



To offer friendship through social and educational activities

EUC Exeter Branch Newsletter

Number 27

JUNE 2016

July to September 2016

Events and Lunches:

Tuesday 5th July 2016: Annual General Meeting of EUC Exeter Branch.

The AGM Starts at 11.00am and this year is to be held at:

The Ruffwell Inn, Thorverton, EX5 5NB.

The meeting will be followed by lunch at 1.00pm.

The AGM is to begin at 11.00am and after the meeting, at no later than 1.00 pm, we shall have lunch for those who are able to stay.



The agenda for the AGM is included in this newsletter (number 27): **please bring your copy to the meeting.** Also included are the minutes of last year's AGM for your information.

If you have suggestions for next year's programme, please come to the AGM. If you have concerns about the Club, its activities or where we meet, come and make your thoughts known. If you would like to take an active part in your Club by joining the Committee, please come and put yourself forward for election. And if you wish to raise any matters arising from the 2015 AGM, this is the opportunity to discuss them.

We need to have numbers for the meeting and for lunch. Please let me know if you are attending and if you wish to have lunch after the meeting no later than by 28th June.

Please book with Clive Lee (01392 841312 or clive.lee3@btinternet.com).

Tuesday 9th August 2016

Committee Meeting and Members Lunch:

The newly elected Committee of the Exeter Branch will meet at 11.00 am to agree on an outline programme for 2017. This will be followed by lunch for all members at 1.00 pm.

We will meet at the City Gate Hotel, Bridge Street, Exeter

Please contact Mike Aspray with ideas for events and to book for lunch (01884 242606 or mikeaspray@btinternet.com).

Tuesday 6 September 2016

Visit to the Westbank Community Health and Care Centre,

Farmhouse Rise, Exminster, EX6 8AT.

Westbank provides care and promotes health to communities across Devon.

The Community Care Centre offers care and support to more dependent members of the community through a range of services.

At the Healthy Living Centre, people of all ages can enjoy a wealth of activities to keep body and mind healthy. This bright, modern building has purpose-built facilities including a fitness suite and Kidzone. <http://www.westbank.org.uk>





The visit will commence with lunch at 12noon, following which there will be a talk on the activities of the Centre and then a tour of its facilities.

Please book with Clive Lee by 30 August (01392 841312 or clive.lee3@btinternet.com).

How to get there:

By Car: Follow the A379 into Exminster, turn into Reddaway Drive, turn into Farm House Rise and then take the first left. A Car Park is on your right.

By public transport:

The Stagecoach No 2 bus stop is nearby. Busses run every 20min in both directions. Use either the Pridhams Way Bus stop coming from the Dawlish -, or Devington Park when coming from the Exeter directions.

Reports

British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) Rugby Championship Final 23rd March 2016



The First Rugby XV team from the University of Exeter met their rivals, the University of Loughborough First XV in the BUCS Final played at Twickenham on 23 March 2016.

After a thrilling first half, in which Exeter took the lead by 18 points to 13, the second was truly nail-biting. Loughborough took and held the lead by 19 points to 18, until in the last minute of play a drop-goal brought victory to Exeter by 21 to 19. *Mike Aspray*

12th April 2016: Lunch at the Teaching Restaurant of Exeter College

A group of 24 club members gathered at 12 noon on 12th April in the teaching restaurant of Exeter College - known as @Thirty-Four. We all enjoyed an excellent lunch, probably the best value for money available in Exeter. The food was excellent, with a choice of two starters, three main courses and two desserts, followed by coffee if desired. Beer and wine was available separately for purchase from the bar. The food and beverages were served by Exeter College students who were in their first year of a catering course at the college - how pleasant it is to have food served properly! The food was cooked by students as well, it is amazing how such excellent food can be produced by relatively inexperienced young people; it says a lot about the training available at our local college and the quality of the staff overseeing the students. After enjoying good food and good company, we all left at about 2pm feeling very satisfied.

If any member would like to sample the food at Thirty-Four, lunch is served every weekday in term time, dinner is served on Wednesday and Friday in term time. The restaurant can be contacted by telephone - 01392 400334 during opening hours, or on line at 'Exeter College: @34 Restaurant' where sample menus etc. are displayed.

Clive Lee

April 21st Visit to Kents Cavern, Torquay

A small group of intrepid Exeter Club members made their way to Kents Cavern, Torquay for a tour of the ancient limestone cave.

