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NEWSLETTER – June 2010

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You may spot some changes in the content of this Newsletter – not a lot, just a few, after comments and discussions at the AGM and in Committee – and at your Editor's instigation. We have decided to omit the 'Salvete et Valete' item, as we realised that people were never sure whether someone had died or had just moved away! Also, with changes in pension arrangements these days, it is quite possible that our Pensions Section does not hear of someone's demise. However, if you have recently *joined* our Fellowship, and this the first Newsletter you have received, let me offer you a warm welcome and hope to see you at some of our events. We would like to know the type of events that interest you, so we can send you details, so do advise any Committee member. See the note from our Chairman on page 6. Whilst I shall continue to list the Committee members and other helpers, in future it will omit the person's postal address, as we felt that telephone number and e-mail address is sufficient for most purposes, and the address of an organiser will appear at the top of an event communication.

You will see a letter from Eileen Smith on page 4. I would welcome letters from members for future Newsletters, particularly with comments on events we

Future Newsletters: To help us keep costs down, if you are happy to receive Newsletters via the Website, please e-mail me and I will arrange for you not to receive a postal one – and you will have a colour copy! Ed

CAROL COURTNEY – VICE CHAIR

I am delighted to have been elected Vice Chair of the Croydon AVIVA Fellowship at the AGM. In the six years since I retired I have enjoyed many of the organised events.



I first joined Commercial Union for a year as an “industrial” placement. I worked in the new St Helen’s office programming a Direct Debit system for the forthcoming decimal currency. I met John Courtney at work and after graduating we married and

have held and with suggestions for future ones and ideas for Newsletter items.

I produced a colour version of the Newsletter last time, and have done so again, but, due to the excessive cost of colour printing, it will only be available via our Web site (see site address above and note below).

Having known her before either of us ever worked for CU, I am delighted to say that Carol Courtney has agreed to become our Vice Chairperson, and she has provided a brief 'life history' below. And mentioning Carol, it is déjà vu! Last time I was congratulating Carol on her session on the Trafalgar Square plinth, and Philip Talmage on his photograph being used on our birthday cards. This time it is congrats. to Carol on winning the 1st. prize in the *In Touch* 'What is this?' competition (did you notice?) and congrats. to Philip for his beautiful picture of a fox on the front of *In Touch*.

VERY SPECIAL CONGRATULATIONS go to Vera Gotts who was 100 on 9th April (Photo page 4)

Oh, and as you ask, 'Yes, I did finish the London Marathon - in 4 hours 9 mins.' I don't think it will make me Sports Personality of the Year! DN

I joined him at Whyteleafe. Four years later I left to raise my children. When I returned to work it was as a lecturer in Programming and IT at East Surrey College. Thirteen years ago I returned to Whyteleafe working on Year2000. I hung on through the GA and NU mergers but retired in 2004.

Since retirement I have become a “Walking for Health” leader and I frequently visit my son and his family in America.

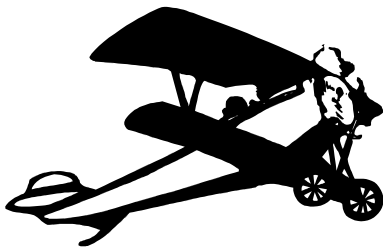
Last year I had the wonderful experience of an hour on the Fourth Plinth in Trafalgar Square. I received great support from AVIVA Fellowship and I’m sure it is my prominence there that has led me to being your Vice Chair.

I am looking forward to the Summer Programme of events and to meeting more of you. CC

RECENT EVENTS

CROYDON AERODROME - 20th MARCH

The March visit to the above told us of the development of Croydon to become London's first International Airport. Many famous folks had flown in over the years between the wars, Amy Johnson being one. JP



Inspecting a model of the old Croydon Airport Site

CONDUCTED TOUR OF VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM - 23rd APRIL

On a lovely sunny spring day, 20 Croydon members met for a trip to the Victoria and Albert Museum in South Kensington

Now, the V and A covers 11 acres, and contains thousands of items, so it can be a little daunting.

However we had a lovely guide, called Margaret, who was extremely knowledgeable and very interesting, and she whisked us around to give us just a taste of its delights.

My favourite, was the 'Cast' room, where plaster casts have been taken of famous monuments, such as the incredibly complicated Portal from Santiago de Compostela in Portugal *, Trojans Column from Rome, and Michelangelo's David from Florence. Now, Restorers come to

the V & A to see how to repair and preserve the originals.



