

# Member newsletter #1: Summer 2016

**Welcome to your first digital Member newsletter. We hope you like it.**

These quarterly updates (plus special news emails in between) will be sent straight to your inbox – but don't worry, you'll still receive our What's New and Barn Cinema publications by post!

We hope you will find it easy to navigate around and explore content on the new password-protected Members area of our website. This site contains information that you can access at any time. Your password is *theoldyew*.

Coming up in this first issue... news of yet another astonishing Archive Film Première (featuring the Galapagos Expedition) at our Annual Members Meeting... a presentation by Schumacher ecology design students... an interview with Mirhane, one of our longest-standing Members... some rather revealing trips down memory lane... Summer School Concerts... a catch-up on how Dartington is changing, and much more. And do please take a look at how you can help us to move ahead on our inspiring Heritage Revealed project – to secure our Deer Park for generations to come to enjoy.

We anticipate that as well as being a greener approach to how we communicate with our Members, this switch to a digital newsletter will be a useful new resource for everyone.

As always, we welcome your feedback so that we can continue improving our communication with you – please email your thoughts to [membership@dartington.org](mailto:membership@dartington.org).

**Thank you for your continuing support.**

## In this newsletter:

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**Heritage Revealed Appeal.** Close to £1m raised, just £12,300 to go: help us make a major project around heritage conservation and public engagement on the Dartington Hall estate a reality.



**Event: Presentation by Schumacher College students.** A number of **Ecological Design Thinking course** students have kindly agreed to present their end-of-term projects in an informal session for Members.



**Archive film restoration – an update.** Find out how donations are driving the restoration of some incredible films previously hidden in Dartington’s archives, and when new films will be screened for Members.



**Our Living Community: SoundArt Radio.** We are taking a look at some of the brilliant and diverse businesses and individuals that make the Dartington estate special – starting with the brilliant SoundArt Radio.



## Heritage Revealed Appeal

Almost there... Close to £1m raised. Just £12,300 to go. Please support our Heritage Revealed Appeal now.

'Heritage Revealed' focuses mainly on our medieval Deer Park in the largely hidden north east corner. But it also links into a wider strategy to use this beautiful estate and heritage as a place of inspiration and education.

### Donate now

[Click here to visit our Total Giving appeal page and make your donation. Thank you!](#)



We are thrilled to have been awarded major grants from the **Heritage Lottery Fund**, **Viridor Credits Environmental Company** and **Natural England**. Together with The Dartington Hall Trust’s own contribution, we have reached a target of almost £1m needed to make the project a reality.

We hope that the next step will involve you in some way. As a condition of accessing the Viridor Credits grant of £120,000 (which comes via the Landfill Communities Fund), we must ‘match fund’ just over 10% through independent means. *The rules state clearly that Dartington cannot use its own funds to do this.*

**It leaves us with just £12,300 to raise. Please would you make a donation today?**

We have already received an early gift of £2,500, which is fantastic. But if we don’t find the remaining money by 5 September, we risk losing this grant.

Every £1 you donate will release almost £10 in grant funding for our project. And through your gift you'd be helping to conserve a major piece of Devon's cultural heritage for now and for generations to come.

Thank you for whatever support you can give.

## Heritage Revealed: two key aims

- Protect and raise awareness of the Deer Park area, including repair and conservation of Grade II listed Deer Park walls
- Open up the estate to more people. An idea of what we've got planned:
  - new public walks through the Deer Park that are free and accessible to all and creatively interpreted
  - outdoor learning programme for primary schools visiting the estate
  - family activity days
  - new volunteering opportunities, including as Deer Park guides
  - invaluable 'real world' work experience and training opportunities for trainees on the LandWorks scheme on the Dartington estate (which provides a supported route back into the community for current and ex-prisoners)

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## Presentation by Schumacher's Ecological Design Thinking students

A number of postgraduate students on **Schumacher College's Ecological Design Thinking course** have kindly agreed to present their end-of-term projects in an informal session for Members on **27 July 2016 at 12.30pm**.

One of the featured students is **Ana Luiza Siqueira** who will present 'My Dartington' – all about her research findings on popular trails and places on the Dartington Hall Estate. This follows her informal interviews with people in the gardens, grounds, woods and by the riverside. The results are fascinating, generating a wealth of information that we can then produce as new resources for our visitors.

