



RETIRED STAFF ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

Issue 12, May 2008

After a cold wet start Spring is now bursting out all over. UERSA Members have been busy as usual, looking at gardens, eating and drinking at favourite restaurants round the area, attending concerts, etc. After some general notes there are the brief reports on these activities, and information about various events to come – see the application forms at the end of this Newsletter. You will see that there is mention of events quite far in the future as the next Newsletter is not due to be sent out until September.

General Notes

Membership Secretary: we now have a new Membership Secretary in the person of Judy Mead, and Judy can be contacted by phone (01392 425571) or email (j.c.mead@exeter.ac.uk). Please send all membership, including Group membership, queries or information to her from now on.

Position of Social Secretary on the Executive Committee: Mary Banks, who has been tireless in organising our UERSA events over the last couple of years, will be resigning her post at the AGM. As UERSA membership has increased and we are organising more events, the position of Social Secretary has become correspondingly more onerous. The Committee has put forward the idea of spreading the load by forming a Social Committee which could help with the jobs involved in organising these events. Individual members of the Social Committee could each organise one or at most two events each year; Mary would still be around to offer help and advice as to names and addresses of, for instance, coach hirers or caterers. If any UERSA Member would be interested in helping to run UERSA by joining the Social Committee please get in touch with Mary Banks by phone (01392 669239) or email (alanandmary@blueyonder.co.uk).

Reed Hall: Reed Hall has recently been closed for refurbishment, but is now open again. However, those Members of UERSA who have been accustomed to drop in for lunch will find that this is no longer possible. In the new regime at Reed Hall you have to book in advance if you want to have lunch there; this you can do by ringing 01392 269219. You have been warned! Also, Reed Hall has unfortunately raised its prices as a venue for hiring so high that UERSA will no longer be able to use the Hall and its grounds for functions. Seems a shame that one of the most pleasant venues in the University is no longer available to us, but such is life.

Sports Hall: Paul Mouland, the Development Officer for Sport and Wellness at the University has recently sent us a (somewhat daunting) list of activities at the Sports Hall or run from it, which might be of interest to Members.

- Over 50s Circuits: Monday 9 am-10 am, Streatham Sports Park.
Complete, low impact body workout where the emphasis is on fun and social interaction.
- Body Balance: Wednesday 7.30 am- 8.30 am, Streatham Sports Park.
A combination of Yoga, Tai Chi and Pilates which helps improve balance, strength and flexibility.
- Adult Coffee Mornings (no, *not* that sort of adult!): Tuesday and Thursday 10 am-12 pm. Two hours of tennis coaching and match play followed by coffee and relaxation.
- Badminton: any day in the main Sports Hall. Just call to make a booking and hire rackets and buy shuttlecocks.
- Outdoor heated swimming pool now open.
- Squash courts available for hire.
- Table Tennis tables for available hire

Forthcoming University Events: the University hosts or sponsors a great variety of events, lectures and talks, some of which may well be of interest to our Members. In future Newsletters it is hoped to include information about some of these. For a more complete list see www.exeter.ac.uk/news/whatson.shtml. At the moment there is an exhibition in Northcote House, in the Ground Floor Gallery, of West Country engravings by J.M.W. Turner, entitled *Turner and the Art of Engraving*. 18 engravings of South West scenes are displayed, together with detailed explanations about the craft of engraving and an exhibition of the various tools used in the processes. The Exhibition is open 12th May-4th July, 9 am-5 pm, Mondays to Fridays. On 28th May Philip Hensher is reading from his new novel *The Northern Clemency* [“an engrossing and hugely impressive novel”] in Queen’s Building, Lecture Theatre 1 at 6 pm. On 10th June Professor Carol Black, first National Director for Health and Work, Chair of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, and Chair of the Nuffield Trust, will give a lecture entitled *Working for a Healthier Tomorrow*, as part of the *Shaping the Future* Lecture Series; the venue is Xfi Building, 6.30 pm -7.30 pm.

Personal Notes

With great sadness we have to report the death of Deryck Fairclough, who was for many years on the staff of the Department of Education and latterly was from 1965-1977 the first Director of the Sports Hall. Deryck was a very considerable cricketer and played for Devon from 1949-1964. Deryck was a man of great and intelligent enthusiasm for sport as well as of personal modesty and good nature, a keen promoter of opportunities for young players and a good friend and guide to many people whose careers he touched. Of recent Members of the UERSA Executive Committee, Dennis Lane (whose career as a professional groundsman) was much helped by Deryck), Tony Wragg and Bruce Coleman would particularly like to be associated with this tribute to him.

Reports on General Events

Trivia Fun Quiz on 26th February: a repeat of the popular and enjoyable Trivia Quiz organised last November, at the Isca Centre.

Visit to Cardiff: over 30 Members who took the coach trip to Cardiff on 30th April had a great day out in this impressive city full of things to do and see. Even the weather co-operated: wet journey up and wet journey home, but dry during the time at Cardiff.

Reports on Group Activities

Garden Group: the advent of Spring always prompt Anne Mayes, the Group Leader, to arrange some really interesting outings and so it proved.

