

News from around the regions...

Loughton and Witham

The Spring Luncheon took place at the Sir James Hawkey Hall on 23 April. It was a sunny day which is always helpful with regards to attendance. 136 arrived to enjoy a very good buffet with free drinks, courtesy of Kier London. Although we seemed to have lost some members from the first luncheon, new pensioners plus new members have kept the attendance to around the same number.

The disposal of the table flowerpots of begonias went more quietly this year with an arrow across a napkin pointing to its new owner.



Loughton & Witham members at the Spring Luncheon in April. Unfortunately members from the Midlands had to leave before the photographer arrived.

Can you help?

Fred Brown of Southend, who used to work at the Romford Yard, would like to know the whereabouts of Harry Bradford and Derek (can't remember surname). He sends his kind regards to them. Please pass any information you may have to John Stamford.

Wallis Area

A Luncheon was held at the Hop Farm - Paddock Wood on Thursday 26 April attended by 69 members and partners. Several members were attending for the first time. Fortunately they managed to pick a nice sunny day this time, which judging by the previous years was third time lucky.

Unfortunately quite a few of the "regulars" were unable to attend because it either clashed with other events or they were struck down with the flu virus that was doing the rounds at the time. Everybody expressed their appreciation both of the meal and the venue and particularly welcomed the opportunity of meeting up and renewing old friendships.

I am pleased to report that the membership for this area continues to grow, not only by recently retiring staff, but also by older ex-employees who have been recommended by existing members.

A note from the Chairman

As the Fellowship moves into its fourth year, it seems that the activities are settling into a pattern. Some areas hold many events and others just one or two, but overall there are numerous examples of the Fellowship working throughout the UK. It is a wonderful opportunity for former employees to keep in contact and where everyone meets at the same level.

Like any voluntary organisation, we are totally dependent on the goodwill of our volunteers and helpers as it is only through their efforts that activities can take place. We have always set our hearts against paid organisers. For one there is insufficient income and secondly we want to encourage commitment from our members.

Whilst the traditional approach is to sit back and let others do the work, each area organiser does need continuing help and support, so if you feel that you can do anything to assist, please let them know. Similarly at Trust Board level, we have ideas which we would like to progress, but until we can introduce them effectively and efficiently, they remain on our wish list. We know many people are busy with other interests, but there must be some who would like to do something to help.

We are all looking forward to the next Tempsford Hall Annual Luncheon on Sunday 25 November. We will continue with the identity badges introduced at last year's event as many people commented that they were a great help, especially when someone may not have seen a former colleague for many years. In order to allow more time for socialising, we have decided to start this year's event half an hour earlier. I look forward to seeing many of you there.

John Stamford

Kier Southern

The Supper meeting on 25 April at The Grange, Northwood, attracted 27 members and partners.

A visit was organised to Walthamstow Dogs on 19 June, together with the Rolling Stones Club, when 9 members tried to beat the tote and the bookies. Most failed but the meal and the evening were voted a great success.

The Summer Lunch was held on 6 July at The Old Chequers, Gaddesdon Row, Herts. Twenty members and wives attended and sat down to a first class meal, conversation and meeting of former colleagues. It is hoped to hold a "Winter Warmer" lunch in the New Year at the same venue.

Our best wishes to Ray Griffin at present in hospital and to Marge Paladino and Peter Hunter who are both shortly to try out the health service.

A weekend at Warners, Cricket St. Thomas, has been booked and all available places have been taken.

Sadly, we have to report the passing of two old friends during the last months:

Ivan Skakle (Painting Manager) joined 1969, retired 1976, died suddenly at home and Ken Chelu (Office Manager) joined 1960, retired 1989, died in hospital following two major operations.

Our condolences go to their families.



North East

A luncheon was held on 18 March attended by 15 members and another lunch is proposed for 9 September.