### Share your own trail!

In attending this event, you will also have opportunity to mark up your own favourite walk and inspire others to do likewise. Examples will help create an interactive display in our Visitor Centre.

**In addition, Amy Seefeldt** will present the **WeLand Project** described as 'a patterned journey through making sense of place within the context of the Dartington Estate'. It uses the landscape as a canvas to enquire how to increase integrity and allow the sensing of place to emerge within the community. Meanwhile, **Michael Martin will present Design through Making**, exploring the relationship between design, making and worldview.

This event has been organised primarily with Members in mind but as we anticipate keen interest we are also opening it up to the wider public. **Limited spaces – book early.**

### Make more of your visit!

Why not arrive a little earlier and combine this event with a **volunteer-led Garden Tour to learn more about the heritage, beauty and historical features of the Dartington Hall Gardens?** No need to book – just meet up at the archway in the Dartington Hall courtyard at 11am. The tour finishes at 12 noon so then there is enough time for a drink and a light bite at the Roundhouse or White Hart before you join the Presentation.

# Members events programme in full

27 Jul 2016: **Presentation by Schumacher's Ecological Design Students**

August 2016, various dates: **20% off selected Summer School concerts for Members**

17 Sep 2016: **Annual Members Meeting and Archive Film Premiere**

Also: You might be interested in...

28 July 2016: **Community in Conversation at Dartington**

[Click here for full details and booking information for all Members events](#)

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## More films from the archives

As some of you will recall, generous support from the former Friends of Dartington kickstarted work on restoring films from Dartington's archives, the first results of which were shown to appreciative audiences in February.

Jim Whittle (**Barn Cinema**) is currently putting together a programme of archival footage that can be screened to Members at the Annual Members Meeting (17 Sep), alongside arrangements for an early October Archive Showcase.

The Dartington Hall Film Unit was set up by William Hunter in 1934 as part of Dartington Hall School. The Film Unit was one of the first of its kind and played a key part in the history of documentary film-making in the UK. It trained many early documentary filmmakers, including **Richard Leacock**, who went on to invent the fly-on-the-wall documentary.

It was Leacock who teamed up with teacher and ornithologist **David Lack** to travel to the Galapagos Islands to document groundbreaking theories on Darwin. The Galapagos film, in its original form, is arguably the most exciting and scientifically important footage in the collection. (Reference: *One Dartington*, Autumm 2009.)

Funding from the donations at the last screenings have helped to buy hard drives, hardware and supplies for the next batches of films as well as a DVD release of each one which has meant small items of additional hardware. We'll keep you informed of developments.

[Click here for more information about the Annual Members Meeting and Archive Film Premiere.](#)

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## Member interview: Mirhane McLaren-Howard

**Tell us three interesting things about yourself**

I originally studied at the Royal College of Music, London, where I was also introduced to Dartington – a long time ago!

I have an abiding interest in Earth Energy.

I have camped overnight on an ice field adjacent to fast, full lava flow on Mount Etna. After climbing the active vent and gazing into fiery, molten depths, the vent collapsed one hour after descending!

**Describe Dartington in three words**

Spirituality, inspiration, example.

**Favourite place on the Dartington estate and why?**

The steps at the head of the Tiltyard – to feel what Dartington is about.

**Favourite event on the Dartington calendar and why?**

The **Summer School of Music** because Dartington seems to be at its most vital and most expressive then.

**How long have you been a Member and what made you decide to join?**

Since the beginning... in order to give support in whatever way appropriate.

**What memory stands out the most from your involvement with Dartington?**

An astonishing late-night performance of 'The Protecting Veil' by John Tavener. This was a memorial concert to him. Afterwards no one could speak.

**'Many-sided life'; 'laboratory for living and learning... for social and ecological change'; 'strong human and ecological values' – what do you think about Dartington's **emerging new strategy and vision**?**



Reflective: Mirhane looks out over the Tiltyard, with Dartington Hall in the background

## Could this be you?

We are always on the lookout for Members with interesting stories to tell, memories they can share about Dartington past or thoughts about Dartington present and future. If this sounds like you, please get in touch and let us know why!  
Email [membership@dartington.org](mailto:membership@dartington.org)

Fine so far and I prefer to think of the 'laboratory' as being prefaced by 'living' otherwise to me its bald use smacks of alien, clinical coldness rather than the wholistic and holistic perceptions of the Elmhursts.

