

UERSA website <http://groups.exeter.ac.uk/uersa/> - for those on the internet

Sitting here writing, hail showers alternating with sunshine, cold winds ablowing, it is difficult to think that summer is approaching fast. Nevertheless, in this newsletter, you will see a varied offering of activities to fill in any gaps you still have left in your calendar before the annual summer invasion of the South-West by families and friends.

Due to a matter of newsletter timing, it has not been possible for plans for some events to be finalized, and so I shall try to leave a marker for events still at the planning stage. Details on how to get updates on these and other activities can be found towards the end of the letter.

Your committee hopes you find something to your liking. Remember we are a lively organisation, always willing to welcome new faces into any group, even as a one-off taster, as well as having ideas for new activities. If you are unsure – go on – give it a go!

Rachel (Ed.)

A Message from our Chairman

Spring has sprung and the university and local media are full of the impending visit by the Queen to open the new Forum. It's a great honour, and indeed the university seems to have had a fair number of visits by the Queen over the years. Some of our members will have vivid memories of meeting her in past visits and some have been invited to share in the celebrations this time. Indeed one of the rather more charming features of the redevelopment for me was the set of photographs, largely black-and-white, of earlier years, depicting previous Royal visits, new developments, student and staff groups etc., on the hoardings surrounding the Forum project. I wonder what the fact that the Queen is opening what is essentially a retail, refreshment and administrative building rather than academic, as in the past, tell us? In any case it is certainly a great relief to have the central redevelopment area completed and be able to walk up Stocker Road again. Those of you who may have chosen to steer clear of the campus might enjoy having a look round, and we are considering organising a tour of the redevelopment. Do let the Committee know whether you would be interested in taking part in such a tour.

I am pleased to report the useful link we have developed with the University Staff Association. They invited any of us interested to take part in two concerts by their choir in the University Chapel, one at Christmas and one in early April when half a dozen of us were involved in singing the Fauré Requiem to an appreciative audience, including other UERSA members. The choir would welcome more new recruits from our ranks.

Finally I would like to note one of the undoubted strengths of our organisation, which I have come to appreciate more and more, namely its friendly, inclusive character, allowing us to meet people from parts of the University we would never normally have come across, and take part together in very pleasant social gatherings and group activities. Long live UERSA!

Alastair Logan

Personal Notes

A new departure in Personal Notes – it was suggested that it would be good to hear interesting news from or about our members (marriages? Achievements? ...) as well as the sad but necessary notices of deaths. If you have anything you think would be suitable, please write or email it to the newsletter editor, (details at the end of the newsletter). Rachel

We are sorry to record that Jack Smart, Lecturer in Arabic and Islamic Studies 1976-1997, died suddenly on 29 February, aged 73, at Cullompton.

"For very good reasons, UERSA does not usually allow advertisements to be sent to its members, either by email or via the Newsletter. However, I would like to make an exception and recommend the recently published book "How to live to 110". There are two reasons for doing this: (1) I believe it will help our members to live longer which has to be a good thing, if only to keep up the income from subscriptions and (2) It is written by our very own Brian Kirby and his son, Tim. It's both informative and great fun - highly recommended."

Laurie Burbridge

Reports on General Events

UERSA Coffee Mornings at the Imperial Hotel

Coffee Mornings (arranged by Jan Reynolds) are held regularly on the last Tuesday in each month from 10 a.m.-12 noon, with an average attendance of around 35. Newcomers might like to know about parking charges at the Imperial: if you pay for parking and show your 'parking receipt' this amount will be refunded at the bar on your purchase of coffees, etc.

Drama Department performance of *King John* by Shakespeare

Having had 3 comments written by members, this is going to be a longer report than usual. Here are some extracts. Thank you to those who sent them.

.... **From Brian Kirby** : King John is not one of Shakespeare's well-known plays (with good reason, I think, after seeing it!) but it was one the Drama Department chose to invite UERSA to come to.

Briefly, the plot was about the territorial claims of the English and French monarchs, complicated by the question of who had slept with whom – in those days before effective contraception! Papal intervention in the squabble and the outcome of the slaying of Richard Lionheart added yet further dimensions.

