



UPA Colworth

Editorial

Welcome to the early summer edition of the newsletter – with some interesting articles, I think. Not the least of which is the news about the reinstatement of the UPA Colworth Website (see below). As well as the usual reports of trips and visits we have a Scot's view of Bannockburn – what more could you want?

I'm not a big fan of barbecues. It's always a challenge to get the right balance between killing the salmonella in the chicken leg and creating polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in the charred skin. Failure on the first count would spoil the party somewhat, and on the latter there might be longer term consequences. I was therefore pleased to read that there is now scientific evidence that marinating the meat in beer significantly reduces PAH formation. Apparently the antioxidants present in beer (particularly the darker brews) mop up the free radicals that create the PAHS. This looks to me something worth pursuing. Guinness sounds ideal; Citra (which I know is very popular with some of our members), rather less so. Give it a try and please report back. Mind you, there's still the rain to contend with.

I also note that Blencathra, the mountain east of Keswick, is for sale. At £1.7m. You also get to be Lord of the Manor of Threlkeld. The UPA Rambling Group could have a whip-round. (They'd have to share the title.) Have a good summer – and don't burn the meat.

UPA Colworth Website Relunched

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the UPA Colworth website. The browser address bar shows www.colworthupac.co.uk. The website header features the Unilever logo and the text "Unilever Pensioners Association - Colworth". Below the header is a navigation menu with tabs for Home, What's New, Events, Ramblers, Committee, Reports & Newsletters, Admin, and Contact Us. The main content area is titled "Welcome to UPA-Colworth Website" and contains the following text:

The objectives of the association are to promote social and recreational activities amongst Colworth retirees and any Unilever pensioner living within 30 miles of the Unilever Colworth Research Laboratory located at Sharnbrook, Bedford.

As a member of the association you are invited to participate in the organised social, rambling and other events. These events are described on other pages of this website. You will also become a member of Colworth Social Club. Association membership will provide opportunities to catch up on old friends and to make new ones.

If you would like to join the association, then check your eligibility which is detailed in the constitution document on this site and then request an application form from the Association Secretary. (See Contact Us page.)

Information on recent events within the association can be found via the "Reports & Newsletters" Page.

Please note that this site uses cookies

On the left side of the page, there is a "Member Login" section with a form containing the following fields:

- Member Login
- Username * (input field containing "upac")
- Password * (input field with masked characters)
- Log in button

Members should by now be aware that the new UPA Colworth website has been launched. Information is easily accessed by clicking tabs on the home screen (shown above). Top-level information is available without a password but to obtain details of events and trips etc you must log in. Instructions have been sent out to all members but additional copies may be obtained from the association secretary.

Very many thanks to Mike Quickenden and Janet Westcott for their efforts in setting this up.

Colworth Choir Rocks at the Royal Festival Hall

It was an exciting moment when 65 of us boarded the coach to London on the afternoon of March 10th.

We were on our way to perform at the Royal Festival Hall! We arrived at 5pm and made our way to the venue, which we entered via the “artists” entrance. We were then shown to our dressing rooms and by 6pm we had our “stage call” and were seated in the choir stalls at the back of the stage.

That is when the realisation began after hearing and feeling the power and emotion of the singers rehearsing – and we were going to be a part of it. We had a quick run-through. The rehearsal, led by the musical director, Daniel Thomas, was akin to a whirlwind.

The doors opened at 7:30pm and it was great to see some familiar faces in the audience. The show started with traditional gospel and gathered energy and pace with our accompanying songs: “Lifted Up”, “Running for the Train”, “No Limits”, ending up with the last song of the night led by Israel J Allen singing “I Believe”. Watch us [here](#).

We all agreed it was a night to remember – such an amazing and enjoyable experience.

The date of our next performance with other choirs is 16th June at the Royal & Derngate, Northampton.



Sheila Hemingway via Lisa Corp

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Born in the USA



We'd been intending to have a holiday in the USA for years. My wife, Debby, had never been, and my brother, who lives in Charlottesville, Virginia, kept inviting us over. Being retired is pretty busy, but we finally got on with planning and focussed on going “leaf-peeping” in New England.

