

Kier Fellowship Ma.cro.

Winter 2018 - 19



Welcome to the Maple Cross Fellowship Newsletter

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I've had a lot of good feedback on the Newsletter since I last wrote and I'm glad you appear to be enjoying it.

One particular piece of feedback I received which warrants a special mention is a lovely letter I received from Jack Thompson from Enfield. He reached the grand age of 91 in June and can't make many of the events but the newsletter helps him keep up with all the comings and goings in our Fellowship. I thank you Jack for the letter it really made my day and shows me all my efforts are worthwhile.

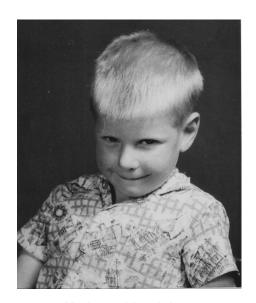
A piece of advice for all of those who use computers, back up your important documents, photos & anything else you care about regularly, you never know when you might need it.

Our main Windows 10 PC "stopped responding" in August and after the "press and hold" of the power button for 5 seconds the computer went off, the usual way of shutting down a non responding computer. When it was rebooted, the User Profile where all the documents are stored didn't load. I managed to find it, and tried to copy all the data off, but 24 hours later it had stalled at 88% with error messages. In the end I had to wipe the PC and reload Windows 10 and all the programmes we use (so required lots of different activation keys & passwords) and load all the documents again.

I was lucky as I have my own personal cloud storage which backs up automatically. However I hadn't realised that it wasn't backing up emails regularly. Luckily what I had managed to copy off the PC, contained all but one of the e-mail files. So after 2 weeks of work we're back to normal, except for the loss of 15 months of Shirley's sent e-mails.

A lesson learnt about the importance of backup. I've also now changed our email service from POP to IMAP so the service provider stores all the mail including sent items. Consider regular backups, if you don't already.

Teff Taylor



Me in my blond days

Organiser's Report

"I start Dry January, but I will be drinking again by our next event in February" May I take this opportunity to wish a Happy New Year to all the Maple Cross Fellowship members and partners. I trust that you have all enjoyed a festive Christmas with family and friends and are now slowly recovering from all the excesses of the period. I know I am as I start Dry January, but I will be drinking again by our next event in February. It was good to see such a great turnout at our Christmas Luncheon at Shendish Manor, back in December 2018. It was wonderful to see a few new faces attend and all the "old" faces that are our regulars. I hope you all had a lovely meal and chat with your colleagues. Thank you all for your wonderful Christmas cards and well wishes.

I know that our Magician and Editor (Jeff) has been working hard over Christmas conjuring up stories to include in this edition of our regular Fellowship Newsletter. Thank you to all our members who have forwarded to Jeff your stories and contributions. I'm sure that if they are not included in this edition they will make it to the next.

Please keep forwarding your stories and experiences to him.

Include in this Newsletter are my proposed schedule of events for 2019 that was shown to the members attending the Christmas luncheon. The first event that I am currently organising is our regular Valentine's Day Luncheon which is actually on the correct day this year Thursday 14th February 2019. I'm also trying to organise tickets to see Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, which is due to show at The London Palladium for a strictly limited period over the summer (July & August). If I am successful I will only have a small number of tickets and will be issued on a first come basis to members and their partners initially.

That is all for now but please keep an eye on your emails and post over the next few months and keep reading the rest of this Newsletter and pass any comments positive or negative to me and/or Jeff.

Norman Elliott

Julie's Sayings

Julie worked in the Design & Build department at Maple Cross, and occasionally came out with sayings that would astound and confound in equal measure, especially when taken out of context. Some of these appear below :-

He's the one who rendered our extension with his head in a cage.

I know I was 21 because it was my birthday.

My next door neighbour started my car with his electric scooter.

My cousin asked for a washing machine for a wedding present, I got her a can opener.

I've got a book of Latrines' of Hertfordshire.

I put one orange in my bag today now there are two!

I wasn't allowed a pet when I was young, but I had a Yo-Yo.

Julie "My older brother looks like the man from KFC."

Dave "What colonel Sanders?"

Julie "No the man from the Moneyhill shop"

Is that the radiator or my PC?

I don't know what I am saying anymore.