- Sherwood: this beautiful garden, near Newton St Cyres, was full of flowering bulbs and early shrubs – and even some rather glacial sunshine. Those who went are now in hot pursuit of a particularly gorgeous hellebore.
- Trewithen House and Gardens: a long-distance trip but well worth it. A splendid old house and the rightly famous Spring shrubs (azaleas, magnolias, camellias and rhododendrons) are the epitome of the Cornish spring garden.
- Taikoo Garden, Belstone: perched on the very edge of Dartmoor this garden is a tribute to the persistence and skill of the owners who battle the elements and the terrain to produce a delightful garden with outstanding views and lovely planting. The house (not open to the public) is an amazing example of do-it-yourself architecture by the original owner the Taipan of Swire, and surprisingly sympathetic to the Dartmoor environment.
- East Lambrook Garden: Another longish trip, but again well worth it. This iconic “cottage garden” by Margery Fish was looking lovely in the Spring sunshine with drifts of intermingling wild and cultivated Spring flowers. However, a sad note was struck with the news that the property was up for sale and in danger of disappearing, at least in its present form. The renowned restaurant and café was also shut, but we were kindly provided with refreshments by the current owners.

Anne has plans for further visits this summer, which she will circulate shortly to members of the Garden Group.

Restaurant Group:

- The Globe, Topsham: this combined wine-tasting and dining evening was a great success; the food was delicious and the wines outstanding and unfamiliar to most of those present.
- The Roedean Restaurant, Kenton: a very pleasant environment and excellent food.

- The Ode at Shaldon: this was felt by some Members to be a mixed pleasure: some very good cooking but thimblefuls of wine, at an unacceptably high price and served over half-an-hour after our arrival were not popular!

The May visit to the Exshed in Exeter is on 29th May – more about this visit in the next Newsletter. A lunch at Crediton in Cairney's Bistro is scheduled for July 2nd. This is being organised by Celia and John Boyle. To join the Restaurant Group and get the autumn programme of good eating places, members should contact Peter Corbin at corbinPFCorbin@aol.com

Music Group: the two Spring events were a concert in the Cathedral by the Exeter Festival Chorus, including Mozart's *Requiem* and Macmillan's *Seven Last Words from the Cross*; and Verdi's *Falstaff* at Plymouth Theatre Royal. The Cathedral concert was a magnificent and moving performance for the twenty-four Members attending and *Falstaff* in the wonderful Peter Stein production was an excellent Welsh National Opera performance, with the by now usual good dinner beforehand in the Theatre. The autumn programme will probably include two more operas in Plymouth and Bristol and Walton's *Balshazzar's Feast* in the Cathedral. For details contact John Sandall at John_Sandall@yahoo.co.uk

Walking Group: the Walking Group is unbelievably about to notch up its 50th walk in June! What a tribute to the hardiness of our Members. There is a full programme for the next couple of months. By the time you get this Newsletter the Group will have been to South Zeal and Cosdon Hill on Dartmoor, along the Creedy near Newton St Cyres, and to Woodbury Castle and Common. The first walk in June is on the 4th: a short morning stroll round Exwick (3-4miles) and on 24th June there is a trip to Lundy from Bideford. The walking Group is flourishing with new members joining and the increasing popularity of the short walks (even intrepid UERSA Members get older, stiffer, fatter, less inclined for 8 miles hard over rough terrain). Enquiries to: preist.exeter@blueyonder.co.uk

UERSA Coffee Mornings

The regular coffee mornings (held on the last Tuesday of each month between 10 a.m. and 12 noon) at the Imperial, New North Road, Exeter are proving to be quite popular. 30-40 members are now coming in for a chat and coffee, which is very pleasing.

Badminton Group

The badminton group has been very enjoyable. Playing badminton for an hour (between 11 a.m. and 12 noon) one morning a week, followed by a chat and coffee at a convenient venue on campus. We have now finished play for three months (June, July and August) and will start again at the beginning of September, at the University's Sports Hall. If anyone is interested in joining (we could do with two or three additional players), please contact Jan Reynolds on 01392 271204.

Forthcoming General Events

We are having two events this Summer and early Autumn:

A Garden Party on Thursday 3rd July, at the Exeter Cricket Club, Prince of Wales Road. The Cricket Club is a delightful venue, beautiful views, smooth green lawns and the use of the Clubhouse if it rains. A really good tea will be provided and light alcoholic refreshment in the shape of Sangria. Please read the parking and access notes on the application form attached to this Newsletter.

Visit to Hartland Abbey and Gardens, North Devon, Thursday 25th September. The historic home of the Stucley family with beautiful gardens and parkland leading to the beach on the rugged Atlantic Coast. The house is on the site of a very old abbey foundation, dissolved in 1536, and is still a family home. Application form attached to this Newsletter.

For forward planners:

AGM: The Annual General Meeting will take place in the Xfi Building on **Friday 17th October at 6 p.m.** Details and agenda will be circulated with the September Newsletter.

The **UERSA Christmas Lunch** will be held at the Devon Hotel (again) on **Tuesday 16th December 2008.**

GARDEN PARTY

Thursday 3rd July at 2.00 p.m.

At Exeter Cricket Club, Prince of Wales Road

Cost: £8 per person

(which includes a very good afternoon tea and glass of sangria)

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 Garden Party on 3rd July

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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Parking and Access Notes

Parking is available on the side of the Cricket Ground. Drive through the Devon and 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 and walk down the hill to Prince of Wales Road then up to the Cricket Ground.

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

VISIT TO HARTLAND ABBEY AND GARDENS, NORTH DEVON

Thursday 25th September

Cost: £20 per person

(to include entry to House and Gardens as well as the coach fare)

The coach will leave the University at 8.30 a.m. from the usual place opposite the Northcott Theatre, returning at about 7 p.m.

Closing date for booking is Friday 12th September

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 on the trip to Hartland Abbey and Gardens on 25th September

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