

# KIERLINK

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## Fellowship matters

A report from the Trust chairman John Stamford

As we enter our tenth year since inception, it is pleasing for me as chairman to be able to report that the Fellowship is alive, well and flourishing. All our regions have held at least one event, and a number have held several.

Our garden party at Tempsford Hall attracted a record attendance of 300 members and guests. It proved to be an excellent get together with a number of new members attending for the first time. There was such a good atmosphere that the band, who were originally booked to play for two hours, continued for an extra hour.

Our annual golf day, held this year at my local club of Pavenham Park,

attracted yet another record attendance, 35 members and 38 dining afterwards, a huge increase from the dozen members who attended the first annual golf day. The course was in near perfect condition and we enjoyed one of the few sunny, summer days. Looking forward, our strength as a fellowship is in the regional activities for members. I always believe that many hands make light work, so if you can spare some time to help your organiser, or have an idea for an event, please come forward and help us make our next ten years even better than the first ten.

## Editor's note

My thanks to Fellowship members who have forwarded details of their experiences, hobbies or pastimes. The various regional activities are gaining in momentum and the numbers attending are steadily increasing – congratulations to all concerned.

I would like to include details of work on wartime airfields and any information would be much appreciated.

**Roger Almond, Editor, KierLink  
Cottage Garden  
2 Orchard Road South, March  
Cambridgeshire PE15 9DE**

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28 February 2008

## A warm welcome to our new members

Name	Town	Area	Name	Town	Area
James Adams	South Shields	Newcastle	Gerry Pemberton	Edmonton	London
Brian Allen	Hedge End	Southampton	David Prothero	Chatham	Kent
Brian Budd	Widley	Waterlooville	Keith Rann	Loughton	Essex
Jeanne Cavill	St Albans	Herts	Kenneth Rudd	Cottenham	Cambs
Mike Desmond	Gt Shelford	Cambridge	Janet Ruff	Eynesbury	Cambs
Edward Evans	Cross Hands	Carmarthenshire	Jennifer Sanders	Rushden	Northants
Richard Fogg	Bedford		Allen Scott	Leeds	West Yorkshire
Martin Grist	Redbridge	Southampton	Christopher Shurlock	Grafham	Cambs
Peter Jackson	Ashford	Kent	Fiona Steed	Tockwith	North Yorks
George Kingsbury	Osbaston	Monmouth	Harold Thompson	Eynesbury	Cambs
Laurence Lewis	Bretton	Peterborough	Dennis Wood	Gloucester	
Geoffrey Osborne	Chatham	Kent			

# ANNUAL GOLF DAY

The KGFT golf day, held on 9 August at Pavenham Park golf course, Bedfordshire, was sponsored by chairman John Stamford.

Thirty-five players and three supporters turned up in time for the action which was located in a beautiful part of Bedfordshire on a course that proved to be quite demanding. The greens were in excellent condition and tested the skills of all who took part.

After a very good four course dinner, prizes were awarded to the players who were a little bit more successful than others.



## WINNERS

The winners on the day were:

- Dick Saunders winner (44)
- Ted Staples runner-up (36)
- Brian Painter best front nine
- John Simpson best back nine
- Frances Bagley lady winner (37)
- Ian Lawson nearest the pin
- Gerry Bangs longest drive
- Alan Robinson straightest drive

## NEWCOMER

Newcomer to the Fellowship this year and to golf, Chris Shurlock won Duncan Mort's dog's special prize – a bag of golf balls which the dog had recovered from a nearby golf course! Chris won the balls as he'd lost a few more on the day than anyone else.

## THREE GENERATIONS



Sonia Webb kindly sent in this photo of three generations of the same family, at Kier Eastern.