Julie Collins

Tempsford Garden Party

On 24th June, a bright and sunny Sunday, 213 members from all areas met at Tempsford Hall to celebrate the 21st Anniversary of the Fellowship.

The marquee was large and bright and supplied with fans to help keep people cool. Maple Cross had 4 tables with 35 attendees.



Pimms or fruit juice was available at the start and hidden away in a coolbox was a limited supply of John Smiths.

After a lovely meal there was a table quiz. Our table got stuck on the name for a group of Leopards (Leap), and the company who gave its logo a haircut and upturned beak (Twitter). We did however get the TV programmes The Persuaders & Randell & Hopkirk deceased, which I guess shows something about our age.





We learnt that Dick Side was retiring from the Fellowship board and Haydn the Kier Chief Executive officer gave us a summary of the Kier activities with good progress on house sales & construction activity.



After the meal John Abbott and his wife Carol started the dancing with the American Smooth which was very good then other people joined the dance floor to the live music from Jenny and the Mantas.





"hidden away in a coolbox was a limited supply of John Smiths"



Theatre Trip -The King & I

During bank holiday week in August, twenty Fellowship members went to the London Palladium to watch The King & I. It would have been twenty one, but Normans wife Sue sprained both wrists in a fall the previous day. (Glad you're better now. Ed.)



17 of the group then went on to the nearby Slug & Lettuce for a meal. The meal was fine but unfortunately orders

17 of the group then went on to the nearby Slug & Lettuce for a meal. The meal was fine but unfortunately orders had to be given at the bar. So after everyone had decided on what they wanted I had to transcribe this into how many of each type of starter, main course and sweet everyone wanted. After a couple of trips to the kitchen to clarify our requirements it all appeared to arrive in the correct order.

"It's the best thing I've seen in many years, but I've seen better plastering on a toilet wall" We had nearly 2 rows of the stalls with a great view of the stage, and once the action began I found the show riveting.

There were many songs I knew (some of which I didn't realized came from here):-Whistle a Happy Tune, Shall we Dance, Getting to Know You & Hello Young Lovers to name a few.

The performance included quite a few young children who were amazing, remembering their lines and marks like the professionals they are.

The show ended with a standing ovation from the audience and Duncan exclaimed "It's the best thing I've seen in many years, but I've seen better plastering on a toilet wall" (referring to the scenery).





It took three attempts to get the bill, but in the end it all worked out OK and we headed home satisfied after a pleasant afternoon & evening.





Late Summer Luncheon

On 20th September we met at a new venue the Belvedere Ristorante Italiano in St Albans. Duncan kindly provided the following, as I was also on Holiday. Ed



Before setting off on our way to St Albans to join up with fellow colleagues of the Fellowship I did a quick once over at the booking form and judging from its layout I all too hastily set in my mind that upon arriving in the city we would be seeking out a Freddie's type Mediterranean restaurant.

After all when you have quickly read Zuppa Del Giorno, Prosciutto di Parma e Melone, Terrine di Anatra, followed by Pollo al Pepe Verde, Medaglione D'Agnello Pavarotti, Pepperone Ripieno alla Zingara finished off with Torta di Mele or Tiramisu, what else would a doddery old retired bricklayer think.

There we are with a good half hour to spare driving up and down a road in the back end of St Albans looking for a café with a continental sort of façade. In the end we gave up and taking turned into an Hotel driveway to seek directions. Low and behold, there to greet us were twenty two smiling faces, smug that they had found the venue without to much trouble because they hadn't left the directions on the kitchen table.

It goes without saying that any new luncheon venue is an exciting social experiment raising a whole host of questions ranging from will the food served be as good as the tried and tested, but sometimes overused, local watering holes? Then there is the vexed question will the toilets up to scratch and on and on it goes.

It's pleasing to say that the Belvedere Ristorante turned out to be a most delightful and enjoyable new establishment, light, airily bright and exceedingly spacious along with having the most agreeable decor.

A further added attraction was that a wedding breakfast was in full flow and the ladies had the pleasure of seeing the bride in all her finery, but didn't catch the bouquet.

This gem of a venue had been recommended to our leader Norman Elliott who after making the booking promptly announced that he had also arranged to take a holiday during the same week and as a result would be absent on the day.