A small restaurant built on the Thorpe Arch Trading Estate which was one of Jack Hughes last contracts. This contract was affectionately known as Jack's Café.

We wonder if he got a feel for the business and opened his own establishment?

Newport/Bristol

January saw the first function of 2001. A return visit to the Old Barn Inn at Llanmartin for our post Christmas lunch which was well attended and a most enjoyable day, culminating in a champagne toast to members of the Kier Fellowship Trust. The champagne was provided by way of the Chairman's Award referred to in Issue No.2 of the Kier Link News (see back page).

A champagne toast to the Fellowship Trust by Newport/Bristol members at their post Christmas lunch.



Many thanks to Kier Western for their kind invitation to their Annual Spring Ball at the Thistle Hotel in Cardiff on Saturday 7 April. Fourteen Fellowship Trust members attended. This was an excellent opportunity to maintain links with the company and renew friendships with those still employed at Kier.

The Costwold Scenery Tour took place on Tuesday 7 July, which was well attended, albeit on a very wet day. Our trip included visits to Bourton on the Water, Stow on the Wold, Moreton in the Marsh and Broadway. Let's hope for better weather on our next excursion.

Sadly, our colleague Cliff Collins, an active member of the Kier Fellowship Trust, passed away suddenly on 10th August 2001. Our sympathies are with his wife, Olive and family at this time.

Cliff worked for Wallis Western at Newport as a site Agent for many years and will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

Future Events

For those who were looking forward to our Golf Days, these will hopefully be re-scheduled (due to the outbreak of foot and mouth disease) later in the year.

Arrangements for our planned trip to Ireland (Waterford) in October are progressing nicely after a very good response.

New Members

John Hurst	Kier Western
Glyn Morris	Kier Western
Keith Wallace	Kier London, Loughton

Wisbech

"I counted them all out and I counted them all back" - with a sigh of relief! The intrepid Fenlanders went on an expedition to see the sights of London - and we saw a few including those being 'enhanced' by Kier London. Twenty-three of us had a most enjoyable time seeing multi-coloured majestic buildings and their inhabitants! Our driver, who was most knowledgeable, drove us around the highways and byways of the capital so that we could really relax and enjoy a good day out - coupled with a break for eating and shopping.



Wisbech members arriving back safely at the French Kier yard after a day out in London.

Cheltenham

Len Gaylor reports that he is arranging another dinner at the Golf Club in late Autumn and all local members will be advised of the date.

North West

On 23 February all our members, together with employees of the company who have completed 25 years' service were invited to our first reunion dinner at the Suites Hotel, Knowsley.

We had a fairly good response and those who attended enjoyed a few drinks and a good meal in very comfortable surroundings. It proved to be a perfect venue to meet with former colleagues and hear at first hand about the progress of the company. It also enabled us to inform our former colleagues of the benefits of keeping in touch through the Trust, which we hope they will come to enjoy with us in the not too distant future. I felt that this was a very enjoyable evening, and it is our intention, with the help of the company, to make this an annual event.

On 24 April we had our bi-annual lunch where members and their partners were able to once again meet together and just enjoy the relaxed atmosphere.

Unfortunately, we were unable to proceed with our proposed trip across the Irish Sea to 'Ballykissangel Country' owing to lack of numbers, but perhaps with a bit more notice we may try again next year.

Tempsford Hall

The second annual golf day took place at the Newmarket Golf Club on Thursday 9 August and attracted 20 players including two wives. Tempsford members were joined by players from Loughton, Maple Cross and Rushden.



Tempsford Golfers at their 2nd annual golf day in August

Newmarket is Gerry Bangs' Club and all the players found the course with its long holes interesting and challenging especially the two holes where players had to drive across the 'gallops'.

Overall winner of the competition was Tom Saunders with the runner up John Swann. Winner of the front nine was John Hebblethwaite with Ken Stoneman winning the back nine.

A very successful (if at times wet) day was brought to a conclusion with a dinner at the clubhouse where the prizes were presented.

