



## Welcome to the Maple Cross Fellowship Newsletter

### Inside this issue:

[Organiser's Report](#) 2

[Duncan's sayings](#) 2

[Late Summer Luncheon](#) 3

[Christmas Luncheon](#) 4

[The Mayor of Welwyn Hatfield](#) 5

[Two tales of one city](#) 6 - 9

[Qantas Jokes](#) 10

[Games & Puzzles](#) 11

[Contact Details & forthcoming events](#) 12

First a note of condolence for my friend Gerry Pemberton whose wife Gwen died late last year. Her funeral service was extremely well attended, including some from the Fellowship of which she was a keen and popular member. We and many others will miss her.

Sorry for the delay in this issue which unfortunately was not caused by vast quantities of articles to edit, but more mundane items. First my car broke down, which took a lot of sorting. When it was finally fixed, I sold it and bought a different one. Then I had computer issues, not being able to retrieve the half finished version of the Newsletter from the cloud where it was stored, luckily I eventually sorted that as well, and by then it was Christmas.

Still I finished it eventually and here it is, though a bit thinner than usual.

It may also be a bit thinner for some time as there will be somewhat fewer events due to the problems Kier are experiencing. Norman mentions more about this in his words on page 2.

On a happy note I must thank Jack Thompson for his second lovely letter, received in August. It's great to get feedback on the newsletter, especially when its good ☺, and I'm glad it helps people keep in touch with what our fellowship is doing.

Were now in 2020 and I hope you all enjoyed last year and have a good 2020.

*Jeff Taylor*



**Happy New Year**

## Organiser's Report

Happy New Year to all our Fellowship Members.

Also for this year welcome to a new decade. I advised all the members attending our excellent Christmas Luncheon at Shendish Manor Hotel back in December, and as most of you know, Kier Group have had a very difficult year trading last year. They have seen a change to all their Main Board Directors (apart from non-executive) and have commenced a programme of austerity and cost cutting measures. This has affected the Group Fellowship in that we have not received the matched funding as previous years. The result of this is that I anticipate slightly fewer functions this year and a slight increase in contributions to events in order to make the funding go further. On a positive note the Fellowship existing funding is ring fenced within Kier and our interest earned on investments made, is in an excellent position. The Trustee Board are hoping that the matched funding will return in 2021.

**"I am currently looking at another Thames River cruise and cream tea"**

Again thank you Jeff for producing an excellent newsletter and anyone that has contributed to the content. Please keep your contributions coming in as Jeff can only edit and write about what he receives.

In our last newsletter I advised that Arthur Bishop was due to undertake a parachute jump to celebrate his 90th birthday, however due to illness and a slight accident this did not happen in June. He was hoping to carry it out in December before Christmas, so hopefully it all went well.

I have prepared a list of our regular events for this year, which Jeff has included later in this newsletter. The first is our regular well attended Valentine's Day Luncheon at Biggles Restaurant in Denham. I look forward to catching up with you and all the gossip there. Again due to the austerity measures there will be no Summer Garden Party or Long Service Luncheon which in the past have been funded by Kier. Most of our events this year are lunches but I do hope to throw in some other events during the year. I am currently looking at another Thames River cruise and cream tea (watch this space).

That is all for now but please keep an eye on your emails and letter boxes for more information on events and updates of progress of Kier Fellowship Group. If any of you know of any employees that are due to retire or leave the Group let me know and I will try and pursue them to join our group.

Norman Elliott

## Sayings from Duncan

Inside every older person is a younger person wondering, "What the hell happened?"

When everything is coming your way, you're in the wrong lane.

What happens if you get scared half to death, twice?

99 percent of lawyers give the rest a bad name.

A day without sunshine is like night.

He who laughs last thinks slowest.

*D Mort*

## Late Summer Luncheon

It is not that often that I feel a teeny pang of sadness or even sorrow for other members of the Fellowship, but way back one lunchtime in September was one of those occasions when those absent colleagues really missed a treat.

The sun was shining, the air was balmily warm, and God was in his Heaven that day in St Alban's when eleven members joined together and dined at St Villa's.



The venue found by our leader Norman turned out to be quite a pleasant and avant-garde new experience and a watering hole worthy of being added to the Fellowship list of venues. Those of a critical disposition may say that the interior décor was slightly on the side of bijou but was smart and tastefully decked out in white.