Ever the stalwart, Terry Delany once more was press-ganged in to leading the troops into lunch and then took control of celebrating the coming together of the members. In his after luncheon oration mentioned that a number of old and venerable members who had been missing at previous gatherings had made the effort to attend and he warmly welcomed them.



It was the general opinion of the guests when it came to 'Home time' that all those present had, had a most enjoyable afternoon joining and renewing their friendship with old colleagues departed suitably fed and watered and content with the world.

William D. Mort

Photos @ Gill Ball

"Terry Delany once more was press-ganged in to leading the troops into lunch"

Long Service Luncheon



On Friday 12th October 47 people met for the Long Service and Fellowship Luncheon. It was held at the Moor Park Golf Club Rickmansworth, a venue familiar to many members.

30 people with more than 25 years service attended, together with many with over 15 years service, a testament to the longevity of staff at Kier.

Clive Cavill started work for the company in 1948 the earliest of all attendees. However the longest serving member must be David Hayes who started in 1964 and is still going strong after 54 years. I doubt this will ever be beaten.





It was nice to catch up with old, and not so old, friends over a drink and excellent meal.



After the meal Norman gave thanks to Martin Reilly for Kier's continuing support of the event. However as he was on holiday he was unable to hear the round of applause he was given. Thanks were also given to Caroline Pettitt who organised the meal and also does so much else for the fellowship including sending out this newsletter.



"30 people with more than 25 years service attended together with many with over 15 years service"



On Thursday 13th December the Fellowship gathered at the Shendish Manor Hotel near Hemel Hempstead. It was a sunny day but very cold so we were all glad to get inside. Due to problems on the M25 some people missed the usual gathering at the start to chat, but made it in time for the meal which was good news.



We had 43 members attending this year's meal, which is a good turn out. This included our newest members Nigel and Anna Burrows who joined in November following Nigel's retirement. Welcome to the Fellowship, hopefully we'll see you again at future events.



After a chance to catch up whilst enjoying drinks at the bar, we were invited into the dining room, where five tables awaited. The meal was excellent as usual with a variety of dishes being served.

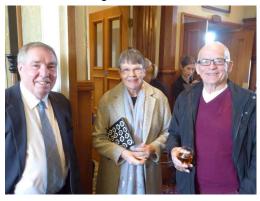


After the food had been eaten, the wine drunk and the coffee poured, Norman gave a speech trying not to mention the Kier share price but not quite managing.



He did advise that he was now not only running the Maple Cross Fellowship, but also a director of the whole Fellowship. Always up for a challenge.

The members then said their farewells and headed home, some to do battle with the M25 once again.



"Norman gave a speech trying not to mention the **Kier share price** but not quite managing. "



Northern Spain by Jeff Taylor



It was our 40th wedding anniversary in September 2018, and we decided to visit northern Spain to celebrate. Shirley spent a year in Spain in the mid 1970's as a student but had not seen much of this part of the country so it would be new to both of us.

Shirley spent many months devising a sensible driving itinerary, booking & amending items as better locations became apparent. We decided to fly out to Santiago de Compostela then, after a few days, hire a car and drive from there on a circular route ending back in Santiago de Compostela for a final few days before flying home again. The whole trip would take 3 weeks.

We stayed overnight at Gatwick and got up at 3 am to get a taxi to the north terminal at 3:30. It was a cold wet morning and as we only had hand luggage and already had our boarding passes we headed straight to an eatery for a welcome early breakfast. The flight was at 6am so we had plenty of time.

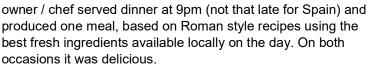
Arriving in Spain we found it warmer but foggy, the taxi driver said not to worry as it would burn off by noon (which it did ©). We arrived at the Hotel near the centre of Santiago by 11am and our room was ready so we unpacked and headed out for lunch.

By now it was warm so we went the main square near the Cathedral and sat in the sun at a café. The waiter apologised and said the chef would be late, but it was so nice we didn't care. We ordered a beer and watched the people in the square. After 3 beers the chef arrived and so still happy we got our lunch. Santiago de Compostella was a lovely city and we spent a few days wandering the streets and taking in the sights.

