

# THE UNIVERSITY OF WITHYWOOD

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## NEWSLETTER – SUMMER 2006

This comes to you very late. Quite frankly we have been so busy doing it – we haven't had time to write about it. In addition to all the ordinary activities, there have been quite a few extraordinary ones.

In May we went public for the first time with Somerset Churches. This project started in 1987 and now well over 200 medieval Somerset churches have been visited, drawn and photographed; with a comprehensive filing system devised and supervised by Glyn Edwards.

By kind permission of Martin Powell, a selection of Anton's watercolours of these churches was exhibited at his attractive premises in Yanleigh Lane, and an appreciative crowd turned up – buying laser copies in aid of our Sponsorship scheme. Initially £310 was banked, with more still to come. It is now hoped to find a more central and popular venue for this exhibition.

University of Withywood Performing Arts have blossomed into a regular team of enthusiasts led by Don Townshend and Jane Fidgen, and they have delivered their unique programme of musical items and comic turns to an ever widening group of clubs and societies, giving great enjoyment to our elderly citizens, as well as making sizeable contributions to our funds.

A grant of £700 from CSV provided a kick-start to the long-planned construction of a theatre and auditorium at the University of Withywood, and to celebrate its completion the Performing Arts team put on their own version of "My Fair Lady", with Sue Meacock as Eliza Doolittle, her three granddaughters as jockeys and flower girls, Anton as Professor Higgins and Don Townshend as Alfred P. Doolittle and Freddy Eynsford-Hill. It was an uproarious success – given to a wide and appreciative audience and it was universally agreed that the costumes and décor were quite as good as the film version. This was followed by a "My Fair Lady" reunion at the cottage in North Wales in August – the third of these visits to this wonderful place this year.

We are especially pleased to report that "Operation Golden Angel" has, after several false starts, been successfully accomplished. This large modern painting by our Siberian artist friend, Alexander Shuritz (who made two visits to the University of Withywood in the early 90s), has been bought to be presented to the new church in Queens Road. The final stages of its difficult transportation from a gallery in Chambéry, France to Withywood being orchestrated by our French friends, Armand and Christian Braun (the second and third angels) in August.

There has been massive progress to report on the completion of a comprehensive index to the Illustrated London News and Graphic – undertaken single-handed by Glyn Edwards. So far years 1842-75 has been finished and has already been much used for educational projects.

On the international front, there have been exciting developments. Marie Jo Coutanche's French and Anton's Spanish conversation classes have received considerable impetus from

the visits of quite a number of us to France and Spain this summer, and one of our sponsorees, Maria José in Mexico, continues to send us challenging e-mails to translate – an operation that can only take place through the indefatigable services of Christine Lillington.

In the spring we received an unexpected visit from Sylvana Apituley from Indonesia whom we sponsored from secondary school up to her Masters and Doctorate. She now tours the world for various organisations, speaking on civil rights, female emancipation in Asia and the delicate position of the Christian church in Indonesia.

In July Mrs Prema in South India opened her new English language centre in Turicharappalli. the whole project, in addition to her Tuition Centre for younger children (which now employs seven teachers) and at least six other students individually sponsored in higher education, is funded by the University of Witherwood and we appeal to all our friends to help her keep this invaluable work going.

Martin Ndiadai in Cameroon, who we have sponsored for the past two years, was one of that country's top six candidates in his final exams, and if we can raise the funds, we will see him through a further three years to guarantee government employment.

Samuel Gomez continues his excellent work for us in Ghana, keeping an eye on the seven or more students we sponsor there and carefully sharing out the money we are able to afford. The same applies to Robert Kigadi and Fredrick Otworu in Kenya where we have helped a further seven or eight students this year.

With the kind help of The Malago Society we have published another of Anton's little books – "*Tyntesfield – the inside story*", which is being well received and is available at the affordable cost of £2 a copy. Part of the income from this will be directed to our Sponsorship Fund.

And finally, a word on a project begun well over 20 years ago – to re-edit John Smith of Nibley's remarkable "*Lives of the Berkeleys*" written c.1630, and clamouring to be placed in its proper historical context and re-told in modern English. The gaps in this magnum opus are steadily closing – so watch this space.

Next year, 2007, we will be celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the University of Witherwood. We would welcome your ideas on what special activities you would like to see. Our new autumn term programme is enclosed and we hope you will continue your kind and generous support.

**NB.** For anyone who has e-mail and has not receiving this by e-mail, can you please send your address to Christine at [mrs1@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:mrs1@blueyonder.co.uk) for future reference. Thank you.