The 'casts' are the only non-originals in the building.

We saw beautiful Japanese lacquered screens, furniture commissioned for The Great Exhibition, and a Bentwood chair that was ,maybe, the first 'flat pack'. It was delivered from the manufacturer in pieces, and put together by the furniture shop. You know who to blame next time you struggle with a flat pack.

Finally we saw the Great Bed of Ware, truly large.. It was moved from Inn to Inn around the area of Ware, so no hostelry had an unfair advantage for too long. In those days you booked a bed, not a room and shared it with as many other people as could be crammed in it!

Too soon, we said goodbye to Margaret, and went looking for lunch, with many of us determined to go back soon, and explore further. JD

* I am informed that it is actually Spain! Ed

TRIP ON THE BLUEBELL RAILWAY – 5th MAY

30 of our members took the 11.00am. train from Sheffield Park to Kingscote and back. This provided an opportunity to experience once again the old steam trains and to enjoy the bluebells as we passed by. On our return there was a choice of places to eat and for those who wanted, to spend some time in Sheffield Park Gardens. We were also fortunate in having good weather which helped to make this a most enjoyable day.

John Ward

And we not only saw bluebells, but primroses, cowslips, pheasants, an owl, rabbits and deer. – and we managed to stay within the Western Hemisphere, just! ED

(See page 5 for pictures)

FUTURE EVENTS

In addition to the following events (see timetable):

Italian Lunch	Tue 3rd Aug	Contact: Brian Welch
RHS Garden, Wisley	Wed 18 th Aug	Contact: Carol Courtney
Tour of Olympic Site	Wed 15 th Sept	Contact: Judy Dumbrell

We also have

1. Limsfield Village Walk – Thursday 24 June 2010 - 10.15 am for a 10.30 am start

Many of you will remember our guide Peter from our guided walks round Godstone and Bletchingley in recent years. Our stroll this year will take us through over 1,000 years of history. There are over 20 medieval buildings within the parish and Peter will take us past many of these. The most interesting, probably, is the old courthouse, which dates from before the Norman conquest. William the Conqueror’s brother, Odo, is recorded as adding a second storey to the building and it is mentioned in the Domesday Book, as is the church, whose graveyard contains the tombs of a number of well-known musicians: among them Delius and Sir Thomas Beecham.

Duration: 2 hours

Meet: Outside St Peter’s Church right-hand side of High St as you come from the A22. There is plenty of street parking opposite. The church is about a 20-min walk from Oxted railway station.

Cost: **£2.00 per person** (proceeds to East Surrey Wildlife Trust) On arrival please “book in” with the Organiser, David Broom, who will collect the £2.00 per person cost. There is no need to book for this informal walk - just turn up in good time so as not to miss the start.

Note: A short part of the walk will be along an unsurfaced footpath through a wood leading to the ancient sheep drovers’ trail. Easy underfoot, but wear appropriate footwear, particularly if it has rained recently. DB

2. Woldingham Country Walk - Monday 12th July - 12.45 for a 1.00 p.m. start

Please meet outside the Coffee Shop at Knights Garden Centre (where we meet for coffee every so often). The walk is about 4½ miles and should take about 2½ to 2¾ hours, finishing back at Knight's in time for a cream tea if you would like one!

Unlike my previous country walks, this is **not** along a river valley, and, consequently, is somewhat more strenuous involving a fairly steep climb at one point, a couple of stiles to clamber over and the ascent of some large rustic steps, so please come equipped with suitable footwear. The reward is a panoramic view of Surrey!

No need to book; just turn up. You can, of course, obtain a light lunch at Knight's beforehand. DN

[Ann and I did a trial walk a month ago, when the bluebells were glorious. So I am planning a shorter walk in the same area for early May next year, both to admire the bluebells and to visit St. Agatha's Church, said to be the smallest and highest (in altitude, not in doctrine!) in Surrey – details in the next Newsletter.]

* * * * *

Coach Trips

The coach trip to Chatham takes place on 14th June (all places booked), and Chris would be interested to know of other places that members would like to visit by coach. Examples are Canterbury, Windsor, Bath. Your feedback on this trip and your suggestions for the future would be very much appreciated.