All eyes are now focussed on the Annual Luncheon which will take place on Sunday 25 November in the marquee at Tempsford Hall. Details will be circulated through area organisers however this year a request has been made for more contact time, so the event will start half an hour earlier. It is hoped that this year's attendance will be an all time record.

Rushden

We have had a hectic first half of the year. In early February 54 members went to Peterborough Dog Track on a Saturday evening, which was enjoyable and profitable for some. This was followed on Saturday 17 February by our annual pilgrimage to The Royal Albert Hall in London for The Mountbatten Festival of Music. This is always very popular and featured the Massed Bands of The Royal Marines.

Our mystery trip this year was different as we included Sunday Lunch and drinks. At times it felt as though the driver didn't know where we were going either but eventually we ended up at Southwold at The Snape Maltings for tea. The weather was kind to us and everybody enjoyed themselves. A second visit to Peterborough Dogs followed, with certain people trying to recoup their losses from the first visit.

On Thursday 17 May we certainly tried something different - fifty people attended The Diamond Centre for a 'Murder Mystery Night' or should that have read 'Brian Hill's Academy for the Bewildered?'. The evening started with a bang and between courses of the lovely meal there were clues galore - 'Who Dunnit?' The end of the evening saw the murder solved by Dickie Saunders who contrary to reports is quite intelligent!

On Saturday 2 June we travelled to Horse Guards in London for the rehearsal of Trooping the Colour followed by a picnic in St James Park where true to form, Frank Furlong ate all the sandwiches and drank all the red wine.



Sunday 1 July was our family day out at the seaside - this year we chose bracing Skegness. Two coaches, plenty of kids and a wonderful sunny day greeted us, but I am not sure whether the donkeys were ready for the heavyweights! Plenty of sun, sea and sand helped everyone enjoy the day before the traditional fish and chips supper.

Some of the Rushden members enjoying a family day out at Skegness in July

Last weekend was our Annual Summer Mystery trip, but this time with passports. We went over on the ferry to Calais and drove to Bruges in Belgium. There was plenty of time to explore as well as a boat trip, a walk, a lovely lunch and a drink which all went well. A good day was had by all, but the six members who were 20 minutes late back to the coach may be having their passports confiscated for future trips.

As you can see life is hectic - our membership has increased to 118 and next weekend we are going to Shrewsbury Flower Show followed by a 10-day break in Austria. In November we shall be going to The Lord Mayor's Show in the City of London and to Leeds for Christmas shopping and The Royal Armouries. Towards Christmas we shall visit Lincoln Christmas Market and the Carol Service at the Guards Chapel in London.

A group of 'oldies' regularly meet for fish and chip suppers on Saturday evenings and get together for quick nights - all in a very sociable group.

Sadly we have lost Harry Hollis and Henry Malster.

Dick Blackwell has been in hospital but I understand is back home and improving.

Four members attended the Golf Day at Newmarket.

Obituaries

P F Garland Rayleigh, Essex
1st May 2001

L A Robson Eastbourne, East Sussex
16th May 2001

T G Murray Ilford, Essex
20th May 2001

H J Sawtell Tewkesbury, Glos.
24th May 2001

W A Sweeney Shoeburyness
June 2001

I H F Lee Dunmow, Essex
June 2001

A Single St Neots, Cambs
June 2001

R McConnell Falkirk, Scotland
2nd June 2001

K J Armour-Chelu Bridgnorth, Shropshire
16th June 2001

E A Fleming St. Neots, Cambs
16th June 2001

K Beckingham London N14
22nd June 2001

J Nougher Hythe, Kent
8th July 2001

E J Lilley Manningtree, Essex
13th July 2001

E Russell Wisbech, Cambs
20th July 2001

M A Divall Hazel Grove, Cheshire
28th July 2001

J Paterson Cheltenham, Glos
4th August 2001

