



News and views from the School

Twice termly: Issue no 23



Greetings from **Johannesburg**, where we are meeting the South African students again. The School is located in a downtown area of the city. The School house and St James day school, across the road, are bright spots in the neighbourhood.

Back in London in January we will be offering **Introductory philosophy and economics free** (£10 admin charge). We're pleased to open our doors and welcome all comers, so please send along any friends and relations who might be interested.

The **Distance Learning programme**, operated from the New York School, is now offering 29 different classes to suit most time zones. Anyone anywhere can attend the School. Go to [DistanceLearning](#) to find out more and enrol.

Go to [Schoolinsight](#) for more articles, back issues and sign-up form. All good wishes,  
Christine Lambie, editor



**Ann Cadman, student in the North East, UK, was awarded an OBE in 2014 for work in the community. In 2003, she started The Source Academy to get people into work and also help businesses towards success. It was built adjacent to the Meadowhall Shopping Centre in Sheffield, taking advantage of its proximity to Meadowhall for training in retail.**

## Changing Thousands of Lives Ann Cadman, North East, UK

**First watch the 10-minute film about this exciting project: [Source10Years](#). Now read Ann's story . . .**

### The idea

The idea came from a simple understanding: great things can be accomplished if we work together for the wider community. As head of some of the Central Services and Human Resources at the Meadowhall shopping centre, I was constantly inundated with requests for support from local businesses, schools,

community colleges, and individuals. However these groups of people were not meeting or working with each other. I saw that by building a facility that could bring these parts of the puzzle together, employers could find employees and vice versa. It sounds simple but both parties required support to make that match. It was also a challenge to persuade everyone that this project would work.

The task was then to find funding. I was delighted when British Land, who had recently purchased Meadowhall Shopping Centre, bought into the vision for 'The Source Academy' - they didn't need much persuasion. They understood the need for large businesses to take responsibility and engage with the local community. They agreed to part-fund the development of the training centre in partnership with Sheffield City Council.

## Getting started

The building work started in 2002 and we opened in March 2003 with a fantastic opening ceremony. We had established a charitable trust with a steering group formed from prominent members of local community groups, schools, colleges and Job Centre Plus. British Land had agreed to underwrite our operations for 20 years, and everyone drifted home from the opening ceremony in incredibly high spirits. Yet in many ways it was quite a scary moment - I knew the hard work had only just begun.

## A holistic approach

We started slowly with 12 members of staff. We took a holistic approach to supporting every member of the local community who walked through our doors, many of whom were long-term unemployed with additional barriers to work such as homelessness, drug and alcohol addictions and low confidence and skills. I wanted to ensure that we looked after the 'whole person'.

We provided a free gymnasium, support with diet and general fitness, and a drop-in computer suite from which we taught basic IT skills and helped people search for work. We also started to work closely with businesses, matching people to jobs with some great results.

We had some incredible early success stories, such as Michelle, who had been unemployed for 5 years. She said: *"When I first started with The Source I had very little confidence. I was overweight, a single mum and my outlook on life was very grim. Thanks to The Source, and sheer determination on my part, I lost three stone (19 kg), received awards for computer studies and healthy living, and secured a fantastic job at Sheffield City Council. I feel that I am a better mum for my son, and a better person overall."* Looking back, it is these individual success stories which helped to keep us focused on our vision.

I believed all along that people DO want to work – we just get them started with the right advice and help. We recently had a young man who came for an interview. He arrived not having bathed and his clothes were dirty. After talking to him, we discovered he was living alone in a bedsit without any parental support. We gave him some advice, helped with interview skills and offered him some clothes for when he attended interviews. He came back to us the following day. He was clean and tidy and that day got a new job. I am told that he is extremely happy, and after 10 months he is still in the same job and enjoying it thoroughly. All he needed was some practical advice and to believe in himself. To see somebody jump for joy, getting a job after five years unemployment is just wonderful.

As we started to secure additional funding we began to co-ordinate vocational skills courses to help young people and adults gain qualifications in areas such as retail and business administration and warehousing. We started to work closely offering one-to-one support to help identify any barriers and limiting ideas people had which affected their confidence.

## Challenges

We also faced some massive challenges during this time, particularly from a financial perspective, and I will forever be grateful to the fantastic team who worked so hard to hit the targets. It took three years for us to break even and begin to pay our debts. My personal target of the Source becoming debt-free was achieved in the fifth year. The question *'What would a wise person do here?'* has been my constant companion and made a real difference when making decisions.

I also discovered the importance of regular meditation during this period. I can honestly say I don't think I would have survived without it; it helped me focus clearly on objectives during some tough times. More than anything though, I was driven by a desire to ensure that The Source helped as many people as possible.