After picking up the hire car, an Opel Mokka, we drove 90+ miles to the Parador at Santa Estevo. This was an old monastery converted into a hotel. It was a lovely building and we spent the afternoon exploring the building finding an art gallery and some lovely views from hidden areas. We only had a single night here and so the next morning visited the Balcons de Madrid nearby, which had lovely canyon views, before heading to Orellan 80 miles further on.



Near Orellan there are the remains of old Roman gold mines, which was the reason for our visit. We stayed in a "Casa Rural", a complete contrast to the Parador, but still charming. The



On the first day we walked from the "Casa" up a hill to a view point over the mining area which was amazing with deep valleys and steep hills produced by the Romans. The second day we drove to these and walked in the valleys learning that the Romans used hydraulic mining techniques. They formed small deep tunnels towards a cliff face, which they then filled with diverted water. The water pressure burst through the cliff face and its rapid flow scoured out the gold deposits from the conglomerate rock. By this method they excavated about 230 million tons of rock to obtain 5 tons of gold, a better return than nowadays apparently. After two nights here and an interesting time, we departed and headed to Leon, 90+ miles away.





The journey so far had been interesting as I had yet to discover how to set the Sat Nav to English, but had managed to turn off the "use Motorways" so we could enjoy more rural routes. This day however we were supposed to use a motorway, but were enjoying the scenery so much we missed the junction, still no problem we just followed the Sat Nav (which Shirley was translating). We ended up on a steep sometimes single track mountain pass with lots of hairpin bends, which was quite a challenge. But worse still it had many cyclists plus backpackers walking towards us often all across the road. I realised then that this was must be the route of the "Camino", the long distance footpath across Spain. When we reached the top of the mountain there was a café, and I was very glad of a rest.





When we reached Leon I decided it was time to set the Sat Nav to English so I downloaded the cars instruction manual in English and found it relatively simple, once you knew which menu to look in. Sofia the sat nav lady proved remarkably polite saying "please" after every instruction (unlike my current one which just demands action.)



We stayed at the Aparthotel Exe in Leon, which had a small kitchen, and meant it was nice to be able to eat simply. It was modern and had breakfast provided, so was quick to get out and explore in the morning. It was a lovely historic city with many churches, a cathedral and also a museum to the architect Goudi whom we both admire. We spent long hours exploring seeing everything from modern street art to ancient walls.

After two nights we took to the road again travelling to Cangas de Onis 112 miles away. We arrived by lunchtime and explored the lovely town with twin rivers flowing through and a high arched roman bridge. We were staying in a hotel above the town so drove up there in the late afternoon. This Hotel had wonderful views down the valley but was in the style of Fawlty Towers. The room was south facing and very hot when we arrived and with no air conditioning we had to open the windows and door to get some air flow to cool it down. The bar and restaurant service was very slow though the food was good, and in the end it wasn't bad just not as good as it could have been.





The reason for travelling to Cangas was a walk you could do round some lakes high in the mountains. As it was a single track road cars were banned in peak season so we caught a bus relatively early and had a leisurely drive up the mountain. The walk around the lakes was stunning with very few people. At one point we came across a couple who obviously lived in an old stone building miles from anywhere, no road and only a stream for water. The lady was doing some washing in a stone tub and the man was tending some chickens, a scene from a bygone age. It was a lovely walk in the mountains and after sitting, overlooking a quiet lake we headed for a lovely rustic mountain bar for a well earned beer and lunch.

Northern Spain (Cont.)

The next day we headed for Gijon, but as it was only 50+ miles away we stopped at a little seaside resort of Ribadesella, for lunch and a walk along the promenade. This was a quiet place and we had a simple lunch at a little kiosk. The drive into Gijon was interesting with quite a few main roads and flyovers but "Sofia" kept us on track and we arrived in plenty of time to meet the owner of the apartment we had rented for a week. We had a nervous wait as she was late but when she arrived she was apologetic as she had mislaid the keys, a thing we've all done I'm sure. The apartment was lovely and modern with a view over the beach, a supermarket on the ground floor plus an ice cream parlour & cocktail bar nearby, what more could you want ©.





