

# Friends of The Wharf Newsletter Spring 2014



## WHARF EXTENDS INTO 5 CANAL ROAD

The Friends are very pleased to announce that Wharf Director, Mrs Angela Court, has signed a 5-year lease for 5 Canal Road adjoining the Wharf. The new space will be linked to the main Wharf building by a doorway on the ground floor and will soon be available to hire for a wide variety of community uses, from U3A meetings to a small arts film club. It will also provide additional dressing room accommodation for theatre and musical productions. Anyone wishing to book the space for meetings or events should contact Angela Court: ([angelacourt@tavistockwharf.com](mailto:angelacourt@tavistockwharf.com)). Groups where all members are Friends of the Wharf may receive discounts. We are pleased that the digital cinema facility is now running efficiently which means that a wider range of films can be shown. The Friends have donated £1,000, however, more funding is required for a new designated server, plus fibre optic broadband to enable downloads of live feeds for broadcast. Donations are still appreciated for the Wharf Cinema Appeal. Please make cheques payable to Wharf Cinema Appeal Fund.

## TEATIME TALKS

The Friends Teatime Talks programme, held in the auditorium at 2.00 pm on 2 or 3 Mondays per month, has become so popular that it regularly attracts audiences of between 50 and 100 people. The talks, which include afternoon tea and cakes, are now £4.00 for Friends of the Wharf and £5.00 for others. This has led to a significant increase in recruitment of new members. Please bring your friends and enjoy these interesting social occasions. Proceeds from the talks are used for the Wharf coffee shop catering and the speakers expenses. The 2014 list talks is available from the Wharf reception.

## ENDSLEIGH SALMON HATCHERY



The first talk on Monday 13th January was by Dr Ann Pulsford on the Tamar salmon fishery. Concern about the rapidly declining numbers of Atlantic salmon *Salmo salar* in the Tamar led to a 10 year complete net fishing ban in 2004. Various conservation measures have been implemented including restocking of the river with juvenile fish, some from the salmon hatchery at Endsleigh. This hatchery was originally set up to supplement the Tamar salmon stocks which had been severely affected by pollution from the extensive mineral mining in the Tamar Valley in the C18th and early C19th. The former 'Endsleigh Cottage' was then used as a summer holiday home by many members of the Bedford family

who were also keen on fishing in the Tamar. In 1906 the 11th Duke (Hebrand Russell) and Duchess (Mary Tribe, the 'flying duchess') sent some salmon smolts from the Endsleigh hatchery to the Marine Biological Association (MBA) Laboratory in Plymouth, to carry out experiments on their feeding habits. Smolts are the juvenile seagoing phase in the salmon life cycle. The Bedfords wanted information on how long the juvenile fish took to reach sexual maturity. The aim was probably to bypass the seagoing stage so that they could restock the River Tamar with the salmon that had matured in the MBA aquarium. A member of the audience, Mike McNicol, has memories of his grandfather who had worked at the Endsleigh hatchery for the Duke of Bedford and has some photographs of the original salmon hatchery. Any further information on the Tamar salmon fishery would be welcomed by Dr Ann Pulsford; please contact: [a.pulsford@axiom.eclipse.co.uk](mailto:a.pulsford@axiom.eclipse.co.uk)  
Ann will be talking about *The Art and Science of the Sperm Whale* on Monday 8th December.

## HUSKIES IN ANTARCTICA



On Monday 27th January 2014 John Killingbeck gave a fascinating talk on *Huskies in Antarctica* from his own personal experiences. John also brought along his sled and demonstrated how the dog teams were driven and the supplies carried. He had spent his first year (1961) of national service in the RAF in the Antarctic as base leader at Deception. Whilst there he took a dog team around the island and the experience convinced him that he wanted to go further south. In the 1991 Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty dogs had to leave the Antarctic by 1st April 1994, as they were deemed by the international community to be non-indigenous species.

The British Antarctic Survey (BAS) had only two teams left. As they represented an important genetic stock, it was decided to return them to their ancestral home in Labrador and to give them to the

Inuit community. John Killingbeck, with John Sweeney, was asked by BAS to drive these last dog teams, the Huns and Admirals, to support the scientific programme on Alexander Island in the 1993/4 season. The Friends of the Wharf donated John's fee, at his request, to the British Antarctic Monument Trust, which was set up to commemorate those who have lost their lives in Antarctica.