## Apprenticeships

In 2004, we decided to invest in training apprentices, in order to meet the changing need of local communities and businesses. It was possibly the best decision we ever made. We started with just three tutors and a 'case-load' of exactly two apprentices in our first month! Our team now comprises over 30 members of staff, and we currently deliver qualifications to over 900 apprentices from 500 businesses. The creative approach to working alongside local businesses to develop exciting apprenticeships means we engage young people across the Sheffield City Region, and enthuse them about the joys of learning whilst working.

## Support to businesses

We offer a free recruitment service, and assistance to help businesses including bespoke support in developing business plans.

A lady from Rotherham decided to open a sweet shop and temperance bar (no alcoholic drinks), making and designing sweets. We helped her set up her shop which included materials from other shops that had closed, and have continued to support her. She has now taken on 6 apprentices and has just opened her second shop in Sheffield.

In partnership with Rotherham Council, we recently opened a shop called the Makers Emporium; it is an exciting new retail space showcasing a variety of products hand-made by local crafters, artists and designers. It is staffed by apprentices who are studying whilst also gaining great experience. Through our work on other projects we have supported over 2,000 businesses and created or safeguarded over 700 jobs.

## Anything is possible

My vision is to help people realize their full potential and have a better quality of life. I would like The Source to be a place where relationships and partnerships are built to help the whole community. From the study of philosophy I learnt that it was more to do with a holistic approach and needed to include health and wellbeing, developing skills and increasing confidence and self-esteem. We have also offered stillness exercises to some groups of students and staff.

I think our journey over the last decade demonstrates that absolutely anything is possible. And I am incredibly confident that, by staying true to our original principles, we can overcome every obstacle and continue to thrive, and help thousands more achieve their dreams.

Website at [TheSourceAcademy](http://TheSourceAcademy).

## Top Tips

### Items recommended by readers

1. **Tattvopadesha:** Now available in English translation for the first time, **The Teaching of Reality** is a work attributed to Shankara, the great proponent of Advaita philosophy. Translated by Warwick Jessup, senior student in London, this work is an extended commentary on the motto, 'Thou art that', in Sanskrit, tattvamasi. Anyone wishing to understand this statement needs to read this book! Order now. Go to [SESbookshop](http://SESbookshop) to order online.
2. **Just This Day:** Catch up with one event of [JTD](http://JTD) which took place on 26 November, gathering together people who value stillness and silence.



**3. Just for fun:** Japanese forest music. Go to [Japformusic](http://Japformusic)



## Sacred places: Ypres, WW1 Battlefields

**Ypres and the war cemeteries, immaculate and beautiful, are haunted by the sounds and ghosts of 1914-18. Dirk, senior student in Belgium, writes about this place, dedicated to memory of the Great War.** The photo shows Dirk, bottom left, in front of a ceremony at Menin Gate.

### Dirk Vandeputte, Belgium

*“Long live Belgium, long live civilisation,”* is what Pierre Pirene, 17, scratched in his school desk before he, like so many others, signed up for voluntary service. Germany asked if its army, the mightiest in the world, could have free passage through Belgium the next day. The answer the Belgian government decided on in one terrible sleepless night, was a unanimous ‘NO WAY THROUGH’. The whole of Belgium stood behind this decision. Sacrifice

was the inevitable consequence.

Four terrible, unbearable years later, soldiers went home and villages emptied to meet them. Villagers met their soldiers in silent veneration as if each was a being from a higher order.

In memory of the fallen, every evening at the going down of the sun, at 8 pm at Menin Gate, a bugler plays the Last Post. Ypres stands as witness and a symbol of this sacrifice; in 1928 a voluntary organization was established to mark this sacrifice every single day (only missing in WWII).

During recent decades more and more visitors from all over the world come to Ypres and its surroundings where every soldier from that world fought between 1914 and 1918, in the greatest war of all time.

I am deeply moved every time I attend the ceremony at Menin Gate; it takes place in a monument that remembers men and women, who gave their lives for me and all of us, now living in freedom thanks to them. The gratitude that comes from this makes me feel more human: I feel united with all mankind. So many

names to be remembered are chiselled in the wide arch of the Menin Gate.

The whole city of Ypres is full of places of remembrance; you meet them on a beautiful walk starting at the Menin Gate. There is the 'Clothhall' ('Lakenhalle'), a beautiful, huge market place of overpowering buildings, originally a trading place for cloth, now the hosting place for 'Flanders Fields Museum'. Around Ypres are the beautifully kept cemeteries – sacred places of memories. Even today, if a farmer or a roadworker comes across a bone or some other human remnant, a new burial ceremony is held with full military honours, utmost respect and reverence, even if the soldier is unknown.

And if you go and listen to the buglers, I guarantee you that you will be deeply moved!