Ordering from a pre-selected menu the food presented was acclaimed by everyone as delicious bordering on fabulous for a group outing.

The young staff who served at tables were extremely friendly and courteous, attending to everyone's wishes and on the ball with the wine. How they would cope with a much larger party will need to be tested as it turned out that apart from two other tables we had the restaurant to ourselves.

Another plus for St Villa was the nearby multi storey car park in the Maltings. The ample parking bays were set out in a manner best suited for those driving a 1938 Morris Minor. Modern day tanks driven by the more affluent members of the Fellowship found that despite using outstanding manoeuvring and parking skills, they were unable to exit their vehicles once parked. Added to which the locating of a parking payment machine added a further dimension to the day.



So, to all those members who used the excuse of being on holiday or even those who attended an alternative lunch celebrating Louis Bleriot's flight across the English Channel or some such RAF reunion, all I can say is 'Tough Luck' - you missed out on a most memorable lunch.



**"The young staff who served at tables were extremely friendly and courteous"**

## Christmas Luncheon



On a rainy Thursday in December 40 members gathered for the Christmas lunch at Shendish Manor which has become a regular venue.



It's always great to catch up with friends.

**"There was evidence of the previous days wind, with the chairs in the outside seating area in total disarray"**

As another group was also having a meal here at the same time, Norman issued tokens for the free drink at the bar so he wouldn't get charged for the other group's drinks. As it transpired, we had pretty much taken over the bar area, so there were few if any takers from the other group. Still better safe than sorry.



Despite a reduction in Fellowship funding for next year, and a small reduction in events you might like to note that there are still 6 events planned, and also the possibility of a Fellowship organised Garden Party. See the back page for more information.



There was evidence of the previous days wind, with the chairs in the outside seating area in total disarray, or perhaps it was the result of a passing herd of cattle.



# The Mayor of Welwyn Hatfield

By Roger Trigg



Roger & Carole Trigg  
Mayor & Mayoress of Welwyn Hatfield  
at the Mill Green tea

I was appointed Mayor of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council in May 2019 with Carole as Mayoress. This is for a one year term.

It has been an interesting year attending School and Church anniversaries, religious ceremonies and welcoming Chinese trade visitors.



Roger cutting 100 year cake to  
celebrate the Addison Housing Act

We are excited that Welwyn Garden City is celebrating 100 years from first beginnings when the land was first purchased in 1919. The first house was occupied in 1920 and we have several special projects during 2020. The Addison Act also came into force in 1919 which started the provision of council housing after WW1.

**Well done to  
Roger and Carole  
for the time taken  
to support the  
local community  
and charities.**

**A credit to the  
Fellowship. Ed**

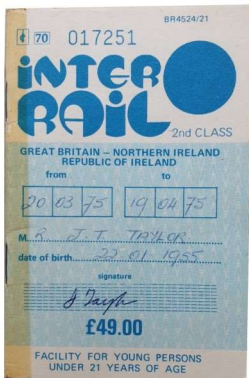


Roger & Carole with the main organisers  
of the Potential Kids Charity

We have also attended fund raising activities for Potential Kids, our charity based in Hatfield. They work by helping children and Families who are affected by ADHD Autism and other similar problems by holding small activity workshops etc.

## Two tales of one city (and a few other places)

by Jeff Taylor



Shirley and I first visited Rome in March 1975 as two impoverished students with inter rail cards. These cost £49 each and allowed for a month of “free” train travel in Europe. In those days there was no internet or mobile phones, and we didn’t have credit or debit cards, so off we set with what we hoped was sufficient money in the form of Travelers’ cheques to last the whole 10 days of our trip. We also had a Pan European rail timetable, cost £1.25, printed monthly by Thomas Cook (remember them ☺). What could go wrong!

Well after a pleasant train journey from Maidstone East rail station we caught the ferry from Folkestone to Calais and then the train to Paris. From there we were supposedly heading overnight to Pisa. However on reaching Paris we discovered that the Italian train drivers were on strike, though rumour had it that it would end the following day. We had a quick discussion and decided to travel overnight to Modane on the French / Italian border and wait for a train to Rome missing out Pisa. Luckily the rumors were true and after 13 hours sitting in the cold station, a train arrived to take us to Turin where we caught another to Rome; and so we spent our second night on a train!