The week was spent doing local walks that Shirley had previously researched, one long the coast which we could walk direct from the apartment, and two inland requiring a 10 minute drive to the start point. We also visited the wonderful botanical gardens displaying and explaining the natural flora very well, and also a strange Franco era partly obsolete University building. We enjoyed walking through the town and watching the surfers riding some really good surf right onto the beach. It was such a nice place that we'd like to go back someday.

After a very relaxing week where we celebrated our anniversary, we headed for Ribadeo also on the coast 90 miles away. We went via a coastal rock formation called Praia das Catedrais. This was like Durdle Door in Dorset only much more so. Imagine our surprise when at the top of the steps down to the beach they said we needed tickets for the visit which they couldn't provide but could be obtained online. Using my phone with only a slow data connection I eventually managed to download two tickets. No payment was required it was just to limit numbers in view of the rapid tide. They scanned barcodes now on the phone and let us onto the beach. The views were worth it and it being foggy made it quite eerie. To get to parts of the beach you had to wade through water so off came our sandals and we spent a happy couple of hours splashing about looking at the amazing rock formations.



Back in Ribadeo we had a quick explore of the town before dinner and found a very friendly lady in the local tourist office. She gave us lots of information about walks in the town and surroundings and this proved to be the most unexpected but delightful of stops. The following day we walked out to a nearby lighthouse about 3 miles up the coast road. We stopped at a rebuilt loading platform by the sea where local iron ore was brought by train to be exported. No rail lines now exist but you could tell it was a large undertaking. We had a lovely day ending with nice views across the estuary from the hotel.

We then returned to Santiago de Compostella a journey of about 120 miles the longest single drive of the holiday, returning to the same hotel. We walked to some of the same places we'd visited previously and also used the car to travel to Fisterra, which means "Lands End" (Fis Terra), and so it was. With a lighthouse, tatty gift shop & Café it was like our own Lands end. There were also Camino Pilgrims getting the "Last Stamp" to prove they'd walked right across Spain.



It was a wonderful holiday with lots to see and, even with the driving, very relaxing. We hope to visit again sometime.

Parley Golf Centre fundraising by Gill Ball



On 26th July Parley Golf Centre handed over a cheque for £1,101 to Macmillan Caring Locally after its charity day. The money will go towards Macmillan's 'Brick by Brick' appeal which aims to raise £9m for a new palliative care unit at Christchurch Hospital.

Barry Wilson from the charity received the cheque from the club's ladies captain Gill Ball.

The golfers played a three-team Texas Scramble on the course that last year received £250,000 of investment.

A cake stall on the 9th hole kept the energy levels up as the 13 teams competed for the title.

Gill said: "To raise money we had a second hand book stall, a plant stall and a grand raffle. Richard supporting me by driving me around to collect the books that I sent out an appeal for, we had a whole car load of them.

The prizes were great and included a 'date night for two' at The Horns Inn, with a chauffeur-driven Tesla S, courtesy of Presla - Electric Chauffeurs.

When approached, Martin Reilly at Maple Cross arranged for the Kier Group to donate a generous amount of John Lewis vouchers. Jimmy's Iced Coffee supplied drinks and B&Q donated some plants. Our members are always very generous when it comes to supporting charities and Macmillan Caring Locally does amazing work."

The winning team was Peter McIntosh, Colin Spooner and Eddie Lippmann.

Gill Ball



Gardening with Warwick

Snippets from Warwick Stevens on gardening and his acting / presenting career.

A funny thing happened to me when I was working on a big job building warehouses in Boreham Wood with Trevor Ayling. BBC's Eastenders used the site for one of their episodes and a number of us appeared as extras. When I was boarding a fork lift truck my helmet fell off and a big shout of 'CUT' was heard so I had to enact the "scene" again!

I also used to be on Allotment Watch on Radio 2 on Sunday mornings in the 1990s (So you could say he knows his onions. Ed)

What to do in the garden at the start of the year :-

Before moving the grass for the first time, rake it to remove worm casts.

