

## OPENING LECTURE FOR “TREE OF LIFE” EXHIBITION

Dr Geoffrey Farrer-Brown

The Society's meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> October took the form of an introductory lecture on the exhibition “The Tree of Life” by Dr Geoffrey Farrer Brown. The Exhibition, which is jointly sponsored by the Corinium Museum, Cirencester and the Society, runs at the Museum from 5<sup>th</sup> October until 5<sup>th</sup> January 2007. Other support has been provided by the British Heart Foundation, Glaxo Smith Kline, the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council and the Gloucestershire Smoking Advice Centre.

The Exhibition is the brainchild of Dr Farrer Brown a retired histopathologist late of the Middlesex Hospital, London. He conceived the idea of linking art and medicine, to help people to understand severe problems, after working with an artist Susan McFarlane in 1992. Subsequently in collaboration with a growing number of artists, Dr Farrer Brown produced two exhibitions on Breast Cancer Care and Living with Leukaemia .

Dr Farrer Brown showed over a period of five years how he put together the Tree of Life Exhibition, although his first ideas for the exhibition came when he was working in the Histology Department of Northwestern University, Chicago. He noted that in a lifetime of 70 years the human heart beats over 2 billion times.

The aim of the exhibition is to help the viewer understand the vital role of the heart and its blood supply (coronary arteries and veins). Pieces of art showing different depictions of the heart have been produced by 11 artists and 4 children who attended the Chelsea Children's Hospital School. The media used ranged from mosaics, ceramic bowls, and patchwork quilting to paintings and sculpture. The exhibition clearly demonstrated the structure and beauty of the human heart. Finally Dr Farrer Brown showed arteries damaged by smoking. He hoped that young women and children would heed this warning

*Lecture on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2006 at the Corinium Museum*