



SKÅL INTERNATIONAL BRIGHTON, SUSSEX AND THE CHANNEL

President
Christine Ayers

Secretary
Edward Lewis

APRIL 2017 Newsletter

Editor: Valerie Field

Your President writes:

EXCITING TIMES AHEAD

Another month and here we are again. Moving well down the road towards our Club hosting the National Assembly in September.

Memories of 1993 when it was held in Brighton and it was hell and no notion putting together an occasion that would attract large numbers from across the, then, expansive Skål world. Now life is quieter and we will have an equally good value weekend based in Eastbourne. A brochure should be in your hands shortly and we look forward to receiving your bookings - plenty of choice re attendance: one day, two days, splash out on three. Meals only. We can accommodate them all.

Looking forward to seeing people at the Old Tollgate in Bramber to celebrate our International Day on 28 April with an early evening meal for a change. Get those bookings in now!!

In May we're aiming for a fish lunch in Escalles. Do I note a trend here? We're looking for a day trip via coach and the ferry, or people can do their own thing and go by car and stay in Calais overnight. Prices to follow!

And in June it's fish and chips on the Spa Valley railway. My goodness all this brain food!!

Phone calls today and the credit card is groaning because we're all done and dusted with our booking for the Asian Assembly based in Bahrain. Just as new travel restrictions come in for travel from Muslim countries. I'll have to go back to reading a paperback rather than my Kindle. Ah well. We're also going to the Omani Musandem Peninsula which in 2000 boasted one hotel in Khasab. Looks a bit better now, and a dhow cruise in and around the main fjords should hopefully be serene and spectacular. Must remember my travel pills...

Cont'd...

We have a short report from Ron Brooker this month who attended the International in Monaco in the autumn. Makes interesting reading. Ron and his daughter, Julie Oliphant NEW MEMBER, are already booked for Hyderabad and now we've got our Bahrain stuff sorted, we too will be looking at booking. Need to get a train trip sorted!

Getting into stride with the Skål year and looking forward to seeing you at functions. Have you got any one else in mind that we can get on board as member?

Christine Ayers

EASTBOURNE HOSPITALITY ASSOCIATION (EHA)

As part of our Club's membership development programme in recent years, President Eric – with Edward & Jean Lewis as well as Anthony & Yolaine Gay – has attended the EHA Dinner Dance with a view to recruiting new/former members for our club. This year, it was the turn of new President, Christine Ayers with husband Philip to lead a substantial Skål party at the Hydro Hotel composed of Immediate Past President Eric Etienne, Anthony & Yolaine Gay, Edward & Jean Lewis and "new" member Ron Brooker, who has become very active in Skål since he rejoined. Indeed, one or two possible new candidates were identified and it is hoped that the EHA will take a table at our Skål UK National Assembly Gala Dinner in September.

The food was good and our table was the source of much pleasant conversation, at least until the band started playing. But the music was great and got us all on the floor! The Hydro Hotel was excellent too.

The EHA is the perfect example of a suitable associate organisation but we need more to widen Skål's reach so will all readers please send me their ideas so we can enter into a relationship in good time to increase our potential contacts before September.

Anthony Gay

WEBBE'S FISH RESTAURANT, RYE

A small select mix of Skålleagues and two friends had an extremely good lunch on a lovely sunny day in Rye, *writes Christine Ayers*. The food was excellent and tasty and Marianne's eyes nearly popped at the size of the Jacobs Ladder beef rib filling her plate! Yes I know what you're thinking, beef in a fish restaurant!

A variety of puds followed and a pannetone bread and butter pudding got full marks from Eric - individual puds and well presented, marked in the memory box for a future occasion.

One of the attending friends had a French aunt whose daughter turned out to have been Eric's head teacher at secondary school. Small world or what?

FUTURE EVENTS

Our next outing will be to celebrate International Day on April 28. It will be an early evening meal at the Old Tollgate Hotel, Bramber – with a hint of Hyderabad receipes – at a cost of £28 for three courses.

The May date for your diary is Saturday 20th and will be a trip to Restaurant du Cap in Escalles, France. It is hoped to hire a coach for a day trip but if you wish to stay overnight you will need your own transport. Accommodation will be at the Brit Hotel, Calais at €70 for room and breakfast. Full details on costs etc will be in the next Newsletter.

