



Reporter

No 52, May 2019

Journal of The Friendship Centre Federation

Memorable AGM at Great Yarmouth

YOU MISSED IT!

If you didn't join us at Great Yarmouth, then you missed a good week. It all went very well. The hotel was excellent – quite spacious and we almost had the hotel to ourselves. The food – a very important part of any holiday – was really good with plenty of choice. The staff were friendly and helpful. In our room we noticed one of the lights appeared not to be working – probably needed a new bulb. I mentioned this to Reception on our way to Dinner and by the time we went back to our room, it had been fixed!

We had entertainment laid on by the hotel on most evenings and one evening we had a Quiz organised by Sylvie and her friends from Bromley. Everyone seemed to

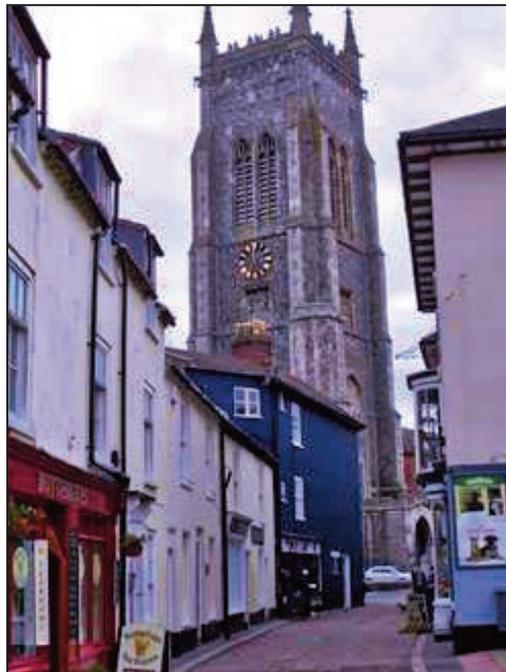
enjoy this too.

On the Tuesday there was a coach trip organised. Ron and I didn't go but Sylvie reported this. The first stop was Cromer which can best be described as "bracing" and where we had time to wander the narrow quaint streets and enjoy the famous Cromer crab sandwiches for lunch. Then it was back onto the coach and heading to our next stop the Heacham Lavender Farm to enjoy tea and a spot of retail therapy. On the way back to our hotel the driver took us through the Sandringham Estate where we had a chance to see the royal residence as we drove past. A very interesting and varied day out.

In the middle of our holiday we did have our planned AGM. No sensational decisions were made with the majority of the Committee being re-elected. Very sadly Tony Ede had decided to step down from the FCF Committee, but he will remain in the background for advice as and when needed.

Thursday, was a free day and most people opted to take a bus into Norwich to do some exploring. Sylvie and her friends went to the beautiful Cathedral, the Castle Museum and not

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Reporter

The Journal of the Friendship Centre Federation

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Who's Who

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

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

Bob Hendley (Secretary of the Edgware & Mill Hill Friendship Centre) – our 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 (member of ARP Ski Club)

geoffreypeterson@frinton.net

Sylvie Redvers (Secretary of the Bromley Friendship Centre – our Secretary). sjredvers@outlook.com

Jim Rose (Treasurer of Bromley Friendship Centre), our Treasurer). beckenham.roses@hotmail.com

Cecily Tween (member of Ashted Friendship Centre). tweeny.t@outlook.com

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

Ted Carradus – our Webmaster
tedcarradus@btinternet.com

YOU MISSED IT! *continued from front page*

forgetting the famous old streets and coffee shops in Tombland, the area around the Cathedral.

The Cathedral's magnificent Victorian stained glass window was painted over following the death of Prince Albert and only uncovered in the 1990s in preparation for a visit by The Queen. In answer to a question about the beautiful "Arts & Crafts" copper font, the guide said "It's an old toffee boiler from the Mackintosh sweet factory.



In our opinion, it was one of the most enjoyable Federation holidays we have had. Thanks are due to Bob and his wife, Margaret, for their efforts in planning and organising this holiday.

*Ron and Marion Walsh
(photos by Pat Skinner)
And a little help from Sylvie.*



The Friendship Centre Federation

2020 Annual General Meeting and holiday

will take place from Monday 30th March to Friday 3rd April
at the Marquis Hotel, Torquay

The AGM will be on Wednesday 1st April 2020 at 2 p.m.

That's a Strike!

Scarborough Over 50s Friendship Centre team walks away with national bowling trophy Bowlers from across the country descended on Scarborough in February to take part in the annual Friendship Clubs Over 50s National ten pin bowling tournament.



