

**Chair** Brian Welch  
**Treasurer:** Carol Courtney  
**Secretary:** Maggie Mahoney  
**Committee:** Judy Dumbrell  
Chris House, Patricia Pegg  
Joan Price, Viv Murray John Whitley,  
Dave Newland, Ian Rae

**Aviva  
Fellowship**



**Croydon Area**  
[www.avivafellowshipcroydon.org.uk](http://www.avivafellowshipcroydon.org.uk)

Dave Newland  
93 Marlpit Lane  
Coulston Surrey  
CR5 2HH  
01737 551 048  
[dave.and.ann@classicfm.net](mailto:dave.and.ann@classicfm.net)

## NEWSLETTER - Summer 2018

### EDITORIAL

Welcome to our Summer Newsletter, the first edition since the Country became a Mediterranean climate, or so it seems – first significant snow for several years early on, followed by the torrential rain in April/May and now the current drought and heatwave. No rain for almost two months at the time of writing!

But it hasn't stopped your Fellowship from being as active as ever, even if the two walks I have conducted (reports below) have been in pouring rain and sweltering sun. Other activities such as coffee mornings, visits and meals continue to be popular, whatever the weather

One disappointment was having to cancel our annual Italian Lunch for reasons given in our (more unusual) Chairman's Message.

Our Regional Chairman, Chris, has been busy sorting/trying-to-clarify problems that we Pensioners have been having with our insurance policies, and Carol, our Treasurer, in the era of plastic money and on-line banking, has summarised our current approach to payment methods for events. (See both below)

My usual thanks to the Committee for their work in organising the events, and for supplying me with reports and other items.  
Dave Newland

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### REGIONAL CHAIRMAN'S NOTE

I hope you're enjoying both this Summer's edition and the weather.

Regarding our Heritage policies and the Motor cover flyer issued with this year's Summer 'In Touch', a few members have requested further clarification, as some problems have arisen.

For example, if, last year, members converted both 'Staff' Home and Motor policies at the same time, the new MyAviva Motor record may not have recorded a Staff indicator for calculating future renewals. As no discount disclosures are given, I personally would recommend Members revert to pay monthly (with 0% APR) to ensure the Staff (Loyalty Bonus) is received.

I do hope that many of you will enjoy a lower premium.

Warm Summer regards.

Chris House

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### TREASURER'S NOTE

At the AGM I spoke about how we organise events and how we process payments. If the Event Organisers collect the reply slips and cheques, they can control the booking and make decisions about cancellations up to the day of the event. We usually bank your cheque if you cancel on the day or do not arrive.

The cheques are usually handed over to the treasurer and banked the day after the event. The advantage of banking cheques after the event is that they can be destroyed if the event is cancelled or becomes free (e.g. 'Remembering 1916' last year) or if an individual cancels in good time.

Handling online payments would make more work for the treasurer, namely: – checking the bank account and informing the Event Organiser of payments – making a double entry in the accounts for each payment – reimbursement after cancellation.

We will continue to review the facilities of online banking but it was agreed that physical booking slips and cheques were the easiest for the volunteer organisers and treasurer. If you would like the full version of my analysis please email me. (Carol.courtney22@gmail.com)  
Carol Courtney

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## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Do bear in mind that some of these dates below may be subject to confirmation or change, and some events may have limited numbers of places.

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### Highgate Cemetery. Swain's Lane, London N6. Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> August.

*The deadline for bookings of this event (Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> August) is imminent, or may have passed by the time of publication of this Newsletter.*



Highgate Cemetery is one of the oldest private garden cemeteries in England. What is now known as the West Cemetery opened in 1839, and includes the Egyptian Avenue, Lebanon Circle and the Terrace Catacombs. It is only open to guided tours because some of the paths are steep, have steps, and can be slippery. Please wear sensible shoes especially if it has been wet. The cemetery has an atmosphere of romantic decay and is one of London's hidden green spaces. Our 75 minute tour starts at Midday.

Carol Courtney is organising this event

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### Buffet Lunch. Croydon Park Hotel, Altyre Road, Croydon. Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> September.



This is an event for those with a good appetite, as the meal comprises several courses. We have enjoyed this meal for a number of years now, and we can look forward to another very tasty lunch. Despite the picture left, wine will not be included in the cost!



Full details will be available in the near future.

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### Kensington Palace and Lady Diana Exhibition. Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> September.