LUCKY WINNERS

Martin Haley is the lucky winner of the March Century Club draw.

The winners of the 200 Club for March are: 1st Derek Ketteridge (Brighton); 2nd London Club itself; 3rd Anthony Herbert (London).

YOUR COUNCIL DISCUSSED...

Prior to the Council meeting held on 20 March there was a meeting of the Steering Committee for the National Assembly to be held in September. Their discussions were reported to Council and it was announced that a Brochure/Flyer would soon be available.

There was a great deal of discussion about the future events programme and the monthly events (hopefully up until March 2018) will be printed on the back of the National Assembly Brochure.

It is thought that the National Assembly should help with increasing membership. More Association memberships are needed and Anthony Gay will produce a list of potential firms.

There has been a delay in producing a new Club Directory due to problems with Windows but Eric Etienne is working on sorting it out and it is hoped to be available shortly.

The date for the next Council meeting is 20 April; if there is anything you would like discussed please contact Christine or Edward before then.

SAD NEWS

It is with great sorrow that we announce the death of our friend, fellow Skålleague and UK National Treasurer John Watts who passed away peacefully during the afternoon of Wednesday, 8 March 2017.

We extend our heartfelt sympathies and condolences to John's wife, Lynn, his daughter Amanda, family and friends.

Some of you may remember Richard Hawkes who sadly past away peacefully on 28 February 2017.

Richard was a long-time supporter of Skål as the husband of the late Joan Hawkes, past President of London. Many people will remember the joyful kind Gentleman Richard.

NEW MEMBER

We'd like to give a warm Skål welcome to Julie Oliphant who is Ron Brooker's daughter. She runs a hotel in Scotland with her husband and her email address is: julie@collhotel.com. Her postal address is: Coll Hotel, Arinagour, Isle of Coll, Argyll, PA78 6SZ. Tel: 01879 230334.

BIRTHDAY BLACKBOARD

Happy Birthday wishes this month go to:

Neville Grice; Christine Ayers and Anthony Gay.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, MONACO

Meeting many Skål members from around the world. Large contingents from New Zealand, Australia and Mexico. One delegate was from an island in the Pacific, another getting the first club in China going, with great difficulty from officials. He trained at Sussex University, Guildford. There was a lady from San Francisco who ran a B&B who was very way out. She wore dress/hats from the Charlston era. A couple from Christchurch, New Zealand, with a self-catering property that had no damage from the earthquakes. So many others. Different trades and countries.

Monaco, as you would expect, was expensive. A bus journey was a set price of 2 euros @ 1.06 to £ and the set price for a taxi 14 euros. Your registration badge gave you free bus travel and the buses covered most hotels to the Conference Centre.

As you gather from the above, I like people watching, and window shopping – all top labels. The saying “if you have to ask the price you can’t afford it” applies here. Fantastic displays. Just sit with a coffee to see a great array of coat hangers passing by with silly little dogs. Everyone lives in apartments so big dogs do not fit in.

Some of you (certainly in Eastbourne) know I charge around town by moped, so I was very interested in the hundreds of bikes parked up all over town. Workers do not live in Monte Carlo – too expensive – so have to commute each day.

Being here I must mention the Grand Prix. Going around on the bus you can recognize the hairpin corners, the hill, tunnel and around the harbour.

I thought the visit and experience was great and value for money.

Ron Brooker

DON CLARKE: AN APPRECIATION *by Graham Appleby*

Skål International Brighton and the Channel were well represented at Don's funeral on Tuesday 7th March. We made up around a third of the mourners at The Porchester Crematorium and afterwards at the Seagull Pub where we celebrated Don's life.

Few of us knew much about Don's earlier career in tourism as he was a very modest man and never talked about it. We discovered that he was Assistant Director of Leisure Services for Portsmouth city Council from the mid 1970s for around 20 years, responsible for Entertainments, Catering and Tourism. In that role it was his influence brought the Overlord Embroidery to Portsmouth resulting in the D-Day Museum to house it. He was particularly interested in D-Day events and played a leading role in the 40th anniversary celebrations. He worked hard to raise the profile of the city, encouraging national conferences to use its facilities, arranging mutual exhibition exchanges with French channel ports especially Le Havre and Cherbourg. On one occasion taking two English "Bobbies", A Rose and Thistle pipe band and a school choir to participate in a tour around the town of Le Havre.

