

SUSS-EX CLUB NEWSLETTER No.13 NOVEMBER 2009

CHRISTMAS PARTY 12.30-2.30 pm, Wednesday 16 December 2009

The Suss-Ex Club and USPAS will be holding a joint Christmas Party for former staff and their partners on **Wednesday 16 December**, 12.30-2.30, in the Meeting House Quiet Room – an opportunity to catch up with friends and former colleagues.

USPAS members will receive a separate invitation via the USPAS Office and, to avoid confusion, should respond to Tracey Llewellyn rather than by the form at the end of this newsletter.

Tickets are £6 each. Book early to avoid disappointment! The closing date is **Friday 27 November**.

Please complete the form at the end of the newsletter and return it with a cheque or credit/debit card details to Sue Bullock, 104 Bonchurch Road, Brighton BN2 3PH,

OR

if you are paying by card, the form and card details may be returned by email to:

sue.bullock@hotmail.co.uk

Of course, organisation of the event largely depends on volunteers, so helpers will be needed on the day of the party to prepare the room and the food and drink, and to clear up afterwards. All offers of help will be much appreciated: please contact Sue for details (email as above, phone 01273 682133).



THEATRE TRIP



Here is the latest suggestion for a Suss-Ex theatre trip. We can, as usual, get a group reduction on the price of tickets for the performances listed if at least ten people want to go, and it is those prices that are quoted below. A booking needs to be made promptly to ensure that tickets are available, and your money has then to be sent in time for the total bill to be paid about a month in advance. For those interested, dinner together at Carluccio's beforehand, or after the matinee, will be booked.

The play proposed is Noel Coward's **Present Laughter**, which is on from Jan. 25:

'a gloriously witty portrait of the life that whirled around Noel Coward in his heyday, sparkling from start to finish with cut-glass humour and spectacular repartee.'

'Garry Essendine, aging matinee idol and self-absorbed man-about-town, is just a guy who can't say "no" - though he sometimes wishes he had. Relentlessly pursued by his adoring fans, our hero is desperate for calm amid the chaos, "Everyone worships me," he laments, "it's nauseating." Part satire and mostly autobiographical, it has been said that Noël Coward took a weekend to write the play and a lifetime to research the lead role.'

Tickets will be £20 except for the Thursday matinee, which is £16. If you are interested, please let Jennifer Platt know **by Nov. 16** (preferably by e mail to j.platt@sussex.ac.uk - or phone 01273 555025, or post to Arts D or 98 Beaconsfield Villas, Brighton BN1 6HE). Please use the slip at the end of this newsletter: just tick all days/times which would be OK, number those when you are free in order of preference, and indicate how many tickets you want and whether you would like to join dinner before (evening) or after (matinee). You will be notified of the outcome soon after Nov. 16.

OTHER EVENTS

The Suss-Ex Club is grateful to Bob Benewick and Steve Pavey, who have arranged a number of talks at the University, most recently one by Margaret McGowan on *Dance in the Renaissance*. They would like someone else to join in this activity and invite volunteers to get in touch with them by email: Bob Benewick r.j.benewick@sussex.ac.uk; Steve Pavey miniperson2003@yahoo.co.uk.

There will be a walk round Brighton with Geoffrey Mead called 'Brighton Boozers' on 21 March 2010 at 10 am. More details in the next newsletter.

John Murrell has published a 112 pp booklet about the School of Chemistry and Molecular Sciences from 1965 to 1995. He will be pleased to sell a copy for £10 (or £11 by post), and can be contacted in the Chichester Building BN1 9QJ or by email j.n.murrell@sussex.ac.uk. All profits will go to the provision of student bursaries.

CIRCULATION LISTS AND WEBSITE

We are pleased to send hard copies of this newsletter to those who do not have an email address. If, however, you currently receive the newsletter by post but now do have an email address, please send a message to c.l.alexander@sussex.ac.uk and ask to be placed on the electronic circulation list. This will save us time and expense.

