



RETIRED STAFF ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

Issue 18, April 2010

What with a General Election, exploding volcanoes and dodgy banks, life seems to be getting just a bit too exciting. However, comforting, predictable UERSA has prepared a summer of events to take your mind off these problems, enjoying the Devon and Cornwall countryside at its best, sampling food and wine, music and cream teas. Our 5th Anniversary Charity Walk on 5th May (details already circulated separately) should inject just enough altruism and effort to stop us feeling too complacent.

A Message from our Chairman

This is a significant year for our Association as we approach our 6th birthday because a number of important Officers and Committee Members will be leaving their posts at the AGM in October. Three reach the end of their terms of office: Jan Reynolds, our Secretary, and Sue Guy, the Editor of the Newsletter, who have served with distinction since UERSA was set up in 2004, and Tony Wragg who has completed the maximum of four years as a valuable Committee Member. (We hope that he will nevertheless continue his involvement in organising the Annual Garden Party at the Cricket Club). In addition, Mary Banks has decided to take a break from her role as Social Co-ordinator which she has carried out so successfully for four years. I feel sure that everyone involved will agree that we are a happy, open and successful organisation. Our membership keeps growing and our activities are thriving: for the Music/Opera Group and Restaurant Group, new organisers are now in post, and the Wine Group has resurfaced under its original leader. However, if our success is to continue we do need some enthusiastic volunteers to fill the vacant Offices and Committee places from October 1st. I can assure you that if you come forward to participate in the running of our Association you will enjoy it – yes, there is some work, but there is also companionship and you will gain satisfaction and have fun. So please give this request your serious consideration and any current (or past) Committee Member, including myself, will be more than happy to tell you about the job before you finally commit yourself. To contact Members of the Committee go to the UERSA website at <http://groups.exeter.ac.uk/uersa>, where their names, addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses are given.
Alan Leadbetter.

Personal Notes

We are very sad to report the deaths of Margaret Barr, for many years Secretary to the Vice-Chancellor until she moved to the Development Office, and of Mrs Rikki Clayton, widow of Professor of Classics “Fred” Clayton, and Warden of Jessie Montgomery Hall from 1966 to 1970.

Reports on General Events

The Tempest, by Shakespeare was performed by members of the Drama Department in the Roborough Studio on 9th March. As usual it was a delightful performance of great professionalism – and one or two surprises: two Mirandas caused the audience some initial confusion but we are told that a later version of the play by Dryden did indeed contain two Mirandas, so there is evidence for this departure from the text.

The Trivia Quiz at the Isca Centre on 22nd March was a repeat of a popular event. It was well-attended and enjoyed, even by the dunces [amongst whom I figured prominently -Ed.]

Reports on Group Events

Music/Opera Group: The Welsh National Opera Company gave us a splendid production of Mozart's *Il Seraglio* at the Theatre Royal, Plymouth, set on an Orient Express-type train which actually moved across the stage. All thoroughly lighthearted, funny, and beautifully sung and acted.

Gardens Group: Although the Group had suffered from its first wet trip last autumn, our more usual luck held this time and we had a truly memorable visit to Marwood Hill Gardens near Barnstaple, glorious sunshine and even more glorious magnolias glowing against a deep blue sky.

Restaurant Group: a return trip to the Roedean Restaurant at Kenton was as before a most enjoyable experience. Then the Group drove deep into the Devon countryside to the Stag Inn at Rackenford near Tiverton. This is a lovely old pub and, in spite of some early confusion due to staffing problems, gave us a very pleasant meal.

Bridge Group:

The Group continues to flourish in the warm and music-filled atmosphere of Knightley. Sessions usually start at 7 p.m. and end around 10 p.m.

Walking Group: Do you remember the weather conditions this year during January to March? Amazing though it may seem, there *were* walks undertaken then by the intrepid Walking Group, though once or twice their determination wobbled: the Topsham Tea Walk turned into a stroll along the Exe (during which two walkers managed to get detached from the main party but were later found in another café); and at the start of the walk from Okehampton only the presence of *children* taking part undeterred in a bike ride along the Tarka Trail stiffened the sinews of the Walking Group and sent it onto Dartmoor to what had been described the previous evening as the coldest place in the UK. Other walks were via Maidencombe to Babbacombe in brilliant sunshine but a freezing wind on February 8th; and to South Zeal on 16th February, with the snow-laden tors above and boggy mires below. Finally, in March, Spring began to show itself and the walk from Castle Drogo to Chagford was in pleasant (even warm) sunshine. Webber's hardware store in Chagford proved a bit of a distraction (when does it not!) but all the Walkers returned safely to Castle Drogo.

Wine Group:

The Group met for the first time for 18 months in March and enjoyed a tasting of interesting wines provided by Piers Markham of Whistle Wines; then in April there was a tasting of Portuguese wines chosen by John Ford. Laurie Burbridge, though pleased to be starting up the Group again, is looking for a successor – please contact him on 01392 668833 or L.Burbridge@exeter.ac.uk

Calendar of Events, May-July

(see below for further details of each event)

Sat. 15 May	Garden Group	Rosemoor Gardens
Wed.19 May	Restaurant Group	Cadeleigh Arms, Bickleigh
Tues.25 May	UERSA	Coffee Morning, Imperial Hotel
Wed.26 th May	Walking Group	Eggesford Walk
Wed.26 May	Bridge Group	Knightley
Sat.5 June	UERSA	Tamar trip
Tues.8 th June	Walking Group	Exmoor Walk
Wed.16-Thu.17 June	Walking Group	SW Coast Path Walk, nr Fowey
Thur.17 June	Gardens Group	Little Ash Bungalow
Wed.23 June	Restaurant Group	Green Door, Woodbury
Sat.26 June	Music Group	Monteverdi's <i>Vespers</i> , Cathedral
Thur.24 June	Bridge Group	Knightley
Tues.29 June	UERSA	Coffee Morning, Imperial Hotel
Wed.30 June	UERSA	Garden Party, Cricket Club
Thur. 1 July	Wine Group	Tasting at the Hermitage garden
July-August	UERSA	No coffee mornings until Sept.
July-August	UERSA	No badminton until Sept.