Lyn Sutherland, who supplied much of the above information, worked for Don and says there are still managers in Portsmouth who remember him as "the best boss they had ever had". When he retired he used his creative talent to produce many imaginative items just some of which were on display at the wake, all done without the help of a computer.

Don was born in Leicester and he and Florence were married in Newcastle in 1953 and worked subsequently for, among others, Derby and Bedford Councils. He joined the newly formed Skål Club of Portsmouth in 1983-4 and served on the council but did not hold office. When that club closed Don elected to transfer to Brighton and made many friends here.

When Florence died in January last year they had nearly reached their 63rd wedding anniversary. Those of us who came across Don from then on saw a different man who, although he was making plans as late as last November, would never be content until he was reunited with Florence.

He was a lovely man and will be greatly missed by us all.

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

FRIDAY 28 April – Skäl International Day – hints of Hyderabad in an early dinner at the Old Tollgate Hotel, Bramber. Peter Sargent and his team will do us proud I'm sure and the price will be in the usual range as we're not taking up his Sunday spaces this year!

SATURDAY 20 May – Restaurant du Cap in Escalles, France. Those with long memories will know of this super restaurant. We're also investigating the possibilities of a stop-over at the hotel just a step away in the village.

THURSDAY 15 June – Fish and chips and a trip on the Spa Valley Railway, Tunbridge Wells. Martin Hayley is looking to see if he can include a visit to a workshop or shed that the railway buffs can get excited about.

SUNDAY 16 July – President's Garden Party which will be at The Old Rectory, Litlington. A buffet lunch and naturally the weather will be kind. The event is open to family and friends as generally are all our functions.

AUGUST- usually a joint meeting and this time to be arranged by Southampton. They have decided to make their President's Night later in the year the 'joint' meeting so Martin is working on Edward Lewis to have afternoon tea on **Saturday 19 August** at the Lansdowne during 'Air Borne'. This happened a couple of years ago and was very enjoyable. There's trains to Eastbourne, 12a bus from Brighton stops at the Winter Gardens or there's 'park & ride' at the Sovereign Centre which will drop you at the pier. The seafront is closed off and town parking will be at a premium.

FRIDAY 22 September – SUNDAY 24 September- this is the UK National being held in Eastbourne, centred on the Lansdowne Hotel. Leaflets and brochures will be available shortly. We're looking for volunteers for a steering party. Eric Etienne is doing the bulk of the work through his company but it would be good to get Members' ideas too. So don't be shy. Help.

OCTOBER- Martin is pursuing skittles at the usual Barcombe venue and is hoping for a menu choice acceptable to all. The pub was under new management last year so may have settled down now.

SATURDAY 11 November- Gala Night!! Cooden Beach Hotel is the venue and having undergone a 'refurb' in the spring our dining room may be a little different. Price and brochure with meal choices will be available soon. How about getting a table of friends/family together? Do you want to dance or just listen? Have your say soonest.

SATURDAY 2 December – (Christmas?) lunch at The Old Rectory, 12.30 for 1pm and yes, there will be bread & butter pudding.

The AGM in January 2018 is likely to be Sunday 28 January as being the closest to Burns Night. However, your Treasurer has a big birthday the next day which may be celebrated over the weekend instead.

Get those dates on the calendar.

To: Philip Ayers, The Old Rectory, Litlington, Polegate, East Sussex BN26 5RB

I/We will/will not be attending the International Day dinner on Friday, 28 April at the Old Tollgate Hotel, Bramber BN44 3WE. Tel: 01903 879494. Time: 6.30 for 7pm.
Price: £28.00 per person.

My guest/s is/are

My cheque for £ is enclosed being £28.00 per person. *(Cheques should be made payable to Skål International Brighton)*

OR

Internet Transfer to Club Account:

Account Name: Skal International Brighton
Account No: 54205181
Sort Code: 09-01-55 (Santander)

NAME:

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I/We will/will not bring a raffle prize. **Replies and payment to Philip by 21 April please.**