If the history was not enough to muddle the non-historian, the cast of men and women interchangeably played all the male and female characters. In one scene they might be a monarch and in another a lord of a different sex. One potential contender for the English throne, central to the plot, remained readily identifiable throughout – he was a boy portrayed by a puppet.

It was an ambulatory performance with the actors and the audience mingling and moving about in the performance area, in the midst of actors changing their costume for the next scene. Remembering the costumes they wore was central to understanding who they were representing though, of course, the words helped preserve continuity too.

This brave production could have readily descended into chaos. That it didn't do so depended on the theatrical achievement of the cast coupled with their enthusiasm to make it work. Listening to the opinions of the departing audience at the end of the show suggested some had enjoyed it as truly novel theatrical experience, others were given much to talk about over their evening meal, and some just could not thoil the idea of Shakespeare being presented in this way. It was great to hear debates on the ideas of the cast, not just 'well, that was very good'! I guess the message is we should no longer think of going to the theatre for a quiet evening of pre-digested entertainment.

.... **From Jill Baines** "I enjoyed the production tremendously. A few students really stood out; perhaps they were ones wanting to be actors rather than directors and scene setters. The colour coding and sashes did work so long as I kept hold of my programme and I was happy to see the students get turns at the meatier parts. The promenading was OK but it would have worked just as well if we'd all been allowed to sit around the walls. (My days of standing for long periods are gone.)

I hadn't realised the saying about 'practice to deceive' came from this play, having not ever seen it before. The puppet Arthur was a good idea and had me close to tears both when threatened with eye-gouging and at the suicidal leap from the battlements. I look forward to the next production."

.... **From Michael Smith** "...the performance of King John by postgraduates, I thought it was an excellent production. I had doubts about it being a promenade production and the added complication of interchanging roles but it worked very well and it gave them the opportunity to make full use of their high standard of acting ability.

Quiz evening

This was held on Monday 19th March 2012, at the Exeter Isca Centre. 30 members attended the event. The number of those attending was down slightly from last year but everyone who came enjoyed the Quiz and the buffet.

Special Interest Groups

The Special Interest Group Organisers are:

Badminton:	Jan Reynolds (tel: 01392 271204, e-mail: janandmikereynolds@gmail.com)
Bridge:	Paul Ellison (tel: 01626 867999, e-mail: p.a.ellison@exeter.ac.uk)
Gardens:	Anne Mayes (e-mail: a.c.mayes@exeter.ac.uk)
Music / Opera:	Helen Pope (tel: 01392 860159, e-mail: h.pope174@btinternet.com) Alastair Logan (tel: 01392 434715, e-mail: a.h.b.logan@exeter.ac.uk)
Restaurants:	Liz Smith (tel: 01363 84667, e-mail: Geoffandlizsmith@yahoo.co.uk) Frankie Peroni (tel: 01363 773946, e-mail: F.Peroni@exeter.ac.uk)
Theatre and Shows:	Sue Cousins (e-mail: scousins@talktalk.net)
Walking:	Trevor Preist (e-mail: preist.exeter@blueyonder.co.uk)
Wine:	John Carroll (e-mail: J.C.Carroll@live.co.uk)
Membership Secretary:	Judy Mead (tel: 01392 425571, e-mail: JudyMead@hotmail.co.uk)

Reports and news from Special Interest Groups

If you can get on the internet, all this information can be found on the UERSA website where it is kept up-to-date, and is easy to navigate (thanks to Roger Coles).

If you are interested in participating in any of these groups, please apply to the Membership Secretary, Judy Mead. This is particularly important if you are unable to use e-mail, as information and updates on group activities are sent by ordinary mail only to members of that group

You can contact Judy by telephone or via her e-mail address above. Or you can download an application form, in pdf format, from the Membership forms page.

Reports on group activities over the last few months, gleaned either directly from the organisers, or from browsing our website :-

Gardens Group

Trebah - March 2012

The group arrived in glorious sunshine and were met by Nicky, our guide who is also their plant archivist.

Highlights of the tour :-

the koi carp pool with the amorous toads (ask anyone who went!).

the wonderful views enhanced by some shrubs being in full bloom.

the gardens dropping right down to the beach (where one member spent the whole time sunbathing).