In 2019 we travelled in on Easyjet, for £45 each return in 1975 terms, and it only took 2½ hours! It was a quick rail and tube journey from the airport to our hotel, booked on the Internet. How times have changed.

In 1975 we first went to the Colosseum, the must see building in Rome. It was difficult to reach it as it was circled by roads, & the Italian drivers ignored the pedestrian crossings. Still we made it across and went inside. What an amazing sight. Although the floor had gone you could still imagine how it must’ve looked when it was in use.



In 2019 the area around it was now pedestrianized so we had an easy walk to reach it, but, compared to 44 years ago, it was crowded. However Shirley, organized as usual, had booked timed tickets so we were able to walk straight in. It was still a marvel of engineering and we enjoyed a leisurely walk around inside, admiring the workmanship (and the scaffolding). There were also amazing displays showing how it used to look and function.

Near the Colosseum is the Forum, which was the second place we visited in 1975. It has many buildings and pathways, and covers a very large area. However with limited time we just walked through the main area looking at the various features and taking a few photos, including the one of Trajan’s Column on the next page. Despite being tired we still found it a very interesting place. In 2019 we took a whole day to fully explore all the areas. It was far bigger than we’d imagined, perhaps more had opened since we last came. It was a really interesting tour with the use of computer projections bringing the old murals to life.

**The forum 1975**



**The forum 2019**



In 1975 from the Forum we headed to the Vatican city. We visited the outside taking a few photos, which as you can see below was practically empty. Although we visited the Sistine Chapel we took no photos, they probably weren't allowed. This time we took a whole day and the area was extremely busy with queues for everything. We managed to see the Sistine Chapel which had 2+ hour queues but again Shirley had prebooked so we just walked in at our allotted time. It was busy inside but well worth it.



**Shirley in St Peters Square**

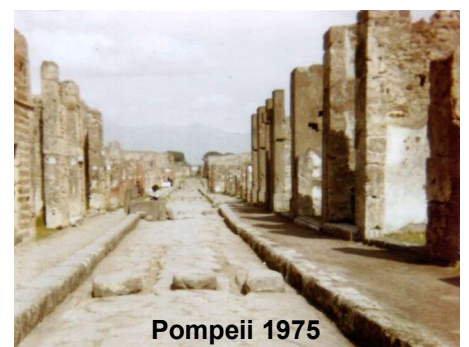


**Jeff in the approach to St Peters Square (Empty)**



**St Peters Square 2019**

From St Peters in 1975 we headed back to the Youth Hostel passing near the Castel Sant' Angelo where Tosca supposedly jumped from the battlements in the opera. After 2 nights sleeping on trains was good to have a proper nights sleep. From Rome we traveled to Salerno for a visit to Pompeii. This we found incredible just the sort of place we both love. Apart from all the amazing buildings and casts of the people who didn't escape the volcano, the most memorable feature for me were the wheel ruts worn into the cobbles. Just an ordinary feature but which showed that people did really live there, and had done so for a long time before the eruption.



**Pompeii 1975**

## Two tales of one city *(Cont.)*



The Trevi Fountain 1975



The Trevi Fountain 2019



Crowds at the Trevi Fountain 2019

On the journey we knew we'd missed a lot in Rome so revised our itinerary. We decided to go back to Rome from Pompeii, spend an extra day there, then just visit Pisa on the train early in the morning on the way to Florence. Thus we'd have seen all we planned and be back on schedule. So we found ourselves back in Rome.

On our second Rome day in 1975 we visited the Trevi Fountain.

We found it was a lot cleaner in 2019, but also far busier. It was actually quite difficult to move round, with lots of tour groups and their guides. At least the majority seemed to be using Bluetooth headsets so there was no shouting.



