

Chairman: Rob Hall
Vice Chairman: Dave Newland
Treasurer: John Gibbons
Secretary: Maggie Mahoney
Committee: Judy Dumbrell
Viv Murray
Joan Price
Pauline Wynn

**Aviva
Fellowship**
Founded 2002

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Croydon Area

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NEWSLETTER – AUTUMN/WINTER 2023

EDITORIAL

I begin my editorial on a very sad note. I had just issued the previous Newsletter, when we heard of the death of Chris House. I did manage to add a short comment to the on-line version, but I have asked our Chairman, Rob, to provide a brief obituary in this edition, which appears below. We do not usually give details of those who have died, but Chris was exceptional.

I will be standing down as Vice-Chairman at the next AGM, but will still be organising my Spring Bluebell Walk and Autumn Stroll for at least one more year. More importantly, this will be my last Newsletter, after being Editor since 2009 and, unless someone can take over, it will be the Fellowship's last one as well!

If you are a budding Rupert Murdoch, please let me or our Secretary, Maggie, know.

I'll be only too happy to talk to you about producing our Newsletters and to assist in producing your first edition.

Judy is also standing down from Committee at the next AGM, but will also be organising one more of her brilliant visits – back to The Natural History Museum in June. Many thanks, Judy for all the visits and conducted tours you have arranged over the years. We'll forgive you for seemingly organising outside ones when it is raining and indoor ones when the sun shines!

And my thanks to all the Committee and others who have organised events and provided me with reports afterwards over the years.

Christmas greetings and a good New Year to you all.

Dave NEWLAND

Chris House 1941 - 2023: A tribute by Rob Hall, our Chairman



A long serving Fellowship Committee Member and Regional Chairman for Area 8, Chris House had been battling cancer but sadly passed away in June of this year. He was an extremely keen and energetic member of the Fellowship for over 20 years and organised many events not only for the Croydon Area but also National Events such as the memorable River Thames Cruise to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the establishment of Commercial Union. Chris was a friend to many and the Fellowship will be all the poorer following his passing. He will be sorely missed.

Rob Hall, Chairman (Croydon Committee)

Thank you, Rob.

To indicate what a loss Chris is, not just to Croydon but across our Region, his death was the first item in the recent Watford Fellowship Newsletter

Annual General Meeting - 26th March 2024

This is notice that the Annual General Meeting will be held at East Croydon United Reform Church, 86 Addiscombe Grove, Croydon. CR0 5LP on Tuesday 26th of March, beginning at 11 a.m., when we shall be reviewing 2023, and electing / re-electing Committee members. If you would be willing to join the Committee, please advise our Secretary, Maggie Mahoney. As indicated above Judy Dumbrell and Dave Newland will be standing down.

Attendance at these meetings has been rather low in recent times, so do make an effort to come along. As well as hearing reports from various officers, it is your opportunity to let us know what you want – and a chance to meet up with other members.

Photos may be taken at our events and published in our Newsletters or on our web-site.
If you do not wish to be in any photos please let the photographer know.

Some Forthcoming Events in the next half-year

Do bear in mind that any event could be liable to amendment or cancellation.

First, here are the eating and drinking events.



Croham Hurst



'The Horseshoe'



'Ponte Nuovo'



McDermott's

Beginning with The New Year Lunch – Monday, 8th January 2024

Croham Hurst Golf Club

We start the New Year with the 'big one'. We are returning to Croham Hurst, after the very enjoyable meal at the beginning of the current year. Come and meet up with lots of others – and you never know, you may win a raffle prize.

Full details and booking form are on our web-site. This is again being organised by Viv and Judy, with their supporting team. Ensure your application reaches Viv by 31st December.

Pub Lunch – Wednesday, 20th March 2024

'The Horseshoe', Warlingham

It's the equinox and the first day of spring, so do come along and enjoy an old favourite. With the passing of Chris, who used to organise these lunches, Viv and Maggie will be organising this time.

Fish'n'Chip Lunch – Thursday, 18th April 2024

McDermott's, Forestdale Centre

Our Secretary, Maggie, organises these very popular lunches. I think the fare on offer is obvious! Do come along.

Italian Lunch – Tuesday, 21st May 2024

'Ponte Nuovo', Croydon High Street

I am intrigued by Italian restaurants how they can cope with mass orders from a large menu in such a short time, but they seem to have the secret! So, having already had an English style roast lunch, an English style fish and chips lunch, do come and enjoy your Italian pasta or risotto and your tiramisu or gelato at 'Ponte Nuovo'. Rob is this event's organiser.