(There are lovely photos and descriptions on the website. Rachel)

Music and Opera Group

Thirty-two of the Music and Opera group attended Welsh National Opera's production of Berlioz's delightful *Beatrice et Benedict* at Plymouth's Theatre Royal on Wednesday 4th April. The coach left the Exeter Squash & Cricket Club promptly (thanks to Bruce who saw to the parking) and sped down the A38, arriving in Plymouth in good time for a meal (twenty-five at La Tasca next door, others elsewhere). The production involved a splendid, very Italianate set, and the singers were in good voice, particularly the two stars, Sara Fulgoni and Robin Tritschler (Irish, would you believe!). Donald Maxwell, as the fussy choirmaster Somarone, brought the house down with his buffoonery and allusions to Gareth Malone and his choir. The music was enchanting and overall it was a grand night out.

Restaurant Group

Our first visit of the year introduced the group to the REDWING in Lypstone. We were provided with a wide ranging and tasty menu which included both specials and early dining offers. In March we returned to one of our old favourites RODEAN at Kenton. Here the quality of the food and the attention to detail always impresses. We are a social bunch who enjoy the food, wine and chatter. Our thanks to everyone involved in organising the different visits.

Theatre group

20 people went to see the Phantom of the Opera at the Theatre Royal in Plymouth, on 14th March. It was an excellent production, very slick and well done, and was much enjoyed by the group.

(I am really glad that the first outing for this new group was so successful – ed)

Walking Group

There are reports on several walks of various lengths with various leaders, which took place from Jan – April. After a series of descriptions of comfortable walks, that of Bennett’s Cross, 22nd February stood out – it was nominated as probably the wettest and windiest in the history of the group!

. *Do try to look at their website, there are some great photos and comments. Rachel*

Wine Tasting Group

The first wine tasting under the ‘new management’ went very well – run by John himself. (The ‘old management’ were there as well, looking very relaxed and able to enjoy the social side). It was fun comparing similar wines (all from Tesco’s but not all basement prices) from either Old or New World. Some of the New World wines were very good, but the Old World often held its own.

Now, looking to the next few months!

All Events Calendar for Summer 2012 (and beyond)

Date	Group	Time	Activity
every Wed	Badminton	11-12	Sports Hall 11-12 noon
last Tue of month	UERSA coffee	10-12	Imperial Hotel 10 – 12 noon
Tue 24th Apr	Restaurant		The Ship Inn, Cockwood
Wed 25th Apr	Bridge		Clayden
Thu 26th Apr	Gardens	2.0	Mothecombe Garden OS202
Mon 30th Apr	Walking	10.30	Cheriton Fitzpaine
Thu 10th May	Walking	10.30	Killerton
Thu 10th May	Wine	7	German wines 21 The Mint
Thu 17th May	Gardens	2pm.	Haldon Grange OS192
Tue 22nd May	Restaurant	12.- 12.30	The Harris Arms Lewdown, EX20 4PZ
Thu 24th May	Bridge	7 p.m.	Clayden
Tue 29th May	UERSA	10-12	Coffee morning at Imperial
Thu 31st May	Walking	10.30	Cothelstone
Thu 14th Jun	Walking	10.30	Bampton
Sun 17th Jun	Gardens	11am.	Heddon Hall OS180
Wed/Thu 20th/21st Jun	Walking	11.30 / 11.0	Devon Digressions at Lynmouth
Tue 26th Jun	UERSA	10-12	Coffee morning at Imperial
Wed 27th Jun	Bridge	7 p.m.	Clayden
Thu 28th Jun	Wine	7 p.m.	Wines of the Loire 21 The Mint
Wed.4 th July	UERSA	3 p.m.	Annual Garden Party
Tue 13th Nov	Wine		New Zealand wines
Tue 11th Dec	UERSA		Christmas Lunch

Forthcoming General Events (UERSA)

UERSA’s Annual Summer Garden Party – Wednesday 4th July at 3 p.m.

This will take place at the Exeter Cricket Club and there will be no charge to members for this event. Glasses of Pimms will be provided, together with scones, jam and clotted cream, and cups of tea – a formula which went down well last year!