## INTERNATIONAL SCOTT CENTENARY EXPEDITION

Henry Evans is a 24 year old marine biologist who graduated from Plymouth University in 2012. He recently completed the 2 man International Scott Centenary Expedition to the South Pole to celebrate the centenary of Captain Scott's 1912 *Terra Nova* expedition, arriving at the Pole on 5th January 2013.

It proved to be a life-changing experience and Henry is now sharing his experiences, by giving talks and workshops to schools, businesses and local groups across the world. To date this has included over 200 schools throughout the UK, USA, Europe, China and South-East Asia. He has kindly agreed to give a talk at the Wharf on Monday 30th June at 2.00 pm sponsored by Colin Kilvington.



## EXTRAORDINARY EXPLORERS



Colin Kilvington gave a marvellous talk on *Extraordinary Explorers* which included Captain Tobias Furneaux, RN (1735-1781) Plymothian, navigator and explorer. Born at Swilly House (approx. 300 yards from The Outlands, Milehouse, the birthplace and boyhood home of Captain Robert Falcon Scott), Tobias Furneaux was the first man to circumnavigate the globe in both directions. It was during Furneaux's first circumnavigation, as second lieutenant in HMS *Dolphin* that the island of Tahiti was discovered. Later, Tobias commanded HMS *Adventure* which accompanied Cook's ship HMS *Resolution* on the second of Cook's three great voyages of discovery to the South Seas to search for and dispel the myth of a great Southern Continent, *Terra Australis Incognita*, in temperate latitudes of the Pacific. Tobias tends to be criticised for being less diligent than Cook in enforcing preventive measures against scurvy.

As he surveyed part of the Tasmanian coast, he saw many features that reminded him of his native Devon. Thus we find today a Mewstone, resembling the Mewstone near Plymouth, Swilly Bay and an Eddystone Point. The Furneaux Islands in the Bass Strait commemorate him. He is buried in the graveyard by the north porch of Stoke Damerel Parish Church.

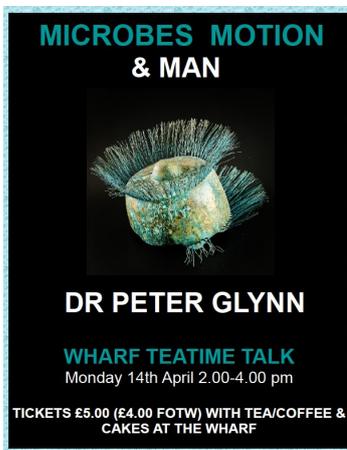
## BADGERS and the MOON



Dr David Dixon, Devon wildlife expert and president of the CB Dennis British Beekeepers' Research Trust, gave a fascinating talk in 2013 on the life history of the honeybee and the diseases which are currently affecting bee colonies, both locally and globally. Particular attention was given to the viral and protozoan diseases responsible for a dramatic decline in colony numbers, which is having serious consequences for agriculture and horticulture. Viral diseases such as deformed wing virus (DWV), whose transference is linked to the rapid spread of the Asia-derived *Varroa* mite, are currently the subject of intensive research, some of which is being carried out at the Marine Biological Association in Plymouth. By coincidence, the honeybee DWV belongs to the same family of viruses as those responsible for regulating phytoplankton populations in the ocean, so the honeybee represents a useful model organism for learning more about the rapid evolution, molecular structure and transmission of these viruses. Dr Dixon

also described a practical approach to *Varroa* control now being tried by expert beekeepers through the development of hygienic bee strains. David is returning on Monday 6th June for a talk on *Badgers and the Moon*.

When David Dixon began watching a family of badgers five years ago, little did he know how deeply he'd be drawn into their nocturnal world. In his talk he will reveal his entertaining observations and his belief that something unearthly was influencing the animals' mating behaviour. His investigations suggested that reproductive behaviour in badgers is strongly influenced by the lunar cycle.



## MICROBES, MOTION and MAN

Dr Peter Glynn will be talking on Monday 14th April at 2.00 pm about the structures responsible for movement in certain types of micro-organisms. These structures, cilia and flagella, are also present in humans, other animals and also in many plants. In humans, they play many important roles, for example in respiratory and reproductive physiology. The study of such micro-organisms is important in its own right because some are human pathogens and others have important ecological roles. They can also provide us with important information about cilia and flagella in humans and other animals. The talk will cover the roles of these structures in the human body, including some of the problems which arise when they do not function properly, and will be illustrated with many still images and short video clips of ciliated and flagellated protozoa.

