

SUSS-EX CLUB

Notes on the 31st meeting of the Steering Group

Friday 20 June 2014

Room 5C11 Pevensey3

1. The meeting was chaired by Gordon Conway.
2. Adrian Peasgood agreed to take minutes.
3. Present: Sue Bullock (SB), Gordon Conway (GC), Jackie Fuller (JF), Charles Goldie (CG), Arnold Goldman, Adrian Peasgood (AP), Jennifer Platt (JP), David Smith (DS), Paul Tofts (PT), Ken Wheeler.
4. Apologies: Colin Finn, Steve Pavey (SP).
5. The Minutes of the 30th meeting, 14 March 2014, were approved; there were no matters arising not covered later in the meeting.
6. Reports:
 - 6.1 'Pygmalion' at the Theatre Royal. This had been enjoyed.
 - 6.2 Royal Pavilion. Alexandra Loske's guided tour had been enjoyed by a group of more than 20; it included some areas not normally shown; it was thought by some that the 'colour' emphasis in the trailer for the tour did not really materialise.
 - 6.3 Financial matters. The formal position was unchanged since March, owing to delays in the Finance Office. JF would try to speak to the Head of payments to see how procedures could be speeded up.
7. Future programme:
 - 7.1 Ridgeview vineyard. It seemed likely that a private tour (including tasting) at £15 per person, exclusive to Suss-Ex members and guests, could be arranged, but no catering facilities could be provided. Agreed that an 1100 start, on a Tuesday in August, would be sought by SB. A pub lunch, in Ditchling or elsewhere, could follow for those interested.
 - 7.2 Chichester. While a theatre visit combined with one to the Pallant gallery would make an attractive day out it was felt it would be difficult to offer a trip which would add to what individuals could arrange for themselves. Agreed to defer consideration of this possibility.
 - 7.3 The Keep. Agreed that JF should enquire about a possible visit early in 2015, preferably on a day when the Keep is closed to the public. She would ask in particular what materials concerning the University were held, and whether the visit could in part feature such items. Discussion of this proposal widened to consideration of where the University's records, whether of the 'centre' or other 'official' bodies, were kept, or survive at all; independent records, e.g. of interviews and memoirs, were also the subject of concern.

7.4 Bremf. JP offered to arrange a trip to a concert with a Venice theme, and an associated picnic, on 24 October.

7.5 Theatre visits. JP noted that the Theatre Royal would be showing 'The importance of being Earnest', and 'One man, two guvnors'. AP reported that Brighton Little Theatre would have Abi Morgan's 'Love song', and New Venture Theatre would have 'Hay Fever' and, just before Christmas, a version of Andersen's 'Snow Queen'.

What could be seen this autumn at Lewes Little Theatre? ['The Diary of Anne Frank' identified subsequently.]

[Also subsequently identified further offerings from Brighton Little Theatre: 'An inspector calls', late October; 'Wind in the willows', a musical adapted by Alan Bennett from the book by Kenneth Grahame, 6-13 December.]

8. Recruitment:

Resumed discussion of Paul Tofts' paper, agreeing that positive backing from UOS senior staff would be essential if Suss-Ex were to achieve a significant increase in size, and with that, the potential to be seen as an active supporter of the university as well as a primarily social group. How to demonstrate that potential? JP noted as an existing example the list of post-retirement academic achievements maintained by Suss-Ex, and its role in helping UOS placings in university rankings lists. It was noted that significant help for the university might entail more effort than many Suss-Ex members could, or perhaps wished to, provide. We wondered whether US universities' emphasis on relations with alumni and retired staff would ever be replicated in UK, particularly in universities like Sussex, with public funding the major element of its history and development.

Concluded that a group comprising GC, CG, PT, and possibly SP, would seek an August meeting with, it was hoped, the new PVC, the head of alumni, and the head of development; CG to arrange. A pre-meeting of the Suss-Ex team, to discuss a previously determined agenda, was highly desirable.

9. Pre-retirement course. JP reported that the established type of course was to be discontinued, being replaced by a shorter session limited to core factual matters. This news was regretted, and some wondered whether providing a replacement looking at broader issues might be something Suss-Ex could offer, though careful scoping would be necessary, and the commitment might be beyond our capacity.

10. Newsletter. AP would be responsible for a brief Newsletter by mid-July, chiefly to announce details of the Ridgeview visit when they became available via SB, but also outlining other forthcoming events. A fuller Newsletter would be issued when the autumn/winter programme was settled.

11. Next meeting. Friday 26 September, 1715. Venue: DARO meeting room if available, otherwise presumably 5 C11 Pevensey 3.

anp
26jun14