



## **RETIRED STAFF ASSOCIATION**

### **NEWSLETTER**

#### **Issue 10, September 2007**

Enclosed with this Issue of the Newsletter is the Agenda for our third AGM in October. Our newly-formed Association is flourishing and it is good to see so many Members at our various events. The Committee has worked hard and enthusiastically to promote UERSA and to arrange events to suit our Members. But at the end of three years the Committee feels, for several reasons, that it is time more Members got involved with the running of UERSA: one or two Committee members are finding their tasks more burdensome than they can accept; others have commitments which cannot easily be balanced with Committee work; and perhaps most importantly it would be good to have some new blood in the Committee, with new ideas, perhaps some changes in direction, and generally a fresh look at what UERSA is and where it is going. And it is not only Committee Members who would like a bit of a change. Some of the Group Leaders, who have over the last three years been organising many of our most popular and enjoyable events, would like to consider passing on the task to others. So when we come, at the AGM, to call for nominations, please think seriously about joining the Committee or leading a Group and putting forward your ideas for the running of UERSA – there is surely a lot of talent out there!

#### **Annual General Meeting**

The Third Annual General Meeting will take place in the Xfi Building, Streatham Court, University of Exeter, on **Friday 12<sup>th</sup> October at 6 p.m.** After the Meeting there will be an opportunity to meet fellow Members over a glass of wine. Subscriptions can also be paid to Jan Reynolds, our Secretary, before or after the AGM. The Agenda for the Meeting is attached to this Newsletter

#### **General Notes**

**Membership Secretary:** Sandy Simpson, our Membership Secretary, is standing down after three years, during which her helpfulness and efficiency have been much appreciated.

**Subscriptions:** the Committee has decided to hold the subscription at £6 for a single or dual membership. Subscriptions are due on 1<sup>st</sup> October for 2007-2008; a subscription form is attached to this Newsletter and can either be posted with a cheque to our Secretary Jan Reynolds (as we are temporarily without a Membership Secretary) at 77 Rosebarn Lane, Exeter EX4 5DG, or brought to the AGM and paid in person to Jan. Although the subscription is actually due on 1<sup>st</sup> October, there is no problem if Members would prefer to pay 12 days later at the AGM. We would, however, hope to have all subscriptions in by 31<sup>st</sup> October.

**Coffee Mornings:** these will start again, after the summer break, on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> September at the Imperial Hotel from c.10.00 am to 11.30 am, and subsequently on the last Tuesday of each month (i.e. 30<sup>th</sup> October, 27<sup>th</sup> November). All Members most welcome.

Some interesting University news: The *Times Good University Guide*, published in August, ranks Exeter in 17<sup>th</sup> place. This is the first time we have appeared in the top 20 in this publication, and we have risen from 28<sup>th</sup> place last year. Exeter appears above many of our competitors, including Nottingham, Manchester and Cardiff.

### **Personal Notes**

Very sadly we have five deaths to report in this Issue: Cynthia Ransome, who was our Social Secretary until recently, and whose death was a great shock to us all on the UERSA Committee; Ian Linn, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Biology; John Dudman (Hospitality Services); George Duller (Mathematics Department); and Kenneth Shaw (Education).

On a more cheerful note we have a communication from our Past President Peter Wiseman (I bet none of you ever thought that Exeter might be a model for Hogwarts!):

#### Dumbledore disclaimer:

Members may have noticed a story in the press this summer – part of the hype about the final Harry Potter novel by J.K.Rowling – claiming that our ex-President Professor Peter Wiseman was the inspiration for Albus Dumbledore, Headmaster of Hogwarts. Alas, it's all nonsense. It was started by Marc Horne in *Scotland on Sunday*, alleging that 'Wiseman made a big impression on the young J.K.Rowling as her mentor during her time studying Greek and Roman mythology at Exeter between 1983 and 1986'. In fact Jo Rowling's Exeter degree was in French. She took Greek and Roman Studies as an 'Additional Subject' for her first two years; and though Peter was indeed Head of the Classics Department at that time, he was on study leave for most of JKR's first year, and in her second he was just one of four or five Classics staff whose lectures and classes she went to. Hardly her 'mentor'! Still, he did teach her Roman mythology, including Remus... The 'crucial similarities' Horne alleges include (a) 'that both have a sweet tooth and a predilection for enjoying confectionery between lectures', and (b) that both are 'imposing, tall and thin figures with twinkling eyes and white whiskers'. Peter comments: 'The first is pure invention – I don't have a sweet tooth at all. As for the second, when Jo Rowling was at Exeter I was in my early forties, and the beard was black. Dunno about the eyes'

