

Burton Bradstock Village Society News Page (January 2015)

NEWS OF 2014-5 MEETINGS:

Membership for the year costs £5 and annual subscriptions should have been paid some time ago!
New members are always welcome!

Dates for the speaker meetings for 2014-5 are as follows:

2014:

September 19th

October 17th

November 14th

December 5th

2015:

January 16th

February 6th

March 13th

April 17th

A CIRCUMNAVIGATION OF SPITSBERGEN

Spitsbergen is the largest, and only permanently populated, island of the Svalbard archipelago in northern Norway. Jane Steenbuch, daughter of Burton Bradstock's Derek Parsons, will discuss its extraordinary geology, its glacial movement, an array of arctic birds, polar bears, etc....and will show many striking photographic images from her recent voyage.

Join us for Jane's talk t **7.30pm on Friday 16th January.**

On February 6th we are indebted to historian **Susan Moores** for presenting 'The Legacy of the Romanovs - Artefacts and Architecture', following Susan and David's recent travels in Russia.

We round off the talks' year with **Bob Ayers** discussing 'Old Father Thames' on March 13th, including news of 5 impromptu fairs held between 1683 and 1814 that were staged actually **on** the frozen Thames; and finally an arresting talk on April 17th by an intrepid woman stunt performer for films and TV, Denise Edwards. You won't want to try any of these at home!

PREVIOUSLY, AT THE VILLAGE SOCIETY...

In **December** we enjoyed the return of Mike Crankshaw, ex-Royal Navy Chef (who kindly stepped in earlier this year when one of our speakers was suddenly indisposed). In the first half-hour he covered his trip down the River Stour by canoe, in tribute to the life of his nephew, who had served in the British forces. In the second half – after enjoying a hot Christmas 'cup' and mince pies – Mike shared pictures with us on-screen – approved by the Royal Family – of the Royal Family on board the Royal Yacht Britannia and spoke further of life aboard it, where Mike served as Chef.

In **November** we heard from Havana Marking, speaking on her 10 years as a film director and producer, during which she directed the award-winning 'Afghan Star' film (living in

Kabul for 5 months). She has also interviewed a leader of a Balkans-based international network of jewel thieves, the 'Pink Panthers' - the resultant documentary 'Smash & Grab' was screened on BBC TV. It was a fascinating insight into the work of someone living 'on the edge' and the workings of documentary film makers in relation to the main TV channels. We shall certainly be looking out for Havana's work in future released through Roast Beef Productions Ltd.

In **October** we applauded the return of wildlife specialist Brian Pettit, talking on the birds, wildlife and scenery in France and Spain, where he has lived and has very close knowledge. We saw wonderful high-definition photos of scenery, insects, plants and animals associated with this part of Europe, with Brian's amusing delivery and passion for his work.

In **September**, Phil Wilkinson, speaking this time on 'Women at War' gave us a fascinating insight into the role of women in many countries, not least Russia. Having been British Military attaché in Moscow he has brought us insights into Russian life with his previous talks. This time, he included a section on the not widely known role of Russian women's fighter and bomber squadrons in World War 2.

In **July**, Angela Turner, the Creative Director of the Winchester Cathedral Flower Festival and a Chelsea Flower Show Gold Medallist, came to show how she had designed the Winchester Festival – seen by many Village Society members on last year's outing. The photos gave a wonderful insight as to the scale and intricacy of the design and construction of the magnificent displays. In the second half of the programme Angela demonstrated ways of interpreting the schedule for local flower shows and gave a number of ideas around two categories in the local show which took place the following week.

The annual outing, organised immaculately by Peter Broomhead, took 51 members to **Knights Hayes Court and Cothay Manor** in early June. Blessed with good weather, members enjoyed exploring the gardens and houses and were especially enthralled by the interior of Cothay Manor for which one of the groups was guided by the owner herself. The day ended with the traditional cream tea at Cothay prior to the return coach back to Burton.

In **April**, **Bob Ayres** returned for the last talk of our 2013/2014 season. The talk was entitled "Sayings of Olde London town" in which Bob took a light-hearted look at the origins of the sayings specific to London that have become part of our everyday language. They included the sayings associated with London trading, diseases and executions, to name just a few. As usual, the audience were thrilled with Bob's knowledge and humour.

Our **March** speaker was **Brian Jackman** with a talk entitled 'Lions at First Light'. Brian Jackman and his wife Annabelle live in Powerstock. Brian worked and travelled extensively for the Sunday Times and currently writes for the Telegraph. In 1974 he saw his first lion in the wild, in Africa, and from then on his interest grew and grew. Today the Jackmans continue to visit the Maasai Mara two or three times a year and probably know it more intimately than West Dorset. The striking images and experiences of the wildlife of Africa they shared were quite amazing. One of his very recent articles may be found at

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/africaandindianocean/10711004/Africa-safari-holidays-first-timers-guide-to-Kenya-and-Tanzania.html>

In **February**, the former BBC correspondent, **Kate Adie**, came to give us a talk about her work and how she ended up in journalism. It was a very entertaining and interesting evening from someone who is well used to talking and more than a match for anyone asking her a question! As expected, the occasion drew one of the largest audiences of members.

Our **January** 2014 speaker, an aircraft engineer, had to cancel at the last minute owing to his being posted to Norfolk to assist in the investigations surrounding the helicopter crash that had recently occurred. However, organiser, John Grantham, using all his expertise came up trumps and secured the services of **Mike Crankshaw** who gave us a very entertaining and emotional evening on his experiences as a chef on the Royal Yacht Britannia. It is highly likely that we shall see Mike again in a future programme!

The **December** talk at was entitled 'Entertainment with Musical Instruments' - a light hearted look by **Andrew Dickson** at his life in music, using musical instruments he had collected from around the world. A winner of the European Composer of the Year for the film 'High Hopes', Andrew also composed the music for the celebrated film 'Secrets and Lies' not to mention for the Burton Bradstock Community Play 'Shh' in 1982. There was plenty of audience participation as those attending were challenged to play the instruments!

Our **November** speaker was **Brian Pettit** on the subject of Wildlife in Dorset and Hampshire. Brian had the most amazing photographs in high definition and magnification such as most of us have never experienced before, of wildlife from Damsel Flies and Red Squirrels to Elephants and Giraffes, obviously the last two weren't in Dorset! He told us always to keep our eyes open when we are out walking as you never know what you might be missing either underfoot or in the trees. Brian is a very entertaining speaker with some very amusing anecdotes and we hope to welcome him back in the future for another one of his talks.

The **October** presentation by **Air Commodore Phil Wilkinson** resulted from a chance meeting in Moscow between himself and Lev Kerbel, arguably Russia's best sculptor of modern times. The meeting turned into a lasting friendship which allowed the speaker to give insights which drifted away from the official Russian record of the sculptor's life. Born at the time of the Russian revolution, Lev Kerbel's works ranged from patriotic busts of war heroes of all nationalities from his wartime experiences in Murmansk, to titanic memorials to Stalin, Lenin and subsequent Russian leaders that dominate many Russian sites today. What could have been a dry and technical presentation actually produced a fascinating, informative and witty insight into both sculptor and Russian life. The length of the applause at the end of the presentation was testimony to the level of audience interest and almost certainly a repeat invitation to Phil to come back for another session in a future programme.