## TAVISTOCK HERITAGE FESTIVAL

FOTW are pleased to be participating in the Tavistock Heritage Festival. On Monday 27th October there is a full day of talks including *John Taylor and the Tavistock Canal* by Ann Pulsford at 11.00 am followed by a walk along the canal. In the afternoon at 2.00 pm Kevin Dickens will be talking about *The Normans in Tavistock*. Day tickets including sandwich lunch and tea and cakes in the afternoon are £8.00 FOTW and £10.00 others. The Wharf will also be hosting the very successful play *The Unreliable History of Tavistock* on Sunday 26th October at 7.30 pm.

Tavistock museum will be open with an exhibition on the departure of the Americans for D-Day 70 years ago and the role played by the 115th Field Hospital on Plaister Down, which treated casualties brought back to Tavistock after the landing.

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT: OBESITY AND DIABETES



Professor Gareth Williams, Emeritus Professor of Medicine, University of Bristol, gave an informative talk on *Obesity and Diabetes* on Monday 3rd March. He reminded us that obesity is caused primarily by the overconsumption of calories and a lack of exercise, overlaid in some cases on a genetic tendency to gain weight. Serious obesity is now common (40% of UK adults) and is particularly worrying in schoolchildren. The life expectancy of an obese primary schoolchild will be significantly reduced, and what used to be called 'late onset' diabetes is now appearing in young children. This also increases their risk of early heart attacks and strokes. Opportunities for exercise have been reduced by sedentary activities like playing computer games and watching television, and the sale of school playground and sports facilities in many places has made things worse. Sedentary activities like television, particularly when food or soft drinks advertising appears, also lead to overconsumption of calories by children.

The audience was particularly concerned about this area and many of the questions at the end of the talk addressed the issue of how we can prevent young people from damaging their health and life expectancy by becoming obese. Various suggestions were put forward on how to reduce consumption of sugary drinks and fast food but they should be supported by some forms of government control and education on the sale of these potentially health-damaging products. Although Tavistock has been proud of the fact that we are one of the few towns where a famous fast food outlet has closed down, this is not the norm. Professor Williams will be returning to the Wharf with a talk on *Jenner and Vaccination* on Monday 13th October at 2.00 pm.

## EDWARD VIII'S MISTRESSES

Edward VIII visited Tavistock three times during his period as Prince of Wales and briefly as King in 1936. During WW1 he funded the sphagnum moss depot at Princetown, where sphagnum moss gathered from Dartmoor was prepared for wound dressings. Although he famously abdicated in 1936 to marry Wallis Simpson, his romantic life before meeting her was varied and eventful. Dr Ann Pulsford will be presenting a talk on Edward VIII's mistresses on Monday 23rd June 2014 at 2.00 pm



## FRIENDS OF THE WHARF

The Friends volunteer committee includes: Sue Boxall: committee; Eunice Burr: gardens & stewarding; Wendy Cronin: membership secretary, box office & stewarding; Rebecca Garland: secretary & box office; Barrie Hyne: treasurer; Christopher Kirwin: vice chair of Friends; Sheena Odle: committee & stewarding; Ann Pulsford: chair of Friends, talks organizer & speaker; Mary Stewart: committee; Chris Talbot: box office & committee; Mary Thompson: committee & stewarding; Frank Woodcock: committee. Our funds have been spent on general maintenance of the building and a donation to the cinema fund appeal.

### BARRIE HYNE

A big thank you to Barrie Hyne who is retiring as FOTW treasurer after 4 years service but is continuing in his role as a Wharf administrative volunteer.

### AGM

The Friends of the Wharf AGM will take place on Monday 19th May 2014 at 3.30 pm at the Wharf (following the Teatime Talk). All 485 members are very welcome to attend, but please bring your membership cards. Membership forms on the back of the Teatime Talks programme are available from the Wharf reception and membership makes an ideal gift at only £8 or £10 p.a.

### BOOK DONATIONS

Please leave your unwanted books and videos for the Friends to sell in the bookcase near the bar area.