*{Just shows you should never believe a word you read in the newspapers... Ed.}*

### **Reports on General Events**

Antiques Evening: after a most interesting quiz set by our speaker Mr Whitton of Whitton and Laing which really stretched our knowledge of antiques, we then presented our 'treasures' for comment and valuation – though none of us came away millionaires we did learn quite a bit about them.

West Somerset Train Trip: Our good luck with the weather deserted us and it was a very damp evening when we joined the train; it got even damper when we arrived in Minehead, which was a shame because the station is just a few yards from the front and splendid views over the sea, and we had a Big Band playing to welcome us on the station platform. Nevertheless we managed to have an enjoyable time in spite of the rain.

### **Reports on Group Activities**

Badminton: Meetings of the Group have had to be changed from Mondays to Fridays for the Autumn, in the University Sports Hall, 11-12 noon. For more details contact Jan Reynolds on 01392 271204, email: janreynolds@freeuk.com

Bridge Group: Monthly meetings will resume in September. 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. Come and give us a try. For more details contact David Oates on 01392 279722, email: mail@davallo.co.uk

Gardening Group: We have had four most enjoyable visits this Summer, to Abbotsbury Gardens in Dorset, to the Orangery near Mamhead, to Winsford Walled Gardens near Okehampton, and to Pine Lodge Gardens near St Austell. The Abbotsbury visit was made particularly pleasant by good and informative guiding, and Pine Lodge Gardens, in perfect sunny conditions, was delightfully free of other visitors so we could wander at will (and indulge ourselves in the plant sale centre). Abbotsbury and Pine Lodge are well-known great gardens, but the other two were generally unfamiliar. The Orangery was originally part of the Mamhead House estate but is now a separate property and the owners have used the surrounding parkland with its beautiful views and extensive woodlands to create a most impressive setting, with flower borders, avenues of trees and a lake at the top of the hill! Winsford Walled Garden is that rare thing in the West Country: a summer garden, not a rhododendron or camellia in sight. It is a newcomer on the garden circuit but has spectacular collections of rare and beautiful plants – well worth a visit. For more details contact Anne Mayes on 01392 263224 or 01647 252603, email: a.c.mayes@exeter.ac.uk

Music and Opera Group: the Autumn programme for the Group includes a visit to Bristol Hippodrome for *Carmen* (Bizet) on September 26<sup>th</sup>; a concert in the Cathedral with the Exeter Festival Chorus including works by Bernstein, Janacek, and Rutter, on November 8<sup>th</sup>; and Glyndebourne Touring Opera presenting *L'Elisir d'Amore* (Donizetti) at the Theatre Royal, Plymouth on November 20<sup>th</sup>. Alan Leadbetter is giving up the Leadership of this Group, and John Sandall will take over from the beginning of next year. For more details of the Autumn programme contact Alan Leadbetter on 01392 254855, email: aandbleadbetter@onetel.com

Restaurants: Our most recent luncheon venues were a return visit to Orestone Manor after a successful visit in June last year, and visits to the Five Bells at Clyst Hydon and La Petite Maison in Topsham. Members enjoyed the contrasting styles at the restaurants, e.g. the emphasis on country fare, especially meat pies, at the Five Bells over against the French influence found (deliciously) at La Petite Maison. The Autumn programme includes visits to the Culm Valley Inn, Culmstock, the Dartmoor Inn at Lydford and the Blue Fish, Queen Street, Exeter. For more details contact Peter Corbin on 01392 256887, email: CorbinPFCorbin@aol.com

