

KierLink

The magazine for the Kier Fellowship Trust | Issue 36 | Spring 2018



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JOHN & CAROL'S ADVENTURE –
PAGE 20





Neil Meixner

Chairman's matters and Administrator's Report

As we write this column for the magazine we have just completed our review of the previous 12 months activities, and we are delighted to advise you that 101 events took place with 2,851 attendees at those events. All our areas were active with an amazing spread of different activities including lunches, visits to places of interest, concerts, theatre trips, horse racing, golf, trips on historic railways and overseas visits to mention just a few. The Trust has been further enhanced by the addition of a Scottish area attached to the Kier office in Glasgow and we look forward to further expansion as the Kier business expands.

Our continued success this year is in part due to the introduction of more, small committees to assist the area organisers and help to not only spread the workload but also introduce new ideas for events. This together with the excellent administration and financial support provided by Kier has helped our organisers maintain the high standard and quality of events.

Membership of the Trust continues to grow, and interest remains high across the country with a record 1,335 members registered with us.

The news that Dick Side has decided to step down from the Trust Board after 20 years' loyal service is a sad day for all of us. He has been involved with the Trust since its inception in 1998 and helped build the organisation into what it is today. His passion, enthusiasm and wholehearted commitment to the Trust will be sorely missed.



Brendan O'Boyle

At the end of 2017, John Simson stepped down as joint area organiser for Loughton and Witham after more than 10 years' service. John was also joint editor of the KierLink with Geoff Brown for a number of years and helped develop the fine magazine we have today. The hard work he put into the Loughton/Witham area was rewarded with numerous 'Best Area Awards' at the annual garden party, and he leaves a successful, thriving area as a legacy. We extend a warm welcome to John Abbott who, together with Geoff Brown, will we're sure maintain those high standards.

Since our last publication we have been engaged in the development of a new micro website for the Fellowship which will make us self-sufficient in the future. The new web address is www.fellowship.kier.co.uk The new site includes a home page, membership detail page with joining form, calendar of events, blog, gallery of photographs from events, KierLink previous editions and a contact page. Do have a browse! You are now able to flick through the calendar of events and contact organisers from outside your area to join in any activity that interests you, perhaps combining that with a longer trip to another part of the UK! Please also help us add more detail especially future events, new photographs and any items for the blog by sending them to Andrea McDaid at kierfellowship@gmail.com

This year will be the 21st anniversary of the first garden party and to celebrate we'd like as many of you to attend this year's

special garden party to be held at Tempsford Hall on 24 June 2018. We have asked your area organisers to come up with innovative ideas, which will be funded by the Trust to get some attendees particularly from the further flung areas. So please contact your local organiser with suggestions or to express an interest in joining us on the day.

As always, we are seeking interesting articles for inclusion in the KierLink magazine so if you've been up to something interesting, be it pastime, hobby, holiday or recollection of a Kier project etc. Please contact any member of the KierLink editorial team. Just click on one of the following: Andrea McDaid, Neil Meixner or Brendan O'Boyle and we'll assist you!

We still have a small stock of 'KGFT' ties available for members on request at £5 each.

We remind you to advise us of any change of address or circumstances so that you can continue to receive invitations to events and copies of the KierLink magazine.

If you require help or information with any matters relating to the Kier Group Fellowship Trust, please contact Brendan O'Boyle at: Kier Group Fellowship Trust, 7 Chestnut Drive, Harrow Weald, Middlesex, HA3 7DL
email: brendan.o'boyle.ext@kier.co.uk

Regards Neil & Brendan

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COVER PHOTO:
MEMBERS FROM
LOUGHTON AND WITHAM
AREA ENJOYED A TRIP TO
KENSINGTON PALACE IN
SEPTEMBER 2017.



Copy deadline for Autumn/Winter 2018 issue:

**MONDAY
13 AUGUST 2018**

Email kierlinkmag@gmail.com

Message from the Group Chief Executive



"I hope that you have had a good start to 2018."

In January, we released our trading update covering the performance of the first half of our financial year and we have traded in line with our expectations in the period. This solid financial performance continues to demonstrate the strength and stability of the business and highlights our leading market positions in infrastructure services, building and developments.

There has also been some sobering news in our sector, as you may have heard that Carillion went into liquidation in January. This news has had an impact on the environment in which we operate, with our share price subsequently fluctuating along with others in the sector. However, our two joint ventures with Carillion have not been adversely affected, as we will now be taking full responsibility of these projects – HS2 and the Smart Motorway programme, both important high-profile contracts. I'm also pleased that with the agreement of our clients, we have been able to offer all Carillion employees working on these projects the opportunity to join Kier or Kier/Eiffage, providing continuity of project delivery. I am proud we have been able to step up quickly on these projects.

Fundamentally, Kier is a diverse business and this provides resilience. We are also very focused on the particular sectors and territories where we operate. We are mainly UK focused, operate in strong markets where we have leading positions and we undertake acquisitions that enable us to accelerate growth in these markets. We are in a strong financial position with a minimal pension deficit. Against this background we are well positioned to keep delivering for our clients and our customers.

"Thank you as always for your continued support and interest in Kier."