Coffee Mornings

To confirm that UERSA's Coffee Mornings will be held at the Imperial Hotel, Exeter, on the following dates:

24th April, 29th May and 26th June.

We shall have a break for July and August, but will resume again in September (dates will be confirmed on our next Newsletter).

Christmas Lunch at the Devon Hotel, Exeter, Tuesday 11th December 2012

This has been arranged (already!) to be held in the Regency Suite – the same venue as last year.

Other events being considered for this year include:

A tour of the University's new buildings - quite a lot of the new buildings are nearing completion so this begins to look like a possibility at last. Details will be circulated if a date is agreed before the end of September.

A Beer/Skittles Evening is also being researched

Forthcoming Group Events

Badminton:

This season, meetings will be on the following Wednesdays (court unavailable on other dates)

April 18th, May 23rd, 30th, June 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th

in the Sports Hall at the University between 11 and 12 noon (followed by coffee and chat!).

Please contact: janandmikereynolds@gmail.com: Tel 01392 271204 for further details.

Bridge:

We tend to play Chicago most evenings, but occasionally are able to play rubbers. We start at 7.0 pm, stop for coffee/tea and biscuits mid-session, and aim to finish around 10 to 10.15pm. To be able to access Clayden, we have registered as 'Music Associates' and have bought a small batch of Associate cards.

The remaining sessions for the summer are: **Thu 24th May, Wed 27th June**. We stop for July and August, and restart in September. I hope to see all the regulars and a few new faces. I will bring coffee/tea etc. If anyone wants to talk to me about joining, then I (Paul Ellison) can be phoned on: 01626 867999 or via e-mail:

P.A.Ellison@exeter.ac.uk.

Gardens:

Thursday 17th May - Haldon Grange Meet at 2pm. OS192

Admission £3.50 light tea available. I went at this time last year and there were many interesting trees and shrubs, it is quite a wild garden.

Sunday 17th June - Heddon Hall Meet at 11am. OS180

This is an NGS day - they only do these (unless you want to arrange a wedding!) and I am told that it is very popular. Stunning walled garden laid out by Penelope Hobhouse.

I will send out the programme for the second half of the year a little later.

Anne Mayes (e-mail: a.c.mayes@exeter.ac.uk)

(Please make sure you have joined the Gardens Group if you want to get the news. R)

Music / Opera:

'Russalka', in November

Arrangements for the autumn visit to Touring Glyndebourne at Plymouth cannot be arranged, as the programme is not yet announced. I did ring Glyndebourne to ask them which operas they were bringing out to the provinces. It's likely we shall go to 'Russalka', in **November** but I've no date yet, so can't give you any more information.

Helen Pope (tel: 01392 860159, e-mail: h.pope174@btinternet.com)

Restaurants:

April 24th will find us at the SHIP INN at Cockwood, well known for its fish dishes.

May 22nd We are looking forward to lunch at the HARRIS ARMS in Lewdown, another new venue for the group. (For further information on the HARRIS ARMS contact Liz Smith email geoffandlizsmith@yahoo.co.uk or tel. 01363 84667)

Other restaurant visits being considered :-

Linda Hale is trying out a place for June

Liz Smith is checking out the Riverford Café for July but may not have a date before this Newsletter is sent out.

Walking:

10.30 am Thursday, 10th May **Killerton – Columb John area** ~ 4 miles

Led by Jarka

10.30 am Thursday, 31st May **Cothelstone, Quantocks** 8 miles

Led by Roger and Rosanne **PACKED LUNCH REQUIRED**

10.30 am Thursday, 14th June **Bampton** 7 miles

Led by Tom **PACKED LUNCH REQUIRED**

Wed / Thurs, 20th / 21st June **Devon Digressions in Lynmouth Area**

Wed 20th 11.30 Lee Bay circular walk to Heddon Mouth (John B) 9 miles

Thu 21st 11.00 Bus E from Lynmouth, SWCP walk back (Trevor) 9-10 miles

Fuller details for this 2-day event will be sent out to those requesting them at the end of April. To date 13 people have registered an interest.

Accommodation for 1, 2 or 3 nights at Lynmouth or Lynton is convenient and I would hope to arrange an eating place for Wednesday and Thursday.