Discover the home of the young (and some not-so-young) Royals, who have lived here over the centuries, together with the 'Lady Diana' Exhibition. Enjoy the wonderful building and grounds, and take a stroll in Kensington Gardens and Hyde Park afterwards if you wish. Chris House is arranging this. Again, full details available soon.

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**The Postal Museum. Phoenix Place. London.  
Wednesday, 31<sup>st</sup> October.**



Judy Dumbrill deserves a medal for arranging this! After several efforts to secure a date, she finally managed to fix it for 31<sup>st</sup> October! You will be free to see Museum before taking a trip on the Royal Mail's own railway line. Numbers are very limited for this visit, so, once bookings become open, it will have to be first come, first served.

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**Fish 'n' Chips Lunch. McDermott's, Forestdale Centre, Croydon  
Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> November.**

Our bi-annual indulgence in traditional English fare, a fine follow-up to the bangers and mash you may well be having two days before.

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**Autumn Stroll. North London. Thursday, 22<sup>nd</sup> November.**



My walk in the spring was in pouring rain, and the summer one was on the hottest day of the year so far. Expect thick fog on this one! Hopefully not. This walk has some of the best views over London anywhere.

I have, over the years, organised these walks on an area basis: Central London, North, East, South and West. This year is the turn of North. On the previous North one, we went along an old railway track from Finsbury Park, but that was only half the route. This year we shall do the other half, starting at Alexandra Palace, the birth place of television, finishing at Highgate (Haven't I seen that name before?) Tube Station.

Despite the justified comments about ThamesLink, from our point of view they have done us a service – direct trains to Cambridge and Peterborough from East Croydon, both stopping at Finsbury Park, where we can connect with a frequent service to Ally Pally.

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**New Year Lunch. Jury's Inn. Friday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2019.**

Yes, I know it is the height of summer, and we haven't received our AVIVA 2019 diaries yet. No excuse for not making a diary note - 4<sup>th</sup> January just scrapes into the 2018 version. (And I have diary items well into next year!)

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**Information about events in 2019 after the New Year Lunch will be discussed at your Committee's next meeting and our Diary will be made available on-line in due course. A copy will be enclosed with the next printed version of the Newsletter.**

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## REPORTS ON RECENT EVENTS

### National Portrait Gallery – Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February



We had the most fascinating visit to the National Portrait Gallery. Our guide was Alan Reid and he was so knowledgeable and amusing, with his anecdotes on the paintings.

We started in the Tudor Gallery and there of course was Henry VIII, only this was an original cartoon! A Cartoon was a preliminary full size sketch; the details and outline were then pinpricked and transferred to the canvas. Charcoal was brushed into the holes, the paper removed and low and behold you have the original 'Join the dots'!

Elizabeth I was possibly the first 'celebrity' to be airbrushed! She would only have portraits painted by 'official' portrait painters. Any others were destroyed. We know she had smallpox and her face was scarred, but her complexion is always smooth in all her portraits.

Elizabeth II also has this amazing ability not to age, under certain circumstances. Look at your next postage stamp!

Next time you are in Trafalgar Square, have a good look at the Lions. 20 feet long and 22 feet high, they look magnificent. Sculpted by Sir Edward Landseer R A, who was a painter rather than a sculptor, they took 8 years to complete. According to Alan, he did somehow acquire a lion, from London Zoo, presumably dead! However

eventually the lion had to be removed, so he based the back legs and paws on his cat. Cats don't sit quite like Lions! The paws are turned in and the legs close to the body, instead of being splayed ready to move.

Many of these portraits are priceless, but in a modest display case, was an amateur's sketch of a sister, now appearing on the £10 note.

The artist was Cassandra Austen and the portrait of course, was Jane Austen. Who would have thought that a little sketch, done by your sister, could become so famous.

As we moved into more modern times, he explained that to paint a self portrait, it is no use just looking in a mirror, but the mirror has to reflect into a second mirror to get a true likeness, Clever.

Poignantly, there was a portrait of Diana, before she married. Sitting on a chair, with her long fringe and innocent look. Behind the chair was a door. Only when it was pointed out, did you realise there was no handle to the door. Was she locked in or was she locked out?

So engrossed were we, that our tour overran by 20 minutes, so we reluctantly said Goodbye to Alan and went in search of lunch!

Judy Dumbrill

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### Chislehurst Caves – Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> March.



Our exciting underground tour in March began and ended with visions of how the tunnels became a sanctuary for thousands of Londoners during the Blitz. From the church to the hospital, order was kept by "Cave Rules" and the Cave Captain of each dormitory of bunk beds. In between we saw tunnels cut by the Romans, modern sculptures carved into the chalk walls and a night club. The acoustic demonstration amazed us, reverberating for over ten seconds. Fortunately no one fell or got lost. We emerged unscathed, some of us lunching together in smaller groups.