[Point noted, Mirhane!]

**How important is it for you as a Member to have a continuing voice and opportunity to help shape Dartington's future?**

Very - as long as it is meaningful.

**Ideas for future 'Member Conversations'?** (Informal get-togethers for Members to engage over a specific area of interest within a Dartington context)

The spirit of Dartington – which I shall be co-hosting for a Member Conversation in October. (Details coming soon.)

**What are you looking forward to getting involved with at Dartington over the coming year?**

More contact with Members and staff etc.

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## Our Living Community

We are taking a look at some of the brilliant and diverse businesses and individuals that make the Dartington estate special. These stories will eventually become part of an online feature on the website, but Members can take a sneak preview before we go live.

### #1. Soundart – the last little corner of the Dartington College of Arts

**Soundart Radio station has sometimes been described as the bit of the Dartington College of Arts (DCA) that stayed.**

Why? It is defined by its fluidity, its total editorial freedom and its belief that anyone who asks to get involved is an artist. The musical output of the community radio station ranges from Chartwell Dutiro's African Music Diaspora to women composer showcase Hildegard to Hildegard. Its talk shows cover Quicksmart Comedy to business programme Our Wavelength. And its how-to shows span from Beyond the Veil paranormal investigations to Dick Everett's Talking Bees.

'At times we've been the rats in Dartington's cupboard: annoying things getting in the way,' says Soundart's co-founder Lucinda Guy. 'What we do is be open to people really expressing themselves.



It can be messy and complicated, noisy and difficult. It's not smooth and easy all the time. This is the nature of what we're doing.'

Lucinda and Nell are both DCA graduates (2006) who set up Soundart in the seismic week that DCA announced that it was relocating to Falmouth. 'I don't think about blame. It felt like there was a change in society, where beautiful little things were not encouraged to survive,' says Lucinda.

While DCA left and the estate went from 'from busy to silent', Soundart survived and is now blossoming, despite continuing financial uncertainty. Over 40,000 people listen online globally and 8,000 local people tune into to 102.5FM. In late 2015 Lucinda was voted chair of the Community Media Association (CMA) which exists to advocate for the community media sector to government, Ofcom and industry. There her aim is to act on its profoundly social remit 'to contribute to the democratic process and to a pluralist society' by increasing the involvement of grass roots media around the UK.

How did Lucinda come to be at Dartington? Her grandad, a self-taught musician, writer and Quaker, used to attend the Summer School in the late 1970s and Lucinda remembers that sometimes the family came along too. There she met Peter Maxwell Davies, who died in March 2016 – a formative experience.

'All the kids would get together and write a play, write the music, make costumes and perform on the lawn. The experience affected me deeply. It stood out as a very different way of being, away from where I was growing up which was quite conventional. Even when I was small I looked at the houses in our street and I felt like me and my sister didn't fit in.'

'It was not until I'd had three children of my own and was working as a music practitioner that I applied to the college. I expected that I'd have to do 'proper' music: I'd always learnt instruments and was interested in theory and composition. But at my interview I was asked 'what do you really like?', to hear who I was as an artist. Once I started it was like a Buddhist monastery – stripping away all the conventional assumptions and rebuilding to develop a sense of my own arts practice.

'My experience here was all tied up with the place. There were what we used to call 'dungeon' practice rooms, where you'd

walk along the corridor and hear all this music around you – the same as when I came here as a child. We were constantly stimulated by new ideas and the history of ideas.

‘We devised things that were quite ugly and difficult, not all pretty and nice. The lecturers would critique them and ask us to look at the work of others doing the same. All staff had really good practice of their own, so you’d learn about what they’d just been doing. Really amazing visiting artists would lead on collaborative projects: a brilliant way of working.

‘There was a point each morning, after I left my home and family, where my walk would affect how I would listen: I’d smell deeper, I’d hear better, ‘stepping out into the sensual world’ of being a better listener. We started a radio station because we wanted to explore this with a lot of people over a long time.’