Hayden Mursell

A warm welcome to the following new members

Name	City/town	Area	Worked for	Years of service
John Abramczyk	Peterborough, Cambridgeshire	Tempsford	Group HR Shared Services	2
Nick Bache	Woodbridge, Suffolk	Waterbeach	Kier Construction Eastern	14
Andrew Burt	Walderslade, Kent	Maidstone	Kier Workplace Services	9
Colin Chapman	Kings Lynn, Norfolk	Waterbeach	Kier Construction Eastern	28
Brian Coppard	Horley, Surrey	Tempsford	Kier Services	10
Paul Cross	Farlington, Hampshire	Solent	Kier Construction Southern	18
David Doran	St. Helens, Merseyside	Liverpool	Moss / Kier Northern	6
John Kinsella	Woodhouse, Sheffield	Leeds	Kier Facilities Services	12
Ewan Macgregor	Gourock, Renfrewshire	Tempsford	Kier Construction Scotland	17
Stephen Milner	Peterborough, Cambridgeshire	Tempsford	Kier International (Caribbean)	46
Ian Robinson	Harlow, Essex	Tempsford	Kier Services / Kier London	40
Lorrain Urry	Norwich, Norfolk	Waterbeach	Finance Shared Service Centre	4
Jodi Salter	Truro, Cornwall	Plymouth	Kier Utilities	20
Ian Walley	Cuddington, Cheshire	Liverpool	Kier Infrastructure	7
David Williams	Marlborough, Wiltshire	Central	Kier Central	32
Jill (Reynolds) Wright	Heydon, Hertfordshire	Tempsford	Kier Ltd / Kier Living	3

Dick Side...

AT THE JANUARY 2018 TRUST BOARD MEETING, THE DIRECTORS ACCEPTED THE RESIGNATION ON HEALTH GROUNDS OF DICK SIDE WITH THE GREATEST REGRET.

The Kier Group Fellowship Trust was formed in March 1998 and Dick was chairman for 11.5 years. As a Main Board director, he was the company nominee on the Trust Board charged with the task of ensuring that the Fellowship functioned effectively and met its objectives. Dick has been wholeheartedly behind the Fellowship at all times and his advice and inside knowledge helped my period of chairmanship. In the early exciting times we started the annual Tempsford luncheon which in those days was on the Sunday following the AGM in November. In addition we started KierLink which still runs twice yearly.

In those early days, finance was not a problem as we could get a 6% yield on our £300,000 fund without any problems but when interest rates started to drop and having to pay high rates of tax on the income, we had to seek investments that would bolster our income, most of which is given to the areas as annual grants to subsidise their activities.

Dick, responsible for regional business, was able to help set up a regional structure and identify recently retired staff who could become the area organisers.

In 2009, Dick retired from the Main Board and I felt it would be good for the Kier Group Fellowship Trust to retain his knowledge and expertise, and for him to become chairman and so I stepped down.

When Dick became chairman, funding for the areas was becoming an increasing problem and it was he who arranged

that the local operating companies provided funding to match the amount given by the Trust. Such action allowed the areas to have a new lease of life and be more ambitious in their programme planning. Dick also arranged for each area to have a local designated director to whom they could go for practical and financial support. Such an idea has worked brilliantly well.

In the Spring of 2015, Dick told us that he had been diagnosed with a health problem and would be stepping down as chairman but would remain a Board Member. It was then Neil Meixner took over.

Through his association with the Fellowship, Dick has keenly supported and enjoyed the National Golf Day. He missed last year's event because his wife Liz had suffered a domestic accident.

Dick Side has been a keen and active supporter of the Kier Group Fellowship Trust since its inception and we will miss his input, although he has said he will be on the side-lines.

"We sincerely thank him for his contribution and wish both him and Liz well in the future."

John Stamford

A member's story...

Pictured: carvings of his niece and nephew, the theme being 'likeness'

"While at the Christmas dinner, I overheard Jeff say he needed input for the magazine. Like a fool I told a story relating to my hobby of wood carving. I should have kept my mouth shut, as I have not felt like this since school days when you had to write a composition on your summer holidays, I'm not one for putting pen to paper!"

"Back in the day when the Hampshire branch of the British Woodcarvers was formed, my wife Tina, with a very good friend Ian, used to travel around the county doing craft fairs, school fêtes etc, trying to bring in new members. Ian being a very good carver used to set up a display and demonstrate, while Tina bent the ears of the public.

"Unfortunately Ian was so good he never had many carvings for the display, as unlike me he did not mind parting with them for money. That's the difference I suppose between a highly qualified accountant and a steelfixer! Anyway the display would always be 75% mine. In the end Ian got fed up with explaining my carvings to the public, and that mine unlike his, were not for sale. As a result Ian insisted that in future if I wanted my work to be seen by the public I would have to set up alongside him at the next show.

"This happened to be in Wokingham at the Guide Dog for the Blind training centre open day. We arrived in plenty of time, set up in the gazebo provided and found we had a half hour to spare. Tina and Ian set off to have a look

around while I looked after the stand. I set about putting the finishing touches to a carving of a hand I had been working on. At this point I had better tell you, I had put on a rather large straw hat, being a rather hot day, plus I thought if I kept my head down I would be able to hide behind it.

"Anyway, there I was minding my own business when I suddenly realised there was someone watching me. I might have muttered "Good afternoon" but fear got the better of my conversation skills. Anyway after a few minutes she decided to tell me I was "Brilliant". Well as big as my hat was, my head was trying to burst out of it. "Well" I thought, "Why haven't I demonstrated before with comments like that?" Now bearing in mind all this time she had been stood there and I hadn't looked up, lacking the courage to do so, after that comment I did have to thank her.

