

Champernowne Opening Event Monday 13 March Opening remarks

1 Anna Clements - *Director of Library Services and University Librarian*

Good evening and welcome everyone. I'm Anna Clements, the Director of Library Services and University Librarian and I have the pleasure of welcoming you to our latest exhibition 'The Power of Creativeness: Champernowne, Withymead, Jung'.

The exhibition tells the story of Irene Champernowne's life, work and legacy. As you'll learn from viewing the exhibition, Irene Champernowne was an inspiring woman and trailblazer - she was a leading Jungian psychologist and psychotherapist in the UK, who pioneered the integrating power of creativeness to improve mental health, and whose vision was to make psychotherapy available to all. Irene was responsible for opening one of the earliest therapeutic communities in Western Europe, which blended together art, music and dance-movement therapy with clinical support, in a community environment that sought to create lasting rehabilitation.

The exhibition is primarily based on Irene's archive, which was donated by The Champernowne Trust to the The University of Sheffield Library Special Collections, Heritage, and Archives.

The Champernowne Trust had been looking to place the archive in a research library where it would be accessible and made widely available, particularly for research and teaching purposes. Following conversations between the Library, the School of English and The Champernowne Trust we were delighted to become the new home of the archive in 2019.

The University is establishing itself as an outstanding centre for the study of the history of psychology, psychotherapy, and psychiatry, across the departments of History, English, Education, Sociology and Psychology. Acquiring the Irene Champernowne Archive has been immensely valuable to supporting this work, and the archive will directly benefit the research of academic colleagues, research groups and community groups.

Although Irene Champernowne is not widely known, this exhibition highlights that her work and the connections she made continue to have influence and impact today. We hope the exhibition and archive's legacy here at the University of Sheffield will be to inspire future research, encourage creativity and bring Irene Champernowne the recognition she deserves.

We would like to thank the following people for their support, many of whom are here tonight.

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- Our exhibition partners The Champernowne Trust - particularly Pam Stirling, Chair of The Champernowne Trust, and fellow Trustee Dave Edwards; and Professor Brendan Stone from the School of English.
- My colleagues in Special Collections, Heritage and Archives - Emily Green, Andrew Moore and Laura Smith Brown

All those that have contributed and loaned material to the exhibition including:

- C.G. Jung Foundation New York - whose video is playing on the screen over there.
- Jackie Hall, Richard Lanham and Clee Claire Lee for loaning their amazing artwork and personal stories for the exhibition that can be seen on display.
- Peter Lyle, for his recollections of Irene Champernowne.
- Sam Smith, Catriona McInnes, Laura Richardson, Anthony Stevens, Salley Vickers, and Dr Chris Wood for their contributions and loans to this exhibition.
- And Nick Bax and Abby Hambleton at Human Studios for their amazing design work

Please enjoy the rest of the evening and the exhibition. And if you feel inspired by what you see in the exhibition we encourage you to leave your thoughts, drawings or poems in the exhibition doodle book, which is just on the wall behind me.

I will now handover to Pam Stirling, Chair of the Champernowne Trust

2 Pam Stirling, *Chair of the Champernowne Trust*

Thank you all so much for coming this evening. I know some people have come a long way. We are lucky that the snow was not today!

I echo Anna's thanks to everyone who has contributed and in turn thank her and the Special collections, and the very patient curating group of Laura Smith Brown, Emily Green and Andrew Moore who have worked wonders in guiding and designing the exhibition. And my trustee colleagues for their constant support.

Many people have contributed to the Trust over many years and we have acknowledged them in the exhibition. Ronald Higgins, Pamela Ford Young, Michael Edwards, Michael Vizard, Julian David and Peter Tatham. And I want to say thank you to the Trust Secretary Tom Lindsay who died suddenly a month ago today.

I would also like to thank Professor Brendan Stone whose idea it was that the archive would be welcomed and useful across several departments in the university. We miss him and send him all good wishes for improved health.

I became part of the Champernowne tradition after attending an amazing course in Cumberland Lodge in Windsor Great Park, recommended by an imaginative supervisor. There I learned a little about Irene, mostly the story of how her old schoolfriend Amy Buller had tea once with the late Queen Mother, then magically the course came to be at a royal lodge, and she founded Withymead!

The archive itself remained a blurry thing in the background, part of the library in deepest Devon. When it arrived here in 2019, it sprang into life as a living, active tale of an extraordinary woman and her undertakings. Irene and her legacy have always attracted those who will care and who want to do more.

When Anthony Stevens moved to Corfu, the library and archive moved to Luscombe farm and a group around the analyst Julian David cared and sorted. Jo Homan worked to box and to transcribe many letters and documents into the electronic form, now part of the archive. She helped it on its way back to Exeter, to the attic of our late colleague Mike Vizard whence it came to the Special Collections. It is a great relief to the Trustees that it is again being treated with deserved respect and curiosity.

In preparing the exhibition our reading of letters, papers, photos, management minutes, development plans and published articles revealed Irene's career in psychology and her use of networks, all leading up to Withymead. We can see her layering up her experience: While teaching biology at a teacher training college, she spent 6 months of each year studying psychology in Vienna with Adler, where she learned how to work therapeutically through groups. Then working with Peter Baynes in London she learnt the essence of art therapy. Travelling and writing pre and post-war to work with Jung and the women analysts around him on Zurich she developed her understanding of the self, and a Jungian perspective.

The exhibition is rich in detail of the centrality of active imagination and creativity in the development of Withymead, alongside the hard work of getting money and running the community.

We have drawn on people who worked and lived there to illustrate life at the therapeutic community. Peter Lyle from Edinburgh contacted us to offer exceptional photos that had been taken another young staff member, Richard Fritsche. Peter relayed that no photography or recording was

allowed, except by Richard: what a difference from today! Peter describes on tape his life at the community.

The intrinsic importance of Gilbert Champernowne and the Elmhursts of Dartington ring through multiple letters and conversations, as the community builds up and then as relations sour. We see the centrality of Irene: The Trustees were willing to resign to enable her to find replacements who she could work with.

The rise of the NHS, the requirement for medical psychotherapists, the impossibility of appointing them, the strong divide between the women therapists supporting Irene and the 'establishment' and the death of Gilbert were all factors in the demise of Irene's involvement in the community. Financing such an operation became impossible. After she signed away her involvement the optimism with which she then approached a move to Stanton in Gloucestershire with her close women friends and colleagues is touching.

The legacy of Withymead rests in the Champernowne courses which were founded in 1972 by the Trust and have been held for 50 years until the pandemic. The themes of creativity or active imagination in groups, lectures on theory and practice and time for song and dance echo down the years. On the wall you can see some of the themes which were tackled by the communities established for around a week bound to a process designed initially by Irene and her colleagues.

Lecturers coming from wide backgrounds addressed the theme. Michael Edwards provided a direct link to Jung in his discussing his analyses of the paintings of Jung's patients: we are lucky to have his slides and the book of his lectures.

Significant members of the arts therapist's community continued the inheritance of the power of creativity, seen in the Art Therapy Northern programme based in this city. As do groups and projects which focus on creative activities of all types : Sheffield Flourish has inherited this tradition.

Of Irene Champernowne's autobiography, only the monograph on Toni Wolff, itself extraordinary, has been published. It is 40 years since Anthony Stevens wrote Withymead. We hope that you will agree that it is time for more study and review of an extraordinary woman and her lasting legacy. We look forward to developing research and arts projects and welcome discussions with any and all!

Thank you!