistry) and am always interested in reading news about the Centre. I wish continued success to everyone involved”

From Dennis Norman, Accountant – “The concept of introducing a Leadership Course within the University originated some fifteen years ago, when Mark Gifford-Gifford, the then Director of the recently established Centre for Management Studies, invited the retiring Commandant of the Marine Commando Training Centre at Lympstone, Colonel Alan Hooper (2 pips!) to join the Centre.

It was with some mixed feelings that the Centre’s staff awaited his arrival. Given his military background, would he be a strict disciplinarian expecting his students to undergo physical exercises daily before starting their lectures!!? Fortunately, although his Diploma Course did include a modest two-days practical exercise, Alan’s natural ability to communicate with all ‘ranks’ soon won him respect, not only within the Centre but throughout the University.

He therefore successfully launched a Diploma in Leadership Studies under his direct guidance, and also lectured on Leadership modules in the main MBA courses. The misgivings of some of the more senior lecturers at the university, that this Diploma did not contain sufficient ‘academic rigour’, were soon dispelled.

Following the merger of the centre for Management Studies with the Department of Economics in 1996/1997, Alan established, and became, Director of a Centre for Leadership Studies which introduced a Masters Degree in that discipline – I believe this was one of the first such independent Centre within a University – he had finally achieved his objective!!

Alan invited me to join him at the new Centre to look after its financial affairs. Its reputation has been further enhanced by moving into the designated part of a new building on the main Campus. Alan had previously retired as full-time Director, but continued as a part-time lecturer on Leadership Courses both within and outside the University – his reputation had spread!

We now celebrate the 10th anniversary of the formation of this Leadership Centre, and I wish its staff, headed by its new Director, Jonathan Gosling, every success in the future”

From Keith Bolden, Consultant – “It used to be customary for the students to have an end of year event which was usually a dinner and entertainment

arranged by them, and to which they invited the staff. The event which I remember was one where they decided to have an 'Oscar Ceremony' and present the senior staff with personal Oscars. Their presentation spiel was very clever and amusing. My citation was for 'Dr Keith who knows what we are thinking before we do!' relating to my MBTI work. Perhaps the others can remember theirs”

From Chief Constable Bob Quick, Surrey Police - “The Centre for Leadership Studies has established itself as a premier business leadership academy. I owe a lot of my achievement to what I learned there from lecturers and course participants”.

From Wing Commander Dan Archer – “ I am delighted to be able to congratulate CLS for their remarkable progress in such a short space of time. I have been associated with the Centre since 1998 when I started my MA, and consider myself fortunate when I was awarded a full-time Fellowship there in 2002-3. I was treated more like a staff member than a student and it was a time of change, as Alan Hooper stepped down as Director and Jonathan Gosling took over the reins. It has been a powerful combination that has taken the Centre to where it is today. Moreover, it has been a strong influence on my personal journey in the Leadership arena – I wish the Centre and all staff and past, present and future students alike, every success”

From Simon Hollington, Director Values Based Leadership Ltd –“ I undertook the Masters in Leadership from 1995-1998, so was one of the first cohorts to go through the Programme. The Programme coincided with a change in career, and it could not have come at a better time. The cohort was very much a team, socially as well as from a learning perspective, and I used the team as sounding boards as I moved into what was a new world for me. My thesis was on High Performance Teamwork – a theme I have used continuously in the work that I currently do. It provided the perfect foundation, and I am grateful that I had the opportunity that CLS provided”