



RETIRED STAFF ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

Issue 14, January 2009

Whether to wish all our Members a Happy New Year might be considered unrealistic given the current world (sorry – “global”) crisis. Nevertheless we hope that all Members *will* have a pleasant time attending the various interesting outings and events planned, both general and group.

From the Chairman, Alan Leadbetter

Our Association is now in its fifth year of existence, having been started in 2004 thanks to the energetic efforts of a small group of enthusiasts. It has proved to be a remarkably successful venture, with a current membership approaching 400. This success has come about through the many and varied activities available, and because we are open, inclusive and friendly. My wife and I have had great enjoyment from our membership of UERSA and have renewed old friendships (I left the University in 1982) as well as making new ones. For this reason I am delighted to serve as Chairman.

On behalf of all the membership it is time to thank the Committee members, most of whom take on particular responsibilities, and also the organisers of the Special Interest Groups and other necessary functions (such as looking after our website) – who may or may not be Committee members. It is due to the efforts of these people, and their predecessors, as well as the enthusiasm of the general membership, that we enjoy our success. Committee members have a term of office defined in our Constitution, whereas other responsibilities carry no fixed period, but it would be neither wise nor reasonable to expect the same members to organise activities indefinitely. Fortunately we have so far been able to replace those who left, sometimes by spreading the work among several people, but it is crucial to our future well-being – indeed to the very existence of UERSA – that this should continue. Therefore, I urge all our members to consider very seriously what active part they might play in the future as a Committee member or participating in running one of the Special Interest Groups. I promise you that you will find it very rewarding!

General Notes

AGM: following the AGM on 17th October 2008 we now have a new Committee Chairman (Alan Leadbetter) and a new President (Mary Ravenhill). A full up-to-date list of all UERSA Officers and Committee Members is attached to this Newsletter, with phone numbers and/or email addresses. Do feel free to contact Committee members with any comments, suggestions or problems.

It was agreed at the AGM that the subscription should remain at £6 for a double or single membership – for the fourth year in succession.

Websites:

For information, the UERSA Website is: www.ex.ac.uk/uersa .

Roger Coles, recently retired from IT Services, has kindly agreed to be responsible for the upkeep of this website. He can be contacted by email at: roger.coles4@binternet.com

Personal Notes

We have to report with much sadness the death of Norman Hardyman on 24th December 2008; he was University Treasurer 1991-2001. Also of Dr Derek Watts on December 16th 2008; he was Reader in French and Head of Department for some years.

Reports on General Events

Hartland Abbey Visit, 25th September. 30 Members and friends visited this remote and romantic spot on the North Coast of Devon and much enjoyed the day.

On 26 November, shopaholics were given their fix with a day out calling at **IKEA (Bristol) and Cribb's Causeway.** We hope there was room on the return coach for all the bags and bundles!

Christmas Lunch at the Devon Hotel in December was very well-attended and the general opinion was "excellent" in all categories: ambiance, food and service (perhaps this was due in some measure to the provision of free wine (courtesy of UERSA) which encouraged feelings of goodwill and satisfaction). Our new President Mary Ravenhill's short speech was much appreciated.

Reports on Group Activities

Restaurant Group: The Group made a return visit to the Globe in Topsham – usual pleasant venue, but the general opinion on the food was "good but rather ordinary".

Conversely, a visit to the Rendezvous Bar in Southernhay was most successful with good food and a fascinating venue in the old cellars under those posh houses in Southernhay.