The tournament was hosted by the Scarborough Over 50s Friendship Centre at Olympia Leisure Centre, with teams from Leeds, Washington, Royal Quays and Hinkley joining bowlers from Scarborough for the two days of competition.

SCARBOROUGH OVER 50's FRIENDSHIP CENTRE meet on the first Friday of the month at the Grand Hotel Scarborough 2 p.m. (Doors Open 1.30 p.m.) Guest speakers with variety of subjects and social activities events to meet all tastes. Tea, biscuits served and free raffle. Why not join us!



Sunday 3rd March was cold and drizzly. Not only that but due to

engineering works there were no trains from Bromley to Victoria or Charing Cross. If this was not enough there were signal problems at Clapham Junction and on the Jubilee line causing more problems. However, 14 intrepid members from the Bromley and London Centres braved these challenges and met up for a tour of Spencer House. Spencer House was built by the 1st Earl Spencer (ancestor of Diana Princess of Wales) around 1765/1766 and was the most sumptuous private palace ever built in London. Several generations of the Earls Spencer entertained there lavishly as befitted their position as senior members of the aristocracy.

The family continued to live there till the 1920s when they moved permanently to Althorp House

Visit to Spencer House

and let Spencer House out to various organisations and businesses.

Fixtures and fittings such as the doors and fireplaces, paintings and furniture were moved to Althorp House to protect them from the Blitz. These became incorporated into Althorp House.

The current lessee of Spencer House is RIT Capital Partners plc under the Chairmanship of Lord Rothschild who undertook a ten year restoration of the House. Exact copies for the doors and fireplaces have been hand made and the house decorated and furnished in the same sumptuous style as it was in the time of the first Earl Spencer.

Situated in St James's Place not far from the Ritz and backing onto Green Park it is a very pleasant way to spend a couple of hours on a Sunday in London.

The Alfred Jewel

One of Oxford's greatest treasures likely belonged to the legendary King Alfred the Great.

In the darkened galleries of the Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, you'll find an archeological treasure that, despite its diminutive size, is of priceless value to England and its history.

The mysterious crystal likeness of a man can be seen in a teardrop shape enclosed within a golden dragon-headed frame. The pale figure stares at the viewer from under his mop of golden hair and clutches what appear to be two long-stemmed plants in his hands.

The intricately carved golden dragon has a long and tapering scaled snout and the corners of its snarling mouth reveal a fanged maw. Indeed, it appears the dragon may have even been included to symbolically to protect the human figure it encircles like some kind of monstrous Dark Age guard dog.

This fascinating archeological treasure is known as "the Alfred Jewel" due to the lettering that runs along its sides. The inscription reads "Aelfred mec heht gewyrca," which translates from Old English as "Alfred ordered me to be made." These words leave little doubt that its creation was commissioned by the legendary figure in English history, King Alfred the Great.

As a young man King Alfred took the throne of Wessex after the death of his brother Aethelred in 871. As such, he also took on the daunting task of leading his people through incessant Viking invasions at a time when all of the Saxon kingdoms except Wessex had fallen under the control of the Nordic invaders.

For many years the young Alfred's life was spent on the run. During this period he lived under conditions of constant travel, never able to stay for too long at any location and being sheltered by the charity of his followers. Danger was an ever-present reality with assassination attempts, spies and ambushes never too far away. Considering such pressures, it's a wonder that Alfred never gave up.



But as resistance against the invaders grew among the Saxons, Alfred and his forces began to wage guerrilla warfare from the marshes and Fenlands harrying the Vikings at every turn. By 878, he had begun to win against his enemies, and was victorious at the battle of Edington. His troops slaughtered the Vikings and pursued the survivors to their camp in Chippenham, where they were starved out of their fortress and made to surrender.

Alfred made the Viking leader Guthrum sign a treaty and convert to Christianity, which resulted in a system demarcating the borders of England (present-day Southern

England) and the Viking territory in the North of the country, which was to be known as the Danelaw. He

then strengthened his army further and built a series of fortresses across the country to defend against future attacks.

Alfred was also a man with a deep respect for education. In his late 30s, he learned Latin and helped translate books into the Anglo-Saxon language and organized educational programmes for the people.

The jewel probably played a role in this education, as it is believed to have been the handle for a pointing stick used to follow words when

reading and teaching. The chronicles record that Alfred distributed such jewels across his kingdom.

It's said that the jewel inspired some of the amulets depicted in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, as J.R.R. Tolkien was a professor of Anglo-Saxon studies at the University of Oxford.

The Alfred Jewel can be found, when not on loan to other museums for exhibitions, in the brilliant Ashmolean Museum in Oxford.