Mid **November** to mid- **March** - Shallot sets - Plant ~ 25cm (10") apart in rows 40cm (16") apart

February - Plant seeds that are susceptible to frost – e.g. onions and marigolds, in trays and place on the window sill. Plant out 2nd week of May. Marigolds can also be sown directly outside between April & May

February - Broad beans - sow directly into the soil

February or March - Carrots - Early cultivars can be sown in under cloches or similar protection. (The main outdoor sowing season is from **April** to early **July**)

March to April, and even early May - Parsnips - Warm the soil before sowing with cloches or similar; leave these in place until the seedlings have developed two true leaves.

March to April - Leek seeds - Sow seed directly into the soil. Plant potatoes, runner beans, tomatoes, marrow, cucumber, pumpkins and squashes

March to September - Spring onions - Sow in rows 10cm (4in) apart. Sowing every 2 weeks will give a continual summer harvest

Mid March to mid April - Onion sets - Plant 5-10cm (2-4in) apart in rows 25-30cm (10-12in) apart

Mid May to mid June - Swede - Sow seeds in a sunny area in rich soil. Thin out as soon as seedlings appear.

March to May - Gladiolas - Plant out when deciduous trees start to leaf

April to May - Sow Aster seeds

Spring - Plant lilies, with Cosmos and Zinnias not until after the last frost .

Prize Quiz

Where is this (less famous) ancient rock cut building?

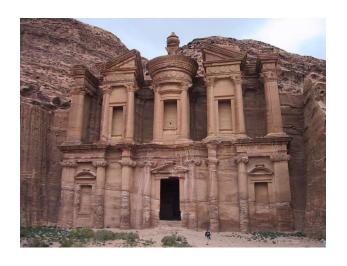
Please provide the name of the site of this monument. Please send your answer & your full name to:kfmaplecross@virginmedia.com

or text 07780 600 580

or post to :-

Jeff Taylor, 24 White Paddock, Maidenhead, SL6 3NF by the end of March 2019.

Only one reply per fellowship member. The first correct entry selected at random will win £5 off a Maple Cross Fellowship event of their choice in 2018.



Games & puzzles

Sudoku

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

Easy

Wordsearch

Т	G	J	Α	K	Α	R	Т	Α	С
G	T	K	ı	N	G	S	T	0	N
К	Z	Α	G	R	E	В	P	ı	W
J	ı	0	R	F	1	E	В	K	0
F	Y	н	J	Α	N	W	U	N	т
G	J	Α	S	Н	W	R	D	ı	ı
т	ı	Z	Α	L	1	Α	Α	S	U
w	D	G	W	G	N	Α	P	L	Q
v	E	T	Α	Υ	E	М	E	E	E
N	M	Α	N	Α	M	Α	S	Н	V
к	Α	В	U	L	X	Т	T	L	Y
G	L	U	J	N	Α	В	Р	0	Α

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

<u>Hard</u>

Which of these Capital Cities is not in the grid?

- 1 KABUL
- 2 MANAMA
- 3 ZAGREB
- 4 COPENHAGEN
- 5 QUITO
- 6 HELSINKI
- 7 BANJUL
- 8 VALLETTA
- 9 BUDAPEST
- 10 JAKARTA
- 11 KINGSTON
- 12 TARAWA
- 13 RIGA

Which countries are they the capital of? Answers on the back page

1969- 50 Years ago:-

January - The Beatles performed for the final time on the rooftop of Apple Records

March - The first flight of Concord took place from **Toulouse in France**

May - The Queen Elizabeth II liner made its maiden voyage to New York

July - BBC 2 first aired the "Pot Black" snooker tournament

September - The Beatles final Album to be recorded, Abbey Road, was released

November - The BBC showed the children's programme "The Clangers" for the first time

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

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<u>Kier Fellow Ship</u> - The main profile <u>K.F. Maple Cross</u> - 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



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

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

Forthcoming Events (proposed)

14th February Valentines day Luncheon

25th April St Georges Day Luncheon

May Visit to Brooklands Museum

with Afternoon tea

24th June Windsor Horse Racing

30th June Tempsford Garden Party

July London Show - Joseph &

The Amazing Technicolor

Dreamcoat

July / August Kier Fellowship Golf Day

19th September Late Summer Luncheon

11th October Long Service Luncheon

12th December Christmas Luncheon

ordsearch Capitals :-

= Afghanistan, 2 = Bahrain = Croatia, 4 = Denmark

Wordsearch - The missing Capital city is Valletta