



Reporter

No 48, August 2017

Journal of The Friendship Centre Federation

2018 AGM holiday to be in Blackpool

IT HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED that the Federation's annual general meeting will be on Wednesday 11th April at 2 p.m. at the Chequers Plaza Hotel, 24-26 Queen's Promenade, Blackpool FY2 9RN. Telephone: (01253) 356 431. We invite you to take advantage of a five-day, four night, holiday from Monday 9th to Friday 13th April at a price of £230 per person.

The Chequers Plaza Hotel is a good standard hotel with the highest level of guest services. No smoking in all areas. Free car parking (limited places). Lift, safe keeping at Reception. Free WiFi/broadband internet connection in public areas.

You may check-in from 3 p.m.

The £230 cost of the holiday includes: half-board accommodation; all rooms *en-suite* with colour TV and tea/coffee making facilities; the Annual General Meeting and the Gala Dinner on the Wednesday.

A day out by coach is included on Tuesday 10th April 2018 to Skipton and Whalley.

We have a generous number of single rooms but do book early if you would like one of these rooms.

You will find a booking form on page five.

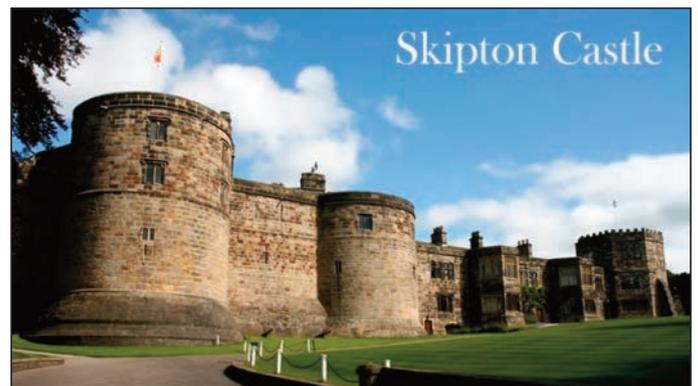
Tuesday's coach trip

Award winning **Skipton** High Street includes a blend of independent and national shops and has been praised for its enduring individuality and character. You will find a "different" High Street: a wide avenue with cobbled streets and alleyways leading off to undiscovered corners.

Craven Court Shopping Centre created from a 16th century theatre. Today its original stone walls

provide a traditional backdrop to this unique shopping experience.

Wander down Jerry Croft or Otley Street to uncover an area called Thanet's Yard where you will find independent shops of all types from a traditional mill shop and antiques to a cycling shop.



Last, but not least, Skipton castle, one of the best preserved castles in the country, sits at the top of the High Street alongside Holy Trinity Church. A visit not to be missed.

The beautiful village of **Whalley** is a place where tradition and heritage meet modern living. Boutiques and eateries are nestled amongst historical monuments and stunning surroundings. Situated in the heart of the Ribble Valley, the River Calder meanders through at the foot of Whalley Nab. The highlights include a 14th century Cistercian abbey as well as a medieval church at the village's centre, Whalley is filled with award-winning cuisine and countless independent shops with a welcoming Lancastrian charm and northern character.

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The Friendship Centre Federation

www.fcfd.com

Reporter

The Journal of the Friendship Centre Federation

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Contributions for the **Reporter** concerning the Federation or your group, or wider issues of concern to

members, are welcomed. Publication is not guaranteed and articles may be edited.

Opinions expressed in the **Reporter** are not necessarily the policy of the Federation.

You may copy the **Reporter** to distribute it among your members, or use extracts in your own newsletters, but please credit the Friendship Centre Federation as your source. Members must get the consent of all of those shown in their pictures before they submit them for publication in either the **Reporter** or on the Federation web site.

Who's Who

The following are the members of the Executive Committee of The Friendship Centre Federation.

Joyce Armstrong (Member, Edinburgh Friendship Centre).

Tony Cassidy (formerly ARPO50 Regional Co-ordinator for East Anglia and East Midlands) – responsible for Public Liability Insurance.
tony.lode@dsl.pipex.com

Angela Cooke (Chairman, Hitchin Friendship Centre). angelac@uwclub.net

Tony Ede (President and former Chairman, Worthing Friendship Centre), **Chairman's assistant/temporary Treasurer**.
tony.ede1@virginmedia.com

Bob Hendley (Secretary of the Edgware & Mill Hill Friendship Centre) – **our Vice Chairman**. Responsible

for **Reporter** and AGM location and holiday.
fcf@post.com

Jean Jones (Social Secretary, The London Friendship Centre). jean@crossharbour.plus.com

Geoff Peterson (Chairman, ARP Ski Club)
geoffreypeterson@frinton.net

Marion Walsh (former Chairman of London Victoria Friendship Centre), **Federation Chairman and Secretary**. marion.walsh1@btinternet.com

Co-opted members

Sylvie Redvers, Secretary of the Bromley Friendship Centre. sredvers@hotmail.com

Jim Rose, Treasurer of the Bromley Friendship Centre. beckenham.roses@hotmail.com

Ted Carradus – our Webmaster
tedcarradus@btinternet.com

A little more about our newest committee member – Sylvie Redvers

AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING in April at Weston-super-Mare, I asked around for volunteers to join the FCF Committee and Sylvie Redvers said she "would give it a go" which I took to mean YES! I thought you might be interested in learning a little more about Sylvie.