Other Eating/Drinking Events – Various Dates over the year

Our Coffee Mornings continue on the second Tuesday of every month at Croydon Clocktower Café in Katherine Street, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Towards the end of eight months in the year we will still be having further Coffee Mornings at either Knight's Garden Centre in Chelsham or Polhill Garden Centre at Badgers Mount plus one at Chartwell. This leaves four months when there have not been end-of-month 'meet-ups', so our Chairman, Rob, is arranging to fill these gaps (and our stomachs) by an 'Eat-as much-as you-like' brunch at Toby Carverys, initially at Brighton Road, South Croydon and hopefully later at Redstone Hill, Redhill. Details are in the Diary of Events or on the web-site.

But, it is not all eating and drinking – well not quite!

Bluebell Walk – Thursday, 2nd May 2024

Badgers Mount, Sevenoaks, Kent



By the time we reach May, with all the eating and drinking, you will need a bit of exercise to walk it all off. This will be your chance. I (Ed.) will be leading a walk starting and finishing at Polhill Garden Centre (Yes, you can have a bit to eat or drink beforehand or afterwards!). I had originally intended to do this walk in 2020, but a certain Covid got in the way, so better late than never here we go.



A fair amount of this walk re-traces part of a summer walk I did to Shoreham several years ago.

Wildlife Photo of the Year – Thursday, 20th June 2024

Natural History Museum.



Earlier this year Judy organised a visit to the 2023 display. (See the report below) She has kindly agreed to organise a repeat visit to see the 2024 winners. Those of us who came on this year's visit will appreciate what a high standard of photography these pictures display – some by quite young people – and will surely want to come again. If you missed 2023, then you have a second chance to marvel at photographic skill.

Eel Pie Island Museum – Wednesday, 17th July 2024. Twickenham

This is being arranged by Hilary Kearney



If you have ever been along the Thames in the Twickenham area, you may have come across an inhabited island in the river called Eel Pie Island. The Island has its own Museum on the mainland, in Richmond Road, Twickenham, which, together with the Island itself, has acted as host to a number of music events.



Currently, these are the only non-eating/drinking events planned for the first part of 2024. In addition, I (Ed.) will be conducting my Autumn Stroll in Central London on 18th November.

Do keep on checking our web-site as there will be other visits arranged throughout 2024. One possibility is Battersea Power Station, and if anyone would like to volunteer to organise a visit, or just suggest it to any Committee Member, that would be great. HOWEVER, if you are a sporting type:

The Cuaco Golfing Society is currently looking for new members. Membership is open to all staff and pensioners of the Aviva Group, plus their spouses, partners and families, and any new members would be very welcome. Anyone interested should contact Howard Smith: howard.smith1968@outlook.com.

Reports on Events that have taken place since the last Newsletter

Day out in Hastings - Friday 16th June



Roger Smith took us on another of his summer trips by train to the South Coast, this time to the Cinque Port of Hastings. We alighted at St. Leonards, Warrior Square Station and made our way along the promenade, past the pier to the Old Town where we stopped for a fish and chip lunch.

We then made our way on the pebble beach among the fishing boats. We should then have used the cliff railway to the cliff top. Unfortunately, the unit was out of order, so we continued back along the promenade, before going to Hastings Station for the return home.

Since taking us on this walk, Roger has been unwell, so our thanks for organising and we wish you well.

Wildlife Photography Exhibition. Wednesday 21st June.

Natural History Museum



Why is it that if I arrange an outdoor outing, it rains. If it is inside, it is a beautiful sunny day?

Anyway, on midsummer's day 11 of us gathered outside the museum and then went in to the most amazing wildlife photos I have ever seen.

The Wildlife Photographer of the year competition is the most prestigious event of its kind in the world. This year there were nearly 39000 entries from more than 90 countries. Each photo had a brief caption on where it was taken, and how difficult it was to get the shot. This included diving under the arctic ice, lying in swamps and climbing mountains, carrying a great deal of equipment.

There were polar bears, looking out of the window and door of an abandoned house, musk

oxen going head to head, even a snake that had caught a bat.

There was a leopardess that had killed a baboon. The baboon's baby was still alive, and the leopardess gave the baby to her cub. The cub played with the baby for more than an hour, before killing it. Maybe it was a hunting lesson?

My favourite was a sunrise photo, showing a pair of great crested grebes in full breeding plumage. The male is offering a gift, a ribbon of waterweed. Lit by the rising sun, with light filtering through reeds, it is a beautiful photo, and was taken in a city. It is amazing what is around us if we only look.