Charles Goldie has arranged some new links to the Suss-Ex Club's webpages. From the University's home-page, click on A-Z and then 'Staff - The Suss-Ex Club (former staff)'

FACILITIES FOR RETIRED STAFF

The University has produced the statement printed below.

The University of Sussex

Facilities for Retired Staff

The University hopes that former staff who have retired from University employment will wish to maintain their contacts with the University and their colleagues. To this end a number of facilities which are open to employees have been identified as still being open to retired staff, and these are listed below. Your name will be shown on the University of Sussex database as an associate member. If you wish to use the facilities of the University of Sussex library or obtain reduced sports service membership rate you will need a new identity card which can be obtained from the Reprographic Unit in the Hastings Building. If you already have an identity card please will you ring 01273 873278 to see if a card can be issued based on the information held by the Unit. If you need to have a photograph taken for the card, the Reprographic Unit staff will ask you to visit the Unit.

The facilities available are:

1. Sports facilities. Sussexsport offer a range of membership options. You are entitled to use the 'Alumni' rates.
2. Library borrowing rights. Please write to the Librarian if you wish to be granted these rights.
3. Use of the Language Centre self-instruction facilities. Please show your identification card to the Language Centre receptionist.
4. Catering facilities at the University, eg Bramber House, Sports Pavilion, snack bars, will remain available to staff after their retirement.
5. Attendance at lectures listed in the Lecture Lists displayed on notice boards. If you wish to attend a series of lectures on a regular basis would you please inform the Lecturer.
6. Retired members of staff may join the University of Sussex Society as associate members. Please write to the Alumni Officer, Sussex House, for details.
7. Receipt of the Bulletin. Please will you let the Information Officer in Sussex House know if you would like to be placed on the circulation list for the Bulletin.
8. Retired members of staff may continue to join the Students' Union as associate members and thus be eligible for membership of the Students' Union societies. Please write to the President of the Students' Union, Falmer House, if you wish to join.

HR Office
September 2009

2008 PUBLICATIONS

We published a list of publications by retired members of staff in the July newsletter. Here are some more that have come to our attention. A list of 2009 publications will be published in due course; please send details to David Smith, Chichester Building, University of Sussex, BN1 9QJ [email j.d.smith@sussex.ac.uk] or to or any other member of the Steering Group.

Robert Smith, Physics and Astronomy

K.-P. Schroeder, R. C. Smith, *Mon. Not. Roy. Astron. Soc.* 2008, **386**, 155-163. Distant future of the Sun and Earth revisited.

This paper attracted lots of publicity because of its conclusion that the Earth will be swallowed by the Sun in 7.6 billion years - there were newspaper and magazine articles. Robert was interviewed on radio programmes, and filmed for small contributions to two TV documentaries shown on the National Geographic channel.

J. Echevarria, R. C. Smith, R. Costero, S. Zharikov, R. Michel, *Mon. Not. Roy. Astron. Soc.* 2008, **387**, 1563-1574. High-dispersion absorption-line spectroscopy of AE Aqr.

Norman MacKenzie, Education

Norman MacKenzie, who wrote a book about Napoleon (*The Escape from Elba*) some 30 years ago has just published the sequel, *Fallen Eagle*, which covers Napoleon's flight and capture after Waterloo. The book goes into detail about his detention on board ship, incommunicado, in Plymouth Sound, the extraordinary interest shown by thousands of sympathetic sightseers, the attempt by radical democrats to get him off the ship to plead for his liberty in an English court, and the hurried legal discussions (it is the Guantánamo point) as to whether his seizure and detention on St Helena were lawful. Copies are now for sale at the University Bookshop and Lewes Book Centre, 38 Cliffe High Street, Lewes.

Maggie Boden, Cognitive Science

Book *Mind as Machine: A History of Cognitive Science*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, paperback version 2008.

Various other articles.

Maggie was appointed to two visiting fellowships in New Zealand: the Hood Fellowship at the University of Auckland, and the Erskine Fellowship at the University of Canterbury, Christchurch.

