



RETIRED STAFF ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

Issue 9, April 2007

Spring has definitely sprung early this year, with cloudless blue skies and a profusion of blossom. We hope that many Members will be encouraged to join in our activities, details of which are at the end of this Newsletter. The various Special Interest Groups are sending out their (most attractive) programmes for the next few months, so once again may we remind Members to be sure to *join* a group which interests them by contacting our Membership Secretary Sandy Simpson (tel. 01392 213506, email: Sandy@buntline.freemove.co.uk). Programmes are only sent out to relevant group Members, and you might miss something good if you are not on the lists.

General Notes

Art Exhibition: a major exhibition of the prints of Lucien Freud is taking place in the Northcote House Gallery from April 23rd to June 6th. There is a splendid illustrated guide to the Exhibition available.

Groups: Some of our Groups are getting very big, and we may have to think of ways to split them up into more manageable numbers. To this end, initially, there is a proposal to set up another Music Group for lovers of musicals, operetta, jazz, folk, military bands, etc., not, of course, in opposition to Alan Leadbetter's splendid Music and Opera Group, but to cater for those not exclusively interested in classical music. If anyone would be prepared to run such a Group we would be delighted to hear from him/her.

Personal Notes: It is with great sadness we report the death on 15th February of **Dr Peter Uzzell**, and on the 23rd of March that of **Dr Norma Perry**. **Peter Uzzell** was a Lecturer in the Department of Education at Thornlea, appointed in 1964. He was responsible for the chemistry element within the PGCE course. He retired as Senior Lecturer from the School of Education, St Luke's in 1991. He was also Director of the St Luke's College Foundation from 1986 to 1996. **Norma Perry** worked for many years in the Department of French, as a Lecturer and later as Reader, one of only two women in the Department for some time. Her research work concentrated particularly on Voltaire in England. We have also just learned that **Dr Donald Haggis**, also of the French Department, died recently at the age of 94.

Reports on General Events

Visit to the Drama Department on 16th February: this proved to be one of our most enjoyable and successful outings to date. We were received at Thornlea by Professor Christopher McCullough (Head of Drama) and Jon Primrose (the Drama Department Technical Manager), and regaled with a delicious light supper and wine, followed by a tour of the new extension (which is very impressive and blends in remarkably well with the older buildings). We then adjourned to the Roborough Building for a most enjoyable performance of Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*, by a (very) small and talented section of Drama

Department students – it was amazing how many parts just six actors could take on so convincingly.

'My Talk by Stephen Sylvester Life as an Entertainer', 22nd February: a most entertaining and interesting afternoon in Reed Hall, before an audience of around 18 people.

Reports on Groups

Badminton: the Group meets regularly now on Mondays, 11.00 – 12.00 in the Sports Hall at the University. For more information, please contact Jan (Reynolds) on 01392 271204.

Walking: the Walkers continue to enjoy themselves, with a trip to Hope's Nose and the Bishop's Walk, Torquay, under initially grey skies, but later in strong sunshine; a birthday (the Group's second) celebration walk, complete with cake and candles, round Lustleigh Cleeve; a sunny walk from Newton St Cyres via the Whitestone Ridge, with lots of fascinating natural history to observe (including wood ants, skylarks and deer); and one for the less intrepid among us, a short walk (more of a stroll really) along the Exeter Canal, in fine weather to Topsham Lock. The 'short walk' formula was shown to be very successful and will be repeated.

Walks planned for the next few months include the Meldon Reservoir/East Okement area (7.5 miles, 8th May); Heddon's Mouth, Trentishoe Down and Holdstone Down in North Devon (8 miles, 24th May); Exe Valley, starting and finishing at Bernaville Nursery (3-4 miles, 6th June); and Buckerell, Hembury Fort, Awliscombe (7miles, 15th June). For more details contact Trevor Preist on 01392 259740 or e-mail: preist.exeter@blueyonder.co.uk.

Wine Tasting:

Our most recent wine tasting was on 8th March, when we were delighted to welcome Marc and Kim Millon who provided us with a second tasting of quality Italian wines. It proved to be very informative evening with some great wines. The evening was made more enjoyable by the Italian cheeses and breads that accompanied the wines. Further tastings are being arranged for May and June. For further information, or to join the Wine Group, please contact Laurie Burbridge (Tel: 01392 668833, E-mail: L.Burbridge@exeter.ac.uk)

Bridge: Monthly meetings continue from strength to strength and we have been pleased to welcome several new faces since the last Newsletter. We play a mixture of rubber bridge and Chicago in a relaxed and informal setting. More players are always welcome, at any level of experience. For more details contact David Oates on 01392 279722, E-mail: mail@davalo.co.uk.

Music/Opera: there were two events in April: Bach's St John Passion in the Cathedral; where the performance was semi-staged (an enhancement for many but a little distracting for some), but musically very good; and a visit to Plymouth to see a performance of *Madame Butterfly* by the Welsh National Opera, well-presented and beautifully sung. Please contact Alan Leadbetter for more information at 01392 254855 or on e-mail aandbleadbetter@onetel.com.