Whilst there, we wanted to do a bit of walking, so set off one day to ascend Camel's Hump (4,083ft) on the North Ridge Trail near Waterbury in Vermont. A great walk (but more Boots & Socks than Crawlers, Doug) so feeling virtuous, and being close-ish to the factory, a Ben-&Jerry's reward seemed appropriate.

Some of you may recall that I spent a number of very happy years in the Ice Cream Application Unit in the mid-90s. (This was long before Unilever acquired B&Js – I was teaching physics by that time.)

We rolled-up at the factory and whilst sampling a tub of choc-chip cookie dough and one of the (local speciality) Maple Syrup flavour, I noticed that there was one final tour of the factory available that day – only \$3 for seniors, so the decision was made. All very nostalgic, seeing mixing vessels, ice cream freezers, tub-filling etc. Not surprisingly, no photos allowed in the manufacturing hall, but the accompanying pictures set the scene.

Even more interesting was talking to the guide – a retired employee: despite the very different approaches of the “hippy-influenced” founders, the feeling was that the acquisition by Unilever had been good news: very little interference and access to investment money which would never have been available otherwise.

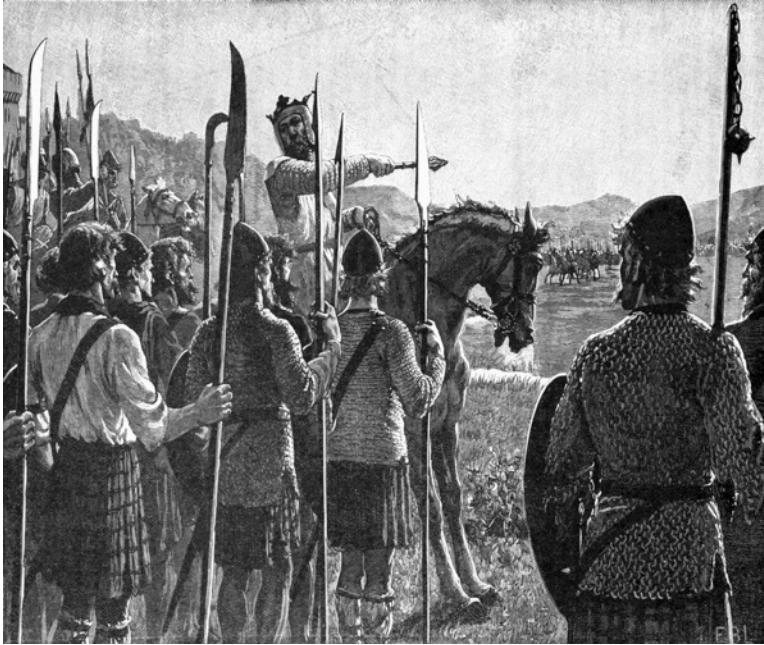
I'm sure their performance supports our share price and results, and the ice cream is good too!

Terry Horsman



Bannockburn – 700 years on

OK! It might be 700 years ago but we Scots never forget a victory over the “Auld Enemy”. June 23rd/24th marks the anniversary of the Battle of Bannockburn, Scotland’s greatest victory, when Robert the Bruce sent King Edward II’s army homeward “tae think again” – a tale retold in the anthem “Flower of Scotland” sung at every Scottish rugby and football international.



Robert the Bruce addressing his troops at Bannockburn

In 1296 the English king Edward I (Hammer of the Scots), angry that Scotland had signed a treaty with France (England’s enemy), marched north with his army. He paused at Berwick-upon-Tweed, then Scotland’s greatest seaport, ransacked the town, and butchered 17,000 men, women and children ordering their bodies to be left to rot in the streets as a warning to other Scots. He then moved north defeating the Scots at Dunbar, laying waste to large areas of the country, captured the Scottish king and announced that he, Edward, and he alone, ruled Scotland. All Scottish lords, chiefs, bishops and landowners had to travel south to Berwick to swear loyalty to him and sign a document known as the Ragman Roll (the origin of the term “rigmarole” – a lengthy and unnecessarily complicated procedure).

