



FLAG News

Registered Charity No. : 1165681

Spring 2018, Issue No 39

Dates for your Diary 2018

3rd May

Drop in

10th May

Drop in

17th May

Tea/Coffee/Cake
Afternoon

24th May

Drop in

31st May

AGM / Supper

7th June

Drop in

14th June

Drop in

21st June

Tea/Coffee/Cake
Afternoon

28th June

Drop in

5th July

Drop in

12th July

Committee Meeting

(Please note dates
are subject to
change)

Spring ?

I started on this, the Spring 2018 edition of FLAG's Newsletter on the 1st of March, which is officially the first day of spring. However as I look out of my window into my garden it is covered in snow. I think this is the worse snow we have had for a good few years now. Laura has cancelled today's Committee Meeting, which I am grateful for, as I wasn't looking forward to going out. By the time you read this it should be early April and a lot warmer. I hope you all managed to keep safe and warm.

by Tracey Brightman.

FLAG's new promotional banner



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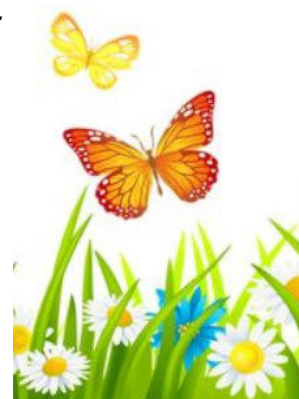
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FLAG's "Children in Need" sponsored Word search.

The 2017 **Children in Need** event was on Friday the 17th of November. **Kerry S** suggested that FLAG do something to raise money for them. So we decided to have a sponsored **WORD SEARCH** that took place at FLAG's Drop-in Afternoon on the 9th November.

Our Word Searchers raised £92.00 for "Children in Need". A big thank you to them and the people who sponsored them.

There were six word searchers on the day. Their names are hidden in the word search grid below, can you find them. The solution is on the last page.



ANN HANNAH KAYE KELLY KERRY LINDA

T	B	Z	P	I	R	N	B	P	U	W	C	G	F	D
L	Y	H	X	V	N	P	L	A	M	N	Y	Y	B	V
E	K	J	T	A	J	Y	X	P	T	M	H	P	K	V
M	O	M	Q	V	K	B	S	A	G	O	G	M	A	W
K	B	L	M	X	Q	K	M	Y	P	A	Y	L	Y	R
I	S	R	G	L	A	L	E	W	X	Y	R	X	E	U
N	N	P	L	X	K	R	G	R	L	Y	D	X	F	L
Y	K	L	B	A	A	T	X	L	R	N	G	Y	W	U
V	R	D	N	P	A	A	E	L	Z	Y	F	N	V	N
F	K	O	O	J	U	K	E	Y	I	S	Y	S	M	W
Z	X	O	B	U	D	E	C	F	Z	N	V	L	G	D
R	D	B	T	A	T	E	F	P	O	O	D	W	G	W
V	X	H	A	N	N	A	H	W	H	Q	T	A	R	B
Y	Q	B	T	R	Q	N	V	G	G	U	E	B	E	C
A	E	N	D	T	Y	H	F	H	R	C	R	F	U	V

Houses of Parliament trip.

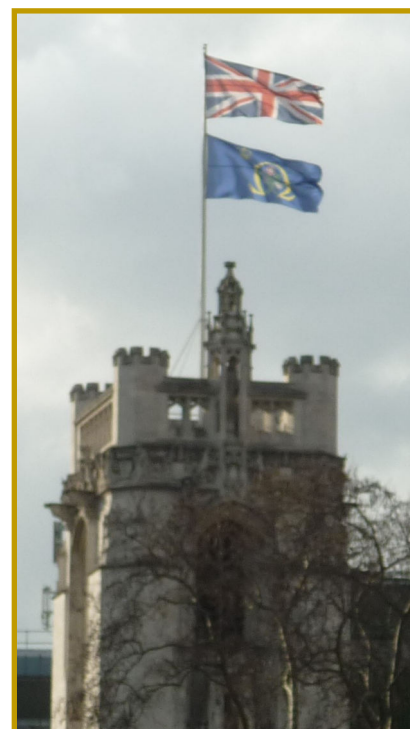
12th February 2018.