The first day will be tougher than the second and I hope to give an idea of difficulty in the circulation at the end of April.

Trevor Preist preist.exeter@blueyonder.co.uk

Wine:

Thurs 10th May German Wines (Jeremy Noakes)

Thurs 28th June Wines of the Loire (Rachel and Brian Kirby) (*We're enjoying the pre-tasting tastings!*
R)

(both at 21 The Mint.)

Sept/Oct Wines of Southern France (Alan Leadbetter)

Tues 13th Nov New Zealand wines (John Jacob).

John Carroll (*e-mail*: J.C.Carroll@live.co.uk)

Theatre and Shows:

I have booked some tickets for the show "Oliver" at Plymouth Theatre Royal on Thursday 6 September for the evening show. The Upper Circle tickets are £35 and the Circle tickets are £45. I will be organising a coach as usual and a meal beforehand for those that wish to eat together and will be circulating information to those that have expressed an interest in the Theatre Group separately. I wanted to give advance notice to all UERSA members so that I can get an idea of the numbers who are interested.

Anyone interested, please contact me: Sue Cousins E-mail: scousins@talktalk.net or Tel.No. 01392 432309.

Full details of the activities and, importantly, updates or changes can be seen on the UERSA website <http://groups.exeter.ac.uk/uersa/>. For those who do not use the internet, organisers can be contacted either by mail or telephone - listed in this Newsletter - and I recommend that you join any group in which you are interested, so that you will get any postings and updates from that group.

News from around the University

Her Majesty The Queen and His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh will visit the University of Exeter on Wednesday 2 May 2012, as part of the Diamond Jubilee Tour.

The University of Exeter has accepted an invitation to join the Russell Group of leading research-led universities. Medical school progress: A positive meeting was held with the General Medical Council to brief them on the creation of the [University of Exeter Medical School](#). Interest is still growing in the [open day](#) scheduled for 9 June.

Following the University's membership of the Athena SWAN Charter which began in 2011, it was delighted this year to receive the Bronze university award, recognising that the University has a solid foundation for eliminating gender bias and developing an inclusive culture that values all staff.

The Sir Henry Wellcome Building for Mood Disorders Research was [officially launched](#) in a series of events from 29-31 March.

The University of Exeter has been voted the winner of the prestigious 'Preparation for Work' award by the Association of Graduate Recruiters. The award recognises the University's impressive achievement in embedding career planning sessions and the [eXfactor programme](#) across the undergraduate curriculum.

Library resources boosted. - More than 10,000 new book titles have been purchased for the library this year, thanks to the University funding an extra £250,000 to boost core teaching materials. Over 7,000 of these are ebooks – these and new online databases are available 24/7 via the [Electronic Library](#).

Contact details for Members of the UERSA Executive Committee 2011/2012

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Retired Staff Association

UERSA ANNUAL GARDEN PARTY

On Wednesday 4th July 2012
At the Exeter Cricket Club Pavilion
Prince of Wales Road, Exeter

The Summer Garden Party will again be held at the Exeter Cricket Club, Prince of Wales Road. The club provides views over Exeter and a lovely lawn for us to enjoy our traditional afternoon tea (after a suitable welcome drink), but if it happens to rain, all is not lost as we have use of the clubhouse.

There will be no charge for this event.

Please complete the slip below and return it to;
Susan Cousins, UERSA Social Secretary,
21 Chantry Meadow, Alphington, Exeter. EX2 8FT. Tel.No:01392 432309.
Email: scousins@talktalk.net
By Friday 22nd June

I/We would like to come to the Garden Party on Wednesday 4th July

Name(s).....

Address(es).....

.....

Tel No.....Email.....

PARKING

Parking is available on the side of the cricket ground. Drive through the Devon & Exeter Squash Club car park (entry from Prince of Wales Road) to find the cricket ground behind it. Park there and walk across to the Cricket Clubhouse. As that will involve climbing steps to the clubhouse level, any members who want to avoid the steps could park in Prince of Wales Road opposite the Cricket Club's formal gates and, going through them, walk along the path to the Clubhouse.

You can take the bus from town, get off at the Northcott Theatre bus stop, walk down the hill to Prince of Wales Road then up to the cricket ground.