The Pantheon 1975 (a bit dirty)



The Pantheon 2019 (a lot cleaner)





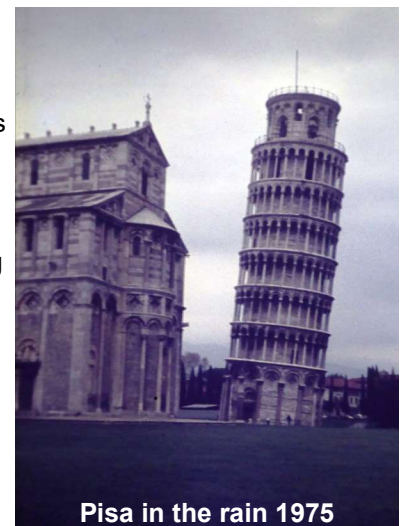
**Piazza del Popolo 1975**



**Piazza del Popolo 2019**

We visited the Pantheon, which we can now see was very dirty in 1975 compared to now. It was still impressive however, especially for an engineer as it still has the worlds largest unreinforced concrete dome, nearly 2000 years after it was built. We also visited the Piazza del Popolo. In 1975 it was used as a coach park which spoilt the view of the impressive column. Now it has been pedestrianized and so is a much more enjoyable place to visit. Nearby is a church containing famous Caravaggio paintings. We visited this in 2019, one of many artworks we enjoyed.

In 2019 we stayed opposite the Plaza del Popolo & although Shirley didn't remember having been there, I had a sense of déjà vu when we entered. It was only when we got home and found the old photos that we realized we'd been there before.



**Pisa in the rain 1975**



**A mosaic in Ravenna 2019**

In 1975 we left Rome for our early morning visit to Pisa where it was raining. We stayed long enough to take a few photos then caught the next train to Florence where we spent two glorious days. It was lovely to have time to explore. Our final visit was to Venice where we explored using the water buses, a real novelty.

For 2019 we travelled by train to Ravenna to see the mosaics in various churches which were beautiful. We also used bicycles from the hotel to visit a nearby Roman port, now landlocked, which was fascinating. Then we moved onto Bologna where we spent our final day before flying home.

The journey home in 1975 was by train and required another night sleeping in the carriage. As for money, on the last leg from Paris we only had sufficient funds for one cup of coffee & 2 croissants, or one croissant & two coffees. We chose the former as the French coffee was large enough to share. So in the end we had brought enough money, but only just!

## *Qantas Jokes*

Apparently, after every flight, Qantas pilots fill out a form, called a 'gripe sheet', which tells mechanics about problems with the aircraft. The mechanics correct the problems; document their repairs on the form, and then pilots review the gripe sheets before the next flight.

Never let it be said that ground crews lack a sense of humour. Here are some actual maintenance complaints submitted by Qantas' Pilots and the solutions recorded by maintenance engineers.

Pilots: Left inside main tire almost needs replacement.  
Engineers: Almost replaced left inside main tire.

Pilots: Test flight OK, except auto-land very rough.  
Engineers: Auto-land not installed on this aircraft.

Pilots: Something loose in cockpit.  
Engineers: Something tightened in cockpit.

Pilots: Dead bugs on windshield.  
Engineers: Live bugs on back-order.

Pilots: Autopilot in altitude-hold mode produces a 200 feet per minute descent.  
Engineers: Cannot reproduce problem on ground.

Pilots: Evidence of leak on right main landing gear.  
Engineers: Evidence removed.

Pilots: Friction locks cause throttle levers to stick.  
Engineers: That's what they're for.

Pilots: Suspected crack in windshield.  
Engineers: Suspect you're right.

Pilots: Number 3 engine missing.  
Engineers: Engine found on right wing after brief search.

Pilots: Aircraft handles funny.  
Engineers: Aircraft warned to straighten up, fly right, and be serious.

Pilots: Target radar hums  
Engineers: Reprogrammed target radar with lyrics.

Pilots: Mouse in cockpit.  
Engineers: Cat installed.

Pilots: Noise coming from under instrument panel. Sounds like a midget pounding on something with a hammer.  
Engineers: Took hammer away from midget.