Forthcoming General Events

Tamar trip, 5th June: this promises to be a real UERSA highlight for the Summer: a cruise up the Tamar from Plymouth to Calstock, then a visit to Cotehele (a Tudor Manor house), its gardens dropping steeply down to the river, and its Quay and Mill. See the end of this Newsletter for details and an application form.

Garden Party, 30th June: Do come and have a traditional afternoon tea (after a suitable welcome drink) and meet your friends. Surely our luck with the weather will change this year and warm sunshine will bathe the scene. See the end of this Newsletter for details and an application form.

Coffee Mornings: after two gatherings in May and June there will be a summer break for during July and August, with a re-start in September.

Forthcoming Group Events

Music/Opera Group: Monteverdi *Vespers* in the Cathedral on 26th June. Contact Helen Pope (01392 860259) or Alastair Logan (01392 434715) for details.

Gardens Group: May's visit will be to Rosemoor on 15th May. Even though things are late this season the roses may well be out and will provide a stunning spectacle. There is also a special plant sale. In June there is a visit to a new garden – Little Ash Bungalow at Fenny Bridges on 17th June, the garden of Helen Brown who won the Gardener's World best garden competition last year. Contact Anne Mayes on 01647 252603 or a.c.mayes@exeter.ac.uk.

Restaurant Group: The Group is making two more visits this season: to Cadeleigh Arms near Bickleigh, and to the Green Door at Woodbury on June 23rd. Contact Peter and Rita Preece on 01392 271432 for Cadeleigh, contact Linda Hale on 01392 210498 or Jean Cole on 01392 83315 for Woodbury.

Bridge Group:

Further meetings of the Group are planned for 26th May and 24th June

Walking Group: There are 3 walks planned for late May and June: two medium length and one two-day marathon. On Wed. 26th May a circular walk round Eggesford in the Taw Valley (6 miles); on Tues. 8 June an Exmoor walk from Withypool to Tarr Steps and back (7 miles); on Wed. 16th June a two-day walk on the Southwest Coast Path round Fowey, day 1 Charlestown to Fowey (10 miles), on day 2 Fowey to Polperro (7 miles). Parallels with last year's Midsummer Madness should *not* be drawn – the leader promises less steep hills and fewer of them.

Wine Group: A wine tasting is planned for 1st July at the Hermitage gardens.

Badminton Group: the Group has been meeting up weekly but will not be playing during most of May as the Sports Hall will be used for the purpose of University Examinations. The Group will take a summer break during July and August, starting again in September.

University News of Interest to Members

Forum Project: As if we haven't suffered enough already, visitors to the Streatham Campus will find even more intense activity and consequent disruption during this summer, as the Forum Project presses on, sweeping trees, plants, paths, roads, car parks and even buildings before it. The possible light at the end of the tunnel is a completion date of the end of 2011 (well, we've all heard about completion dates...)

As an antidote to this depressing news, David Allen, the Registrar, in a message distributed throughout the University, writes: "[Exeter University is] still investing in our facilities and creating new jobs (100 new academics to be appointed this year). ...We have just had a very good grant settlement from the government which gave us nearly £1 million more than we were expecting".

UERSA ANNUAL GARDEN PARTY

**Wednesday 30th June at 2.30pm
at Exeter Cricket Club,
Prince of Wales Road**

The club provides views over Exeter and a lovely lawn for us to (hopefully) enjoy our traditional afternoon tea (after a suitable welcome drink), but if per chance it rains we have use of the clubhouse.

There will be no charge for this event.

Please complete the slip below and return it to;
Mary Banks, UERSA Social Secretary, 8 Saint Hill Close, Exeter EX2 9JE
by Friday 18th June

.....
I/We would like to come to the Garden Party on Wednesday 30th June

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.

UERSA

**JOIN US ON A TAMAR CRUISE
and a
VISIT TO COTEHELE
A Wonderful Tudor Manor House on the Banks of the Tamar**

Date: Saturday 5th June

Arranged by Mary Ravenhill & Nancy Scattergood

We will meet for an 8.30 a.m. departure from the Exeter Squash Club

We arrive in Plymouth to take the 10.15 a.m. boat to Calstock arriving there about 12 noon. You then have a choice of travelling to Cotehele by either continuing on the coach or taking the mile walk along the river.

As well as the house, the Quay and the Mill are well worth a visit, there is a shuttle bus between them and the house if people don't want to walk.

There is a NT restaurant at the house, and a snack bar at the Quay, but of course you can always bring a picnic to have in the lovely grounds.

The £25 cost covers the coach, boat and the driver's tip, but people who are not members of the National Trust will also have to pay the Cotehele entrance fee on the day.

Are you a NT member? yes/no (delete as appropriate) this will tell us how many will not have to pay the £8.70 entrance fee

We aim to leave Cotehele at 4.30 p.m. hoping to arrive back in Exeter about 6-6.30pm.

If you would like to join us please complete the slip below and send it to:
Nancy Scattergood, 56 Rosebank Cres Exeter EX4 6EH

Closing Date: 17th May 2010

I/We would like to join in the trip to Cotehele on Saturday 5th June

Are you a NT member? yes/no (delete as appropriate) this will tell us how many will not have to pay the £8.70 entrance fee

Name/s.....

Address.....

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

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

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