"Kents Cavern is one of the most important Stone Age sites in Europe and one of Britain's best showcaves!

On your visit you'll go back to a time when the cave was home to ancient humans, sheltering from extreme weather, making fires, shaping tools and hunting Ice Age animals. As you walk through the extensive labyrinth of caverns, you'll be surrounded by 400 million year old rocks and spectacular stalagmites and stalactites."

A number had lunch from the freshly prepared dishes in the cafeteria, before we all met up at 2pm for our guided tour.

Although we were less than the stipulated group of 20, they both gave us the group rate and our individual tour guide. The young lady was very knowledgeable and entertaining. She brought the cavern and its former inhabitants alive to us together with geological and archaeological explanations of the cave's history.

The excavations in the Victorian era took a total of 15 years and huge amounts of sediment were removed.

The hard sediment now forms a quite generous car park on the site.

The entirely manual work was carried out in extreme conditions in the cold and damp cave,

where the only available lighting was through candles.



Introduction to the cavern and its history, showcasing the finds that are displayed.
These are just a small fraction of the many thousands discovered.

Bones of many prehistoric animals have been found there as well as human remains and those of Neanderthals.

The human remains are the oldest yet found in Britain (around 42000 years) and prove that both species co-existed in the area.

The accessible parts of the cavern are quite extensive and the envisaged 45 min tour ended up taking an extended hour and 10 min.

As is visible from the pictures the temperature in the caves is quite low, remaining at a constant 14°C.

Anoraks and stout shoes are recommended.

Well worth a visit!

Ian Thomson



Our group inside the cave at the start of our tour.
We all wore our anoraks as the cave remains at a cool 14°C all year round.



Yet deeper into the cavern where we entered numerous chambers on our circular tour.

Visit to Dartington Hall Gardens – 19th May 2016

On a rather damp morning, we gathered in the immense medieval courtyard before moving into the Hall to enjoy lunch in the 'White Hart' bar/restaurant. We were seated on long benches either side of a huge refectory table in a space resembling a medieval fireplace. Our number, initially twelve, was starting to promote thoughts about who should be asked to do the group portrait; then, consternation, we were thirteen, then fourteen, so Leonardo was stood down.



After lunch, the Head Gardener arrived to lead us on a tour of the Gardens combined with the story of the resurrection of the estate.

In 1925, Dorothy and Leonard Elmhirst, an American heiress and her English husband, purchased the neglected, 14th century Dartington. The couple, inspired by innovative thinkers of the time, were rural pioneers in the setting up of a number of farming, forestry and educational projects. Dartington rapidly became a magnet for artists, architects, philosophers and musicians from around the world and an exceptional centre of creative activity.

Early initiatives included the School, the Tweed Mill and, later, Dartington Glass. More recently, and long before climate-change became a major concern, Schumacher College was established and has become a leading centre for sustainable education.

The Elmhirsts repaired and reconstructed the dilapidated historical buildings, restored the huge courtyard on the model of an Oxford college quadrangle, built new properties and worked with landscape designers clearing the tangle of overgrowth and, moving away from rigid Victorian design, revealed the great trees, shapes and curves of the landscape. Three woodland walks were laid out and planted using yew, bay, and broadleaved hollies as background for a variety of camellias, magnolias and rhododendrons.

When the Elmhirsts first arrived, the garden's central feature was an overgrown formal Dutch-style sunken garden. Inspired by Dartington's medieval past and an earlier owner's reputation for jousting, Leonard dubbed it the 'Tiltyard' and had its tiered shape accentuated. Now, a series of grassy banks leads up to a row of ancient Chestnut trees where reposes Henry Moore's 'Reclining Figure'. A lawn, three more terraces and a row of Irish yew trees, known as 'The Twelve Apostles' separate this area from the Hall. Recent research, somewhat unromantically, has suggested that the 'Tiltyard' was, in fact, a giant waste depository/compost bay, with the Apostles planted as screening.

Such theories would perhaps not displease the Elmhirsts: early progressives and ecologists.

Paul Romain

24th May 2016: Lunch at The Lazy Toad Inn, Bramford Speke

In glorious weather we met up at the Lazy Toad, ready to enjoy the delights of this country inn. We were especially pleased to welcome Gerald and Barbara Halls, who used to organize these lunch-time outings. We were given two tables in a private area not far from the bar and kitchen, which made service of the food and drink very easy.