This competition is held every year, so, if you get the chance, please go and see next years'. You will not be disappointed.

Judy Dumbill

Many thanks for another interesting visit, Judy. Looking forward to returning for the 2024 display

Museum of Brands, Ladbroke Grove. - Tuesday 18th July



Twenty three of our members visited the Museum of Brands near Ladbroke Gove, north London. Museum staff gave an introductory talk about the history of the museum; everyone was surprised the museum is actually a private collection. After the talk the group were free to wonder through the time tunnel at their own pace. The time tunnel offered a nostalgic journey of social change. The museum also had a café and wonderful gardens which many of the group took advantage of.

Everyone enjoyed the visit and many people said they would be telling their friends and some will return again. The museum is definitely worth a visit.

John Gibbons

Many thanks, John, for a visit to somewhere nobody seemed to know existed! And great that so many people came.

Tate Modern. – Wednesday 11th October

Wot, no photos? Sorry, left my camera at home Ed.

Sure sign it's about time someone else took over the editorship!

Most people have seen the enormous Tate Modern building from the outside, but how many have ever been inside. If you have, you must have felt dwarfed by the enormous Turbine Hall. At 500 feet long and 115 feet tall it is just vast

The original building was Bankside Power Station. Now a state of the art gallery for the 21st century with many exhibitions staged in the enormous space.

However, there is more to the building than the turbine hall. There are actually 7 floors of galleries, plus of course, a shop and 3 cafés/restaurants.

So, a group of us gathered in the hall to meet our guide, Maurizio Patti, who was such a lovely man.

His knowledge and enthusiasm was wonderful. He took us on an hour's tour, which gave us a taste of what is there. I find modern art a complete mystery, but Maurizio gave clear explanations as to what we were looking at.

We may/may not have liked a particular picture, but it was helpful to those of us who have not studied art history, to hear that a Picasso painting of, for example, a face showed us the features from different angles, new perspectives.

Or a painting, which to us looked like a lot of dark lines, showed that the artist was looking at a tree, but feeling unhappy and depressed.

Definitely worth another visit, and maybe looking with new eyes!

Judy Dumbrell and Ann Newland

Yet another interesting visit, Judy. I have learnt and understood a bit about modern art now! Ed

Autumn Stroll. Bushy Park, Teddington - Monday 20th November



After a worry whether some of us would meet our connecting train at Clapham Junction, eight of us, including one new-comer who lives nearby, enjoyed an autumn stroll around the beautiful royal park. Before lunch we toured the lakes on the east side, where we saw our first group of deer. Lunch was taken in the Pheasantry Café, before following two rivers on the west side seeing a pair of young stags grazing. The walk ended at the 'Diana Fountain' (left) near the southern exit. Walking is thirsty work, so we retired to the 'King's Arms' Hotel opposite to the park entrance for some liquid refreshment. Dave Newland

Oh, I nearly forgot!! We have had a few lunches as well! These were:

**The Horseshoe Pub Lunch
Tuesday, 5th September**



Horseshoe

**Ponte Nuovo Italian Lunch
Tuesday, 17th October**



Ponte Nuovo

**McDermott's Fish'n'Chip Lunch
Thursday, 16th November**



McDermott's

Our thanks to the organisers: Viv and Maggi (Horseshoe), Rob (Ponte Nuovo) and Maggie (McDermott's). All these lunches were well attended, providing the tasty fare to which we have become accustomed. Rob writes the following about Ponte Novo:

A third Italian Lunch was held at Ponte Nuovo in Croydon on Tuesday the 17th October. 32 Fellowship Members attended this popular event (including some first time attendees) and enjoyed an excellent meal chosen from the menu on the day. Many compliments on the quality of the meals were received.

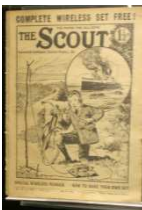
Rob Hall

This really summarises the feeling we had about all three of these lunches, which is why we have scheduled two visits to each of these venues in 2024.

Here are a few more photos



Hastings



The Museum of Brands



Bushy Park. These pictures were taken before the walk!

Photographs: Those of forthcoming events are from various web-sites. At McDermott's: Chris Hall. The late Chris House: Rob Hall. Photo of herd of deer in water: Peter Robson. All other photographs: The Editor.

As usual, if anyone would like a copy of any of these photographs, either e-mail or phone me, and I will send you a copy. We hope to display several more pictures at the AGM.