Gardening: emerging from its winter hibernation, the Group's first visit was to Marwood Gardens in North Devon, a spectacular garden in a deepcombe, with a beautiful lake and stream running down the valley. The day was fine and, once the traffic jam in Barnstaple had been endured and escaped from, Members had an interesting talk from the Head Gardener and then a wander through the garden admiring the magnificent magnolias and camellias.

The summer programme includes visits to Abbotsbury on 18th May (a few places still available), and to the Orangery at Mamhead on 17th June. For further information, please contact Anne Mayes at SOBE, Streatham Court, University of Exeter EX4 4PU or e-mail a.c.mayes@exeter.ac.uk.

Restaurants: the Spring/Summer programme got under way with a visit to the beautifully-set Combe House Hotel, near Honiton: very good food and a delightful ambiance. This was followed by a return visit to the ever-popular Jack-in-the Green at Rockbeare, good food and agreeable company. For more details contact CorbinPFCORBINA@aol.com or 01392 256887. On 16th May the Group was going to the Michelin two-star restaurant in Torquay The Elephant; however, the expense and very limited menu (fish and chips, even the two-

Michelin-star variety, are hardly the culinary heights) has caused a change of plan and we are going to the one-star Orestone Manor at Maidencombe, visited and much enjoyed previously; on 14th June we go slightly down-market to the pub The Five Bells at Clyst Hydon; finally we are going to La Petite Maison in Topsham on 11th July.

Coffee Mornings: held at the Imperial Hotel, New North Road, Exeter, on the last Tuesday of each month, for those members who enjoy a ‘chat and coffee’ (or tea!). The next meeting is on Tuesday 29th May from 10 a.m. – 11.30 a.m.

Forthcoming Events

There are two events planned for the summer, both in July. We hope that, in spite of it being holiday time, as many Members as possible will come along.

An Antiques Quiz Evening, Friday 13th July, at the Isca Centre in Summer Lane, Exeter, at 7.15 p.m. Whitton & Laing will bring along several antique items and each of our Members will be invited to complete a questionnaire giving what they consider to be the value of each item. These questionnaires will be checked by Mr Wakefield Whitton and our general ignorance (or knowledge) of the antiques market revealed! Wakefield has agreed to give a valuation on any item of interest which members are invited to bring along. I am sure this will be of interest to those of us who have a hidden ‘treasure’ in the attic! However, as his time will be limited, it is requested that only one item per household is brought. Tickets for the evening will be £8 per person, to include a buffet supper. Drinks can be purchased at the bar at reasonable prices. Attendance will be limited to 40-50, on a first-come-first-served basis, so apply early to avoid disappointment. Application form at the back of this Newsletter.

West Somerset Railway Trip with Swing Band and Ploughman’s Supper, Saturday 28th July: come and join us on a summer evening trip from Bishop’s Lydeard to Minehead on the wonderful West Somerset Railway. A ploughman’s supper (choose from either ham or cheese served with a pint of cider or beer) will be served on the journey as part of the overall cost. A Swing Band will be playing at Minehead Station where we can get off and mingle for a while before our journey back. The bar will be open throughout. We will leave the University at 5 p.m. for a coach journey to Bishops Lydeard where we will join the train for the journey to Minehead. We should arrive back in Exeter at about 10.30 p.m. The cost is £25 per person. Application form at the back of this Newsletter.

WEST SOMERSET RAILWAY TRIP

Saturday 28th July

The trip will include coach journeys from Exeter to Bishops Lydeard and back, the railway journey, ploughman's supper and swing band

Cost: £25 per person

The coach will depart from the University at 5 p.m. from the bus bay opposite the Northcott Theatre and return to Exeter by approximately 10.30 p.m. There is a bar on the train at which further drinks can be purchased.

Please note: we can only take 30 people, so the trip will be on a first-forms-to-be-received basis. If you do not hear from Mary Banks following your application you can assume that you are going. If you are too late with your application your cheque will be returned to you.

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

1/We would like to come on the West Somerset Railway Trip on 28th July

Name(s).....

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Address(es).....

.....

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

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

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Please indicate whether you would like a cheese ploughman's or a ham ploughman's supper:

Cheese..... Ham.....

ANTIQUES QUIZ EVENING

Isca Centre, Summer Lane, Exeter

Friday 13th July, starting at 7.15p.m.

Cost: £8 per person.

The evening will be presented by Whitton & Laing, and will include a buffet supper. Drinks can be purchased at the Centre's bar. If Members would like to bring along an antique of their own to be examined and valued, please limit such antiques to one per household.

Please note: we only have room for 40-50 people, so the event will be on a first-forms-to-be-received basis. If you do not hear from Jan Reynolds following your application you can assume that you are going. If you are too late with your application your cheque will be returned to you.

Please complete the slip below and return it to Jan Reynolds, UERSA Secretary,
77 Rosebarn Lane, Exeter, EX4 9DG

I/We would like to come to the Antiques Evening on 13th July

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.....