Walking Group: The Group has really been going it this summer, mostly in sunshine, along the cliffs above Beer and Branscombe, on Dartmoor to Rowtor and West Mill Tor (dodgy weather here, though nothing to what struck the Ten Tours victims two days later), to Heddon Mouth on the spectacular North Devon coast, for the less intrepid along the Exe Valley round Bramford Speke and Pynes, and to Hembury Fort in secluded and picturesque East Devon. For details of Autumn walks contact Trevor Priest on 01392 259740, email: preist.exeter@blueyonder.co.uk or go to the UERSA website at [www.groups.ex.ac.uk/uersa/walking.shtml](http://www.groups.ex.ac.uk/uersa/walking.shtml)

Wine Group: Our most recent wine tasting was held on 26<sup>th</sup> July. This was a 'blind' tasting, with the identity and cost of 10 wines (ranging in price from £4.25 to £28) concealed until the end of the evening. Those present were invited to say how much they would be prepared to pay for each wine and then compare these figures with the actual cost. An interesting and fun evening, but sadly everyone's favourite red wine was the one that cost £28! Laurie is looking to find someone else to take over as Group Leader, but for the time being for more details about the group's programme contact him on 01392 668833, email: L.Burbridge@exeter.ac.uk

### **Forthcoming general events**

We have three events to look forward to before Christmas:

A Trivia Fun Quiz on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> November at 7.30 in the Isca Centre. This is not for Mensa members, just a bit of a test for our little grey cells, run in teams of four.

Bath Christmas Markets: a return visit to this popular venue on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> November, coach starting at 9.30 am.

UERSA Christmas Lunch, at the Devon Hotel (Matford Roundabout), Exeter on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> December, 12.30 for 1 p.m. A traditional three-course Christmas lunch or a vegetarian option, welcome drink (further drinks may be purchased at the bar).

We had our Christmas Lunch here two years ago and it proved to be a very pleasant occasion.

Forms for all these can be found attached to this Newsletter, so sign up, pay up, and come and enjoy yourselves.



## **RETIRED STAFF ASSOCIATION**

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**on**

**Friday 12 October at 6 p.m.**

**in the Xfi Building, Streatham Court, University of Exeter**

The Association has now been in existence for three years and the Annual General Meeting is a chance for members to hear what has been going on during the past year, to shape the future of UERSA, and to have a glass of wine with friends and past colleagues; you can also pay your subscription for 2007-8 here.

#### **AGENDA**

- 1 To note the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of UERSA held on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2006
- 2 **Chairman's report**
- 3 **Treasurer's report**
- 4 To confirm the **subscription rates** for 2007/8
- 5 **Election of Officers and Committee for 2007/8**

The following officers of UERSA have agreed to serve for a further year:  
CHAIRMAN: **Eddie Abel**  
TREASURER: **Keith Blanshard**.  
SECRETARY: **Jan Reynolds**  
SOCIAL SECRETARY: **Mary Banks**  
NEWSLETTER EDITOR: **Sue Guy**

The following members of the Executive Committee have agreed to serve for a further year:  
**Laurie Burbridge, Bruce Coleman, Peter Corbin, Anne Mayes and Tony Wragg**

The following Officer and Committee Member are standing down: **Sandy Simpson** (Membership Secretary)  
**Dennis Lane**
- 6 **Election of two new members to serve on the Executive Committee:**
  - (i) The Committee wishes to receive nominations for the post of **Membership Secretary**.
  - (ii) The Committee wishes to propose **Sue Odell** as a new Member to the Committee.
- 7 **Election of President Elect – 2008/9**

The Committee wishes to propose **Mary Ravenhill** as President Elect for 2008/9.
- 8 Report on the activities of **Special Interest Groups**
- 9 Suggestions for future activities and events
- 10 Any other business.



**RETIRED STAFF ASSOCIATION**

**Subscription for 2007-2008**

Subscriptions are due on 1<sup>st</sup> October, but those wishing to pay in person at the AGM on 12<sup>th</sup> October may do so. However, all subscriptions should be paid by 31<sup>st</sup> October.

Please renew my/our subscription to the University of Exeter Retired Staff Association. A cheque for £6, made payable to The University of Exeter, is enclosed

I/we no longer wish to be members of the University of Exeter Retired Staff Association

*(Please delete as appropriate)*

Name(s).....  
.....

Address.....  
.....  
.....