"At that point she gave me a rather strange look, then lent towards me, so we were nearly rubbing noses. I was not expecting what she said next. "You

can see" she said, "Oh well it's not that brilliant then is it!" There you go, the highs and lows of demonstrating in just five minutes. I later found why she had thought I was blind, because in the gazebo next door there was a blind man weaving baskets – now he was brilliant!"

Alan Taplin

"No matter what the lady said, I think Alan's carvings are brilliant." Ed





Around the regions

Bristol and Newport

Our successful programme of events for 2017 continued into the Autumn with 10 attending a golf match held at The Woodlands Golf and Country Club, Bristol. It was good to be able to welcome some current employees at that event too which was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Although in the throes of moving house, Jack Laughton still attended and won the Wallis Trophy.

Our October meal was once again held at The Foresters' Oaks, near Newport. The food and the company were excellent although several 'regular' members were unable to attend this year due to the pressure of fitting in cruises!



walk which included the assembly rooms, famous Crescents, learning about some of the Royal connections, as evidenced by a massive Coat of Arms on the theatre and some history of the baths. After our guide, Joy Roberts, had completed her very informative talk most of us enjoyed a meal in one of the city's restaurants.



In November, committee member Alan Jones arranged a guided tour around central Bath. With its honey-coloured stone buildings, most of the Bath stone was quarried from vast underground workings. Fifteen of us participated in the



We will shortly be commencing 2018 with a visit to a museum of vintage exhibits just South of Bristol, followed by a meal close by.

David Priddis



Central

Sixty members of Kier Central Fellowship met at the Cheltenham Park Hotel for their Christmas lunch on 14 December 2017. The weather was kind after the recent snow and everyone was able to enjoy a happy few hours catching up with old friends over an excellent meal.



On 24 January, 25 members met at The Fleet Inn, Twynning near Tewkesbury, for a get-together over a pub lunch to plan the year's outings. There was an enthusiastic response to the request for suggestions and a varied selection of get-togethers is in the process of being organised.

Sheila Heath

Devon and Cornwall



The Devon and Cornwall group met for one of our usual lunches at the Marsh Mill Beefeater on 11 September where we once again enjoyed good food and conversation.

Pictured left, our Christmas lunch on 5 December at The New Continental Hotel was enjoyed by our members with their guests, together with David Snell, the Devon and Cornwall designated Fellowship director, at our Christmas lunch.

Our next lunch is to be arranged for week commencing 16 April, definitive date to be confirmed.

Dave Riddle

Leeds

Twenty-seven members attended a Christmas lunch which was held on 10 December 2017 at the Milford Lodge Hotel, Peckfield, Leeds. Anne Leslie organised a quiz and the usual raffle was popular with the members. Our next lunch is to be held at the same venue on 25 March 2018.

Katherine Leadley

Liverpool

Christmas lunch was held on Friday 8 December 2017 at the Liner Hotel Liverpool, some 36 persons attended. For those who arrived early there was a Christmas market in front of St. George's Hall to peruse and the rest of Liverpool to shop if they wished.

This year we were joined by Father and Mrs Christmas (aka Barry Cook and his wife). Sadly the hotel would not allow their reindeer inside as they were not 'hotel trained'. Fortunately they did not get a ticket on their toboggan that was parked in Lord Nelson Street!

Following final good wishes all went their separate ways. Father and Mrs Christmas flew back to Lapland to give the Elves their final instructions. Everyone agreed it was a fabulous lunch.

Sharon Jenkins

Loughton and Witham

Hog Roast at Buckhurst Hill Cricket Club: 16/08/17

On a lovely sunny summers day 68 members arrived at Buckhurst Hill Cricket Club for a Hog Roast BBQ lunch.

Tables and chairs were soon moved from the Club House onto the grass outside. Drinks were available from the bar at the Club prices which was a pleasant surprise for all.



The Hog Roast was superbly cooked and the accompaniments varied and plenty of it! Many of us had a second helping ever mindful that there were desserts to follow.

The afternoon allowed time for more drinks and conversations were enjoyed in the sunshine. Some were reminded of the connection in the past with WC French as previous Presidents were Sir John French, Charles French and Bill Nuttall, all named on the President's Board. Bill Nuttall was in charge of the scaffolding and formwork division and I am sure the cricket nets still had the CSF scaffold tube as supports!

Some of the women suggested a cricket match next time. A novel idea. All in all an enjoyable day for all.

John Spray

Kensington Palace: 13/09/17

We arrived at the Natural History Museum to meet our guide, Carol, and after an early lunch, we re-boarded our coach for a brief guided tour, stopping to look at the Albert Memorial, the statue of Albert now magnificently restored in gold leaf.

From the Queen's Gate, we walked through Kensington Palace Gardens to view the sunken garden, currently called the White Garden and dedicated to the memory of Diana Princess of Wales. Current residents of the Palace include the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge with their family and Prince Henry of Wales, (Harry) brother to William who both grew up here with their mother until her death in 1997.



The Queen's Gate

The recently opened exhibition 'Diana, Her Fashion Story' reminds us that throughout her life she was very much a style icon and one of the most photographed women in the world. Many of her clothes are displayed in illuminated cabinets.

In 1819 Alexandrina Victoria was born here, later to become Queen Victoria, empress of the world's largest ever empire. We visited the rooms occupied by the young Victoria and saw some of her clothes and many of her toys. Her clothes very clearly demonstrated how small she was at only 4 feet 11 inches tall with a waist of 18 inches.



Bob and Christine get ready for the ball!

After climbing the King's Staircase, we were able to explore the glittering court of George II and Queen Caroline in the King's State Apartments. It was here that important guests were received and where in 1819, in the Cupola Room, the future Queen Victoria was baptised.