This is why Soundart is completely open-platform – anyone who comes along with an idea, as long as it’s legal, can get on air. And that includes you, dear reader.

You can get in touch with Soundart Radio by email on [info@soundart.org.uk](mailto:info@soundart.org.uk), connect on Twitter @soundartradio or call in at the studio to say hello – or visit [soundartradio.org.uk](http://soundartradio.org.uk).

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## Obituaries

### William Elmhirst

**Philanthropist with a passion for mysticism**

We reported in March of the sad news of the death on 29 February of William Elmhirst while he was travelling overseas. Known as ‘Bill’, he was the youngest of the two children that Leonard and Dorothy Elmhirst had together. The Times has kindly allowed us to reproduce the obituary they carried recently – [you can read it in full here](#).



William Elmhirst

### Helga Watts

**Musician, poet and artist**

Many of our Members will also be saddened to learn of the passing of Helga Watts, a long-time Friend and Member of Dartington. As reported in the Totnes Times (1 June 2016), Helga had a home in Dartington in the 1960s and moved back into the village in the 1980s where she had lived ever since. A keen, Helga was a volunteer at the Dartington Arts office in the early 1980s and frequently attended screenings at the Barn Cinema where she was well known to staff and fellow Members. Helga passed away in late May.

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## Dartington is changing

‘We are going through a time of great change at Dartington, a time full of uncertainty and creative potential... The Trust is at a turning point – as is our society,’ says our CEO Rhodri Samuel.

The Trust is responding to the challenge of creating a meaningful and sustainable future. Our evolving strategy embraces much of the Elmhirst philosophy, inspired by Dorothy and Leonard’s concept of a ‘many-sided’ life’.

Linked into this is our Estate Framework – our high level plan that will support future decision-making about the use of land and buildings, including consultations with local partners in response to the councils’ draft proposals for development in our area.

## Dartington round and about

Some of the more unusual things we found online recently:

- [Why Dartington was Different ... one of Dartington’s alumni recalls the school’s bathing culture](#)
- [Pianist Peter Donohoe recalls working with Sir Peter Maxwell Davies at Dartington](#)
- [Author Mary Bride Nicholson recalls life and death on the Dartington Hall estate](#)

Disclaimer: Interesting and provocative though they may be, these are third party posts and Dartington is not responsible for views and opinions expressed therein nor for associated content on the webpages they sit on.

## A trip down memory lane

In every newsletter, we'll be plunging into our rich history section of the site and emerging with a hidden gem. And since the **Summer School and Festival** is around the corner, where better to start than our **History of the Summer School**.

Find out how this internationally renowned event has developed and grown since it began in 1947, and discover the astonishing roll-call of artists and performers who have visited Dartington through the years.

[button link="https://www.dartington.org/about/our-history/history-of-the-summer-school/" colour="Purple"]Read more about the history of the Summer School[/button]



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## Community Day survey

**Calling all Members who have attended a Dartington Community Day in the past!**

If that includes you, we'd love your feedback in this short survey to help us make future events even better.

As a thank you for taking part, three randomly selected entries will receive a free pair of tickets to a film at our beautiful **Barn Cinema**. Survey responses are anonymous and any contact details you provide will be held only for competition purposes.

If you wish to be entered into our draw for the chance to win one of three pairs of tickets to a film of your choice at our Barn Cinema, please provide a contact email address (this information will be held only for the purposes of this competition).

## App in the gardens: LociOscope – The Letters

Those of you who have an Apple smartphone or iPad might be interested in this locative narrative app dramatising transcripts of a collection of travel correspondence in the Dartington Hall Trust archive from 1925. The app allows participants to explore Dartington gardens and 'tune-into' the historical travel destinations, created in 3D sound.

Inside these imaginary places fragments of the transcribed letters are heard, performed by the voice actors (Bethany Kelly, American Radio DJ and actor Prof Phil Smith). Fragments of the letters can be pieced together to reveal answers to the enigmas posed in the narrative.

**Available from iTunes – [click here for more..](#)**

This was developed back in 2013 as part of the Tagore festival. Currently it costs £1.50 to download, though there are plans for it to be available free. Only a few of us here have used it, so we'd be interested to hear what members think.



## Dartington

An **old place**  
with a **new story**

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but a complex unity of activities.”**

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