



To offer friendship through social and educational activities

## **EUC Exeter Branch Newsletter**

**Number 46**

<http://eucexeterbranch.org.uk>

**March 2021**

**April to June 2021**

### **A message from our Chairman**

How fast the time is passing. Things should open up towards the end of June. We have already made arrangements for two outings: Ugbrooke House on Wednesday 23 June, and the gardens at Buckfast Abbey on Monday 26 July. I hope you can join us. You will find more information about these outings in this Newsletter.

There is a continuing and understandable hesitancy about having close contact in confined spaces, so our face-to-face meetings and lunches will have to be put on hold for the time being. Instead, we plan to hold our get-togethers online by using Zoom. The first such gathering will be our Annual General Meeting, which we have scheduled for 11 am on Monday 5 July. Please do join us for this important event in our calendar. You will be sent a link to enable you to participate.

You will have received the Annual University of Exeter Alumni Magazine. It makes for very heartening reading. Perhaps as we return to a more interactive life we could get more involved. Are any of us mentors? Also, perhaps we could be involved in an event where we try to enrol new members. I would have thought that there would be a new generation of retirees who are not aware of us. Ideas would be welcome.

While it is true that we have not been able to do much this past year, we have still asked members to pay their subscriptions, so that we are in a sound financial position. The amount is £10 per person, and an additional £5 if you want to receive a hard copy of our quarterly Newsletter. Many of you have paid already, for which I thank you, but there are some subscriptions still outstanding. A Standing Order is best. It is easiest for our Treasurer and easy for you because you do not need to remember it next year.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in the coming months.

Frances Canning

## **Covid-19**

With vaccinations coming on apace, most of us will have received our first jab by now, and some will even have had two jabs. But back in January the thought of getting one's first vaccination was something quite exciting to look forward to. Here is what one member reported towards the end of January

### **Message from Honiton (Julia Harris)**

Terry and I had our first Coronavirus 'jab' last Saturday at Exmouth Tennis Centre. We treated it like a 'Day Out', driving over Woodbury Common, enjoying the beautiful views and the expanse of vision, during a time of restriction. We met delightful volunteers and recognized two retired Doctors from Honiton doing injections.

On the way back we dropped off Christmas gifts to a family we know and enjoyed a chat from a distance. The icing on the cake was stopping to pick up Costa Mochas at a garage, which we enjoyed on the way back at a brief stop on Woodbury Common, again 'drinking in the view'!

I've felt so much better this week, thanks to our day out – or could it be the antibodies beginning to work !

## **Farewells**

### **Janet Feltham**

We are sad to report the death of one of our members, Janet Feltham. She died peacefully at home on 11 December 2020 after a short illness. Janet was a qualified teacher and in later life she loved teaching foreign students. Her thirst for knowledge originally led her to do an Open University degree, and she followed up on this by completing an M.A. in theology in 1998 at the University of Exeter. She and her husband were keen supporters of our Club and regularly attended events. We send our condolences to Keith and their three children.

### **Tony Dimsey**

We are also sad to report the death of Tony Dimsey. Tony read Mathematics and Psychology at Exeter, graduating in 1956 and making his career in teaching. He met his wife Jane (also a teacher) while working in the Birmingham area and kept in touch with EUC and Exeter friends in the Midlands during the time they were bringing up their three children. Tony was national President of Exeter University Convocation Club from 1998 to 2001 and visited all the branches during his term of office.

In retirement Tony and Jane moved to Devon and became active and hospitable members of Exeter Branch, where Tony was Chairman for a year and later Secretary for several years. They enjoyed cruise holidays in their spare time. In 2016 they moved to Gloucestershire to be closer to their family and after Jane's untimely death in 2017 Tony continued to live in their retirement flat. Tony had a serious fall in 2020 and after a slow recovery, had to return to hospital in the late autumn where he died from pneumonia on 26 December.