The Queen's State Apartments are somewhat lower key than the King's and were designed for Queen Mary by Christopher Wren. It was here that she could meet her friends and relax away from the hustle and bustle of the court, and it was here that she died in 1694.

Trevor Franklin

Thursford Spectacular Show: 15/11/17

For the third time in recent years a group of 30 members and guests made our way to Thursford by coach and car to see the 41st Christmas Spectacular Show matinee performance.



Preparations for this three hour show began in February and continued throughout the year with hundreds of auditions for singers, dancers

and musicians. The final cast included over fifty singers, thirty musicians and 20 dancers and attracted an audience of 1,500 to every performance over the six-week run up to Christmas. Coach loads of guests came from across the country including Scotland, Devon, Yorkshire and even some from Essex!



This year's show was the best I have seen and was enhanced by a welcome glass of warm spiced wine and a mince pie in the interval and enjoying the 6.4 million decorative lights and seasonal music across the Thursford complex. A day enjoyed by all!

John Simson

Christmas lunch: 07/12/17

The lunch was held at Little Channels Golf Club near Chelmsford, a venue we have used for the past four years. Sixty-three members and guests attended.

The function room was laid out and decorated very tastefully with eight circular tables of eight, each with two complimentary bottles of wine and a jug of punch, provided by Kier Fellowship.



Jan, John, Sandra and Michael

The food was excellent with a choice of four dishes for each of the three courses and very well managed by the Kitchen and Waiting staff.



John, Carol, John and Lynn

John Simson gave a brief update on how the Loughton and Witham area is progressing. It has been a good year with an interesting and varied selection of events. John Abbott thanked John for the many years he has chaired the Committee and as a token of appreciation presented John with a bottle of bubbly and his wife, Lynn, with a bouquet of flowers.

Derek Bryant

Maple Cross



Late Summer luncheon: 07/09/17

Eighteen members experienced the delights of a new venue in the Chilterns near Chesham – The Chartridge Golf Club.

The venue was perfect . We had our own private room on the ground floor which made an excellent place to sit and discuss our summer experiences over a sociable drink and delightful three-course lunch.

The numbers attending were not as many as at our usual venues which could be put down to either the timing (just after the school holidays when a lot of us tend to take our holidays) or possibly the venue was too far out into the countryside for our members to drive to.

Do let us know the reason to help with future planning.

Nevertheless the lunch was good and all who attended had an excellent time.

Long Service lunch: 13/10/17

Thirty-two members gathered at the De Vere Latimer Estate in Chesham for the 42nd meeting of the Fellowship, together with those with long service who are still working for Kier at Maple Cross. It was nice to catch up with former colleagues from the office and hear all the gossip!

The meal consisted of chicken liver parfait followed by slow-roast featherblade of beef and a banilla brulee to finish – all very nice.

Martin Reilly (operations director for Kier Construction Southern) gave a short speech advising how Kier as a whole, and Maple Cross in particular, were doing with regard to future work and earnings – very impressive!



Christmas luncheon: 14/12/17

As last year, the Christmas lunch was held at Shendish Manor near Hemel Hempstead. Luckily the snow of the previous weekend had nearly gone, and it left the grounds with a pleasant sprinkling of white which made the location even more picturesque.

With 50 people attending, it wasn't long before we were spilling out into the nearby corridor!

After an enjoyable lunch, we discussed forthcoming events for 2018 and Jim Conner read his Christmas poem which captured the feeling of many about the modern Christmas spirit.

Norman Elliott



Rushden

Since our last report we have tried to be as busy as time allows with plenty of interesting events.

On Wednesday 27 September, 34 members travelled to Melton Mowbray in Leicestershire for an evening of fun and games (making our own pork pies), entertainment enjoyed by all, followed by a buffet and plenty of wine.



On Monday 9 October, 38 members travelled to Gatwick airport to fly to Munich, where we spent a six-day five-night break in the Austrian Tyrol.

Saturday 11 November was a disappointing turnout for a visit to the City of London for the Lord Mayor's Show and parade.

A party of 26 members travelled to Norfolk for a weekend break at Potters Leisure Resort – the last weekend in November to celebrate the opening of the resort's Christmas Spectacular – enjoyed by all with great entertainment.

On Thursday 30 November we held our annual Christmas lunch at John Whites

Golf Club – 66 members attended which included five past and present directors together with Brendan O'Boyle. A very good meal enjoyed by all with plenty of friendly banter.

Sunday 10 December we woke up early to heavy snow which continued all day. Disaster as we had a fully booked coach of 54 to take us to London for the Guards Chapel Carol Service and Christmas lunch at The Sanctuary House Hotel in Westminster. On police advice we had to cancel this adventure and consequently lost deposits paid for the lunch – most disappointing but in view of conditions a sensible decision!

Our New Year trip this year took us to Valkenburg in Holland. Thirty-four members attended and was enjoyed by all.

We are now planning for 2018/19 but due to numbers dwindling and members growing older the number of events will be cut back.

Since the last meeting we have lost several members who have been staunch supporters and no new members have been forthcoming. Total number of members to date is 156.