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The Scots were not happy with this situation and an uprising grew under the leadership of William Wallace (portrayed by Mel Gibson in the Hollywood film “Braveheart”). With victories and defeats on both sides Wallace was eventually captured, tried as a traitor against the English king and brutally hanged. One of Wallace’s supporters was Robert Bruce, Earl of Carrick, a younger member of the Bruce family who claimed a right to the Scottish throne. He had been a playboy, born with a silver spoon in his mouth and at one time a favourite of Edward I (who is reputed to have even paid off some of his gambling debts). However, after Wallace’s death, Bruce turned against Edward, declared himself King of Scotland and was crowned King Robert of Scots in 1306 though he was king in name only as the land was still held by the occupying English troops. News of the coronation brought Edward and his army north again and a series of swift victories on the English side saw the new king on the run. Much of Bruce’s future campaign took the form of guerrilla warfare with progressive reduction of the occupying English garrison. On his way north again in 1307 Edward, “Hammer of the Scots”, died leaving the fight to be carried on by his son Edward II.

By 1314 just two major strategic fortresses remained in English hands, one of them being Stirling Castle controlling the crossing of the river Forth. Edward II, aware that this renowned stronghold must not be lost, gathered together an army of 16,000 men and 1,000 horses and marched north. Bruce, who previously had avoided pitched battles now had no option but to face the English army head on. Although his army numbered less than half that of the English, Bruce used the natural terrain to the south of Stirling Castle to his advantage, positioning his army in the woodland through which the road to the town passed and forcing the English to fight on ground hemmed in by marshland and the Bannock burn (stream). After two days of fighting the English were forced to flee and thousands drowned trying to cross the steep sided burn.

This dramatic victory marked the turning point in the First War of Scottish Independence but it would not be until 14 years later with the signing of the Treaty of Edinburgh–Northampton that the English crown would recognise the Kingdom of Scotland as a fully independent nation.

Now 700 years on Scotland is “fighting” for Independence again. Is Alex Salmond the new “Robert the Bruce” or will he be the one having “tae think again”? ■

A Right Royal Experience

A full coach of UPA/Colworth members arrived mid-morning at Kensington Park and, with umbrellas quickly opened, walked up the gentle incline of Broad Walk towards Kensington Palace to be met by our Blue Badge Guide and a very fine statue of Queen Victoria designed and sculpted by her talented daughter Princess Louise.



Rain was soon forgotten as we entered the Palace to hear our guide introduce us to Palace history before spending the morning in a leisurely tour of the Kings and Queens State apartments emphasising the “Glorious Georgian” period together with artefacts of Queen Victoria’s early reign and family life.

Palace staff dressed in splendid period costume were always on hand to answer our many questions.

Highlights included the beautifully appointed Cupola Room where famous musicians, including Frederic Handel, entertained Royal residents, whilst the King’s Drawing Room – the inner sanctum for any visitor – was the place to enjoy fine wines and where fortunes could be won and lost on the gaming tables. The Queen’s Apartments included a wonderful display of dresses worn by Queen Elizabeth, Princess Margaret and Diana Princess of Wales whilst Queen Victoria’s apartments featured many displays of toys and nursery facilities enjoyed by her children. We also viewed a stunning glass representation of the Crystal Palace which attracted six million visitors to the Great Exhibition of 1851.



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After lunch in the Palace Café – or a picnic in the park for a (very) few hardy souls – our guide led a short tour of the Palace perimeter including the magnificent entrance gates at which many thousands of visitors, saddened by the tragic death of Princess Diana, had laid flowers and left messages of sympathy.

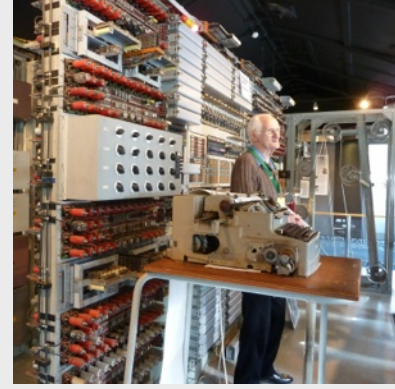
Then crossing Kensington Church Street the bustle and buzz of busy modern life was instantly replaced by the tranquil, peaceful world of period residences, modern mews and well tended gardens. We had entered “Old (and Royal) Kensington” to enjoy a delightful tour of its many attractions.