**(l-r) apprentice bricklayer Andrew Lowe, bricklayer Kevin Lowe and foreman Maurice Lowe. Maurice is now a member of KGFT.**

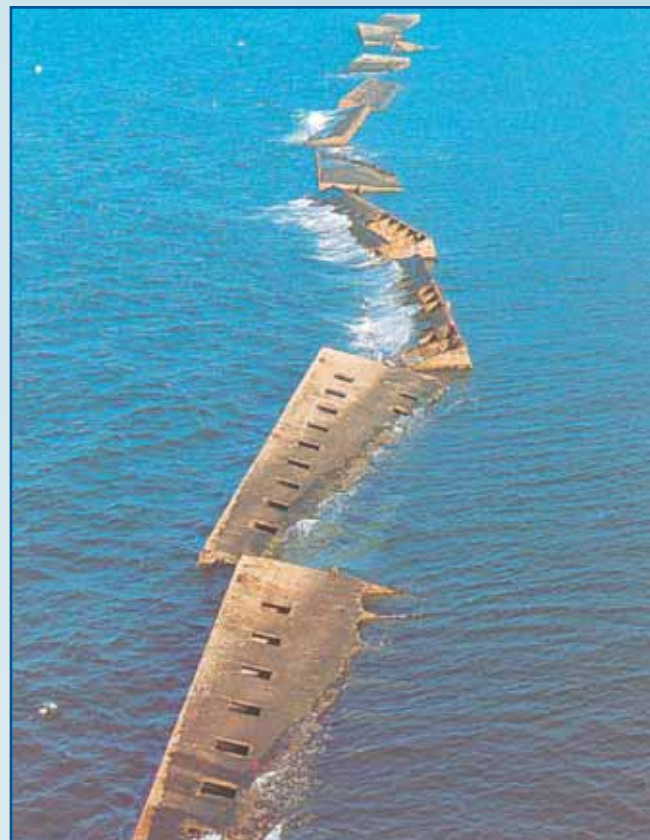
## Commando Raid on the Port of St Nazaire and Mulberry Harbour units for the D-Day landing

In response to my request for information of any Kier or associated company involvement on projects during World War II, details of two major events have been forthcoming. Thank you to Andrew Pallant (see member's letter back page) and Don Robinson for the extra information provided.

### **Mulberry Harbour Units: Arromanches by Roger Almond**

To enable the invasion forces landed on the Normandy coast on and after D-Day to be reinforced and kept supplied, it was necessary to build two invasion ports, each roughly the size of Dover, which were constructed in this country then transported across 100 miles of sea and placed in position off the enemy occupied coast. In May this year my wife and I visited the town of Arromanches and in the D-Day landings the major contractors and consultants involved in this unique project are listed. The list included W & C French Ltd together with other organisations still operating today.

The pontoons were made of concrete measuring 220 ft in length, 60 ft high and 52 ft wide and weighing between 3,000 and 6,000 tons. Twenty of the original 115 units, built to last for only six months, have survived albeit somewhat battered for over 60 years. A



fine example of British workmanship. When in position the pontoons formed a four-mile long breakwater quay.

Sometimes there were up to 280 ships unloading at the same time and by late October 1944, 220,000 men had

disembarked as well as 39,000 vehicles of all sorts from jeeps to 40-ton tanks and 110,000 tons of various goods.

The visit had a personal significance to me as my late father, in his capacity as an officer in the Royal Army Service Corps, was involved in transporting tanks on board 'Landing Ship Tanks' from the channel ports after the main D-Day landings.



## Boston Spa: Revie Morris

Membership remains at 41. Sunday lunch was held at The Owl Hotel, Hambleton on 4 March which was attended by 19 members and guests, and a return visit on 16 September. Congratulations to Roy Butcher and his wife Veronica who had a surprise joint birthday party celebrating their 75th and 60th birthdays respectively.



In addition to the normal monthly lunches, some members enjoyed a weekend in the romantic city of Paris with a visit to the wine and beer warehouse on the return trip. Several took part in the annual golf day at Pavenham and a very good day on a challenging course was enjoyed by all.

Unfortunately some of the planned events have had to be cancelled due to insufficient support. Other events are being planned but they can only take place with the support of members to make them viable.

*Congratulations to John Skull who was presented with the Chairman's Award at the Tempsford summer garden party in July.*



## Tempsford Hall: John Skull

Since the last issue, members have enjoyed several lunch dates at local hostelrys. A few members joined with the Sports and Social Club at Tempsford for a trip to Kew Gardens on 23 June, and some went on the coach trip to Hampton Court on 7 July for this year's flower show. This show still rates among the best in the country within the imposing setting of Hampton Court Palace. The flower beds forming a part of the palace grounds again competed favourably with the displays in the arena.



