



To offer friendship through social and educational activities

## **EUC Exeter Branch Newsletter**

**Number 42**

<http://eucexeterbranch.org.uk>

**March 2020**

**April to June 2020**

With Britain in the grip of the Covid-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic, we cannot be sure what the next few months will hold, but we are including our future planned events, in the hope that some of them will come to pass. Even if they do not happen, you can at least see what you have missed!

Take care, keep an eye on the wellbeing of your neighbours (from a healthy two metres) and wash your hands!

### **Future events**

#### **Monday 20 April 2020: Visit to two Exeter jewels: The Devon and Exeter Institution and St Nicholas Priory - CANCELLED**

We shall visit two of Exeter's best-loved buildings. Both sites are in the centre of Exeter and served by buses to the High Street and Fore Street. Join us for a visit, either to both sites, or to just one.

The Devon and Exeter Institution has been providing a library for Exeter subscribers since 1813 in a building which was adapted from the town house of the Courtenay family. Savour the atmosphere of a Real Library in the two elegant Georgian rooms.

St Nicholas Priory was founded in 1087 and was home to Benedictine monks until 1536. It then became the home of wealthy merchants but later became neglected until it was opened as a museum in the 20th century. The oldest building in Exeter, it is now owned by Exeter Historic Buildings Trust.



**Meet:** 11.00 am Devon and Exeter Institution, 7, The Close, Exeter EX1 1EZ.  
Tour - £4.00 per person  
2.00 pm St Nicholas Priory, Mint Lane, Exeter EX4 3BL  
Tour - £4.00 per person

**Lunch:** 12.15 pm Lunch at Lloyd's Kitchen in Catherine Street.

### **Thursday 21 May 2020: Visit - Moretonhampstead Motor Museum**

The museum is home to a collection of over 135 vintage and classic vehicles, including pre-1920s to the 1990s. It is run by local motoring enthusiast Frank Loft, who is an Exeter graduate. The museum is housed in a newly refurbished bus depot. The collection of vehicles is complemented by motoring artefacts and automobilia, and visitors can also view the restoration workshop.

The normal entry fee is £7 per person, but our group may well get a reduction.

**Meet:** From 12 noon at Union Inn, 10 Fore Street, Moretonhampstead TQ13 8LN  
Tel. 01647 440 199. [www.theunioninn.co.uk](http://www.theunioninn.co.uk)

At 2.30 pm at the Motor Museum, The Old Bus Depot, Court Street,  
Moretonhampstead TQ13 8LG. Tel. 01647 440 636  
[www.moretonmotormuseum.co.uk](http://www.moretonmotormuseum.co.uk)

**Parking:** There are two car parks. One is in Station Road. If coming in from Exeter on the B3212, turn left at the crossroads onto Station Road, signposted Bovey Tracey. The car park is on the right-hand side, and is the nearest one for the Union Inn. The other is in Court Street. Continue straight on at those crossroads through the centre of Moreton, and the car park is down the first turning on the right. This is where the bus stops, and there are toilets there.

**Bus:** The 359 bus leaves Exeter Bus Station at 11.15 am and arrives in Moreton Square at 12.05 pm. If not joining us for lunch, the 1.15 pm bus gets to Court Street Car Park at 2.09 pm. The return bus at 4.15 from Moreton gets to Exeter at 5.09 pm.



**To book:** Contact Anne Mayes ([a.c.mayes@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:a.c.mayes@exeter.ac.uk)) or Peter Wingfield-Digby (01392 424 781) by 14 May.

### **1-4 June 2020: Exeter University Club (EUC) reunion and outing**

As part of the EUC Annual Outing from 1 to 3 June, a visit is being arranged to Greys Court, a National Trust property in Oxfordshire, near Henley-on-Thames. Set in the rolling hills of the Chilterns, Greys Court is a picturesque Tudor manor house, surrounded by layers of history, walled gardens and glorious wooded parklands. There have been buildings on the site since the 11<sup>th</sup> century. It was originally inhabited by the Grey family, who gave it their name.

Information has already been circulated by email to members, and details (including a booking form) are available on our website. If you require further information, please contact the Secretary on 01392 424 781.

### **Tuesday 9 June 2020: Lunch at the Three Crowns Inn, Chagford**

The Three Crowns building is early Tudor and Grade II\* listed. It is reputed to have been the home of Sir John Whiddon who died in 1575. It became an inn in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. According to Historic England, 'the building is of immense value to the centre of Chagford, and forms part of an attractive group of listed buildings in the vicinity of St Michael's Church'.