Date	Event
Saturday 10 March	London Royal Albert Hall for the Mountbatten Festival of Music with the Royal Marines

Date	Event
Monday 19 to Thursday 22 March	Four-day three-night break to Monschau in Germany
Saturday 12 May	Malvern Spring Flower Show
Sunday 24 June	Garden party at Tempsford Hall
Wednesday 18 July	Picnic in the park at Kneller Hall with musical concert
Saturday 11 August	Shrewsbury Flower Show
Sunday 16 September	House and gardens (TBA)
Thursday 29 November	Christmas lunch
Sunday 9 December	London Guards Chapel carol service
Sunday 30 December to Wednesday 2 January 2019	New Year break, Breda, Holland (TBA)

Brian Hill

Trip to the Austrian Tyrol: 9-14/10/17

Thirty-eight of us departed from Rushden very early for the flight from Gatwick to Munich, the first stop on our trip down to our hotel in Kirchberg Austria. The party generally did very well negotiating Easyjet automated check in at 4.00am! The slow speed of German immigration on arrival certainly converted a few of us towards the eye screening gates rather than the more traditional border control.

We had free time in Munich where the group dispersed into the city centre from the Glockenspiel visiting the shops, bars and restaurants. Some dined in the Hofbrauhaus which is a three-floor beer hall dating back to the 16th Century.

We then left Munich and arrived at our very comfortable traditional style hotel late afternoon.

The next day allowed all time to explore, and armed with our free train passes some went to Zell Am See – a very pretty tourist resort set beside a lake. Some went into the mountains around Kitzbuhel whilst others spent the day around our beautiful resort of Kirchberg.



On the Wednesday our trip included an escorted walking tour of Salzburg, the setting for many scenes in the Sound of Music, including passing through the Mirabell Gardens and the Old Town.

On the Friday we had a full day's escorted excursion to the Krimml Waterfalls which at 380m are the highest waterfalls in Austria. The excursion then continued to Mayrhofen, a town within the mountains, via the Gerlos Pass with breathtaking views.

The final day included an escorted tour of Innsbruck, the capital of The Tyrol. In the afternoon we toured Rattenberg known as the glass village of the Tyrol, and were treated to a glass blowing demonstration.

It was then back home after a break in the Tyrol with fine weather and unrelenting sunshine. Another excellent trip – thank you Brian!

Steve Dicks

New Year 2018, Valkenburg

After an early start from Rushden we were soon on our way to Folkestone for our tunnel crossing on our journey to Valkenburg.

After a long journey, helped along with Bucks Fizz and cheese straws, we arrived in Valkenburg for our evening meal.

After the meal we walked into the town to enjoy the Christmas parade which is held to mark the end of the festivities.

On New Year's Eve several of us took the coach to Maastricht to visit the town. We enjoyed hot chocolate and liqueurs on Vrijthof Square, where Andre Rieu performs his summer concerts. It was set up with an ice rink so no sign of Andre!

On our return to Valkenburg a few brave souls took the chair lift up to the Wilhelmina Tower and tried out the toboggan run – some more cautiously than others.

Back to the hotel to celebrate New Year's Eve and welcome in 2018 with a fireworks display.

After a late breakfast/brunch New Year's Day was spent relaxing and exploring Valkenburg before our traditional fancy dress evening with a green theme. There were '10 green bottles' (including an opener) Leprechauns, Elves, Army Officers and more.

We left the hotel the next morning for our journey home, stopping at Ostend for lunch and a wet and windy walk.

We made our way back to Calais for the tunnel journey home arriving back in Rushden after a very enjoyable few days.

Angie Gallear

Solent

Solent Fellowship at Kingston Lacy

On a bright and sunny Tuesday in September 2017, a group of members and their wives met up for a visit to Kingston Lacy House and Gardens.

Kingston Lacy is a Grade 1 listed country residence built in 1665 and located three miles from Wimborne in Dorset. It is set in 410 acres of grounds and gardens and was originally the home of the Bankes family who at one time owned 16,000 acres of Dorset including Corfe Castle. In 1981, when Ralph Bankes died, he left the entire estate to the National Trust; it was the largest single gift that the Trust has received to date.



We started the visit with a tour around the house which, due to an exhibition, had to be pre booked and attended at a specified time. The house was a treasure trove of art from around the world, collected by William John Bankes who was the focal point of the exhibition.

The exhibition entitled 'Exile' told the story of William John Bankes who, after inheriting the estate in 1834, was later

forced into exile to escape the punishment of hanging for being a gay man. His wealth allowed him to do this whilst many others did suffer that fate. His enforced journeys and his passion for art led to the fantastic array of paintings and other artefacts now on display.

Hard-hitting and perhaps rather too graphic for some, was the presentation of 51 nooses hanging in the entrance hallway representing the number of men hanged for their sexual orientation during WJB's lifetime.

The house tour was followed by a wander around some of the estate viewing the well maintained gardens and taking in the fantastic sight of endless grass to mow!

The weather was on our side and the time seemed to fly by very quickly. We adjourned to the restaurant for some lunch before departing for home in the afternoon sunshine.

Kingston Lacy is a fantastic estate and well worth a visit. The ancient hill fort of Badbury Rings is also less than a mile away so plenty to see and do to while away a day in Dorset.

Martin Orr

A special 'Wight' walk

The walk started at Brading Station, near Sandown on the Isle of Wight, on a cloudy October morning. But to get there over the Solent involved some interesting transport, either a ride on the Western World's only scheduled hovercraft or Sealink's fast catamaran to Ryde Pier. From there a shoggy ride on a 1938 class 483 London Underground train.

The five intrepid members alighted from the train and began their only ascent of the day, up Culver Down. This is the eastern end of the chalk strata that is the spine of the Isle with the more famous Needles being the western end.