Thirty-three eager FLAG members gathered early in the morning at Priory Methodist Church's car park for the start of our coach trip to the **Houses of Parliament**. It was a cold morning, the sun was shining, but it was low in the sky making driving difficult. We did not have our usual Motts driver, Steve, but another driver called Martin. We got under way in good time but with the usual traffic in **London** we did not arrive until gone mid-day and our tour was supposed to start at 12.30.

Gordon says
We didn't have Steve,
our usual driver.

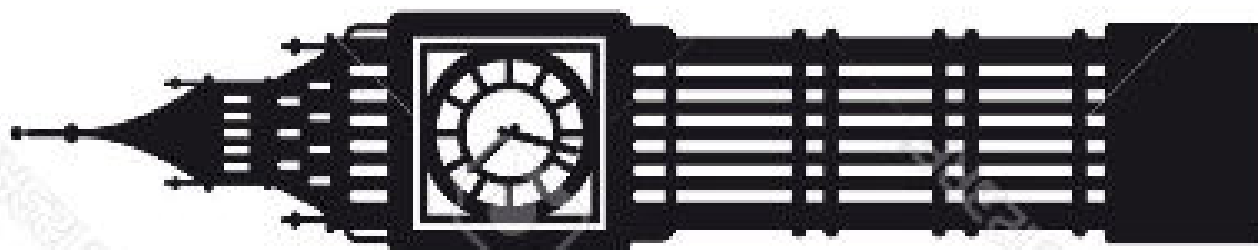


Because of security considerations we had to park along **Millbank** which was quite a way from the **Houses of Parliament** and a few members struggled with the walk. At the Visitors Entrance we had to undergo extensive security checks and we were all given a visitor's security pass which had to be worn throughout the visit. A Security Officer explained to us what was happening and what we could or couldn't bring into the building. Some Police Officers at Parliament carried guns. They carry these to keep everyone safe and would only be used in an emergency.



Houses of Parliament trip, continued.

As we walked to **Westminster Hall** we were able to look up and see **Big Ben**, which as you can see in the photo is almost totally covered with scaffolding. The **Elizabeth Tower** and the **Great Clock** are being renovated and updated over the next four years at a cost of £61million.



Houses of Parliament trip, continued.

At **Westminster Hall** we were relieved to find the much needed toilets. We eventually gathered in the **Hall** to be split into 2 groups and at 1.15pm, a little bit late, we finally began our guided tours. While the more able-bodied went up the steps into **St Stephens Hall** the wheelchair users and wobbly walkers took a detour to the lifts. This was OK for wheelchair users but was quite a long detour for the walkers.

***Westminster Hall** is the oldest building on the site and was completed in 1099. It is where Queen Elizabeth I had her Coronation Banquet and Guy Fawkes and Charles I were tried. Today it is used for public events and ceremonies.*

***St Stephens Hall** is where Prime Minister, Spencer Perceval, was assassinated in 1812.*



Westminster Hall

Back together, our tour guide, **Philip**, took us along to the **Central Lobby** which is halfway between the **House of Commons** and the **House of Lords**. You may have seen news reporters on TV interviewing MP's here. Statues of Kings and Queens of England and Scotland look down from the arches surrounding the high windows.

Gordon says

I'm really looking forward to seeing the Houses of Parliament.

*The **Central Lobby** is where any member of the public can come along to visit or lobby Members of Parliament or Members of the House of Lords.*



Houses of Parliament trip, continued.

We made our way down the **Peer's Corridor** to the **Peer's Lobby** before reaching the **House of Lords Chamber**. The Chamber is grandly decorated with its furnishings mainly red. It is also decorated with three million pounds worth of Welsh gold. Our guide, Philip, told us that each day a member comes to the **House of Lords** he or she is paid £300.00. Very nice.



House of Lords Chamber

Where the Queen makes her State Opening of Parliament speech.

House of Commons Chamber

This is the place where the UK's Members of Parliament pass laws, question government ministers and debate the issues of the day.



Gordon says

I've not been here before. Its really, really good.