Sylvie is secretary of the Bromley Friendship Centre (and has been for quite a few years). She moved to London from Glasgow in 1967 after meeting her late husband in Paris at the international assembly of the International Friendship League.

She has two children, one of whom lives in Aberdeen where Sylvie likes to spend time with her grandson who is soon to have a little brother.

Over the years she has had varied jobs, her last being in logistics and supply chain development for a large multinational company. Sylvie has also served on several committees and was a school governor for 22 years, seven of these as chair of governors.



Following the death of her husband she has been developing a taste for travel. Last year Australia, going again later this year and – if rumours are to be believed – again next year!

We are very pleased to welcome Sylvie onto our Federation committee. Until the next FCF AGM, Sylvie is a co-opted member and if all goes well, she will be nominated and approved as a full Committee member next April.

MARION WALSH

On the way to the AGM



The front of Tyntesfield

FOR THOSE OF US travelling to the Federation holiday by car each year there is the opportunity to make local visits to places it would not be possible to go to on a day trip. Last year it was Portmeirion in north Wales, a fantastical village which was home to *The Prisoner* and which I described in the REPORTER last summer. This year it was but a very short journey from Weston-super-Mare to Tyntesfield, a National Trust property that has been on my visit list for years.

If you can drive to Blackpool, then think about joining us for the 2018 holiday next April and plan a day out to the Trough of Bowland, a beautiful area of Lancashire.

Back to **Tyntesfield**, this is largely a Victorian country house, built around the Georgian original and paid for with the profits from the guano trade. Anthony Gibbs spent huge amounts of money on the structure of the property and its contents. Every room open to the public is full of treasures, and books and guide sheets tell the story of each room. The family made early use of electricity and telephones; in fact parts of the building and the grounds are reminiscent of Cragside in Northumberland, where William Armstrong set up his own hydroelectric power plant.

Viewing is by timed ticket bookable in advance, which helps to control the numbers in the house at any one time. The volunteers were all very knowledgeable, answering questions without hesitation. We struggled with the wide staircase which had no banister for the

first few steps. A volunteer spotted this and conducted us to a lift in the back of the house. This enabled us to see a number of rooms not open to the public. The lift itself is modern, but housed in the old lift shaft, and retains the original doors. Everything was well thought through.

Another feature which continued the Cragside theme was what I can only describe as a concrete wash which followed the contours of a slope in the extensive grounds, disappearing behind the trees. There was no explanation of its purpose.

The reception building is in the old stables, which also houses the café and shop. This in turn is several hundred yards from the house on an undulating path.



Main staircase at Tyntesfield

continues on page four

On the way to the AGM continued

There was a "bus stop" at the entrance to the car park for those who would find the half-mile or so of walking difficult.

Clevedon Court is only open for three hours a day on three days a week. Serendipitously, it was open on the afternoon of our visit to Tyntesfield. Viewing is by timed ticket and not bookable. We hurried there and managed to get tickets for the first group.

Part of the building dates back to the 14th Century, but it has been built on several times, and was partially burned down on one occasion. The result is a house at many different levels and somewhat higgledy-piggledy, with different styles of architecture and content. For example, the great hall contains portraits and well-polished furniture, but a staircase adjacent has drawings of railway stations and bridges on the walls.

The outstanding part to us was the collection of ceramics in the old kitchen. This is Elton Ware, created by the 8th(?) baronet. He was self-taught but over the



Clevedon Court

years produced some stunning vases and objects. In another room there is a display of Nailsea glass; the original glass is quite ordinary in itself, but it gave rise to a fanciful style of bottles which took the name.

The property has been lived in by the Elton family for over 300 years. They must be a hardy bunch because the house is cold. Hopefully their living quarters has better heating!

TONY EDE

Moray break to Largs



A TRIP WAS ARRANGED by Moray Retired Persons Friendship Centre to the Willowbank Hotel, Largs by Charles Shaw through David Urquhart Travel. We left Elgin on Friday 30th June and after a lunch stop at Dobbies Garden Centre at Perth we continued to our hotel in Largs. On Saturday we had a trip to Burns country which was enjoyed by everyone. The Sunday trip was to the Botanical Gardens in Glasgow and then

to the Peoples Palace. We left the hotel on Monday morning and after a stop at Bruars for lunch we arrived back in Elgin.