Plans for Spring 2009 are in hand and will probably include the Lazy Toad at Bramford Speke and a return to the Roedean Restaurant in Kenton. The programme will be circulated to Group Members shortly. For more information, please contact the Group Leader: **Peter Corbin** via email at Corbinpforbin@aol.com or Tel. 01392 256887

Music Group: the Group had a busy autumn going up to Bristol to hear the Welsh National Opera perform *Otello*, to the Cathedral for Walton's *Balshazzar's Feast* and to Theatre Royal, Plymouth for yet another stunning performance by the Glyndebourne Opera Touring Company in *Hansel and Gretel* – even the scenery got an enthusiastic (and well-deserved) round of applause. It was, as ever, immaculately and beautifully sung. For more information, please contact the Group Leader: **John Sandall** via email at john_sandall@yahoo.co.uk or Tel. 01392 255460

Gardens Group: The Group will emerge from its winter hibernation with a visit to Caerhays Castle (spectacular spring shrubs, castle interior, beach, sun, sand....) in March, and will be follow up with a visit to Antony House, home of the Carew-Poles, near Torpoint. For the slightly more adventurous travellers the nicest way to approach Antony is via the Torpoint Ferry (free). For more information, please contact the Group Leader: **Anne Mayes** via email at a.c.mayes@exeter.ac.uk

Walking Group: Our intrepid walkers seem to have had blue skies and sunshine for their outings this autumn (to New Bridge, near Ashburton, to Dawlish Warren, to Exmouth and Budleigh Salterton, and to Topsham. However, the walk round White Cross and the Otter River had its moments, partly due to the heavy flooding of the previous week, but mainly because of an accident to one of the walkers resulting in a broken leg! We do hope the sufferer has made a good recovery.

Walking Group achieves 1000 walkers:

The Group Leader (Trevor Preist) reports that after almost four years and over sixty walks, a sortie into deepest Devon on 19 January produced the 1000th UERSA walker. Prior to the walk the total was 987 and the start was from Landscope – a relatively remote spot off the A38 at Ashburton – left Trevor wondering if they would make it this time. The weather forecast was mixed but most UERSA walkers are not easily deterred and in the end we totalled 15, just getting the Group over the magic number. John Philipson led the group around a very rural and scenic 8 mile route with surprisingly less mud than feared but with some flooded paths. Fortunately these were negotiated without mishap and on returning to Landscope the 1000th walker was determined by 'lot'. Barbara Philipson was delighted to be the chosen one and even more pleased to be presented with a bottle of sparkling wine. The leader of this particular walk (John Philipson) got the reward of some Kendal Mint Cake for bringing the 1000th walker back safely.

Plans for the Spring include walks in the Exe Valley (5 miles), around Crediton via Shobrooke (5 miles), to Moretonhampstead (8 miles), and to Exeter Castle where Bob Higham of the University Archaeology Department will take a guided tour around the Castle.

The group has a steady flow of new members and walking and conversation seem to go together. To join the Group if you are able please check the website for details where Roger Coles has made it easy to find the details of coming walks or contact the Group Leader: **Trevor Preist** via email at preist.exeter@blueyonder.co.uk or Tel. 01392 259740

Badminton Group. The Group continues to play once a week at the University's Sports Hall. This term the members are meeting on a Monday from 11 a.m. until 12 noon (followed by a coffee/relaxation!). Additional members would be welcome – please contact Jan Reynolds (Tel.No. 01392 271204).

Bridge Group: it was pointed out at the AGM that this Group did not have a mention in the last Newsletter – many apologies for the oversight (Ed.), and we would like to report that Bridge is being played regularly in Reed Hall, under the leadership of Paul Ellison, and new members would be most welcome. For more information, please contact the Group Leader **Paul Ellison** via email at: p.a.ellison@exeter.ac.uk or Tel. 01363 866775

Future plans

There will be a **Trivia Fun Quiz on Tuesday 24th February** at the Isca Centre, Summer Lane (application form at the end of this Newsletter). These quizzes have proved to be very popular – a good opportunity for an evening out in good company and a little not too taxing brainwork.

There will be visit to the **Lost Gardens of Heligan in Cornwall on Tuesday 21 April**, with coach travel there and back. Even for those who have been before these Gardens well repay a return visit to see the new developments and revisit favourite places (application form at the end of this Newsletter)

Coffee Mornings: are still taking place in the Imperial Hotel, New North Road, Exeter on the last Tuesday of every month between 10.15 a.m. and noon. These coffee mornings are proving very popular (between 30-40 members have been turning up for a coffee/chat). Everyone is welcome!