We had chosen to order on the day from the *à la carte* menu, rather than pre-order from a special menu. The arrangement worked well. The management had devised a clever

system to keep a record of what we were ordering. Each paying unit (a husband and wife, a single person, or some other combination) was given a card from a pack. Your correspondent had the Ace of Hearts, and was required to present it every time he ordered food or drink at the bar. Those who were too ensconced at their table or too deep in conversation willingly offered up their cards to allow others to order on their behalf. Prices at the Lazy Toad are a little higher than in many local pubs, but the exceptional freshness and quality of the food – nearly all of it locally sourced - more than makes up for it, and the service is impeccable. As a result, several of us had three dishes instead of the one or two that one might otherwise have. Conversation flowed and, before we knew it, it was time to settle our bills and leave. All pronounced The Lazy Toad a lovely venue for lunch, and we await our next visit.

Peter Wingfield-Digby

EXETER UNIVERSITY CLUB – EXETER BRANCH

Minutes of the 84th Annual General Meeting of the Exeter Branch of Exeter University Club held on Tuesday 7 July 2015 at the City Gate Hotel, Exeter.

1. The Chairman, Peter Wingfield-Digby, opened the meeting at 11.04 am and welcomed members present. Peter asked that all sign the Attendance List which would be passed around the meeting.
2. Attendance/Apologies. Only 17 members were present as recorded on the Attendance List, with two more joining the meeting later. Names recorded were:

Peter Wingfield-Digby	Mike Aspray	Gwyneth Garner
Susie Hewitt	Dorothy Wagland	Pamela Lee
Clive Lee	Frances Canning	Jacqueline Cummins
Louise Clunies-Ross	Hilarie Stevenson	Eleanor Attfield
Madge Tomasevic	Bato Tomasevic	Cliff Wadey
Frances Newcombe	Francis Unthank	
late arrivals.....	Barry Cripps	Ann Cripps

Apologies received from 31 members:

Rob Simons	Margaret Simons	Mary Rogers
Michael Head	Ann Head	Jesslyn Lott
Tony Dimsey	Jane Dimsey	John Slate
Melody Dougan	Rachel Jackson	Derek Jackson
Ian Thomson	Elisabeth Thomson	Renata Helmsley
Genie Ridgeon	Janet Feltham	Keith Feltham
Pamela Richardson	Ann Weeks	Alan Weeks
Gerald Halls	Barbara Halls	George Garner
George Tout	Mary Tout	Bill Laws
Marilyn Laws	John Attfield	Marguerite Attfield
Anne Cleife		

Members were sad to note the continuing poor health of Mary Tout, as reported by Ian Thomson after a telephone conversation with George. John Slate reported that he is caring for his wife, Joyce, who has sustained a broken femur. John's sister-in-law has recently had an 'Exeter Hip' fitted and is delighted with the result. The recent injury sustained by Elisabeth Thomson as a result of a fall was noted and a 'get well' card signed by all present.

3. The draft Minutes of the previous year's Annual General Meeting (the 83rd) (held on 8 July 2014 at Cowick Barton) had been accepted as a true record by the Committee at its

meeting on 12 August 2014 and signed by Chairman, Peter Wingfield-Digby. The approved Minutes had been published in the Branch Newsletter (issue no. 23). The meeting confirmed its approval of the Minutes.

Matters arising: none raised.

4. The Secretary's report was read to the meeting. It was accepted on the proposal of Clive Lee, seconded by Cliff Wadey and agreed *nem con*. There were no questions to the Secretary, but the Chairman commented that the Park & Ride buses from Matford terminate at South Street, which would provide a shorter walk to the City Gate Hotel than from Paris Street.

5. In the absence of the Treasurer, Elisabeth's report and accounts for 2014/15 were presented by the Secretary. Again, Peter Wingfield-Digby and Rob Simons had examined the end-of-year account statement, and were thanked.

The use of the term 'miscellaneous' in the accounts was questioned: what exactly is included? Presumably the Secretary's expenses are included, but as these include the cost of posting the newsletter, the true cost of producing and distributing the newsletter cannot be determined from the accounts statement. Similarly the inclusion of donations with speakers' fees was felt to be unhelpful: members wish these to be shown separately. The Treasurer's report was accepted on the proposal of Eleanor Attfield, seconded by Dorothy Wagland and agreed *nem con*.

