

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

**Aviva  
Fellowship**



**Croydon Area**

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

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## NEWSLETTER - Winter 2019

### EDITORIAL

Looking through my last year's AVIVA Pensioners' diary, I discovered that, excluding the 20 (yes, 20!) coffee mornings, we had at least one other event in every month except December. If you look at our Croydon Fellowship 2019 Diary you will see that this year is also full of activities: meals, guided and casual walks (we have already had one walk and meal!), visits to sites of interest, a panto (a first!). There must be something there for everybody, so do take the opportunity to come and join us. Put dates in your personal diary, and check our web-site 3 or 4 weeks prior to the event, if you are able.

None of these events could take place without the hard work of your Committee and a few others, and my thanks to Chris, our Regional Chairman, for organising the presentations he

mentions below. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend, but I do appreciate being presented with my certificate at our following coffee morning. It is very rare for arrangements for our events not to face some problems along the way causing some hair pulling out, so my appreciation for all the organisers' efforts. Also for the reports and items in this Newsletter provided by some of them.

Our congratulations to Charles Rothwell on achieving his 95<sup>th</sup> birthday. His picture, taken at the Autumn Buffet Lunch, appears at the head of that report. I gather that this year there will be three 95<sup>th</sup> or 100<sup>th</sup> birthdays amongst our number. Keep a look-out in 'In Touch'.

My good wishes for the New Year to you all Dave Newland

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### NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Croydon AVIVA Fellowship AGM will take place on **Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2018, 10:45 for 11:00 a.m.** at East Croydon United Reformed Church in Addiscombe Grove. The building is a very short walk from East Croydon Railway Station, Bus Station and Tram Stop, just beyond the former NLA building.

The meeting will be followed by a light buffet lunch.

**You are strongly advised to come by public transport as parking is very difficult in the area.**

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### REGIONAL CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Wishing all our Members a Happy New Year

Following last year's message (please see our web site, as it has been retained) which now needs repeating and, sadly, that Romford Fellowship has folded in the last few days as nobody was prepared to act as Chairman, you will realise we now need newer members' support and ideas if we are to maintain our own Croydon Fellowship. \*

Our London & South East Region held a celebration last Autumn at the Tower of London. This recognised 30 Regional Committee members who had served you all for over 10 years, some more than 20. They were presented with Outstanding Service Certificates in the Tower's Armoury Boardroom by Lady Innes Montague, our AVIVA Chairman's wife. Lady Innes then enjoyed, with us, a guided tour of the Tower of London, a City Cruises' trip to Westminster Pier and finally a Banqueting House tour.

**Heritage Policies:** I trust Members will enjoy lower renewal premiums! This has resulted from our Executive team's lengthy efforts in obtaining Staff discounts on the switch of Staff Home & Motor policies to My Aviva. Should your premium have increased, we suggest you query this with Norwich Staff Insurances (0800 051 6152) as to whether yours included the Staff discount. For us to represent you, it is important Committees are made aware of any problems you experience in dealing with the Company. Hoping we'll gain your greater support of our events this year and also hear your ideas.

Chris House

**\* Whilst I suspect that members of our existing Committee will show their willingness to continue in office after the AGM, none of us is immortal, and we are a pensioners' group, so do bear in mind Chris' comment. Indeed, there is a possibility that we could be needing a new Treasurer in the coming months. Ed**

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## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Do bear in mind that some of these dates below may be subject to confirmation or change.

### Friday 8<sup>th</sup> February - 'Three Twickenham Events'!

Rugby Ground (11:00), Turner's House (13:00) and/or Strawberry Hill House (16:00)



Originally called 'Strawberry Hill House Visit', three visits have now been arranged for the one day. Applications close(d) on 1<sup>st</sup> February, but, some places may still be available with late cancellations, so please phone Hilary on 01342 321834 to check.

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### Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> March - Tate Britain



Last year we visited The National Portrait Gallery. This year we are going to Tate Britain along Milbank, the home of British art from the 1500s. At any one time there are several exhibitions to see and includes some of Turner's paintings (see item above). This will be a morning visit, so, if you feel up to it, you could catch a river boat to Tate Modern in the afternoon!

Judy Dumbrill is organising this event.

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### Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> May - Bluebell Walk (or Spring Stroll), Crystal Palace Park



Why the alternative title? Well, I have checked the area where the bluebells grow, only to find it is now in a bit of a mess! However, Crystal Palace Park is worth a visit in its own right, so nearer the time I'll check the state of the bluebell site and decide whether it is worth visiting. Otherwise, do come for a leisurely stroll to see dinosaurs, sphinxes, the remains of the original Palace and the TV mast, the one that superseded the one we saw at Alexandra Palace on the Autumn Stroll last year. (See item below)

Dave Newland

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### Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April - Fish'n'Chip's Supper, McDermott's Forestdale

Tuesday May 7<sup>th</sup> - Quiz Night and Supper, Whyteleafe

Tuesday May 21<sup>st</sup> - Pub Lunch, Horseshoe, Warlingham

Here are reminders of the dates of our ever popular meals we have together. They always provide excellent food, usually at a Fellowship-subsidised rate. Food is also provided at our Quiz Night

And do come to our Coffee Mornings.