Events for the Summer include the **Summer Garden Party**, a visit to the **Beer Caves** (where the stone for the Cathedral came from), and a possible visit to **Cotehele House**. A visit to the **Devon and Exeter Institution at No.7, The Close**, has been discussed. This beautiful old building houses a unique library, mainly of local interest material, and exudes a very special atmosphere of old-world Victorian charm. A guided tour would be given by a member of the Institution. We need to know if this is of interest to our Members, so please let Jan Reynolds, our secretary, know, by phone or email, if you would like such a visit. Silence will lead to the project being dropped!

Some local events of interest to Members

Art History Lectures: These lunchtime lectures by Professor Sam Smiles of the University of Plymouth are intended to provide a broad introduction to three movements in the history of 20th century Western art, c.1920-1990, including Surrealism (5 Feb.), Art of the Sixties (19th Feb.), and Postmodernism (19 March). The lectures take place in the Queen's Building on the Streatham Campus, in Lecture Theatre 1, 1.00 pm-1.45 pm.

Royal Albert Memorial Museum Lectures, held in the Music Room of Exeter Central Library.: Lunchtime Lecture by Julian Parsons of the RAMM, entitle "The RAMM in the making", Tuesday 17th February, at 1.00 p.m; Spring Lecture by Marjorie Trusted of the V & A entitled "The value of sculpture in the UK", Thursday 26 March at 7.00p.m; Summer Lecture by Robin Wootton, recently of the University Biological Sciences Department, entitled "The Devonshire Association, past, present, future", Tuesday, 19th May, at 7.00p.m.

For further details please contact Celia King, Friends of the Museum Secretary, on 01392 665956 or 251593 or email: friends@exeter.gov.uk

Historical Association, Exeter Branch: a Lecture by Roger Kain on Maps and History, on February 24th at Exeter School at 5.30-7.00 p.m. For further information please contact Mr Britt Zerbe at the Department of History, Exeter University, Amory Building, Rennes Drive, Exeter.

Contact details for Members of the UERSA Executive Committee 2008/9

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TRIVIA FUN QUIZ

Tuesday 24th February at 7.30 p.m.
Isca Centre, Summer Lane
(a very pleasant venue with plenty of parking)

Cost: £5 per person
(which includes a light supper; drinks can be bought at the bar)

Please note: The closing date for receiving applications is Wednesday 18th February. If you do not hear from Mary Banks following your application you can assume that you are going. If your application is unsuccessful your cheque will be returned to you.

Please complete the slip below and send it to Mary Banks, Social Secretary,
8 Saint Hill Close, Exeter EX2 9JE (Tel: 01392 669239).

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I/We would like to come to the Trivia Fun Quiz on 24th February

Name(s).....

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Address(es).....

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Tel..... E-mail.....

I/We enclose a cheque payable to The University of Exeter for

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Please remember that if you are booking more than one event we need a separate cheque for each event

LOST GARDENS OF HELIGAN VISIT

Tuesday 21stth April 2009

Cost: £20 per person.

The coach will leave the University at 8.30 a.m. from the usual place opposite the Northcott Theatre, returning at about 6.00 p.m.

Please note: the closing date for applications is Tuesday 14th April. Tickets for the trip will not be issued. If you do not hear from Carole Burgoyne you can assume you will be going. If your application is unsuccessful your cheque will be returned to you

Please complete the slip below and send it to Carole Burgoyne, 3 Taddyford Court, New North Road, Exeter EX4 4AR, Tel. 01392 274568

I/We would like to come on the Lost Gardens of Heligan Visit on 21st April 2009.

Name(s).....

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Address(es).....

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Tel..... E-mail.....

Number attending.....

I/We enclose a cheque made payable to The University of Exeter

for.....

Please remember that if you are booking more than one event we need a separate cheque for each event