DEATHS AND OBITUARIES

We report with sadness the deaths of former colleagues and show where their obituaries can be found. If you know of any that we have missed, please send in the details so they can be published in a future newsletter.

Tibor Barna: [Sussex University News and Events 6 August 2009](#), [Times 12 August 2009](#).

John Chesshire: [Guardian 7 October 2009](#). See also below.

Brian Goodwin: [Independent 31 July 2009](#), [Guardian 10 August 2009](#), [20 August 2009](#).

Vaughan James: [Bulletin 31 July 2009](#). See also below.

John Lowerson: [Bulletin 3 July 2009](#), [Independent 26 August 2009](#), [The Higher 1 October 2009](#).

John Surrey: See below.

Tom Whiston: [Bulletin 8 May 2009](#), [Manchester Evening News 24 April 2009](#).

C. Vaughan James 1925-2009

Vaughan James died on 17 July 2009, at his home north of Oxford, after some years of ill health. He was lecturer in Russian at Sussex from 1964 to 1973. His first language was Welsh – the C. stood for Caradog – and that may partly explain his extraordinary gifts as a linguist, if not necessarily his equal abilities as a teacher of languages. He learnt Japanese during the last years of

the war and was due to be sent to Japan when the bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. He shifted his interest to Russian and read Russian and Comparative Slavonic Philology at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, going on one of the first student exchange trips to the Soviet Union. He seems to have known most European languages except German, which he refused to learn. An inspiring teacher, his enthusiasm for the language, Russian life, culture and music (he started what was inevitably called a 'serf choir' at Sussex), was infectious, and had a lasting impact on his students, many of whom remained in contact with him. The parties at his cottage in Ditchling were memorable, and he was mainly to blame for the Russian Studies Subject Group's long-lasting reputation for partying.

He was first director of the language laboratory and largely responsible for launching the Russian year abroad, setting up an independent exchange arrangement with Progress Publishers in Moscow (a first for the UK) which involved two Russians coming to Sussex for a year as language tutors, and organizing student placements in Prague and Bulgaria as well as Russia. A life-long socialist, his firm support for the Soviet Union waned somewhat after 1968, and in later life he switched his enthusiasm to China and then Cuba. He wrote a novel partly set in Cuba, *A Reasonable Man*, 1997, but he will be best remembered for his study of *Soviet Socialist Realism*, 1973, and his many translations and language books on Russian.

On leaving Sussex he returned to Oxford to work for Pergamon Press, famously managing to get on with Robert Maxwell, and then headed CILT, the National Centre for Languages. He will be much missed and fondly remembered by many.

Beryl Williams

John Surrey and John Chesshire

The two founders of the widely-known energy research work in SPRU ('the county set') died in the late summer.

John Surrey passed away on 8 August, after struggling with illness for some years. An economist originally from LSE, John came to SPRU in 1969, following Chris Freeman, the founding Director of SPRU, from the National Institute for Economic and Social Research. He established an energy policy research activity, which was at the time unique in the country, four years ahead of the first oil crisis of 1973. He soon recruited John Chesshire and subsequently a large team of researchers, several of whom have subsequently, following his generous mentoring, gone on to achieve professorial status. All were funded while at SPRU entirely through a series of short-term research contracts. Indeed when John retired in 1998 he was the first professor at Sussex to reach retirement age, having never had a permanent contract.

John's earlier career had included British Railways and the civil service and his work always bore the hallmark of political economy rather than a narrow interpretation of economics. He published an influential book with Lesley Cook (Sussex Economics department) in 1977 on energy policy and after many other wide-ranging publications over the next two decades he edited a well-received collection in 1996 on *The British Electricity Experiment*.

He had a massive influence on the evolution of social science-based energy research in the UK and succeeded, with John Chesshire, in winning SPRU a flow of large ESRC research centre grants from 1979 till 1997. He always aimed his work at the policy system as well as the academic community and actively engaged in national and European energy policy processes. While he worked as an adviser to both Government and Parliament he always preferred the scrutiny role of Parliament and served as Specialist Adviser to countless Parliamentary Select Committee inquiries on energy-related subjects. He had real influence on the culture and practice of UK energy policy.