Entrance to the museum is free and its opening hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. from Tuesday to Sunday. You will find the Jewel in the "England 400-1600" interesting artifacts.



The World Wide Web turns 30 – Where we go from here? Sir Tim Berners Lee writes...

TODAY, 15th March, 30 years on from my original proposal for an information management system, half the world is online. It's a moment to celebrate how far we've come, but also an opportunity to reflect on how far we have yet to go.

The web has become a public square, a library, a doctor's surgery, a shop, a school, a design studio, an office, a cinema, a bank, and so much more. Of course with every new feature, every new website, the divide between those who are online and those who are not increases, making it all the more imperative to make the web available for everyone.

And while the web has created opportunity, given marginalised groups a voice, and made our daily lives easier, it has also created opportunity for scammers, given a voice to those who spread hatred, and made all kinds of crime easier to commit.

Against the backdrop of news stories about how the web is misused, it's understandable that many people feel afraid and unsure if the web is really a force for good. But given how much the web has changed in the past 30 years, it would be defeatist and unimaginative to assume that the web as we know it can't be changed for the better in the next 30. If we give up on building a better web now, then the web will not have failed us. We will have failed the web.

To tackle any problem, we must clearly outline and understand it. I broadly see three sources of dysfunction affecting today's web:

- ◆ Deliberate, malicious intent, such as state-sponsored hacking and attacks, criminal behaviour, and online harassment.
- ◆ System design that creates perverse incentives where user value is sacrificed, such as ad-based revenue models that commercially reward clickbait and the viral spread of misinformation.
- ◆ Unintended negative consequences of benevolent design, such as the outraged and polarized tone and quality of online discourse.

While the first category is impossible to eradicate completely, we can create both laws and code to minimize this behaviour, just as we have always done offline. The second category requires us to redesign systems in a way that changes incentives. And the final category calls for research to understand existing systems and model possible new ones or tweak those we already have.

You can't just blame one government, one social network, or the human spirit. Simplistic narratives risk exhausting our energy as we chase the symptoms of these problems instead of focusing on their root causes. To get this right, we will need to come together as a global web community.



At pivotal moments, generations before us have stepped up to work together for a better future. With the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, diverse groups of people have been able to agree on essential principles. With the Law of Sea and the Outer Space Treaty, we have preserved new frontiers for the common good. Now too, as the web reshapes our world, we have a responsibility to make sure it is recognized as a human right and built for the public good. This is why the Web Foundation is working with governments, companies, and citizens to build a new Contract for the Web.

This contract was launched in Lisbon at Web Summit, bringing together a group of people who agree we need to establish clear norms, laws, and standards that underpin the web. Those who support it endorse its starting principles and together are working out the specific commitments in each area. No one group should do this alone, and all input will be appreciated. Governments, companies, and citizens are all contributing, and we aim to have a result later this year.

Governments must translate laws and regulations for the digital age. They must ensure markets remain competitive, innovative, and open. And they have a responsibility to protect people's rights—online. We need open web champions within government—civil servants and elected officials who will take action when private sector interests threaten the public good and who will stand up to protect the open web.

Companies must do more to ensure that their pursuit of short-term profit is not at the expense of human rights, democracy, scientific fact, or public safety. Platforms and products must be designed with privacy, diversity, and security in mind. This year, we've seen a number of tech employees stand up and demand better business practices. We need to encourage that spirit.

And most important of all, citizens must hold companies and governments accountable for the

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World Wide Web at 30 from previous page

