The Changing Face of the Sussex Campus

Talk, tour and tea, Wednesday 17th June 2015  2.00 to 4.30 pm

We’ll meet at the Conference Centre, Bramber House, from 2 pm for a welcoming coffee or tea. At 2.30 pm Charles Dudley, Director of Residential & Campus Services, will give an illustrated talk about new campus developments and will also show us some historical pictures of the original campus.
At 3pm we’ll split into small groups for a campus tour. This will include the Northfield accommodation, the Jubilee Building, and the Attenborough Centre. The visit will conclude with tea and cakes. Parking vouchers for Car Park 10, East Slope, will be sent to those requesting them on the booking form.

The inclusive cost of this visit is £5 per head. All are welcome! Complete the form at the end of this 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 can be returned by email to: sue.bullock@hotmail.co.uk. Any general questions about this event should be addressed to the event organiser, Colin Finn (colinfinn@btinternet.com) and not to Sue.

THE CLOSING DATE FOR BOOKING IS THE END OF MAY 2015.

Recent Suss-Ex events

Tom Stoppard Arcadia  Theatre Royal 3 February 2015
This attracted the largest theatre group to date and made a good social occasion.

The Keep 16 February 2015
The purpose-built archive opposite the University now houses the University special collections, as well as the archives of Brighton and Hove and the East Sussex Record Office. The Suss-Ex party (with 58 members the largest for an event since 2007) heard introductory talks from the University archival staff about the collections, and were then able to tour the building to see the areas for long term storage of papers and the rooms devoted to conservation. They were also able to look at documents from the earliest says of the University, including those deposited by the first Vice-Chancellor, Lord (John) Fulton. We thank Jackie Fuller for organising this event.
Retired members of staff continue to contribute to the University’s reputation by writing books, publishing papers in learned journals, speaking at conferences, and serving on national and international committees. Some of these contributions are listed below.

**Ben du Boulay**


**Vivienne Griffiths**


**Jim Hanson**

Hanson, J. R. Diterpenoids of terrestrial origin. *Natural Product Reports 2013, 30*, 1346-1356.


**Alan Lehmann**


Invited speaker: International Meeting on xeroderma pigmentosum, Kobe, Japan; Seminars : CRUK, Clare Hall Labs; Leon Mullenders retirement symposium, Leiden, Netherlands; British Photobiology Group, British Association of Dermatology, Glasgow; Cockayne Syndrome Support Group, Salt Lake City; Xeroderma pigmentosum meeting, Madrid, Spain; U3A Life Science Course, Lewes.

PhD thesis external examiner: Matthew Peacock, UCL

**Laci Löb**
Books
*Postkarten von Bergen-Belsen. István Irsai und sein graphisches Werk.* (Small volume of 73 pp. published by Bergen-Belsen Memorial. Main contributor Ladislaus Löb, pp. 4-56)

*Greetings from Belsen. István Irsai’s picture postcards and life in the concentration camp.*

Research Paper No. 10, Centre for German-Jewish Studies, University of Sussex, 33 pp

Articles
“Grüße aus Bergen-Belsen : István Irsais Ansichtskarten und das Leben im KZ“. *Einsicht*, Fritz Bauer Institute, University of Frankfurt/Main, vol. 11, pp. 60-67
Book reviews in *Einsicht* and *The German Quarterly*

Numerous talks to schools, universities and adult groups (incl, Brighton and Eastbourne civic event for Holocaust Memorial Day 2014).

**Jennifer Platt**

"Using journal articles to measure the level of quantification in national sociologies”, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*.


Term of office as Vice-President for Publications of the International Sociological Association completed.

Paper given at World Congress of Sociology, Yokohama: ‘How can we characterise national sociologies?'
Organiser and panel chair of World Congress training session on publications.

Michael Ramsey


Research students completed in 2014: Peter Roston and Sue Clegg.

Invited Chair of Royal Society of Chemistry/ Analytical Methods Committee (RSC/AMC) Subcommittee on Sampling Uncertainty and Quality.

David Smith

Robert Smith

Mike Wallis

Donald Winch

Lecture on 'The Political Economy of Empire' to Charles Gide Association for the Study of Economic Thought in Martinique, also given in St Andrews and to History of Political Theory Seminar, Institute for Historical Research, London. Doctoral examiner, Paris 1, Sorbonne.
Obituaries and Memorial Service

Mrs D Kenefick  known as Kenny

Kenny died from a heart attack on 24 October 2014, four months away from her planned celebration on what would have been her 90th birthday on 27 February 2015.

