"In the autumn of 1958 a small team of ringers in Metropolitan Essex trapped nearly a thousand migrant Sand Martins as they passed along a narrow insignificant river bordering an urban sewage farm", wrote Robert Hudson in *Bird Study*. By 1968, the Sand Martin total had increased by 421,700 birds and Chris Mead’s name was for ever linked to Sand Martins.

The Sand Martin Enquiry ran from 1962 to 1968, a period when free rings and boundless enthusiasm generated huge numbers of recoveries. Tethering mist nets was a new thing as were the “modern” split rings!

By 1963, there were already exciting results from the Sand Martin Enquiry. Ringers all over the country recorded many movements; the map shows the ringing locations of birds caught at the Chichester roost.

Also in 1963, the first BTO-ringed Sand Martins were reported in Belgium and Morocco.

Overseas movements were analysed by Mead and Harrison. Recoveries on autumn migration are shown here.

Chris Mead also looked at colony fidelity. In the diagram below, he presents movements of juveniles in the same and later years.

“Chris once said to me that he expected to ‘come back’ as a Sand Martin. I shall be even more careful this summer when ringing them – and look for that one with a glint in his eye.”

David Oliver