6. Report from Exeter University Club (EUC) Representative: Louise Clunies-Ross spoke of the decision taken at its recent AGM to close Exeter University Club. The EUC Committee members will now work to secure the future of "Branch Lines", the website, the Annual Outing and the distribution of its financial assets. Louise spoke of the recruitment problems that all Branches face, namely the failure over several past years to attract new, younger members. She felt that we should modify our programme of events to include weekend events.

Louise emphasised that the closure of EUC will not affect the individual Branches. Francis Canning spoke of the Ladies' Alumni Group that meets in Exeter on the first Tuesday evening of every month.

7. Election of Branch Officers and Committee Members for 2015/16.

Chairman: the retiring Vice-Chairman, Gwyneth Garner, indicated her willingness to serve as Chairman. She was elected on the proposal of Clive Lee, seconded by Pamela Lee and agreed *nem con*. Gwyneth took the Chair and was presented with the Badge of Office by Peter Wingfield-Digby. Gwyneth expressed her appreciation and thanks to Peter for his year as Chairman. The meeting supported this with acclamation.

Vice-Chairman: Clive Lee was proposed by Louise Clunies-Ross, seconded by Peter Wingfield-Digby and having confirmed his willingness to stand, this nomination was approved unanimously.

Secretary: Mike Aspray indicated his willingness to remain in post, there being no other nominations. Mike was duly re-elected on the proposal of Gwyneth Garner, seconded by Dorothy Wagland and with the agreement of all present.

Treasurer: Elisabeth Thomson was absent, but had indicated her willingness to remain in post. There were no other nominations, thus Elisabeth was duly re-elected on the proposal of Mike Aspray, seconded by Louise Clunies-Ross and with the agreement of all present.

Committee Members:

- Immediate Past-Chairman: Peter indicated he is willing to serve and was duly appointed for 1 year with the agreement of all present.

- George Tout, being absent, had not indicated his willingness to continue as a Committee member for a further 2 years. His position will be held open pending clarification of his wishes and availability.

- Pamela Lee indicated her willingness to serve on the Committee. On the proposal of Mike Aspray, seconded by Louise Clunies-Ross and agreed *nem con*, Pamela will serve initially for 1 year.

- Susie Hewitt was nominated for a 1 year term of office by Mike Aspray. She indicated her willingness to join the Committee. Susie's nomination was seconded by Louise Clunies-Ross and agreed *nem con*.

Mary Tout and Alan Read retire from the Committee.

Ian Thomson, as Newsletter Editor, will serve on the Committee *ex officio*.

Pamela Lee offered to assist Elisabeth Thomson by collecting money at meetings. Peter Wingfield-Digby said he too would assist when Pamela is absent.

8. Election of an Exeter Branch representative to the EUC for 2015/16. Louise Clunies-Ross was proposed by Mike Aspray, seconded by Clive Lee and agreed *nem con*.

It was unanimously agreed that Louise Clunies-Ross, as Branch Representative on the EUC Committee, would be co-opted onto the Branch Committee.

9. Appointment of an auditor for 2015/16. The meeting agreed that the role is that of an examiner of the financial papers, rather than that, in the strictest terms, of auditor. Rob Simons was proposed for the role of Examiner by Peter Wingfield-Digby, seconded by Mike Aspray and agreed *nem con*. The meeting noted that Peter Wingfield-Digby will assist Rob as for 2014/15.

10. It was noted that the newly-elected Committee is due to meet on Tuesday 11 August 2015 at

11.00 am in the Garden Room at the City Gate Hotel. Following the meeting, lunch would be available for all Branch members. Peter Wingfield-Digby gave apologies for the meeting and lunch.

11. The programme for the remainder of 2015 was briefly reviewed.

Gwyneth Garner announced that the Branch Christmas Lunch will be held at Reed Hall on Thursday 3 December 2015, 12.00 for 12.30 pm subject to availability, with arrangements for coffee after the meal as in 2014. Anticipated total for the lunch expected to be about 50. Gwyneth explained that the lunch in September will be at the "Red Lion" in Broadclyst.