* * * * *

Theatre

We haven’t as yet arranged our theatre visits for later in the year. Two are well worth considering – but they’re on at the same time (24-27 November) so we won’t be doing both.

All Shook Up, premiered on Broadway as recently as 2005, puts the shake in Shakespeare. It’s a jukebox musical with no fewer than 25 Elvis Presley songs and a story based on William Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*. Set in the American Midwest of the 1950s, the show has great roles for the girls and boys of the Croydon Stagers company, who will put it on at the Ashcroft Theatre in Croydon. Need I remind you of the great Elvis hits?

By contrast, it’s now 60 years since *Guys and Dolls* first appeared on Broadway, and 55 years since release of the film version starring Marlon Brando, Frank Sinatra, Vivian Blain and Jean Simmons. The show has worn very well, with frequent revivals (in the West End in 2005 and on Broadway only last year). You’ll certainly recognise some of the songs, such as *Luck Be a Lady* and *Sit Down, You're Rockin' the Boat*. West Wickham Operatic will perform at Bromley’s Churchill Theatre.

If interested, do send an email or call to let me know your preferences and /or to make other suggestions. PT

EATING and DRINKING



The group at the first Alders coffee morning. Since then numbers have increased significantly!

Our members are still hungry and thirsty! As well as the monthly coffee mornings (now at Alders), we have twice been to our old haunt of Knight's and the annual visit to Chartwell is in July. **In addition** please take a note of the new venue on Polhill.

We have had two pub lunches, one at the Good Companions and one back at the re-vamped Horseshoe (our thanks to Patricia and Chris for organising these) and a Fish and Chips Supper – thank you, Maggie, and a 'fishy' lunch is planned for October. If you can't wait until October, an alternative is the Italian Lunch in August.

(See the list of events for details of future coffee mornings etc.).

Our Centenarian Vera Gotts



**Vera with our Chairman, Brian,
on her 100th Birthday**

Brian and Joan visited Vera on her birthday, and presented her with chocolates and bubbly on behalf of the Croydon Fellowship.

Our heartiest congratulations to you Vera from all the Fellowship members.

A Letter to the Editor

Dear Dave

I am a new member and I feel I must pass on to any other new member my experience at attending the AVIVA Christmas lunch at the Aerodrome Hotel.

I was rather nervous on the journey there (I have been known to board the wrong bus or even arrive at the wrong venue!) but the thought of not knowing anyone there was rather daunting to say the least. I arrived (at the right venue) cold and wet, gave my coat over at reception and was immediately greeted by a lady with a clip board who said "Are you Eileen Smith?" She, who I found out later was the lovely Maggie *, introduced me to a very nice couple who then with me met some friends of theirs. By the time we went into the restaurant I felt that half an hour had just flown whilst I had been chatting to many people I had never known before.

Unfortunately, not one of those people was at my table and, as on the bus, I started to fear that I would be eating my lunch in silence and surrounded by strangers. How wrong can you be?

By the time I was drinking my coffee I knew everyone on my table and I don't think we had stopped talking. On the way home I reflected on my first encounter with the AVIVA Fellowship and felt very grateful I had become a member. I must add the meal was superb.

Since then, I have been to a lunch at The Good Companions, attended the AGM and met up with quite a few for coffee at Alders. I'm not going to say that I now feel part of the furniture yet, but I certainly feel I belong and am welcomed by people who already I would call friends. My thanks to everyone who has shown me such warmth and kindness.

I do hope you will find room to print my letter Dave, as I want it to encourage any new member who might be nervously hesitating about attending their first function with the AVIVA Fellowship. Just come and if nothing else prove that I was right!!!

With regards, Eileen Smith.

* Patricia says she had the clip board!

What a lovely letter. Thank you Eileen. I hope this will be the first of many letters for the Newsletter, even if they are not so complimentary! Ed

YOUR COMMITTEE

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Event Organiser	David BROOM (DB)	01883 345 231	david_broom@hotmail.com

* * * * *

Bluebell Railway Pictures



Changing Ends at Half-Time!



The Party Beside 'Earl of Berkeley' at Kingscote Station



Sheffield Park Gardens, where several of us went afterwards

* * * * *

Advertisement

APARTMENT TO RENT IN VILAMOURA, ALGARVE

New luxury 3 twin bedroomed apartment situated in Algarve's Golden Triangle' on quiet, green belt complex with pools, gym, bar/restaurant, supermarket, near to beaches, tennis, golf courses (Vila Sol 200 metres), marina, nightlife and numerous international restaurants. Faro 15kms.