**Watch this clip (advertisement) which captures one poignant episode of WWI. Go to [WWIChristmas](#)**



**Lily is the labrador puppy who lives with Donald Lambie, the leader of the School and his wife, the editor. Many people asked for more from Lily, so here she is again.**

## Letter from Lily

I'm a W1 Dog. For anyone who doesn't live in London, that's a very fashionable part of the city. Personally I prefer Hyde Park, but it's important to be seen outside great cafes too. You'd be surprised at how many people stop and talk to moi. I'm quite The Attraction; everyone loves to tell me about their dog. I only have one question: why don't I get those nice cakes???

A couple of weeks ago, I overheard my owners saying what a good dog I'm turning into. That's a serious allegation, so I got to work straight away. I've managed to chew up 3 of my beds; it doesn't take long. Actually, I'll tell you a secret – you only have to make a smallish hole in the bed and then the white fluffy stuffing can be easily pulled out all over the floor. Actually it looks quite good there, don't you think? Just relax – enjoy life, stop worrying about white fluff and small stuff. Happy Christmas.

**Love from Lily**

**The Dutch School's Gregorian choir 'Schola Cantorum Nomini Tuo' was founded in 1994, with male singers, all students of the Amsterdam School. The choir rehearses weekly, and gives concerts occasionally, including very popular concerts at Art in Action. Chris van Nimwegen (*left in photo*), student in Amsterdam and choir member since the beginning, writes about this unusual group.**



## Sung Stillness: 20 years of Gregorian Chant

### Chris van Nimwegen, Holland

Gregorian choir singing has to sound as if coming from one voice, which means that individual choir members have to give up their individual voices to merge fully into that one voice. This is attainable only through utmost focussed and fine attention to both words and melody. When merging is attained, unity arises and is experienced by the whole choir. Therefore Gregorian chant is a perfect exercise of focussing attention.

This was recognized by a few students of the Amsterdam School in 1994; it was one of the reasons to start the Gregorian choir. Preserving the sacred tradition and beauty of this “sung stillness” was another reason. Gregorian chant is the unaccompanied singing in unison of Latin bible texts set to music, mainly psalms. Roughly speaking it developed and flourished during the 8th and 9th century and for many centuries it has been handed down orally. We owe much to our first conductor, who was a professional singer and conductor of various Gregorian choirs. He also was a well-known authority and researcher in the field of Gregorian notation, teaching us how to read and interpret the earliest Gregorian music notations, the so-called neumes. He rehearsed an extended repertoire with us and nourished our love for Gregorian chant. The choir now consists of seven singers and a conductor. Throughout the year and irrespective of School terms we have our rehearsals on each Thursday evening. A few years ago we decided to memorize the songs we sing. This appeared to be a major step forward, because now all the attention is available for the singing itself including the direction of the conductor.

Choir members say: *“It is a strong experience of unity in which music sounds and feels like balm for the soul”, “It’s a direct way to sing to your still presence; doing this together is exciting and joyful, like a flight of geese in formation,” and “Not being a Roman catholic and without any religious education it amazes me that I am experiencing so much joy and satisfaction in singing Gregorian chant”.*

In the Dutch School we contribute to Christmas and Easter celebrations. This year, on the occasion of our 20th anniversary, we are giving a concert tour to all 8 Dutch School branches. Since 2008 we have given concerts during Art in Action in the lovely ancient church next to Waterperry House, St Mary the Virgin. Art in Action is a good barometer for the interest in Gregorian chant. Visitors do not primarily come to this magnificent show to listen to our music. Yet, almost always the church is full, and often we have to add chairs to give everyone a seat. During the concert one can feel the stilling and uplifting effect. Afterwards people leave the church very silently. The most touching reaction from this year’s event came from an elderly man saying: *‘There is something in your music that makes me believe again.’*

## Reader Feedback



*Thank you for the latest Newsletter Issue No. 22. It is so inspiring to read of the many beneficial outcomes that the teachings we receive have prompted. There is something so freeing when work is undertaken out of pure love and with no thought or expectation of reward. Many thanks to Sherry and to Susan and Rex for sharing their experiences and confirming how great for mankind their generous offerings have been.*

*Look forward to Issue No. 23! **London***

*Have just received another newsy Newsletter from London. It is always so exciting to read about the wonderful things that are going on in the schools around the world. It makes the heart sing! **Durban, SA***

*Dear Lily, I was delighted to receive the latest Insight circular and scrolled down excitedly to find your letter - and there it wasn't! What's happened Lily, are you OK? Not in the doggy corner for running away from daddy again are you? Don't worry,*

*I know what it's like to be in the dog house too, but he'll get over it. Hope to hear good news that your letters will be reinstated! Keep up the good work! With love from An Admirer, **UK***

### Thanks for reading

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Please keep that feedback coming. I need all your suggestions of personal stories, insights, links, articles, cartoons, video clips – anything that will be of interest to our philosophy community. Do you know someone in the School who has an interesting story to tell? E-mail me at: [editor@seslondon.org](mailto:editor@seslondon.org). Thanks again for reading, CL

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