12. Programme for 2016, alternative meeting venues and the need to increase the number of members attending meetings.

An e-mail from Tony Dimsey describing the difficulties in getting to the City Gate Hotel for those with walking limitations was read to the meeting. A recent conversation with Gerald Halls reported by the Secretary supported this. Other locations had been tried by members in recent months and found to provide suitable facilities (the "Ruffwell" near Thorverton (Clive Lee and Louise Clunies-Ross); the "Fisherman's Cott" at Bickleigh (Ian Thomson and Peter Wingfield-Digby) as well as others visited for lunches (the "King's Arms" at Tedburn St Mary and the "White Horse" at Woodbury Salterton). Ann Cripps suggested the St Olave's Hotel in Exeter.

There are buses that run near to the City Gate Hotel: suggested that city centre bus routes should be illustrated in the Newsletter.

A number of suggestions for future talks, lunches and visits were then made by members present. Susie Hewitt suggested the Air Ambulance and a talk by Simon Dell on Everest. Pamela Lee recommended a return lunch visit to the College.

It is known that Paul and Simone Romain recommend a location for a lunch (the "Lamb Inn").

Dr Todd Gray offers a wide variety of historical subjects.

Hilarie Stevenson spoke of Dartington Hall and Gardens for a lunch.

Susie Hewitt recommended a visit to Buckfast Abbey with car sharing.

Clive Lee suggested the Exeter Volunteer Bureau and West Bank League of Friends.

Other suggestions included a visit to the Life Sciences Institute on the Streatham Campus of the University, a talk/visit by Terry Underhill, Head Gardener at Dartington Hall, a talk/visit to the University Gardens (Ian Park), and similar at Greenway (suggested by Dorothy Wagland). A visit to a local vineyard such as Yearlstone or Lily Farm (near Budleigh Salterton) was suggested by Gwyneth Garner.

Other suggestions were made by Ann Cripps and Frances Canning. They were invited, together with any other member, to send their suggestions/contact details to the Secretary by e-mail for circulation to Committee members ahead of the August Committee meeting. The talk subject and speaker, also the venue, will influence attendance, but the need to recruit further members was agreed as there are so many of our current members who are rarely, if ever, seen at meetings. Ian Thomson has suggested advertising in the 'Western Morning News'. Other suggestions included the alumni magazine, also 'Exeter Living'. It was suggested that absent members should be contacted and personally invited to a meeting.

13. Other matters.

The Chairman reported that the speaker at a past meeting, "Exeter's Blitz: reflections of Art and War" in November 2013, Dr Anthony Kelly, had died recently from motor neurone disease.

The meeting was closed at 12.50 pm and was followed by lunch.

Chairman

Date

PLEASE BRING THE NEXT PAGE WITH YOU TO THE AGM

EXETER UNIVERSITY CLUB EXETER BRANCH

2016 Annual General Meeting

11.00am Tuesday 5 July 2016 at the Ruffwell Inn, Thorverton EX5 5NB (followed by lunch at 1.00pm)

AGM Agenda

1. Chairman's welcome
2. Apologies for absence and news of members
3. Minutes of the 2015 AGM (held on 7 July 2015): to confirm approval given by the Committee at its meeting on 11 August 2015
 - matters arising
4. Secretary's report
5. Treasurer's report
6. Exeter University Club (EUC) - Exeter Branch Representative's report
7. Election of Branch Officers and Committee Members for 2016/17
 - a. Chairman
 - b. Vice-Chairman
 - c. Secretary
 - d. Treasurer
 - e. Committee Members (1 for 1 year, 1 for 2 years and 1 for 3 years)
 - f. Co-option of additional Members (if necessary) (note: under the Branch Constitution the Newsletter editor is a Committee member *ex officio*)
8. Election of an Exeter Branch representative to the Finance Group of the former EUC for 2016/17
 - agreement to co-opt onto the Branch Committee (if necessary)
9. Appointment of an Examiner of Accounts for 2016/17
10. Date, time and venue for a meeting of the new Committee (Tuesday 9 August 2016 at 11.00 am at the City Gate Hotel is suggested)
11. Programme for the rest of 2016:
 - date and venue for Christmas lunch, 2016
12. Survey of members' views regarding the Branch programme (Gwyneth Garner to report on the recent survey)
13. Suggestions for the 2017 programme
14. To consider alternative venues for talks
15. To consider how we can increase the number of members attending meetings
16. Other matters by leave of the Chairman
17. Closure of meeting

Mike Aspray
Branch Secretary
18 May 2016