

UPA report

News from Unilever pensioners across the UK

Ashford

Our event organiser has been keeping active with members still walking, stitching, sewing and going to club meetings and pub lunches. Our meeting on 15 September featured a particularly interesting talk from a Guide Dog for the Blind walker, accompanied by two of the dogs!

We have been to see a number of musicals: 'The Sound of Music', 'Wicked' and the spectacular 'Lord of the Rings' in London, and 'Aspects of Love' in Canterbury. We have also visited Kew and Whipsnade, and taken a 'flight' on the London Eye (along with an excellent boat trip and lunch along the Thames). We enjoyed a walk around Folkestone – followed by afternoon tea at the Grand – so much we are planning to do it again next year.

Forty-nine of us went on a splendid 5-day holiday to Bodelwyddan Castle in North Wales. We went up the Great Orme in Llandudno (but decided to drive past Snowdon!).

So you see we are still managing to enjoy life. Our future plans include a visit to Frogmore House, a trip to see "Calendar Girls" in Canterbury in November (that has woken the men up), and of course the Christmas Lunch in December.



Lunch on the Thames

Colworth

The highlights of the year were probably our visits to the Gardens at Highgrove and a walking break in February in the Lake District.

Highgrove House is the private home of HRH The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall, and its garden opens on application to 'specially invited guests'. After applying some time ago (the wait can last five years) we were invited in April. We then renewed our application – only 25 people are invited on any tour – and were delighted to receive another invitation in July.

The sundial garden and the terrace were stunning, with a wonderful variety of plants. Another highlight was the 'carpet garden' (based on a Turkish style carpet at Highgrove), originally created for the 2001 Chelsea Flower Show. Other areas included a wild flower meadow, an azalea walk, a sanctuary and an arboretum. As we still have many members who would like to go, we have renewed our application yet again.

Pensioners climbing from Ullswater to Grisedale Tarn on a nice day is a challenge. With a ferocious wind and driving rain, it became 'Mission Impossible'. After a couple of the smaller members of our party had been blown off the path,

and others forced to lie down on one of the exposed areas, we retreated with the Tarn still half a mile away. Despite the wind and rain, we walked every day with no more scares. In fact, the odd ray of sunshine illuminated our walks to Brothers Water and Angle Tarn. The hotel was excellent, and the camaraderie great. We are already booked again for 2009!



'We must be mad!'

Gloucester

In February, 30 of us travelled to Cardiff to see the Holiday on Ice show 'Romanza' which, combined with some 'retail therapy' in the city, proved an excellent day out. Our spring outing was to Salisbury, whose cathedral (which has the tallest spire in Britain) was celebrating the 750th anniversary of its dedication. This is a beautiful city, well worth a visit – and the sun shone for us!

Instead of a seaside trip this year, 57 of us enjoyed a Lochs & Glen holiday to Scotland, including a visit to the Edinburgh Tattoo. Again, the elements were kind, and although we went fully prepared for wet weather, no raincoats were needed as we sat on a balmy evening to enjoy the spectacle. Our other daily excursions included a steamship trip to Loch Katrine.

In November, 42 of us are off to Eastbourne on a 5-day 'Turkey & Tinsel' break, and our year will close in December with our Christmas lunches and concert.

We have had several successful re-union lunches in spring and autumn. These are great opportunities for our members to meet up with old friends and colleagues, and reminisce about the 'good old days'.

At our AGM, we welcomed Colin Matthews from the Unilever Insurance Department, who gave an excellent presentation. The committee was re-elected en bloc, so we look forward to serving the Association to the best of our ability for another year.



On the banks of Loch Lomond

Leeds

UPA Leeds have had another successful year with numerous organised events from our annual overseas outing (Amsterdam in June), to walks and visits to local places of interest, and not forgetting our popular lunches, where members have the opportunity to catch up on news from ex colleagues.

Our AGM last year was once again the single largest attended event organised by the group. The guest speaker was Nigel Smith of Tennants auctioneers, who shared lots of amusing anecdotes from his career in the antiques business. This was then followed by an absorbing and entertaining talk on antiques which members had brought for interest and valuation. Just like the Antiques Roadshow (on which Nigel has appeared), there were both disappointments and pleasant surprises for the owners.

Two founder members of the committee stepped down during the year, Andrew Mostyn and Mike Steed, along with our Secretary, Gerald Brook. Fortunately, we have been able to recruit Peter Stancliffe as Secretary, and Diane Lawton – yes, finally another woman on the committee! The Chairman, Leon Mayers and fellow Officers, David Dale and Dave Cockcroft, offer them a warm welcome.