Houses in Holland Street with minimum window frames were the result of 18th century “Health and Safety” to reduce fire risk whilst bricked up window spaces were a creative attempt to avoid window tax – the origin of the phrase “daylight robbery”. Kensington Square, an area surely the quietest and most relaxing of all London Squares, featured beautiful period houses with superb communal gardens to match.

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Bletchley Park



February 26th dawned fair but cold – the sun was shining as 30+ pensioners headed towards the famous Home of the Codebreakers at Bletchley Park. Many of us felt that this venue was reminiscent of another research establishment based at a stately home site.

We were given a very informative introduction and tour around the heritage site by one of the knowledgeable guides. After this we enjoyed a tasty hot lunch in the attractive dining room, and then ventured forth in small groups. We were each armed with a hand-held multimedia guide which enabled us to gain further insights into the workings and (literally) life-saving discoveries of those who cracked the codes. Of particular interest were the WW2 codebreaking huts, the reconstructed Bombe and Enigma machines and displays, and the Alan Turing sculpture.

By 4pm most of us were “coded-out” and our brains were hurting. But it was a fascinating day out, and a site that really deserves at least one more visit to be able to fully appreciate just what went on there.

Terry Horsman



A Right Royal Experience – Continued from page 4

Addresses such as Canning Place, and De Vere Mews were illustrative of London’s rich heritage of town architecture and love of English gardens – a heritage well illustrated by a former residence of Anthony Armstrong-Jones having a magnificent Wisteria trained to cover the house front in wonderfully artistic fashion. The only pub in the area – The Builders Arms – was a very attractive proposition for afternoon refreshment but sadly time did not allow.

With a visit to the beautiful St Mary Abbots Church and School and yet another encounter with stunning cottages and gardens close to Kensington High Street, we made our way back to board the coach for our homeward journey. A Right Royal Experience had proved a memorable outing for all of us.

Barrie Hall



Forthcoming Events

July 3rd Colworth Supper (**Invitations have been sent out**)
Aug 11th BBC Studio tour (London) – **Now Booking**
Oct 8th Vineyard and Leatherhead HO visit – **Diary Date**

Please note that the **ww1 Holiday** planned for October / November 2014 has been cancelled due to a low level of interest from members.

Due to ill-health of the organising member no **Lunch Clubs** have been offered recently. However, it is proposed to hold a Lunch / Afternoon Tea at Knuston Hall, Rushden, in conjunction with a ww1 centenary talk. The date will likely be in September so watch for further announcement.

2015 Diary Date:

July 2nd Summer Holiday – Bristol

Walking Programme

June 13th Boots & Socks (led by Geoff & Robina Gilpin)
July 9th Crawlers (led by Dudley Ferdinando)
July 16th Boots & Socks (led by Mick & Chris Lawry)
Aug 1st Crawlers (led by Dave & Jackie Martin)
Aug 20th Boots & Socks AwayDay, Chipping Norton (led by Stewart Rainbow)

The Lakes Walking Holiday, 2014



Sunday April 6th 2014 saw 41 members of the UPAC Rambling Group travel up to The Lake District to partake in daily walks, companionship, witty banter and nightly fun. The weather forecast was very iffy so our expectations were not too high. With this in mind we could only be pleasantly surprised.

Olwyn Wishart

Obituaries

With great sadness we report the deaths of **Elizabeth (Betty) Craig, David Deeley, John Judge, Margaret Hodgkin** and **Jane Horne**. **Betty** joined Colworth in 1965, retiring in 1984. She worked in Animal Nutrition for seven years before becoming a Seed Analyst in Crop Science. **David** was husband of Phyllis who many will know as secretary to Drs L.Morris, P.Kyle and A.Evenson. She retired from Analytical in 1994. **John** joined Colworth in 1967 working in Plant Science. He retired in 2001, his last job being in Measurement Science. His wife, Kath, also worked in Colworth in Ice Cream. **Margaret** was 93 years old and the widow of Roland who worked in Security. **Jane** worked in the Colworth shop and was married to Brian, Grounds Maintenance manager.

Our thoughts are with their families.

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