The walks challenge was to follow the high tide line all the way back to Ryde without getting your feet wet. So with the tide just starting to flood we set off around Whitecliff Bay, across the notorious Bembridge Ledge that has caught many a sailor, circled Bembridge Harbour and Priory Bay and over Ryde Sands back to the Pier. A total of 11.5 miles, 700 feet of ascent and all of it with dry feet, no mean feat.

Graham Willoughby

Christmas lunch

The Lysses Hotel in Fareham was once again the venue for a lunch, this time in recognition of long service. Nineteen members attended, together with four members of staff from the local office in Southampton, on 3 November. Numbers were down a little from previous years due in part to several people taking advantage of good value (cheap) post-summer and pre-Christmas holiday offers!



As is often the case at these long service lunches there was plenty of discussion and reflection about 'times gone by' and past working practices and conditions. Chemical toilets and steaming donkey jackets drying out in the canteen were 'fondly' remembered and viewed as character building. A far cry indeed from today's significantly superior facilities.

Trevor White, the local office director, briefed us on the business both from a local and Group perspective. How the size and structure has changed since the Havant and Southampton offices became members of the Kier family in the 1990s. After an excellent three-course meal we all raised our glasses to the continuing success of Kier Group and look forward to them meeting their 2020 goals and targets in these challenging times.

Peter Wallbank

New Year lunch

On Tuesday 16 January, 28 members and partners met at the East Horton Golf Club for a New Year lunch, Greenside Barn located adjacent to the 18th green. This was a new venue for us, a first at a golf club and we were not disappointed.

The 16th century tythe barn complete with wrought iron chandelier was built using reclaimed ship timbers. It has flagstone flooring with a private patio overlooking the Greenwood course and ancient woodlands. The log burning stove added a lot to the warmth and character of the barn. Unfortunately on the day the weather prevented any use of the patio and guests made merry within the barn.

The event was enjoyed by all with good food, lively conversation and plenty of catching up with former colleagues.

Gary Mackie

Tempsford

Our monthly lunches continue to attract a similar number of members and partners – although not necessarily the same people each time.

On 3 October we had 12 at The Green Man in Stamford, Bedfordshire where there appeared to be a new regime and I am sure we will return. On 12 October, we tried something new – an early evening dinner in Stamford, Lincolnshire followed by attendance at The Corn Exchange to see ‘Pirates of Penzance’ performed by The Stamford Gilbert & Sullivan Players of which one of our number is a member. Eight gathered at Prezzo for dinner and were joined by another four at the theatre.

Our November lunch was at The Eaton Oak, Eaton Socon and 14 attended on 14 November.



Christmas lunch was held again at The Tavisstock Pub & Carvery in Bedford. Twenty-nine attended on 12 December and we were concerned on arrival to find our

usual location already occupied! However, we benefited from the move to a separate room, albeit a conservatory area with a draughty sliding partition to the outside – a pity for those who chose to sit near the window as the rest was nicely warm. A jolly time was had, with the usual good food and service.

For the rest of this financial year we have two lunches booked – February and March at the Greyhound in Haynes, Bedfordshire and the Wheatsheaf, Tempsford respectively. We also have a fully booked early evening visit to Bedford school on 1 March to see their planetarium and observatory.

Harold Thompson



Waterbeach

On 5 December 2017, 40 of our members attended the regional Christmas lunch at the Crown Hotel Outwell.

Numbers were slightly up from last year even though a few of our regulars had prior appointments. But it was positive to see that two new members with their partners were able to join us.

On a sad note we have to report the deaths of four of our long serving members during the past two months.

It is pleasing however, that we continue to see requests for new membership, not only from the core Eastern Business Unit, but from previous employees from other parts of the region such as from Highways, May Gurney etc, instead.

Moving forwards we have already notified all members of the date of the Tempsford garden party and expect a good turnout for that as we did in 2017.

More locally we are finalising details of a lunch for members at The Hare Arms, situated between Downham Market and King’s Lynn, where members can have a simple catch up and chat within pleasant surroundings.

Mark Jude



Obituaries

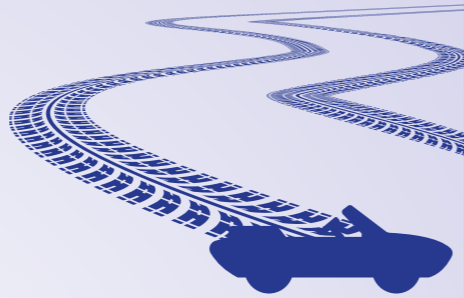
Our thoughts are with the loved ones of those who have passed away.

Gwendoline Adams	19/12/2017
Peter Amor	23/10/2017
Richard Besant	01/02/2018
Alan Beeby	18/08/2017
Dennis Bensley	13/07/2017
Ronald Bickers	13/12/2017
Monique Birch	21/12/2017
Douglas Bishop	20/12/2017
Oswald Borrow	29/10/2017
William Braby	15/09/2017
Pauline Cass	01/12/2017
Maisie Clinch	30/09/2017
Albert Cogger	April 2017
Kenneth Collins	12/01/2018
Elizabeth Cook	23/07/2017
Ian Cook	02/07/2017
Malcolm Cork	13/12/2017
Margaret Cutting	05/06/2017
Carol Dilling	05/08/2017
Terence Elliott	24/12/2017
Dennis Emerson	11/01/2018
Grace Fowle	15/01/2018
Pamela Fox	09/09/2017