We are already planning new and exciting events for 2009. Although we now have a core membership of loyal and enthusiastic pensioners, we are always keen to welcome new members. So, if you would like to renew old acquaintances, enjoy a chat over a pleasant lunch or a gentle walk in the countryside, do join us using the contact details on the back page.



At the Lakeland Hotel, Monnikendam, Holland

London

The club has had a busy year in 2008, including day trips, holidays, lunches in London and visits to the new Unilever headquarters.

The day trips were a day out at the races in Folkestone and a visit to Hever Castle, which during Tudor times was the home of Anne Boleyn. Our final trip of the year will be to St Albans and Hatfield House.

Our first holiday was to Northumberland in April and included a trip to Alnwick Castle, visits to two Roman forts along Hadrian's Wall, as well as days at the Beamish Open Air Museum, Bamburgh and the Farne Islands.

In June, we stayed in Chester, visiting Port Sunlight and going to Liverpool by the 'ferry across the Mersey'. Our last holiday for 2008 was to Poland where we visited Krakow and Zakopane.

This year we also held our AGM and lunch at Drapers Hall, which was attended by 170 members, some of whom visited the British Library or the Mansion House before the meeting. During the summer, we arranged a series of visits to the new Unilever Headquarters (100 Victoria Embankment – '100VE' – previously known as Unilever House) where we enjoyed seeing the new building.

We are now working on our 2009 programme, which we hope will include holidays to East Anglia and Tuscany.



At Hever Castle

Warrington

UPA Warrington continues to thrive – we are pleased to report that last year we had an excellent turnout for our Christmas lunch at Statham Lodge – over 100 members joined us for what we were told was the best party ever!

Our theatre trips and monthly lunch meetings are still popular but not so well attended as in previous years – probably due to rising costs of food and fuel which unfortunately affect most of our events. We also enjoyed a day out at York followed by an excellent evening meal at the Calf's Head at Worston (near Clitheroe) on our return journey. Everyone who attended enjoyed the day, but once again the turnout was lower than expected.

Our main event this year was a holiday in Edinburgh. We took the scenic route crossing the border at Gretna, stopping for lunch at Moffat, before continuing our journey to Edinburgh. Our hotel was excellent – only 10 minutes away from the centre, with friendly and helpful staff and delicious food. Every day we did something new and interesting, including a guided tour of Edinburgh, a visit to the Royal Yacht Britannia and of course the Military Tattoo in the castle grounds. All too soon we had to return to Warrington – stopping at Melrose for an opportunity to do some shopping.



The Military Tattoo

Wirral

During the past twelve months, UPA Wirral has continued to provide a varied programme of events for its members. We aim to organise at least three events a month, and this seems to satisfy the members taking part. The support for the events has been, once again, phenomenal.

The autumn 2007 schedule began with a short break in Scarborough, which attracted the usual coach load of 50 members and friends. As the nights drew in, we organised more indoor activities – these have included the ever-popular quizzes and film matinees held in the Lever Club in Port Sunlight. A trip to Manchester to see 'Zorro – the Musical' was also very well attended.

The New Year began with a new pursuit of curling (which everyone enjoyed), closely followed with a spot of ten-pin bowling. These 'strenuous' events were designed to get the blood flowing again. Day trips to Windermere, Yorkshire Dales, Llandudno and the Electric Mountain in North Wales were also well attended.

Our short breaks have included Norfolk and Brighton, and we have just returned from our longer stay in Sicily. Needless to say, the monthly luncheon clubs continue to flourish.



The trip to Norfolk

Useful contact details

Here in one place are the contact details you need should you have any questions. Please cut it out and keep it somewhere safe.

Cynthia Elliott, Pensioners Liaison Manager

(for information about the Unilever UK Pensioners Association or any of the clubs featured)

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Springfield Drive
Leatherhead, KT22 7GR

Please note change of address from Walton.

Trustees

If you feel you need to contact the Trustees directly, please contact the Chair, Liz Airey. You can write to Liz care of the following address:

Address: Unilever UK Pensions
Unilever House
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Unilever State Benefits Helpline

(for any queries about State benefits)

01494 729796

Unilever Pensions Team

(for any queries about your pension, or to let us know a change to your personal details)

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(for any queries about how tax applies to your pension)

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