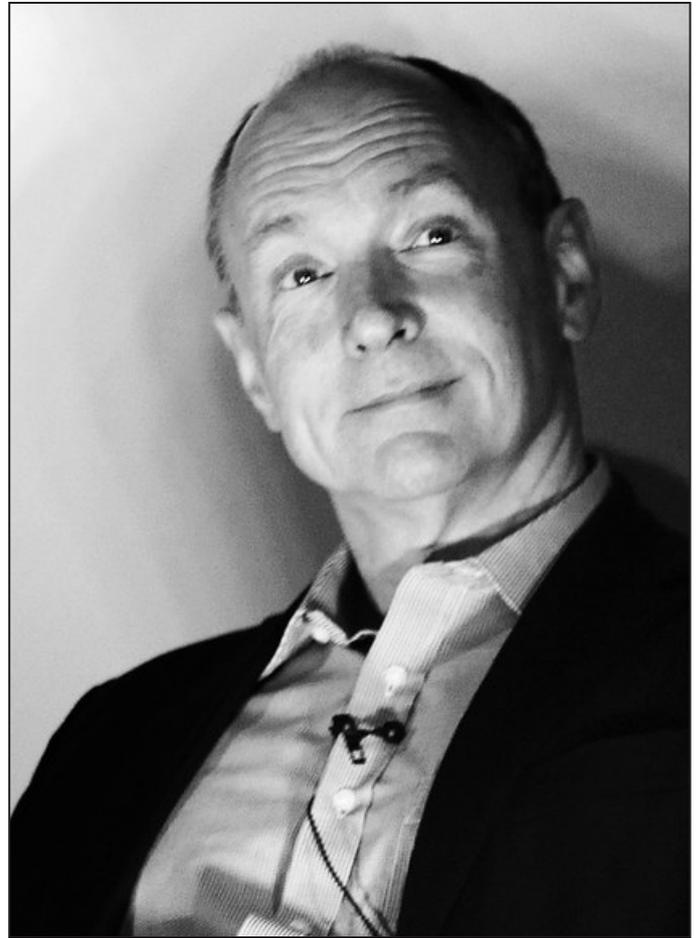
commitments they make, and demand that both respect the web as a global community with citizens at its heart. If we don't elect politicians who defend a free and open web, if we don't do our part to foster constructive, healthy conversations online, if we continue to click consent without demanding our data rights be respected, we walk away from our responsibility to put these issues on the priority agenda of our governments.

The fight for the web is one of the most important causes of our time. Today, half of the world is online. It is more urgent than ever to ensure that the other half is not left behind offline, and that everyone contributes to a web that drives equality, opportunity, and creativity.

The Contract for the Web must be not a list of quick fixes but a process that signals a shift in how we understand our relationship with our online community. It must be clear enough to act as a guiding star for the way forward but flexible enough to adapt to the rapid pace of change in technology. It's our journey from digital adolescence to a more mature, responsible, and inclusive future.

The web is for everyone, and collectively we hold the power to change it. It won't be easy. But if we dream a little and work a lot, we can get the web we want.

This story was initially published by the World Wide Web Foundation.



Sir Timothy John Berners-Lee, OM, KBE, FRS, FR Eng., FRSA, FBCS, was born on 8th June 1955 and is an English engineer and computer scientist, best known as the inventor of the World Wide Web. He is currently a professor of computer science at the University of Oxford and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

WELCOME TO THE MARQUIS HOTEL

The Marquis Hotel is situated in the heart of Torquay on the English Riviera. We are a stones throw away from beautiful award winning beaches, picturesque Cockington and Torre Abbey.

We welcome everyone with a smile.

The Marquis Hotel has established it's fine reputation on a family run team, friendly smile, relaxed service, hearty english breakfasts and comfortable bedrooms.

The Marquis Hotel offers: 44 en-suite bedrooms including sea view rooms, garden view rooms and family and dog friendly rooms.

Facilities at the Marquis Hotel include: 44 bedrooms (*all en-suite*): free Wi-Fi; free tea making facilities and flat screen TV in every room; hotel bar open all day every day; dog friendly; roof terrace and garden.



The Federation has exclusive use of the hotel for the period of the holiday, Monday 30th March to Friday 3rd April 2020.

The beautiful Bute Court, now renamed the Marquis Hotel, was built for the 3rd Marquis of Bute as a summer residence in the 19th century. Still having many of the original features it was converted to a fine hotel in 1920 which includes superb sea views.



The Friendship Centre Federation ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2020

The Annual General Meeting of The Friendship Centre Federation will take place on Wednesday 1st April 2020 from 2 p.m. at the Marquis Hotel, Belgrave Road, Torquay, Devon TQ2 5HQ. Telephone: 01803 213055.

We invite you to take advantage of a five-day, four night, holiday from Monday 30th March to Friday 3rd April at a price of £270 per person.

The Marquis Hotel is situated in the heart of the English Riviera.

All public areas and bedrooms are non-smoking. All rooms have *en suite* bathroom, television, free Wi-Fi.

The £270 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 five course Gala Dinner on the Wednesday evening.



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
Member 2 delegate plus as many members as they wish*

*We require an emergency contact name and telephone number. Name.....
This will only be used in an emergency and not kept after the AGM. 'phone.....*

Four nights, 30th March-3th April,

Total cost: bed, breakfast and dinner; AGM and Double Twin Single
Gala dinner. **Cost £270.**

Disability requirements Yes/No Please detail

Dietary requirements Yes/No

Annual General Meeting and Gala Dinner (*without accommodation*) £35 per person

There is no charge to attend the AGM only, but please let us know if you are coming

Insurance is available at £20 per person (*include 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 £220 is due before 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