John was a fine cricketer who regularly played for high-quality club as well as university sides, as well as an enthusiastic squash player. He had a unique working style. This included a habit, on the first day of every new project, of immaculately hand-writing quite detailed conclusions – and then spending the next two or three years, trying hard to prove his conclusions wrong, though he only occasionally succeeded.

John Chesshire OBE died on 12 September at the early age of 62, after a short but devastating illness brought on by lung cancer.

John was the first of John Surrey's many recruits to the Energy group of SPRU and took over the leadership of the group in 1990, having worked closely with John Surrey for over 25 years. John was an economist from Durham University who spent his early working life as an industrial economic adviser to the TUC. He was a life-long Fabian and was always deeply interested in the distributional consequences of energy and other economic policy. While his economic analysis was always rigorous, he wanted his work to make an impact on the world of public policy, and his great specialisation was in the analysis of energy demand and energy conservation. This was especially true in relation to the 'fuel poor', for whom he researched and campaigned with something close to ferocity. His OBE was in recognition of his huge contribution to the improvement of energy efficiency and his tireless campaigning for a better deal for the 'fuel poor'.

In the early years at SPRU, his major academic contribution was the dull-sounding but vitally important 'boiler study' which greatly increased understanding of how 20% of UK energy was used, when previously nothing was known at all. This was a huge, ambitious empirical project collecting and analysing thousands and thousands of items of data before personal computers had been invented. (This also allowed him to pursue his lifelong hobby of collecting pub names and histories). John was later an influential figure in the analysis of the big energy privatisations that took place between 1986 and 1996.

John took early retirement from the university in 2000 but this in no way diminished his high levels of energy and activity. Having already been deeply engaged in the world of energy policy – like John Surrey he was Specialist Adviser to very many Parliamentary Select Committee inquiries from the late 1970s onwards – he began a career, closely following on from his university work, in public sector consultancy. The range of his activities was enormous. Three recent examples are his chairmanship of the Energy Efficiency Partnership for Homes, deputy chairmanship of the Government's Fuel Poverty Advisory Group and his chairmanship of the Local Government Association's inquiry into the local implications of climate change.

John had a remarkable talent for translating between the worlds of academia and public policy, and could present research-based and quite radical policy proposals to policy-makers in ways that seemed the merest common sense. Equally, he was always able to frame research questions in ways that helped the policy process, while always remaining independent and where necessary, critical.

Gordon MacKerron

*** Christmas Party Booking Form 12.30-2.30pm, 16 December 2009**

.....
 To be returned by 27 November to Sue Bullock, 104 Bonchurch Road, Brighton BN2 3PH. **OR**, if you are paying by card, the form and card details may be returned by email to: sue.bullock@hotmail.co.uk

Please book place/s at £6 each	Total cost £
--------------------------------------	--------------------

Payment Details

I enclose a cheque for £..... (payable to **University of Sussex**).

Please charge my debit / credit / Maestro card with £.....

Card Type (Visa, Mastercard, Maestro etc)



Card number.....

Valid from.....to..... Maestro issue number

Security Code.....(last 3 numbers on signature strip on reverse of card)

Name on card.....

Signed.....

 **Theatre Trip booking form** 

Present Laughter	Mon. Jan 25, 7.45	Tues. Jan. 26, 7.45	Weds. Jan 27, 7.45	Thurs. Jan. 28, 2.30	Thurs. Jan. 28, 7.45	Sat. Jan. 30. 2.30
Date & time OK?						
Preference?						
How many?						
Dinner?						

Name:

E mail and/or postal address:

.....

If you are interested, please let Jennifer Platt know **by Nov. 16** (preferably by e mail to j.platt@sussex.ac.uk - or phone 01273 555025, or post to Arts D or 98 Beaconsfield Villas, Brighton BN1 6HE).