Horace Friend	06/01/2018
Pamela Gatehouse	28/07/2017
Alasdair Gillies	18/01/2018
Joy Goodman	09/10/2017
Dorothy Gower	20/11/2017
Catherine Hamlin	21/12/2017
Leslie Hart	06/01/2018
Joan Head	05/01/2018
Kathleen Hewett	01/01/2018
Keith Howell	24/06/2017
Robert Jenkins	07/12/2017
John Johnston	02/08/2017
Jim Jolliffe	January 2018
Dennis Jones	15/09/2017
Evelyn Krause	14/01/2018
Sheila Langley	11/09/2017
Leah Marsh	03/02/2018
William Miller	16/10/2017
Sidney Moore	22/01/2018
John Moran	21/12/2017
Anthony Oliver	16/01/2018
Bryan Parkes	08/11/2017
Joseph Pilkington	23/07/2017

Pat Pollington	17/12/2017
Andrew Pullar	29/06/2017
Denis Ratcliffe	12/11/2017
Kevin Reddington	22/06/2017
Thomas Rigby	09/02/2018
Doreen Satt	06/02/2018
Jessie Sawdon	23/11/2017
Nora Shaughnessy	26/10/2017
Ronald Simpson	11/01/2018
Jean Skull	08/10/2017
Hamish Smith	14/12/2017
Dorothy Taylor	07/12/2017
June Travis	25/01/2018
Malcolm Walmsley	02/01/2018
Reginald Watkins	15/11/2017
Sydney Whiteway	07/09/2017
Kenneth Wilcox	01/12/2017
Melvin Wilkins	05/01/2018
Jean Williams	09/09/2017
Albert Willmore	25/05/2017
Sabina Wise	10/10/2017

John & Carol's big adventure...



We had booked an apartment in Tuscany for a fortnight in September some time ago and were beginning to think about travel arrangements when Carol said:

“Why don't we take the Lotus?”

I didn't need asking twice and so began the planning for a month long trip in Europe driving down to Italy via France, Belgium, Germany and Switzerland and returning via Monaco and France.

The Lotus in question is a 2004 Elise 111R, a rear engine two seater with a tiny luggage compartment so on a sunny morning at the end of August we packed up a few clothes and our toothbrushes, kept our fingers crossed for good weather, put the roof into the space we had left in the boot and set off for the Channel Tunnel.

Our first stop the other side was for lunch in Dunkirk, quite poignant since a few days earlier we had been to the pictures



with friends to see the new Dunkirk movie, and then we drove on into Belgium for our first overnight stop in Bruges.

Suitably rested we took the roof off again the next day and headed for our next overnight stop at Saarbrücken in Germany. We had booked our first AirBnB there but first it

was to Luxembourg for lunch. We were amazed at the queues for the petrol pumps at the first service station after we had crossed the border from Belgium into Luxembourg until we saw the prices. Generally petrol was significantly more expensive than at home and the Lotus has a small tank that needed to be filled every day, the most expensive that we saw was in Italy at €1.87 a litre (€1 = £1.10) but in Luxembourg it was cheaper than at home. We liked Luxembourg, it was clean and tidy and we will go back to explore the city and its architecture some more. On then to Germany and our AirBnB booking proved to be a great success. We were on the lower ground floor of the family house with our own kitchen and bathroom. It was nice to walk down to the local supermarket and get ourselves some food to cook for dinner rather than more hotel or restaurant food.



Our next overnight stop was to be in Switzerland and so the next day the roof came off yet again and we drove back into France, crossed the Rhine at Strasbourg and stopped for lunch at Freiberg in Germany on the edge of the Black Forest. Freiberg is a self-

proclaimed 'GREEN' city and you are not allowed to take your car into the city without a special permit so we parked on the outskirts and, once we worked out which one to get on, caught a tram into the centre.

We thought that we had ordered sausage salad but what came out was more like Spam, still, when you are hungry...

Lunch was interesting!

We spent the next night in Lucerne, Switzerland and planned to drive over the Alps using the San Gotthard Pass the next day. We had hoped that this would be one of the highlights of the trip but sadly it was a bit of a

disappointment. The pass is only open between June and October and there were lots of roadworks going on and when we got to the summit it was cloudy! However, Carol managed to get a few pictures from the car as we crossed.

We then dropped down into Italy, stopped for lunch on the side of Lake Como and spent the night in Milan.

The Lotus really didn't like the cobbled streets in Milan!



The TomTom shook its holder to pieces and the CD player refused to work for the rest of the holiday after that.

The next day we arrived at our apartment a few miles south of Siena and spent two weeks exploring the beautiful Tuscan countryside and sampling the local produce, Chianti wine, Pecorino cheese and, of course, the ice cream.

The Piazza del Campo in Siena. Probably Europe's finest medieval square and site of the famous Il Palio horse race which is held twice a year in July and August.



roads, tunnels and traffic. Some days it took us all day to drive just 80 miles but it was a thrill to find ourselves on the Grand Prix circuit in Monte Carlo, coming out of the tunnel, through the chicane, left at Tabac, into the Swimming Pool Complex and then on to the Rascas curve...

A few days with our friends in France allowed us to wash our few clothes again and enjoy the beautiful countryside of the Pyrenees, although they told us that it was unseasonably cold. It was the first time in thirty years that they remembered snow on the mountains in September!

Leaving the snow behind we drove back up to the Channel Tunnel with overnight stops in Bordeaux and Rouen and a slight detour to drive part of the Le Mans racing circuit!