Carol Courtney

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## Bluebell Walk, Woldingham – Friday 27<sup>th</sup> April



Pouring rain, a fallen down tree enforcing a diversion and how do we subsidise an event with no charge? But it was all worth it just for the cream tea afterwards at Knight's Garden Centre.

In the event, the fallen tree blocking a scheduled path meant we just repeated the walk of a couple of years ago, but in reverse. By the time we reached the bluebell wood, we were all thoroughly soaked, and I reproduce the picture of the bedraggled party that appeared in 'In Touch'. And the subsidy? Easy. I just drew out a couple of bags of £2 coins and handed one to each cream tea partaker.

Dave Newland

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## Amberley Museum and Heritage Centre – Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> June



On a warm sunny day, we had a very enjoyable visit to Amberley Museum. Bravely most of us travelled by train, and our faith paid off, as the train ran to time, so maybe the infamous new timetable does not apply to Saturdays.

The Museum is situated in an old chalk quarry right next to the railway station. So we could not possibly miss it. The 35 acre site can be explored, using the vintage bus or the steam train, or of course on foot. We started our visit in the Hayloft barn, with an introductory talk by one of the volunteers. Then a reviving cup of coffee in the Limeburners Café, before we all wandered off to explore. There was a broom maker, a walking stick maker and one of my favourites, the stonemason. He was such an interesting man to talk to and I now know the difference between Portland, Purbeck and Bath stone. (It has a lot to do with winkles!) There was an old rural telephone exchange, with 2 phones black Bakelite of course, and by dialling one phone, you could see all the movements of the equipment to connect to the other phone.

The Tools and Trade building held many drills and chisels, any of which could be used today. Good design rarely changes. For an example, think of the bicycle, ignoring Penny Farthings, an Edwardian Gentleman would recognise a modern standard bicycle easily.

In the Railway Exhibition and Hall, were mail carrying trucks, which we looked at with interest. We will see some in use, later in the year, on another outing. In the Electricity Hall was an area that makes you realise how the years are racing by. Their exhibits included twin tub washing machines, and Belling cookers!

Eventually, after having walked right round the site, it was back to the café for an ice cream, and out to the Station, where our train arrived within a few minutes of the timetable!

Judy Dumbrill

[Talking to a person in the Printing Shop, we discovered he used to be a 'Daily Express' worker, lives in **Chaldon** and regularly demonstrates his craft, voluntarily.

Ed]

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## (No) Italian Lunch, Gi Trattoria, West Wickham – Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> July Message from our Chairman (who organises this event)

We had to cancel our Italian lunch at Gi Trattoria in July as the restaurant closed at the end of March to enable building works to take place. The building was boarded up for a number of weeks.

The boarding has now been removed and this week I was able to visit the site and talk to the new manager who is the son of the previous owner.

The restaurant will be called PrimoCaffe and the opening is planned for September. After the opening I will visit the restaurant and review the food options to see if it is suitable for another Pensioners' Meal.

Brian Welch



## Summer Walk, Banstead – Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> July



This time it wasn't the rain (do you remember that thing called rain?) but the heat – hottest day of the year so far. This meant diversions to keep in the shade as far as possible and to reduce the distance.

Starting from the 'Ramblers Rest' pub in Chipstead, five brave souls (or fools) – actually four people and a dog – walked up a long slope, finally entering Banstead Wood, where it was a lot cooler. When we eventually came back into the open, we met the only stile (See Chris' gymnastics above left) at which point it was obvious that to do the whole route was not on, so out with the map and back into another wood to Holly Lane. At the first opportunity, we left the road and picked up the original route again, in time to see a bent lamp post and the lion (both carved in wood). It was then back to 'Ramblers Rest' for ice cream or drinks. Meantime, my wife, Ann, was busy picking up bags of litter, but that's another story. Dave Newland

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### A Few More Pictures



Chislehurst Caves



Fallen Tree. Bluebell Walk



Amberley

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<b>Photographs/pictures:</b>	Highgate Cemetery:	Carol Courtney
	Kensington Palace:	Palace web-site
	Postal Museum	Museum web-site
	All others:	Editor

**Usual reminder:** If you would like a copy of any of my photographs, please let me know and I will be pleased to let you have one, preferably as an e-mail attachment.

Dave Newland