The market town of Chagford is surrounded by some of Dartmoor's most spectacular scenery. Why not combine your visit to Chagford with a short walk, starting from the inn? For further details, go to the inn's website and click on Attractions; there you will find a detailed description of four circular walks. Nearby gardens worth visiting are Castle Drogo and Stone Lane.

**Meet at:** Three Crowns Inn, High Street, Chagford, TQ13 8AJ from 12 noon for 12.30.  
Tel. 01647 433 444 [www.threecrowns-chagford.co.uk](http://www.threecrowns-chagford.co.uk)

**Transport:**

**By car:** The Three Crowns Inn is located in the High Street, just along from the market square. There is no parking at The Three Crowns for non-residents, but there is a Pay and Display carpark about 50 metres from the inn and close to the main square.

**By bus:** The 173 bus goes from Exeter bus station to Chagford. Depart Exeter at 11.10 am and arrive in Chagford Square at 12.14 pm. There are return buses at 3.03 pm and 6.23 pm.

**To book:** Contact Mike Aspray ([mikeaspray@btinternet.com](mailto:mikeaspray@btinternet.com) or 01884 242 606) by 30 May.

### **Wednesday 24 June 2020: Visit to Ugbrooke House, Chudleigh**

Ugbrooke House has been the family seat of the Clifford family for over 400 years. In the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century the house was remodelled by Robert Adam and the gardens by Capability Brown. Both are well worth exploring. There is also a very impressive chapel that is still in use. Cream teas are available.



**Meet:** At 12 noon for lunch in the Orangery, Ugbrooke House, Chudleigh TQ13 0AD.  
Website: [www.ugbrooke.co.uk](http://www.ugbrooke.co.uk) Tel. 01626 852 179

At 2 pm for a conducted tour of the house. The cost for house and gardens is £9.50. If we have 15 or more members visiting the house, we shall get a private tour to ourselves – otherwise we shall have to be part of a public tour.

**Transport:**

**By car:** Take the A380 road from Exeter. Turn off at the slip road at Olchard Ideford Dip (GR 50.59, -3.58). Turn left at the junction, and continue for 1 km to Ugbrooke.

**By bus:** There is an hourly bus service (no. 7) from Exeter bus station. For instance, the 10.50 am bus gets to Olchard Ideford Dip (the next stop after Kenn) at 11.17. Cross the A380 and then walk NW for 1 km to Ugbrooke House. Return buses run hourly, at a quarter to the hour.

**To book:** Contact Frances Canning ([francesandedward@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:francesandedward@blueyonder.co.uk) or 01392 209 542) by 10 June.

## Retirement of the Vice-Chancellor

As you no doubt will have heard, Professor Sir Steve Smith is planning to retire in August. Indeed, the name of his successor – Professor Lisa Roberts, currently Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the University of Leeds – has already been announced. We include here a message that has been received from the University.

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## Sir Steve Smith scholars programme

**Professor Sir Steve Smith has led the University of Exeter since October 2002, during which time it has attained Russell Group membership, witnessed turnover increase five-fold to £430 million and has featured regularly as a top-10 UK university.**

The first in his family to go to university, Sir Steve has a deep personal commitment to the transformative power of higher education. Told at school that university wasn't for him, he was driven not only to succeed academically but also to devote his life to opening up educational opportunities to all.

With Sir Steve's planned retirement announced for August 2020, we would like you to join us in honouring a leader who has steered Exeter to become one of the UK's fastest growing and rapidly rising research universities; an institution with a growing international reputation.

The University has decided to approach a select group of supporters with a view to creating a permanent endowment in an area close to Sir Steve's heart. Their philanthropy would establish the Sir Steve Smith Scholars programme to help talented students from all backgrounds achieve their potential far into the future.

During Sir Steve's tenure, student numbers have doubled and the need for support has grown. His wish is that we augment our £40m endowment to provide for students in perpetuity, and to stand alongside wealthier competitors.

We want to disburse six Sir Steve Smith Scholarships in perpetuity. There will be one scholar in each of the University's six Colleges at any one time, each receiving an award of £10,000 per year for the duration of their studies.

To do this we need to raise £1.6 million to add to the endowment. Please consider joining us in honouring Sir Steve as one of the founding donors to the programme.

To learn more about the Sir Steve Smith Scholars Programme, please get in touch with: [J.A.Greenway@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:J.A.Greenway@exeter.ac.uk) Tel. 01392 726 633 or 07748 704 355

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## Event Reports

### Talk by Steve Aves on 'Yeast in Science', 13 January 2020

Susie Hewitt welcomed 20 members to this talk by Steve Aves, recently retired Associate Professor of Molecular Biology at Exeter University, saying how much she was looking forward to hearing more about the role of yeast beyond her present understanding of its function in the making of bread, beer and Marmite.