## TEMPSFORD AREA: FUTURE EVENTS

### DATE

27 Oct

13 Nov

17 Nov

7 Dec

11 Dec

5 Jan

8-11 May

26-30 Jun

### EVENT

Les Miserables at the Queens Theatre, London, matinee performance

Lunch at The Anchor, Tempsford

The Phantom of the Opera, London

Visit to Bonn and its traditional Christmas market: three nights B&B at The Hilton, tour manager and visit to wine & beer warehouse on way home

Lunch at The Eaton Oak

Aladdin pantomime, Milton Keynes Theatre

Trip to Vienna

Trip to Budapest

### COST

**Sold out**

Pay as you go

**Sold out**

£210 (few left)

Pay as you go

£24

£350-£390

TBN

*All Fellowship Trust members are welcome to attend any of the Tempsford or Rushden regional events. For more details and to declare an interest in any of the above events, please call or write to John Skull at 7 Boardman Close, Little Paxton, St Neots, Cambs PE19 6NF, tel: 01480 474802.*

## Wisbech: Brian Painter, Sonia Webb

On 10 June, Kier Eastern held a fun day at Stonham Barns attended by 30 Wisbech and Witham KGFT members. The total attendance was 290. The Cromer Seaside Special proved once again to be a popular outing with 40 members enjoying the show and sunshine on 7 August. The first luncheon club meeting took place on 30 August at the Red Lion in Wisbech. Twenty-one members attended and our intention is to meet at different venues on a regular basis. The annual Christmas luncheon and Thursford carol concert are planned for 13 and 16 December respectively.

## Loughton & Witham: John Simson

Loughton and Witham members enjoyed a buffet lunch at the Metropolitan Police Sports Club at Chigwell on 26 April. Ninety members and guests attended at this new venue which was deemed by all to be much improved with good parking and, more importantly, better food! We have already booked for next year and hope to attract more than 100 people next time.

## Cheltenham: Hugh Sweet

On 12 June, 22 members visited the SS Great Britain, Brunel's great steamship which was built in 1833, restored over a number of years, and is now an award-



winning attraction in Bristol. We were blessed with one of the very few fine and sunny days of this wretched summer, and were able to make the most of

the excellent display both below and above water level (wet suits not needed), and get a very good idea of what life was like for passengers and crew on a long voyage in the 19th century. The attention to detail in all aspects of the restoration of the ship is truly impressive. The good weather also allowed us to wander about the Bristol docks in comfort, and take advantage of the open air food and drink facilities.

Our next event will be a visit to the Everyman Theatre in Cheltenham to a production of Hobson's Choice on 12 November.

## Rushden: Brian Hill, Frank Furlong

A mystery trip took us to the Watercress Steam Railway in Hampshire and the cathedral city of Winchester. Our Easter break to Lake Como was a great success and enjoyed by all 36 members. We flew to Bergamo Milan then on to our hotel at Cadenabbia which was



situated on the prettiest part of the lake. We visited many places and saw beautiful gardens and islands. One of our party, Dennis Hodgkin, won a giant Easter Egg in a raffle, but as the egg was too large to take on the aircraft, he donated it to a local charity.



In June we had our annual visit to watch the pageantry of Trooping the Colour on Horseguards Parade followed by a seaside trip with the grandchildren to Sheringham, which included donkey rides, a paddle in the sea, fish n chips and a ride on the North Norfolk Railway.

July saw the annual garden party at Tempsford and a visit to Stapeley Water Gardens and the city of Chester. Unfortunately we picked a wet day for the trip and had to 'get wet inside' at a local tavern!

Twelve members entered the annual golf day in August and, for the second year running, Rushden produced the winner – congratulations go to Richard Saunders! Also in August, we had a boat trip up the river Thames from the Embankment to Greenwich where we spent an interesting day viewing the museums and climbing the hill to the Royal Observatory.

Thirty-six members signed up for the nine-day cruise from New York to Nova Scotia which took place at the end of September.

Coming up we have our annual ferret race night, Lord Mayor's Show and Birmingham shopping trips, Thursford Christmas Spectacular and carol service at The Guard's Chapel. Twenty-eight members have already booked for our New Year break to the Isle of Wight, and at Easter we are going further afield for a five-day break to Riga in Latvia. Frank Furlong, our chairman, is now back in full flight and ready to accept any bookings for future events.