She disliked her name and would always introduce herself, in her warm and informal way, as Kenny. She started work for the University in the Health Centre, based in those days in portakabins along the Refectory Road. The Director was Dr Anthony Ryle, author of Student Casualty fame. Barbara Shields, the wife of the then-Registrar of the University, also worked there and was her long-time friend. Indeed, it was at her home of that Kenny suffered her heart attack.

After a number of years at the Health Centre, Kenny transferred to the position of School Secretary of The School of Educational Studies, which very soon became The School of Cultural and Community Studies (CCS), and worked there until her retirement in December 1989. Appointed for her intelligence and integrity, she was fiercely loyal to her students, Deans and staff, both secretarial and academic. Never too busy to listen to a student or member of staff with a problem or concern, for many years Kenny presided over a very happy School where students and faculty would get together and produce a Christmas Review to the delight of a receptive and amused audience.

Tutors would give parties in their own homes and invite students and colleagues, and students would also give parties and invite their tutors. Likewise, Kenny would give parties in her home and be invited to the parties given by tutors and students.

Unique amongst those who held the post of School Secretary, Kenny made it a practice at the start of each academic year to take home the freshers’ admission forms with their names and photographs and memorise each student’s name and face so that she could greet them personally on their arrival. Imagine a new student’s surprise on being greeted by someone completely new, who knew them by name, not just by a number. All received a truly warm welcome to the University.

When Kenny retired she continued to be loyal to the University and was always eager to receive news from former students and staff. She was pleased to take up the welfare role of visiting former staff for the University of Sussex Pension and Assurance Scheme, and also organised theatre trips and visits to Houses and Gardens.

Her last generous act was to donate her body to medical research so that there was no funeral. Instead, former colleagues and friends gathered with her beloved son and daughter-in-law who travelled from Trinidad, at Kenny’s chosen venue. They raised a glass to toast the life of an
efficient, sparkling and warm-hearted woman who gave so much affection and care to so many. She lives on in the hearts and minds of many, both in this country and around the world.

Pauline Grant

Tony Thorlby (1928-2013)

Tony Thorlby, who died on 21st December 2013 at the age of 85, was the first Professor of Comparative Literature at the University. He was educated at Tonbridge School and Peterhouse, Cambridge, where he read Modern Languages and was taught by the great Germanist, Erich Helle. He then went to Yale where in 1953 he was awarded a PhD for a thesis on ‘Fatality in Four Novels of the Nineteenth Century’. He learned Russian during his National Service in the famous Joint Services School of Linguists, where Michael Frayn and Alan Bennett, as well as our own George Craig and Peter France, were also enrolled. D. M. Thomas, who was a contemporary, has written: “On my course the obvious leader—older, sophisticated, handsome, with a PhD,—a kind of admired Steerforth—was one A. K. Thorlby, later a distinguished academic. One felt he was on easy terms with the tutors and I envied him his air of insouciant superiority.”

My own first acquaintance with Tony was rather different. Alban Krailsheimer, the supervisor of my Oxford BLitt, on learning that I had got a job at Sussex, warned me: “Beware. There is a dangerous, subversive person there, A. K. Thorlby.” This would greatly have amused some of his more radical colleagues, such as John Mepham, who felt that if he lacked anything it was a subversive edge, but then in those days ideas regarded as radical at Oxford might appear cautiously conservative at Sussex.

Tony had come to Sussex in its second year, 1962, having first joined Heller in the Swansea German Department, where he met his wife Jill, who was a student there. He and David Daiches introduced the Modern European Mind course, which so many students in the Arts area identified with the place, and he ran it with flair, charm and patience until he retired in the late eighties, lecturing brilliantly on Kafka, Rilke, Thomas Mann and the rest to rapt audiences.