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## Monday 3rd June - Treasure Trail – Bankside, London



Every other year Carol Courtney organises a ‘Treasure Trail’. Working in small teams, you have to seek out several items from clues that Carol gives you. In the past we have done this in Oxted, Reigate and Battersea Park. This year we will be exploring the area around Bankside, near London Bridge Station, the area which includes The Globe Theatre, The Clink, the Millennium Bridge and Tate Modern to name but a few sites which we **could** be asked to investigate, finishing at the ‘Anchor Inn’. How are your investigative skills?

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## Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> July - Summer Walk, Tonbridge, Kent



I am still working on the detail of this, but will hold it in Kent, where I haven’t led a walk for several years, in the Tonbridge area. The town has its castle, the River Medway walk and plenty of places for refreshment. It also has easy public transport access both from Croydon and from Bromley / Orpington. Dave Newland

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Information about later events will appear in the Summer edition of the Newsletter, but do note the dates from the Croydon Fellowship Diary for 2019.

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## REPORTS ON RECENT EVENTS

### Highgate Cemetery. Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2018.



Chatting in Waterlow Park Beforehand



Entrance to West Cemetery



‘Cannon’ Post



Fire Brigade Memorial

Our August visit to Highgate Cemetery was very popular. Most of us met up for coffee at the café in Waterlow Park then strolled through the park to the imposing entrance of the West Cemetery. We were split into two groups and our guide led us up a flight of steps into the oldest part of the cemetery. Highgate Cemetery was a private facility designed as an alternative to burial in an overcrowded churchyard. Even when it opened in 1839 the costs were beyond most people.

We were guided past large family monuments up to the Circle of Lebanon. This is a double circle of vaults surrounding a cedar tree. On up more steps to the top of the hill, we were led through the Terrace Catacombs, an eerie corridor with shelves of coffins on each side. We took a gentler path back down the wooded hill and past more recent graves. After the tour most of us explored the more popular East Cemetery with the graves of Karl Marx and more recent politicians and celebrities.

Carol Courtney

See a reference to one of the West Cemetery’s ‘RIP residents’ below in the Autumn Stroll Report.

Many thanks, Carol. All who went found the visit really worthwhile. Ed

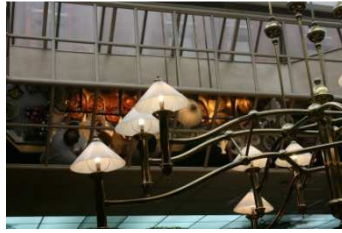
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## Buffet Lunch. Croydon Park Hotel. Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2018.



Pre-lunch Drinks



Hardly a 'Light Meal'!



Brian Helping Himself



Charles Rothwell 95

I am always surprised that people are always so hungry early in September, having often indulged themselves whilst on holiday during August! But, probably, we pensioners hadn't yet been away, and were exhausted through all the gardening done over the summer and were in need of major sustenance. Whatever the reason, plates were piled up again as we attacked the very tempting fare on offer – up to 5 courses!

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## The Postal Museum and Mail Train. London. Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2018.



Mural



Penny Farthing Post Bike



Mail Coach



Mail Train

### The Postal Museum

Well, we finally got our visit to the Museum and it was well worth the wait! The first part of our visit was to the Exhibition and Museum, after coffee in the café of course! It tells the history of the Mail and also the GPO which was part of the set up for many years.

My favourite delivery vehicle was a Penny farthing bicycle, with a wicker basket on the front for the letters and 4 stabilisers, 2 each side, so the Postman did not fall off! Early mail was delivered by Stage coach with the risk of Highway Men. Indeed one poor postman was attacked by a lion on Salisbury Plain.

There was a clever machine, where you could take your photo and design a stamp round your portrait and then email it home, to show your friends. The penny black stamp was the first in the world to have adhesive to attach to the letters, and it helped spread the use of post to everyone.

Although we are used to red post boxes, to recognise our athletes who won gold in the last Olympics the home towns of these athletes showed their pride by painting their post boxes gold!

The two world wars made the Post Office incredibly popular, with wives, sweethearts and parents all desperate for news of their soldiers. Many letters were lost when ships sank. One such ship was the S.S. Gairsoppe, a British Steam Merchant ship, carrying a large cargo of much needed silver bullion from India. Low on coal, she

Then it was back up the stairs to seek refreshments before heading home. If you missed out on this trip, it is now much easier to visit. Check out the web site and maybe go with 2-3 friends. You won't be disappointed. Judy Dumbrell

As usual a very comprehensive report, Judy. Many thanks for the massive effort you had to put in for this event. Ed

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dropped back from the convoy, and was hit by a German submarine.

Some crew escaped in small boats near Cornwall, but only one man survived. Many years later, when the silver was salvaged, some of the letters aboard were also rescued and were on show.