The hotel was excellent and we had entertainment every night. A special mention for all the staff in the hotel as they were so helpful, cheery and nothing was any trouble.

ANNE McDONALD

The Friendship Centre Federation

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2018



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BOOKING FORM Please complete clearly, IN CAPITALS

Names (1) (2)

known as (1) (2)

Address

..... Post Code.....

Telephone: Email address:

Member group

Attending as: Delegate 1 or Member 1 *Each member group may send one voting delegate plus as many members as they wish*
Member 2

| | | | | |
|--|--------|------|--------|------------|
| Four nights , 9th-13th April, bed, breakfast and dinner; coach outing, AGM and Gala dinner. Cost £230. | Double | Twin | Single | Total cost |
|--|--------|------|--------|------------|

Disability requirements Yes/No Please detail

Dietary requirements Yes/No

Emergency contact (required)

Insurance is available at £19.50 per person (must be included with deposit)

I enclose a cheque made out to the **Friendship Centre Federation** for £
which is a non-returnable deposit of £50 per person. *To ensure your place please book early.*
Your balance of £180 is due by 14th January.

Signed

Please return the completed form with your deposit cheque to:
The Friendship Centre Federation • 16 Oakleigh Avenue • Edgware • Middlesex • HA8 5DT
Telephone: 020-8931 2828 • Email: fcf@post.com

Is retirement good for your health?

ECONOMIST JAMES BANKS of the University of Manchester says it depends on what you have come from and what you are going to. If you have had a highly paid, high-status job but little time or inclination to cultivate social activities or friends outside work, then retirement could be a negative step even if you have a huge pension pot. "You may walk all day and do sudokus all night once retired, but still miss the social and intellectual stimulation of the workplace," he says.

However, if you have given up a physically demanding and hazardous manual job, or one with little control and lots of stress, then retirement may be a positive step. UK, European, US and international studies show a mixed picture; it depends on an individual's change of status when they leave the workplace. And it is possible it may not even change your life much; if you can maintain your standard of living, interactions and sense of purpose, then retirement may not have an impact on your quality of life.



by Ann Robinson who has been a GP for 16 years.



Who else is at home?

Academic Gill Mein, at St George's, University of London, worked on the Whitehall II study, which looked at the social determinants of health among British civil servants. She has two tips for a "good retirement". One is to develop a hobby or interest while still employed, which you can build on when you leave work. The other is to involve your partner/spouse in your change in role at home once you retire. "I met some couples where one person was used to being at home all alone and found it difficult to adjust to both being at home and with each other 24/7."

What about early retirement because of ill health?

Professor Deborah Schofield, of the University of Sydney, says: "Moving into a planned retirement from choice is very different from having to leave because of illness. Control over your plans – such as paying off the mortgage, building up some savings and waiting for

kids to leave home – are thrown into disarray, you may have less income and also fewer plans. You can find yourself at a loose end without companionship."

There is a relationship between income and reported satisfaction with life; money may not make you happy, but it helps to be able to afford the necessities of life and a few luxuries. Schofield adds that divorce can hit women particularly hard as they often have lower savings than men. And the three main causes of early retirement because of ill health – pain, arthritis and mental illness – are poorly treated and resourced compared with other conditions such as cancer. "Most conditions that

take people out of the workplace are not really considered health care priorities; there's often no sudden and dramatic illness. Cancer that makes someone suddenly ill is an overt tragedy that strikes fear into the heart of most people. But chronic pain is a less visible, silent condition; you don't look unwell or lose your hair but you may be going home from work each day and collapsing from the toll of keeping going." She says government needs to address underfunded services for these areas, on both health and economic grounds.

What are the secrets of successful ageing?

Geriatrician Dr Jeremy Jacobs, of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, says research into a cohort of Jerusalem residents has suggested old people who rate their health as being poor are more likely to be lonely, depressed, poor, obese or have back pain. "Loneliness is common, but it doesn't kill you," he says. Once you take financial security out of the equation, culture, country of origin and ethnicity seem to play a very minor role in how you age. People over 90 stop reporting pain as a problem; no one knows exactly why. To live longer and with good quality of life you need to sort out vision and hearing problems (cataract surgery and a hearing aid), take measures to prevent falls (nail down the carpet), avoid taking siestas, eat a decent amount and range of food (not vitamin supplements – they may increase mortality) and, above all, keep moving and stay engaged. "Adverse life events don't affect longevity, but if you sit at home all day doing nothing, you will deteriorate. You need to leave the house every day even if you're in a wheelchair. And keep mentally, socially and physically active at whatever level you can manage. You don't have to stay in paid work; volunteering is fine too," says Jacobs.