## Future events

### Wed 23 June 2021: Visit to Ugbrooke House near 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.



The gates open at 12 noon. **Please remember to bring your facemask.**

**Meet:** (Optional) At 12 noon for a light 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 will be £9. 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 A30 road from Exeter, then the A38 and A380. 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.

### Mon 5 July 2021: Annual General Meeting by Zoom (11 a.m.)

This is our major event of the year, so please do try to attend. The AGM will be held online at 11 am on Monday 5 July, using Zoom. Full details will be given in the next Newsletter, but please make a note now of the date and time. For the few members who do not have an internet connection, perhaps you could get help from a neighbour who does have one. In this case please contact the Secretary for assistance.

## 13-15 July 2021: EUC Annual Outing and Reunion

We have received word about the annual outing and reunion planned for this year. There will be more information later, but if you are interested in going, it is important to book the hotel now. Here is the information they have given us so far.

Dates: Tuesday 13 July to Thursday 15 July 2021

Hotel: Shillingford Bridge Hotel, Wallingford OX10 8LZ Phone 01865 858567  
Website [www.shillingfordbridgehotel.co.uk](http://www.shillingfordbridgehotel.co.uk)  
Email [reservations@shillingfordbridgehotel.co.uk](mailto:reservations@shillingfordbridgehotel.co.uk)

The hotel is now part of Art Hotels and has had a makeover since last year. Their website shows views of the hotel and rooms, and explains the hotel Covid-19 safety policy.

We have asked the hotel to reserve 10 single and 10 double rooms for the Exeter University Club at present. The hotel general manager has agreed to hold these rooms for 1 month. We suggest you phone the hotel and discuss the accommodation you would like. The river view rooms will probably be popular so book early.

The guide prices, including a group discount, are as follows:-

Single room	B&B £85 per day
Double room	B&B £105 per day
Double room with river view	B&B £125 per day

A DB&B option is available Dinner rate £25pp extra

Payment for your stay is due on arrival. There is no charge if you need to cancel 24 hours before arrival, but let us know if you need to cancel.

Please act quickly because the hotel rooms will certainly start to fill up soon, which is why we have asked the hotel to reserve rooms for us.

### The Annual Outing

This will be held at Greys Court NT, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 4PG, probably on Wednesday 14 July. Rolf Holstein will issue details later. We plan to enter Greys Court NT as individuals and then meet on site.

Greys Court (National Trust), near Henley  
<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/greys-court>

*For more information, please contact Mike Aspray, our Vice-Chairman:  
[Vicechairman@eucexeterbranch.org.uk](mailto:Vicechairman@eucexeterbranch.org.uk) Tel. 01884 242606 – leave a message.*

## Mon 26 July 2021: Visit to the Gardens at Buckfast Abbey

On this visit to Buckfast Abbey, we shall have a conducted tour of Buckfast Abbey Gardens. At Buckfast there are spacious lawns and three specialist garden areas: a Lavender garden, a Physic garden, and a Sensory Garden. Everywhere there are specialist trees which give a magnificence and splendour to the grounds.

- 12.00 (Optional) Lunch – those who wish to do so can have lunch or snacks in the Grange Restaurant, which commands spectacular views of the Abbey and the surrounding countryside.
- 2 pm Conducted tour of the gardens. The head gardener is both knowledgeable and enthusiastic, so this should be a very interesting tour. There will be a charge of £3 per head.

The Abbey and grounds are usually open from 10 am to 4 pm. Please note that the Abbey will be closed to visitors between 12 and 12.30, when it is only available to those attending Mass. There are also three interesting shops nearby.

Buckfast Abbey, Buckfastleigh, Devon TQ11 0EE <https://www.buckfast.org.uk/>

### Transport

**By road:** Buckfast Abbey is half a mile from the A38, and mid-way between Exeter and Plymouth. There is ample free parking at the Abbey.