And yet—this for me was the paradox of the man—there was a sense in which he didn’t believe a word of it. A devout Catholic, and in one sense very English, he treated the German, mainly Protestant tradition, with a kind of bemused tolerance. Yet he had a deep understanding of it and he joined Heller in editing a fascinating series of short books, Studies in Modern European Literature and Thought, of which my favourite is Elizabeth Sewell’s eccentric Paul Valéry. Unlike Heller, though, Tony did not best express himself in print. He wrote short studies of Flaubert (1957), Kafka (1972) and Anna Karenina (1987), and a book on the Romantic Movement, but his main scholarly achievement is probably the series of four gigantic volumes he and David Daiches edited under the title Literature and Western Civilization, and The Penguin Companion to European Literature. Rather, like so many of Sussex’s best minds in those early years, he put his life and soul into teaching undergraduates, and speaking out for ‘the Sussex way’, and he did both supremely well. Peter France remembers an occasion when, ‘perhaps at a French Studies Conference, there was a session on comparative literature, represented on the one hand by a very dry Sorbonne professor apparently only interested in “the fortunes of writer X in countries A, B and C”, and on the other hand the young Tony Thorlby, the first professor of comparative literature in Britain, full of dash and energy, representing a new world. No comparison...’.

When he retired, to look after Jill, who was suffering from Multiple Sclerosis, they moved to Herefordshire, where Peter remembers ‘the pride and expert knowledge with which he guided us round his extraordinary collection of willow trees.’ I exchanged Christmas cards with him until the end of his life. In one of them, featuring a Madonna and Child by Sano di Pietro (1406–81), he wrote: “Do you think one of the reasons for painting on and with gold was that it
reflected light so well, focussing and amplifying the light of candles in the dim religious gloom of early sanctuaries?” The profundity of the observation, the hesitation implied by the question, the fastidious care for grammar and syntax even in a hastily scribbled Christmas card, and the profound and yet simple faith it breathes are all typical of the man. He was one of the many people who made my years at Sussex such a joy.

Gill predeceased Tony, who is survived by their daughters Ruth, Julie and Rachel.

Gabriel Josipovici

A European heritage

At Sussex in the 1960s the practice of teaching literary history, using lectures to convey information about books, was replaced by seminars that encouraged students to become pro-active. The approach was to be comparative, for the careful study of a good translation was surely better than ignoring key texts in unfamiliar languages. Since the list of books for in-depth study had to be limited, there was a commitment to quality, but texts alone were not enough. Literature, David Daiches argued, explores the human condition, but under circumstances that are continuously changing—hence the importance of context. The curriculum also incorporated good practices from other quarters, including one of the strongest features of Cambridge Modern Languages, the linking of European literature with thought and history. Particularly appealing was the openness towards Europe. Brighton’s proximity to the continent encouraged a unified focus, linking the study of a foreign language with our broader European heritage.

The most controversial innovation was the Modern European Mind, a course originated by Daiches in English and American Studies. Colleagues contributed across a plurality of subjects: literature, philosophy and the history of ideas, psychology and even theology. For lecturers in English, the central issue was the response to modern industrial democracy from the late nineteenth-century onwards—from Ruskin and Morris to Joyce and Lawrence. For those in the European School, the key lay with the concept of ‘alienation’, as formulated by Hegel and Marx and fictionalized by Kafka and Camus. The course was framed by lectures from different disciplines, staged at noon in the Physics Lecture Theatre. Staff and students would pack the auditorium, with the debates spilling over into the refectory over lunch. Dickens’s model of learning from experience was elucidated by Daiches in a lecture on David Copperfield, while Sybil Oldfield elucidated the feminism of Virginia Woolf, as epitomized by Mrs Dalloway. Larry Lerner explored Joseph Conrad’s disturbing vision in The Heart of Darkness, while Peter France and Robin Milner-Gulland shared their passion for French and Russian poetry.

The prominence of German within the Modern European Mind was due to Anthony Thorlby, who coordinated the German Subject Group. In his previous post at Swansea, he had fallen under the spell of the charismatic Erich Heller, whose Disinherited Mind highlighted the significance of Nietzsche and Spengler, Kafka, Rilke and Kraus. It was Thorlby, a warm-hearted mentor, who took the fledgling members of the German group under his wing. Our efforts were enhanced by the appointment of a German lector, Ladislaus (Laci) Löb, who had gained his doctorate at the University of Zurich. The three of us would meet every week to discuss German idioms, compiling examples for our students in preparation for their Year Abroad.