Steve opened his talk by explaining that a number of major scientific breakthroughs have been made using yeast cells since the 19th century, naming Pasteur, Buchner and Maria Manaseina as early pioneers in this field of biochemistry research. The critical importance of doing research using yeast is that the cells behave in much the same way as human cells do but are less complex. Therefore the outcomes of experiments conducted with yeast can build up an understanding of how molecular genetics works in humans – vital research that avoids the moral and ethical concerns that often arise in experimental work undertaken with humans or animals. Steve named some very useful products that have resulted from genetic engineering conducted with yeast cells; in particular a vaccine for hepatitis B, insulin and a rennet substitute used in making vegetarian cheese.

In recent decades the use of computers has transformed approaches to the design and execution of scientific research projects, as scientists now spend most of their time analysing results – often from large data sets generated by computer – and less of their time setting up and performing experiments and gathering the results in the laboratory. Steve stressed that today's scientific research on yeast cells has 'an awesome power' both in terms of the amount of work it can achieve and the far-reaching effect the outcomes can have. As an example, Steve explained how identifying mutants within yeast cells is a first critical step in the process that can lead to advances in identifying and treating cancer cells in humans. The genetic analysis of cell division within yeast is fundamental to this research.

There followed an interesting question and answer session, after which Frances Canning gave the vote of thanks to our speaker. We all left knowing far more about the importance of yeast than we did at the start!

*Louise Clunies-Ross*

## Talk by Edward Neather on 'Common Origins of Music and Language', 13 February 2020

The advance publicity for this talk promised us an exposition of how ideas about the common origins of music and language had developed since the eighteenth century. But the ground covered was far more extensive, beginning with consideration of Neanderthal man now thought to have had some use of music and language, and the ancient Greeks' concept of music, embodying elements of melody, verse and dance. Edward told us that from a young age he had been very interested in the interaction of music and language, and this led him to exploring such matters as the idea that music preceded language and the conclusion that there are no primitive languages, only different ones.

Famous names from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries came into play; the German philosopher Johan Herder, was an early influence, who studied the origins of language, with one ear on the importance of birdsong, Jean-Jacques Rousseau who detected syllables in rhythm and sound, and Ludwig van Beethoven whose Pastoral Symphony was intended to convey the emotional feelings of being in the countryside rather than to paint pictures of rural scenes.

Coming up to date Edward stressed the importance of the work of the contemporary academic Stephen Pinker who in his book *How the Mind Works* put forward the view that music and language are fundamentally different, a point exemplified to some extent by Beethoven but quite different from the convictions of our lecturer who is convinced that in all the civilisations that have been studied, music in its broadest sense preceded speech.

He touched on the contributions of Charles Darwin whose view was influenced by his work on evolution. For a long time he had real problems with music. He could not see that it fitted into his theory that all human traits assisted with evolution. Eventually in his book *The Descent of Man* he saw music and rhythms being adapted to attract the opposite sex, a phenomenon exemplified in birdsong, and sometimes known as the Caruso Theory.

In a wide-ranging survey of his subject, Edward introduced us to such fascinating concepts as 'motherese' or 'infant directed speech' used in all eras and cultures by parents to begin communicating with their children, and 'click languages', of great importance in the study of the development of languages.

He touched too on recent advances in the use of modern brain scans contributing to our understanding of the roles of the temporal and frontal lobes, shedding light on the interaction of the musical and linguistic functions of the brain.

Edward is clearly committed to his theory of the common origins of music and language but with academic candour conceded that not all his contemporaries agree. He quoted one distinguished author Maggie Tallerman who has concluded that 'musical protolanguage is .... an evolutionary cul-de-sac.'

*Edward and Frances Canning*

## **Lunch at the Redwing Restaurant, Lymptone, 4 March 2020**

On Wednesday March 4<sup>th</sup>, 11 members defied the Spring rain and the coronavirus and lunched together at The Redwing Bar-Restaurant in Lymptone.

The restaurant is comfortable and attractive, the staff, led by manager James, are pleasant, welcoming and efficient, the food is well prepared and good and the prices are very reasonable.

At James' request we pre-ordered and as a result the food appeared freshly cooked exactly on time.

Needless to say, the company was excellent and the conversation was lively, intelligent and informed.

It was a most enjoyable meal. The Redwing is well worth another visit.

*George Garner*

## **Talk by Jaz Atkinson of Devon Wildlife Trust on 'Exeter Wild City', 25 March 2020**

Sadly, this talk had to be cancelled because we were in the grip of the Covid-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic. Gatherings were being discouraged, and the over-70s were being told that they would soon need to self-isolate for a lengthy period of time.