# Games & puzzles

## Sudoku

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|   |   |   | 5 |   | 1 |   |   |   |
|   | 7 | 8 |   | 3 |   | 5 | 1 |   |
|   | 1 |   | 9 | 8 | 6 |   | 3 |   |
| 8 |   | 3 |   |   |   | 2 |   | 1 |
|   | 2 | 5 |   |   |   | 4 | 9 |   |
| 1 |   | 9 |   |   |   | 8 |   | 7 |
|   | 8 |   | 6 | 1 | 5 |   | 2 |   |
|   | 5 | 2 |   | 9 |   | 1 | 8 |   |
|   |   |   | 8 |   | 2 |   |   |   |

**Easy**

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 |   |   |   |   |   | 8 |   |   |
|   |   |   |   | 9 | 6 | 4 | 7 |   |
|   |   |   |   | 8 |   | 2 | 5 | 6 |
|   |   |   |   | 1 |   |   | 3 |   |
|   | 8 | 5 | 7 |   | 3 | 6 | 4 |   |
|   | 3 |   |   | 4 |   |   |   |   |
| 5 | 6 | 8 |   | 3 |   |   |   |   |
|   | 7 | 2 | 1 | 5 |   |   |   |   |
|   |   | 3 |   |   |   |   |   | 8 |

**Hard**

## Wordsearch

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| F | W | H | T | R | O | F | I | R | Y |
| K | A | L | E | M | O | U | T | H | V |
| Q | C | I | M | R | K | M | H | Z | S |
| B | T | W | O | L | R | A | M | R | L |
| I | R | I | N | R | Y | H | Y | V | B |
| A | E | D | C | E | N | G | R | I | M |
| N | B | R | L | B | R | R | E | C | X |
| E | L | O | I | M | E | U | W | T | H |
| M | A | F | F | U | V | B | O | O | C |
| L | X | L | T | H | E | Y | T | R | U |
| I | U | I | O | X | S | R | O | I | N |
| C | N | W | N | E | K | D | R | A | S |

Which of these UK Suspension bridges is not in the grid?

- 1 ALBERT
- 2 CLIFTON
- 3 DRYBURGH
- 4 FORTH
- 5 HUMBER
- 6 KALEMOUTH
- 7 MARLOW
- 8 MENAI
- 9 SEVERN
- 10 TOWER
- 11 VICTORIA
- 12 WELLINGTON
- 13 WILFORD

Also which was the first to be opened?  
Answers on the back page.

### 1970 - 50 Years ago:-

**January** - The half crown coin ceased to be legal tender

**February** - Chrysler UK launched the Hillman Avenger to compete with the Ford Escort & Vauxhall Viva.

**March** - The Bridgwater by-election was the first in which eighteen-year-olds were entitled to vote .

**April** - Chelsea & Leeds United drew 2-2 in the FA Cup final at Wembley Stadium. The replay was won by Chelsea 2-1, their first FA cup win.

**May** - The Britannia Bridge, carrying the railway across the Menai Strait, was badly damaged by fire .

**June** - The Methodist Church allowed women to become full ministers for the first time.

**Wordsearch** - The words can be found forwards, backwards and on both diagonals and in either direction.

## Kier Fellowship

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**Note change in e-mail address and two e's**

Find us on 

[Kier Fellow Ship](#) - The main profile

[K.F. Maple Cross](#) - Group members only

If you wish to be added to the closed group, send your Facebook e-mail address or details, to:-

[kfmaplecross@virginmedia.com](mailto:kfmaplecross@virginmedia.com)



*This magazine serves the Kier Fellowship members from the Maple Cross area. It is provided by members for members.*

*Please send any contributions you may have, such as anecdotes from your working life, photos, recent events, holidays etc. which may interest others, to Jeff Taylor, at :-*

[kfmaplecross@virginmedia.com](mailto:kfmaplecross@virginmedia.com)

*Please provide feedback on the newsletter, good and bad, so it can be improved. If there is anything you wish to see added, please send requests to the above e-mail address.*

*Also if you have any suggestions for other events please contact Norman Elliott.*

*Also Kier now have a dedicated Fellowship website go to :-*

[www.fellowship.kier.co.uk](http://www.fellowship.kier.co.uk)

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## Forthcoming Events 2020

- |                      |                                |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>13th February</i> | <i>Valentines day Luncheon</i> |
| <i>23rd April</i>    | <i>St Georges Day Luncheon</i> |
| <i>22nd June</i>     | <i>Windsor Horse Racing</i>    |
| <i>27th August</i>   | <i>Fellowship Golf Day</i>     |
| <i>1st October</i>   | <i>Autumn Lunch</i>            |
| <i>10th December</i> | <i>Christmas Luncheon</i>      |

**Wordsearch** The Wellington bridge is not in the grid.

The Menai bridge was the first in the list to be opened in 1826. The Kalemouth Bridge opened in the late 1820's, exact date unknown