In the interests of minimising our administrative costs we strongly encourage members to use e-mail. Please indicate whether you are prepared to receive all future UERSA information by e-mail:

YES/NO *(delete as appropriate)*

If YES, your e-mail address.....

Please return this form to the UERSA Secretary, either in person at the AGM, or by post to:

Jan Reynolds, UERSA Secretary,  
77 Rosebarn Lane,  
Exeter EX4 5DG.  
(Tel: 01392 271204)

**UERSA CHRISTMAS LUNCH**

**Devon Hotel, Matford, Exeter,  
Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> December,  
12.30 for 1.00 p.m.**

The cost is £18 per person.

This is for a three-course traditional Christmas lunch or a vegetarian option (menu attached for your information). It also includes a welcome drink (further drinks may be purchased at the bar).

We realize that it is perhaps a bit early to be booking for Christmas, but this is the only Newsletter going out before Christmas and we need to know numbers attending sometime before the date of the Lunch.

.....

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

I/We would like to come to the Christmas Lunch on 13 December.

Name(s).....

.....

Address(es).....

.....

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

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

.....

*Remember if you are booking more than one event you need to send separate cheques for each event*

**Starters**

*Fresh Atlantic Prawn Platter presented on Mixed Salad Leaves  
crowned with a King Prawn served with Brown Bread & Butter  
Homemade Winter Vegetable Soup with Butter-fried Croutons  
Fanned Honeydew Melon with Winter Berries  
and Refreshing Raspberry Coulis  
Chilled Fruit Juice*

**Person 1 – Choice .....**      **Person 2 - Choice**  
.....

Main Courses – from the Carvery

*Fresh Traditional Devon Roasted Turkey served with Chipolata,  
Seasoning & Cranberry Sauce*

*Roast Devonshire Beef  
Served with Yorkshire Pudding & Creamed Horseradish*

*Vegetable, Cranberry & Goats Cheese Nut Roast  
enriched with a Delicate Redcurrant Jus*

*Accompanied by a Selection of Seasonal Vegetables & Potatoes*

**Person 1 – Choice .....**      **Person 2 - Choice**  
.....

**Desserts**

*Traditional Christmas Pudding  
complimented with Brandy Butter*

*Rich Chocolate, Rum & Chestnut Cheesecake  
served with Clotted Cream*

*Raspberry, Lemon & Grand Marnier Torte with Clotted Cream  
Duo of Local Cheeses served with Biscuits*

**Person 1 – Choice .....**      **Person 2 - Choice**  
.....

*Freshly Brewed Tea or Coffee with Mints*



By popular request we have once again arranged the following trip:

**UERSA COACH TRIP  
TO  
BATH CHRISTMAS MARKETS**

**Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> November**

**An opportunity to taste the continental atmosphere of the  
Markets or the visit the Abbey, the Baths, the Museums, the  
Pump Room or the shops**

The coach will leave the University at 9.30 a.m., from opposite the Northcote Theatre. The return to Exeter will be at approximately 7 p.m.

The cost is £10 per person. There are 50 seats available.

Please complete the slip below and return it to Mary Banks,  
UERSA Social Secretary, 8 Saint Hill Close, Exeter EX2 9JE, by  
**Friday 9<sup>th</sup> November.**

---

I/We would like to come to Bath on 29<sup>th</sup> November

Name(s).....

.....

Address(es).....

.....

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

Number attending.....

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

For.....

**Please note: we do not issue tickets – if you have not been  
successful your cheque will be returned**

*Remember if you are booking more than one event you need to send  
separate cheques for each event*

**UERSA**

**TRIVIA FUN QUIZ**

**Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> November at 7.30 p.m.**

**at**

**the Isca Centre, Summer Lane, Exeter**

Come along and test your memory, nothing difficult, just general knowledge. It will be run in teams of four, either bring your own team or join in with others on the night.

Cost: £5, which includes a light supper. Drinks can be bought at the bar.

---

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

I/We would like to come to the Quiz Evening on 9<sup>th</sup> November

Name(s).....

.....

Address(es).....

.....

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

Number attending.....

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

For.....

*Remember if you are booking more than one event you need to send separate cheques for each event*