Tony Thorlby possessed exceptional imaginative flair. As a student remarked after one of his poetry tutorials: “We started with a jumble of words and ended with a revelation”. It was difficult to repress a pang of envy—how could one ever acquire such finesse? One of our discussions dealt with Die Leiden des jungen Werthers, Goethe’s epistolary novel. The hypersensitive hero falls for the motherly Charlotte Buff, only to discover that she is already engaged. Driven to distraction by unrequited love, Werther ends his life with a revolver. He must have forgotten that, well before his first encounter with Charlotte, he had already been warned that
she was betrothed. “I fear,” Charlotte says to Werther, “that it is only the impossibility of possessing me that makes the impulse so irresistible”. This, Thorlby suggested, hints at an unconscious dimension that links Goethe with Freud.

A similar spirit informed the approach to modernism. Under Thorlby’s guidance textual engagement became an intellectual adventure. “Our students arrive as well-adjusted sixth-formers,” he observed, “and we alienate them!” This was said in jest for no one was more concerned with the university’s pastoral responsibilities (each student had a Personal Tutor). But teaching was certainly designed to challenge middle-class complacency. Where Marx had diagnosed the alienating effect of capitalism, the Modern European Mind explored the concept of alienation through further permutations from Dostoevsky’s Notes from Underground and Kierkegaard’s existential questioning to Kafka’s isolated heroes and Camus’s absurdist outsiders.

As editor of the Penguin Guide to European Literature, Thorlby was to share these findings with a wider world. But the Europe explored at Sussex was not only a continent of the mind. All those majoring in our School were expected to spend their third year studying abroad, and on their return they would write dissertations about contemporary France or Germany. Sussex extended the frontiers of education to include Berlin and Paris, Milan and Moscow. “Students are to become explorers,” Asa Briggs insisted. The metaphor of a ‘new map of learning’ figured prominently in his public statements, including his contribution to The Idea of a New University: An Experiment at Sussex, published in 1964 under the editorship of David Daiches. The result was an intellectual landscape designed for adventurous spirits.

Edward Timms (adapted by the author from the ‘Sussex in the Sixties’ chapter of his memoir Taking up the Torch: English Institutions, German Dialectics and Multicultural Commitments, Sussex Academic Press, 2011)

Memorial Service
Ruth, Julie and Rachel (07719 576803) have arranged an informal memorial service for their parents Gill and Tony at noon on Saturday 30 May at St Pancras Catholic Church, Lewes, followed by refreshments. All are invited.

We are sorry to hear that Professor Alan Cawson has died. An obituary by Professor Caroline Bassett appears in the Bulletin of 1 May 2015.
More information about Suss-Ex is available on its webpage at http://www.sussex.ac.uk/suss-ex/. ‘Suss-Ex Club’ in Google will get you there, as will http://tiny.cc/sussex, or you can find us in the A–Z on the University’s homepage. The website has copies of past Newsletters, and also has a link to http://www.sussex.ac.uk/suss-ex/Obituaries.html, a list of obituaries of deceased colleagues. We document the contributions made to the University by retired members of staff and publicise their continuing scholarly work.

Suss-Ex activities are organised by a steering committee, which currently comprises:
Sir Gordon Conway, Chair G.Conway@imperial.ac.uk
Sue Bullock sue.bullock@hotmail.co.uk
Colin Finn colinfinn@btinternet.com
Jackie Fuller jkfuller21@hotmail.com
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David Smith j.d.smith@sussex.ac.uk
Paul Tofts uos@paul-tofts.org.uk

We are always seeking ideas for social occasions when we can meet former colleagues. Please let us have your suggestions, or volunteer to join the committee. We meet once a term, when practicable immediately before a Suss-Ex event.
This is a chance to see the recent changes in the University campus. The programme for the afternoon is as follows:

2.00 - 2.30 pm Assemble in the Gallery Room, Conference Centre, Level 3 Bramber House. There is a lift. Tea and Coffee will be provided.

2.30 - 3.00 pm Talk on new buildings at Sussex by Charles Dudley, The University Director of Residential and Campus Services

3.00 - 4.00 pm Tour of the Campus to include the new Northfield Accommodation, the Jubilee Building and the Attenborough Centre

4.00 - 4.30 pm Coffee, tea and cakes in the Conference Centre

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TO BE RETURNED NO LATER THAN END OF MAY. (Please print all details clearly in caps!)

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