## Rushden: continued

Best wishes go to our members who are not enjoying the best of health at the moment. We wish them all well.

Condolences go to the families of Bill Cheal, Liz Preston, Barry Saunstone, Bill Stokes and Ron Ablett.

## North West: Norman England

The annual reunion dinner was held in March at the Suites Hotel where we were joined by current employees with over 25 years' continuous service. Also attending were Kier North West md Larry Wilkinson and director David Jenkins.

The spring luncheon was held at the Fourways Restaurant, at Hanglwood Golf Club where 32 people enjoyed the food and the panoramic views over the Welsh Hills, Liverpool and Cumbria, so much so that a return visit is planned.

Future events include a Ghost Evening at Hiskin Hall where two mediums will explore the limits of our psychic energies followed by a hot pot supper with apple pie and cream to follow. Also planned is a Christmas carvery meal with the usual festive fayre.

## Maple Cross: Terry Delany

A spring luncheon was held at St Michaels Manor, St Albans on 27 April where 35 people attended including 10 members who between them have clocked up 358 years' service with the company (see main picture below). Can any other area beat this?

A number of members enjoyed a four-day coach tour to EuroDisney, Paris in May. Terry Dalany's granddaughter Rebecca (age 13) reported: "Our visit to EuroDisney was a truly magical experience that my brother, sister and I will never forget. On our first day we went on most of the rides. My favourite was Peter Pan and It's a Small World. My brother went on Space Mountain and Pirates of the Caribbean and loved it. I think it looked too scary for my sister and me. On our second day we went to Universal Studios where we visited most of the shows and met many of the Disney characters. We had time for a few more rides before heading back to the hotel."

A number of members travelled to Fareham in June to join colleagues for a summer luncheon at Lysses House Hotel, and 29 members attended the Tempsford summer garden party.

Future events include the long service award luncheon at Fareham on 19 October and winter warmer luncheon at Aldenham on 9 November.



**Maple Cross spring luncheon:** back row (l-r) Ray Plassard (27 years) Terry Delany (30 years) Clive Cavill (29 years) Harold Bromwich (30 years) Norman Elliott (30 years) Maurice Bailey (44 years) Eric Colbran (40 years): front row (l-r) Brendan O'Boyle (40 years) Daphne Shepherd (44 years) Don Robinson (44 years).

*Congratulations to Maurice and Olive Bailey who celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary on 14 June. Maurice started his career with William Moss as an office boy and retired as company secretary.*



## Retired Wallis director David Wallis shares his memories and love of his hobby



“Some of my earliest memories as a lad are of my dad taking me to ‘the works’, especially the joinery shop at Broadmead Works, Maidstone, which was built on a site acquired in 1901 by my grandfather and his two brothers as a depot and base for the growing firm started in 1860 by great grandfather George Ephraim Wallis.

I have been interested in anything to do with wood ever since. After I joined the family firm in 1949 I became involved in all aspects of contracting. As the company grew, I was particularly glad that I was eventually given responsibility for managing the joinery department. The company’s reputation for high quality work was always strongly supported by the excellence of its joinery for which we earned the Carpenters Award twice for the Old Bailey and The Museum of London. Training has always been an important element. On one occasion we employed apprentices in eight different trades so I quite naturally became involved with the Training Committee of the British Woodworking Federation and this continued well beyond my retirement from Wallis in 1981.

It is not surprising that the hobby I have now taken up is Marquetry, the making of pictures in wood veneer. It is an absorbing interest; all you need is a scalpel, at least one good eye and loads of patience. Anybody can easily pick-up the knack and enjoy it. Initially you draw your picture on a waster, the sheet of veneer which forms the background and then cut one little piece after another with the scalpel (this could amount to hundreds depending on the complexity of the picture), continually selecting and cutting from veneers of contrasting grain and depth of tone to replace them. You use the hole as a pattern and glue the pieces in the hole as replacements to form the picture, which remains one veneer thick throughout. When you have finished the cutting to your satisfaction you mount the picture on a baseboard usually MDF and blue veneer to the back edges and margins. Then you sand it down and varnish it with a dozen or more coats and a final polish.