Our drive back was to take us around the Mediterranean coasts of Italy and France taking in Monaco and Monte Carlo before spending a few nights with friends near Perpignan. We used the coast road for a long while which was great fun, but slow due the winding

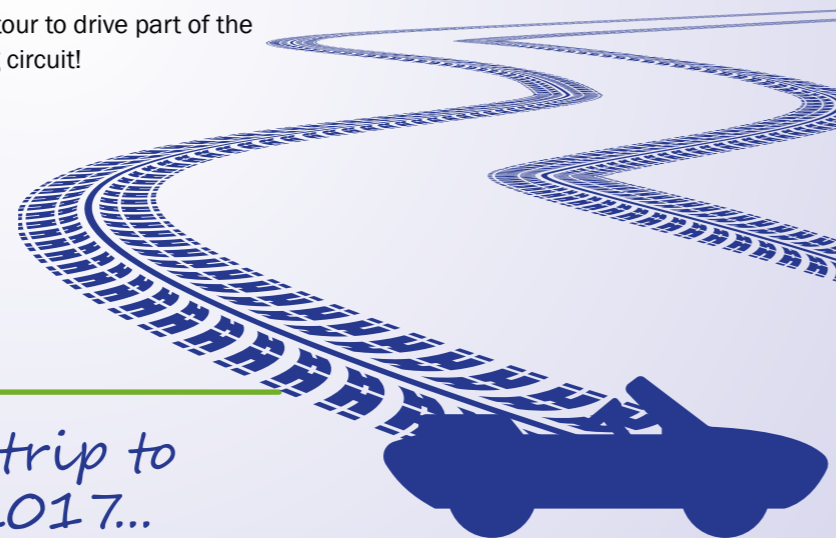


Road trip to Italy 2017... quite an adventure!



By now the weather was much cooler so we had put the roof on the car, but the good thing about that was that we managed to fit some wine in the luggage compartment!

We returned home on 24 September having driven 3,170 miles.



A member's story...

I was a young student and joined Kier for my first period of industrial training in 1974. The contract was for the construction of the structures on the new 10-mile A14 Ipswich to Stowmarket link. The section where I was based was at Claydon where five bridges were to be built. One bridge had just started, but all the rest had to be built from scratch. David Gartside was the site manager and Harry Bradford was the foreman.

After joining the team, we all had to attend a meeting to explain the new Health & Safety at Work Act which, we were told, meant we had to wear safety helmets and think about safety on site. There were no method statements, tool-box talks or forms to complete. A much more innocent though less safe time than today.

Before long David tended to leave me to it, and I worked with Harry who explained

what needed doing as I'd never worked on site before. I did the setting out, ordered concrete and reinforcement (which was mainly cut and bent on site), checked everything was correct before supervising the concrete pours. In addition I had to calculate the bonus for the men. This entailed measuring the holes and notches being cut by the chippies, and the amount of steel cut, bent & fixed by the steel-fixers. This led to many arguments. There was also the correspondence with the on-site resident engineer to be done. So I was quite busy.

It was great experience, with moments of excitement such as when whilst reversing the Landover, I missed the bridge over the river and slipped down the river bank. My excuse is that it was a closed in back, but I should have been more careful! Four-wheel drive was no good, the back was underwater and I couldn't open the doors due to the vegetation, so I had to use the radio to call for help. This was site wide so the whole 10 miles heard and it was probably the most embarrassing moment of my time with Kier. The Landover was pulled out with an excavator using chains and I wasn't allowed to drive it again. When available I was given a dumper, otherwise I walked. I also got stuck doing this as well!

We also had a fire in a remote site hut and watching Harry towing the burning hut away from the gas bottle store was



Me stuck in the mud. I had to be pulled out with a dumper and lost my wellies!

quite interesting, and when the crawler crane toppled backwards, (the piling hammer didn't stop swinging as he stopped slewing) the dangers of site work became apparent. However it was all good training for a future career.



Oops!

The freedom of decision making and the team spirit on site made me sure this was the career for me. So I joined Kier after graduation and spent the next 35+ years doing what I loved i.e. building things with Kier.

Jeff Taylor



People wearing safety helmets, however where's the scaffold?

The Trust's got talent!

Bruce Sweetland



This picture is of a chapel, a beautiful early 20th century arts and crafts building in the grounds of Mount Vernon Hospital. It's built in sandstone with flint panels and a greyish slate roof and it has a wonderful solidity and presence about it, the sloping buttresses make it look as if it's there to stay. I used watercolour paints but struggled to find a technique which adequately represented the flint work.



This is a drawing of a sea eagle, an enormous bird with wing spans of up to eight feet. When I was drawing him I was struck by his head and feet which reminded me of a reptile.



I can't remember where the idea of the snowy, moonlit, forest came from, something I've seen somewhere perhaps. It was done in black ink with an uneasy yellow watercolour for the moon. It makes me think of silence.



I was walking past the cheese grater building in the City of London on a bright sunny day when I saw the third image. I know it looks like abstract art but it is in fact a pretty accurate representation of what caught my eye.

The black rectangular grid is the framework to the glass façade, the red boxes are the counterweights to the lifts and the blue and orange beams are the steel framework of the building.

The bottom right hand corner of the painting is still the surface of the cheese grater but reflecting the buildings opposite! A truly remarkable sight. To get the bright colours I used oil paints on special paper.

I have been wondering about why I choose to draw and paint. It is rather an odd thing to do when you think about it, after all the subject itself is there in front of you and there seems to be little point in trying to make a copy of it, which can never really capture the original. I think it is something to do with possession. When you make an image of your subject you capture it and it becomes yours.