**By bus:** From Exeter Bus Station there are two alternatives. The No. 7 bus at 9.50 am gets to Newton Abbot at 10.45. Then take the 88 bus at 10.50 am, which gets to Buckfast Abbey at 11.22 am. The return buses are at 38 minutes past the hour. Another option is to take the X38 bus at 9.30 am towards Plymouth, and get off at Station Approach, Buckfastleigh, at 10.20 am. From there it is a half-mile walk to the Abbey at Buckfast. The return bus to Exeter runs every two hours.

**Please remember to bring your facemask.**

**To book:** If you would like to join this tour, please contact Frances Canning by 13 July. [francesandedward@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:francesandedward@blueyonder.co.uk) or 01392 209 542

## How well do you know your University?

### EUC Christmas Quiz – the results

Our Christmas Quiz proved very challenging for many of our readers, but we still did receive a few entries. We had one clear winner, to whom we offer congratulations. He received an Amazon voucher for £25 as his prize:

Ian Douglass, Geography and Geology, 1968

We also had two other excellent entries who each received an Amazon voucher for £10:

Bonita Searle-Barnes (Hopkins), Engineering Science, 1983  
Madeline Hussey, Mathematics, 1966

And now for the answers. Inevitably with this type of quiz the answers are not always cut and dried, so some flexibility is required in assessing them.

1. What was the name of the very first Hall of Residence in Exeter? *Bradninch.*
2. By what name was Exeter Hall more commonly known? *Kilmorie*
3. What name does the former Hartwell House now have? *Hope Hall*
4. In which Hall did the 'Jentlemen' live? *Crossmead (J bus)*
5. Name the hall that had a library and music room  
but where the dining room was a large hut. *Mardon*
6. After whom is Reed Hall named? *Alderman W.H. Reed (former mayor & benefactor)*
- 7-9. Three Halls built in the 1960s were named after Devon hills.  
Which were these? *Raddon, Haldon, and Brendon*
10. Name the architect of the Mary Harris Memorial Chapel? *E. Vincent Harris*
11. Who was Mary Harris? *Mother of the architect*
12. What is the connection between Exeter and sewing machines?  
*Washington Singer (he donated £25,000 to help build the laboratories)*
13. What do the initials UCSWE stand for?  
*University College of the South West of England*
14. What do the initials LSI stand for? *Living Systems Institute*
15. What large new residential development opened up on campus in 2020?  
*East Park Phase 1. Smaller developments were Moberly and Spreytonway*
16. In what year did the University gain its Charter? *1955*
17. Before that time, which University conferred degrees on Exeter students? *London*
18. What is the name of the University's bar? *The Ram*
19. Who laid out the gardens and planted the arboretum around Reed Hall?  
*Robert Veitch, nurseryman for Richard Thornton West, the owner*
20. Where did the name 'Streatham' come from? *Streatham Hall (now Reed Hall)*
21. In what year was the Prince of Wales Road opened? *1927*
- 22-23. What replaced the Exeter Theatre Royal, and when? *Northcott Theatre, 1967*
24. Who is the current Vice-Chancellor? *Professor Lisa Roberts*
25. When did St Luke's join the University? *1978*
26. When did the Camborne School of Mines join the University? *1993*
- 27-28. What Group has the University joined, and when? *Russell Group, 2012*
29. What building is this? You will find the AccEPT clinic here.  
*Sir Henry Wellcome Building (Mood Disorders Centre)*
30. Who is this person? *Baroness Floella Benjamin (former University Chancellor)*
31. Why are her hands included? *She always hugged new graduates.*
32. What TV programme did she present? *Play School*
33. When was this building officially opened? *(Forum) 2 May 2012*
34. Who opened it? *H.M. The Queen*
35. This artwork is called Reflected Vision. What place  
on the campus is it associated with? *Bill Douglas Cinema Museum*
36. Identify this building. *Northcote Tower / House*
37. What event does this sculpture commemorate? *Tiananmen Square 1989*
38. Who is the sculptor of this artwork? *Dame Barbara Hepworth*
39. Who is this person? *Dr Clive Lee*
40. Why was he awarded an honorary doctorate/  
*Along with Professor Robin Ling, he invented the Exeter Hip*

If you spot any errors, please tell us.