The range of subjects is endless, whether pictures of your own design or adapted copies of existing pictures or photographs. I belong to a local branch of The Marquetry Society at whose weekly meetings I can buy materials and ask advice from more experienced fellow members. Some of their work is of an amazing intricacy and beauty and although I do not aspire to their standard yet, my work is improving as the photos may show.

I heartily recommend marquetry as a hobby, whether you do it on your own or join a society.”

## Ever wondered why?

If flying is so safe, why do they call airport buildings terminals?

Doctors call what they do practice!

Noah didn’t swat those two mosquitoes.

There isn’t a mouse flavoured cat food.

The time of day when traffic moves the slowest is called the rush hour!



A couple in their nineties are both having problems remembering things. During a check-up, the doctor tells them that they’re physically okay but they might want to start writing things down to help them remember.

Later that night, while watching tv, the gentleman gets up from his chair.

“Want anything while I’m in the kitchen?” he asks.

“Will you get me a bowl of ice cream?”

“Sure.”

“Don’t you think you should write it down so you can remember it?”, she asks.

“No, I can remember it.”

“Well I’d like some strawberries on top too, maybe you should write it down.”

“I can remember that,” he says  
“You want a bowl of ice cream with strawberries.”

“I’d also like whipped cream. I’m certain you’ll forget that, write it down!” she says.

Irritated he says, “I don’t need to write it down, I can remember it! Ice cream with strawberries and whipped cream – I got it for goodness sake!”

Then he goes off into the kitchen. After about 20 minutes, he returns from the kitchen and hands his wife a plate of bacon and eggs.

She stares at the plate for a moment, then asks: “Where’s my toast?”

## Obituaries

William Hooper	15 March 2007
James Dooley	17 March 2007
Elsie Wales	30 March 2007
Douglas Richards	2 April 2007
Stephen Tyson	13 April 2007
Elizabeth Powley	20 April 2007
Michael Summers	20 April 2007
Audrey Perks	29 April 2007
David Fluck	2 May 2007
Angus McMillan	6 May 2007
Harold Langford	19 May 2007
Clarence Bennett	23 May 2007
Ronald Stewart	29 May 2007
Peggy May	5 June 2007
Robert Anderson	6 June 2007
Cecil Weston	15 June 2007
Rosemary Burgess	25 June 2007
Janet Burling	26 June 2007
Mary Flanders	29 June 2007
Douglas Forsyth	4 July 2007
Donald Strange	7 July 2007
Anthony Kelleher	26 July 2007
Anna Valvano	30 July 2007
Gregory Thorne	7 August 2007
Dennis Palmer	9 August 2007
E A Pywell	9 August 2007
Frederick Stretton	10 August 2007
Jack Coleman	12 August 2007

3rd September 2007

Mr R. A. Almond,  
Cottage Garden,  
2 Orchard Road South,  
MARCH,  
Cambs. PE15 9DE

Dear Roger,

In a previous issue of KierLink, mention was made of D-day and the invasion beaches together with St. Nazaire. Some readers may have watched the recent BBC documentary by Jeremy Clarkson called "The Greatest Raid of All" based on the book of the same name by CE Lucas-Phillips. One of the unmentioned facts was that the Officer in command of the Commandos – and leading from the front – was Lt. Col. Charles Newman, a Territorial Army Officer of the 4th Bn The Essex Regiment. His "day time job", pre-war, was as a civil engineer with W&C French Ltd., eventually becoming Chairman of the Company. Col. Newman, together with 4 others, was awarded the Victoria Cross in recognition of their bravery on that tumultuous night back in 1942.

I had the good fortune to know and work under the direction of Col. Newman, who, in my opinion, has that elusive charisma which made him a natural leader in any circumstances.

Many employees of W&C French served, at some stage, in the same battalion to the extent that it was often referred to as "The 4th Bn The Frenches Regiment"!

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Pallant,  
Ex 4th Bn The Frenches Rgt

## Where are they?

Fellowship members who may wish to contact former colleagues are welcome to write to Brendan O'Boyle or Hilary Edmunds at Kier Southern, Maple Lodge Close, Maple Cross, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire WD3 9SN. Their letters will be forwarded on accordingly.

## Ties

We still have "collector's item" KGFT ties in stock. Available from Brendan O'Boyle or Hilary Edmunds at Kier Southern (above address), tel: 01923 721277. A bargain at only £5 each!



Summer garden party band.