### The Ride in the Mail Train

As you can see we learnt a lot and then came the highlight of the trip. Mail used to come in from all over the country in mail trains and needed to be sorted and sent on its way, so this small train ran underground to all the main London stations. Here it would be loaded with mail bags and brought back to Mount Pleasant Post office for further sorting. Now it has been converted to take tourists on a ride along the tunnels. As you can imagine, it was a bit of a tight fit to squash humans in instead of mail sacks. However we all managed it and off we went with a commentary telling us about the loading, unloading etc. At each 'station' we stopped and a video projected onto the walls, showed men working busily to keep the system going. Lights flashed, buzzers rang and off we went again. Fascinating!

Then we had to get out of our cramped seats but there were no mishaps and we had more things to see as we headed for the exit. There was a mock up of the sorting area in a night mail train, where you stood on a jiggling floor, trying to post the mail into slots headed, Glasgow. Nottingham. Sheffield etc. and see how quickly you could use up all the 'letters' Not easy, against the clock.

## Autumn Stroll. North London. Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2018.



Alexandra Palace



TV Mast



Walking through the Park



Old Railway Track

Who of our readers remember Muffin the Mule? On a rather overcast day our autumn walk started by climbing the hill from Alexandra Palace Station to the Palace itself, from where TV was first transmitted. A reminder of this fact is being put together on the site. There is a panel depicting programmes transmitted in 1953: the Coronation, Philip Harben (we also came across him in Highgate Cemetery!) and dear old Muffin.

After a short coffee break in the Ice Rink Café, where none of the party felt tempted to don skates, we continued across the Park, under a short tunnel and onto the remnant of the old railway track, the southern part of which we walked on five years previously. In theory, these early parts of the walk should have provided brilliant views over London. Unfortunately not on that day - misty! This was followed by a path beside the course of the old railway leading us to Highgate Wood and the sports field within it, where we stopped for lunch in the café. It was just a short distance then to Highgate Tube Station. Dave Newland

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

No pictures this year, I am afraid. To be perfectly honest, photos of this event just seem to duplicate those of the previous year. So, if you attended, just have them in your mind!

As usual, this was very well attended, including some new faces. Welcome, if this was your first Croydon Fellowship event. There were some minor changes from 2018, mainly brought about through a change in the hotel management. We received the traditional welcoming buck's fizz, but no bottles of red and white wine on the table (unless you ordered them and paid in advance). Instead we each had a mini-bottle of prosecco waiting for us. The raffle produced a profit of £153.20, which we traditionally donate to Age UK

As usual, preparation for this event involved several people and provided more than the odd headache. Thanks are due to Judy Dumbrill, Chris House, Maggie Mahoney and Patricia Pegg. Ed

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## New Year Stroll. Addington. Monday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2019.



Addington Palace



Walking through the Golf course



The Harvester

An innovation, led by Roger Smith, a short stroll to get the legs moving again towards the start of the New Year. Starting from Coombe Lane tram stop, we walked along one of the roads through Shirley Heights, where *one* needs *one's* Rolls Royce just to visit to *ones* neighbour, if it isn't *one's* chauffeur's day *orff*! Then through Addington Palace Golf Course and into Addington Park, before arriving at the Harvester (our Chairman and Delia's regular haunt, we gathered) for lunch. Thanks to Viv Murray having her mobile with her, we all received a discount on our meals through Harvester's app. Modern technology can be useful at times!

Thanks for organising this, Roger. Hope you can organise one for next year as well. Ed

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## Festive Festivities: Christmas Tree Festival and Pantomime.



1 We like to be part of the Festive Season, so, as your Committee has its regular meetings in St. John's Church in Old Coulsdon, and as, in early December, the Church had a Christmas Tree Festival, Patricia Pegg offered to contribute a tree on behalf of the Fellowship, which Brenda Hay and Audrey Lawson decorated with handmade items.

2 Viv Murray organised another innovation, a visit to the Pantomime 'Treasure Island' held at Purley URC at about the time of publication of this Newsletter. Hope to have a report in the Summer edition. Our thanks to those involved in these two events.

**Stop Press:** Have heard the Panto was a great success, and Viv has some photos.

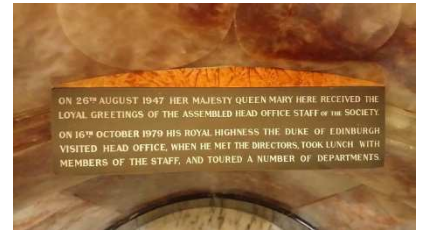
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## Region Visit to Norwich 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> November 2018.

I haven't received a report on the Region Visit to Norwich, but Trudy Chen has provided me with several photos of the trip, so here are a few of them: Many thanks, Trudy.



Cambridge



Norwich



Bury St. Edmunds

**Photo Sources:** The 'Twickenham' pictures – From Chris House's Flier!  
Tate Britain – Tate Britain Web Site  
Bankside and Anchor Inn – Carol Courtney  
Tonbridge – Medway Web Site  
Mail Train – Museum Brochure  
Norwich Trip – Trudy Chen

**All others:** Editor

I will have a lot more photos displayed at the AGM.

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

Dave Newland