See www.holidaylettings.co.uk/8556.

Please contact Tony O'Connell : 01268 724391 or mobile 0779 3017887.

DIARY OF EVENTS FOR MID-JUNE TO December 2010

JUNE

Mon	14	CH	Excursion to Museum	Coach Trip to Chatham Dockyard	10:15 for 10:30
Wed	23	MM	Coffee Morning †	Polhill Garden Centre	10:30
Thu	24	DB	Guided Walk †	Old Limpsfield	10:15 for 10:30

JULY

Mon	12	DN	Country Walk †	Woldingham circular	12.45 for 13:00
Tue	13	MM	Coffee Morning †	4th Floor Restaurant, Allders, Croydon	10:30
Thu	29	MM	Coffee Morning †	Chartwell	10:30

AUGUST

Tue	3	BW	Italian Lunch	GI Restaurant, West Wickham	12:00 for 12:30
Tue	10	MM	Coffee Morning †	4th Floor Restaurant, Allders, Croydon	10:30
Wed	18	CC	RHS Garden	Wisley	10:45 for 11:00
Wed	25	MM	Coffee Morning †	Knight's Garden Centre, Woldingham	10:30

SEPTEMBER

Tue	14	MM	Coffee Morning †	4th Floor Restaurant, Allders, Croydon	10:30
Wed	15	JD	Going for Gold	Tour of Olympic Site	10:45 for 11:00
Tue	21	CH	Region 8 Canal Trip	Regent's Canal	
Thu	30	MM	Coffee Morning †	Polhill Garden Centre	10:30

OCTOBER

Mon	4	PP	* Lunch	Good Companions, Hamsey Green	12:15 for 12:45
Tue	12	MM	Coffee Morning †	4th Floor Restaurant, Allders, Croydon	10:30
Tue	26	MM	* Fish 'n' Chips Lunch	McDermott's, Forestdale Centre, Selsdon	11:30 for 12:00

NOVEMBER

Tue	9	MM	Coffee Morning †	4th Floor Restaurant, Allders, Croydon	10:30
TBA		PT		? Churchill Theatre, Bromley	
Wed	24	MM	Coffee Morning †	Knight's Garden Centre, Woldingham	10:30
TBA		PT		? Ashcroft Theatre, Croydon	

DECEMBER

Fri	3	PP	* Christmas Luncheon	Aerodrome Hotel, Purley Way	12:15 for 12:45
Tue	14	MM	Coffee Morning †	4th Floor Restaurant, Allders, Croydon	10:30

Notes: For organisers' contact details, see list of committee members and other event organisers.

† No booking is required for events with the † symbol. Just turn up.

* Dates and / or times of starred events are liable to alteration / cancellation

- **Members please note:** On our **Membership Database** we have information about the types of events for which each member wishes to receive invitations. In order that we can reduce our ever-increasing postage costs, if you have NOT attended an event in the last **2 YEARS** we will delete your name from our invitation lists. Should you wish to continue to receive invitations please contact a member of the Croydon Area Committee and this will be arranged. BW
- **No Shows:** We have also decided that when members have booked an event but do not turn up on the day without prior notification, we will still bank their cheques as we need to cover our costs. This could also stop other members on the waiting list from attending the event. BW
- **Coffee Mornings:** Unfortunately, due to the makeover at The White Hart in Brasted it is no longer a suitable venue for our monthly coffee mornings. During the closure of the pub and the A25 gas main replacement we have trialled a new venue in the 4th floor restaurant in Allders, Croydon which proved very successful with an average of 30 members attending in February, March and April. Many members without cars have welcomed the opportunity to join in.

We have therefore decided to make **Allders** our regular monthly venue **on the second Tuesday of each month at 10:30 am** for the foreseeable future. An arrangement has been made with the restaurant for us to use a separate area and they will provide coffee and biscuits. This will be paid for by the Fellowship whilst funds permit.

In a effort to retain a venue in the eastern side of our area we are also prepared to trial 2 coffee mornings at **Polhill Garden Centre** on the A224 at Badgers Mount, Sevenoaks, Kent TN14 7AD at 10:30am, so put **Wednesday 23 June 2010** and **Thursday 30 September 2010** in you diary and come and join us MM