## News from the campus

No sooner has the first phase of the massive East Park residential complex been completed than we hear news of another large residential development being planned. The university has submitted a planning application for the redevelopment of the Clydesdale, Nash Grove and Birks Grange Village halls of residence.

The proposal, which covers the area near Mardon Hall, would see the demolition of the existing Clydesdale and Nash Grove buildings – built in the late 1980s and early 1990s – and the construction of student accommodation buildings ranging in height from three to eight storeys. This would deliver a net increase of about 1,200 student bedrooms on the university campus.

In January there were two interesting Zoom meetings. On 8 January the new Vice-Chancellor, Lisa Roberts, hosted an event for alumni and supporters. This gave her the opportunity to greet alumni, describe how the University was coping with the pandemic, and discuss future plans for the next decade. Then on 19 January Stephen Fry was the special guest at a 'Creative Dialogues' event, at which he described aspects of his many roles as actor, writer, film director, historian and broadcaster. So many people wanted to participate in this event that the organisers had to switch from Zoom to Teams at the last moment; in the end about 1,500 people participated online.

In February the University Chancellor, Lord Myners, announced that he would be retiring after five years in the role. His successor is being sought.

## Walks on campus

During the pandemic the campus has been fairly quiet. When we had the first lockdown the campus was closed to outsiders, but now it is open. Anyone strolling round will be struck by the inevitable yellow signs on the paths, which can also be seen around much of Exeter as well, telling us to keep our distance. There are also large green circles painted on many of the paths; apparently these are to indicate that the paths are 'Safer Walking Routes', which are covered by CCTV.

A particularly nice feature is the way they have blended together the old and the new. This can be seen, in particular, with the continuing use of the old logo of the University in one or two places around the campus. For those of us of a certain vintage, it is quite nostalgic to see the old sign.



## **Local news**

### **Debenhams**

The city centre continues to feel the effects of the Covid pandemic. The latest casualty is Debenhams in Princesshay, which has announced its closure. But already there is hope for the building. A developer, so far unnamed, has come forward with a proposal to turn the top floor of Debenhams into a four-screen cinema, with a bar and food area overlooking Cathedral Green.

### **The Royal Clarence Hotel**

It is now more than four years since the terrible fire that destroyed the Royal Clarence Hotel in the Cathedral Close. With the hotel site in new ownership, it was hoped that building work would have restarted by now, but sadly there is nothing to report.

### **'That bomb'**

Exeter received national and international coverage at the end of February when a 1,000 kg unexploded World War II bomb was found in Glenthorne Road, close to the main Streatham campus. The building site was being cleared, awaiting the construction of more student housing. The fuse was so badly corroded that it was not safe to remove it.

About 2,600 properties were evacuated, including 1,4000 university students. Despite the use of 400 tonnes of sand and the erection of a special structure to contain the blast, many buildings nearby were badly damaged. Some of these people have been told it will take six months to carry out repairs. The sound of the detonation was heard all over the city.

### **Buller statue**

After much public discussion, and following comments by the relevant Minister, the City Council reversed their earlier decision to apply for listed building consent for possible relocation of the statue, in preparation for a formal consultation. Instead, they have announced that the statue of General Buller on his horse Biffen will definitely not be removed to another site, but temporary information boards will be erected, which should provide more context about General Buller and his life.

### **Okehampton-Exeter railway line**

In our last issue we included an article by one of our members, Richard Westlake, in which he mentioned that the Government was considering reopening the Exeter to Okehampton railway line for passengers. Now we have the official confirmation in this month's 2021 Budget that "the Budget will unlock more than £40 million of funding to reinstate passenger services on the Okehampton-Exeter line, subject to final approval of costs and contracts". Congratulations to Richard and the others who have campaigned so long for the re-opening of this line, and we look forward to including travel on this line as part of some future Club event.