We turned around and went back through to the **Central Lobby** and across to the **Members Corridor** and **Members Lobby**, where at each corner stands a statue of a prominent Prime Minister of the 20th Century, namely David Lloyd George, Winston Churchill, Margaret Thatcher and Clement Attlee. We went under the **Churchill Arch** and through a door, the one that **Black Rod** knocks at each State Opening of Parliament, and into the **House of Commons Chamber**. This room is a simpler and plainer design as it was rebuilt after heavy bombing during the second world war at a time of budget constraints. It has its recognisable green seats and wooden panelling.



Houses of Parliament trip, continued.

We did not have time to look at the **Robing Room**, the **Prince's Chamber** or the **Royal Gallery** which was a shame as you can see by these pictures they look wonderful.

The **Robing Room** is where the Sovereign gets her Crown and Robes on before going into the House of Lords Chamber for the State Opening of Parliament.



The **Prince's Chamber** is staffed by doorkeepers and serves as a working ante-room to the **Lords Chamber**.



The **Royal Gallery** is the largest room in the Palace of Westminster. It is mostly used as a working space for Peers., but is also used for State Receptions, Dinners and Parliamentary Ceremonies.



We all thanked our guide **Philip**, although we didn't really need him as Matthew knew almost as much of the history of the place than **Philip** did.

Back in **Westminster Hall**, we had 30 minutes to visit the Café, the Gift Shop and the Toilets. I only managed two of them, I didn't have time to look into the Gift Shop.



Gordon says
At the Gift Shop I bought a small whiskey gift and a book about London..

Houses of Parliament trip, continued.



Tracey

During the tour, **Philip**, our tour guide, said that sitting on the **House of Commons** or **House of Lords** benches was strictly forbidden. Don't worry, Tracey, Lance and Carole didn't get carted away by Security. They were sitting on a replica bench in front of a poster in **Westminster Hall**.



Lance & Carole

At 3.30 it was time for all FLAG members to gather together and make their way back to the coach. Again it was quite a walk but there was nothing we could do about it. I had a great time apart from being a bit cold. I hope you all had a good time too. Thank you to our ever wonderful volunteers and also to Gordon Cooke for his comments about the trip.

by Tracey Brightman.



Gavin

Gordon says
At the end of the day my legs were aching.



Gordon says
I would give this trip a 9 out of 10.

FLAG's tour was sponsored by the Labour MP for Bedford **Mohammad Yasin**, who won the election in June 2017. You may remember he came to speak to FLAG members at one of our Thursday Afternoon gatherings last year. Mr Yasin also very kindly gave FLAG "**Wooden Golden Portcullis Ornament**" that can be hung on a Christmas Tree.



Mohammad Yasin MP

**Houses of Parliament trip.
12th February 2018.**



FLAG in the Community

Saturday 28th April	FLAG are at St Paul's Church Spring Fair - 10.00am to 2.00pm.
Monday 28th May	FLAG are at Sharnbrook Village Fete - 10.00am to 2.00pm.
Saturday 15th September	FLAG are at St Paul's Church Autumn Fair - 10.00am to 2.00pm.
Saturday ?? November	FLAG may be at Priory Methodist Church Fete - <i>Date & Time TBA.</i>
Saturday 17th November	FLAG are at St Paul's Church Winter Fair - 10.00am to 2.00pm.

FLAG Jumble Sale. 17th March 2017.

Jumble Sale

So Bernadette had this brilliant idea of raising funds for FLAG by having a **Jumble Sale**. The Committee agreed and the Small Hall at Priory Methodist was booked for Saturday the 17th March, leaflets were distributed, adverts were done and members and friends raided their wardrobes and cupboards for old clothes and bric-a-brac.

Jesmary and Roger Gaunt lent us two clothes rails. Brendan's sister Fiona and her partner Nick transported the rails to the church and back, did a bit of lifting and sorting clothes and Fiona put up about ten posters around the Newnham Avenue area. Thank you to them.

The day of the Jumble Sale arrived. At the door I took the 50p entry fees, Brendan ran the Raffle, Gavin served Tea/Coffee and Biscuits, Laura had a Craft Stall and Bernadette, Linda, Maggie, Julie and Ros sold the Jumble. We had about 24 members of the public through the door, unfortunately no FLAG members turned up, however it was a bitterly cold day with flurries of snow and maybe it was best to stay at home and keep warm.

At the end of the two hour sale we had a lot of Jumble left over and nowhere to store it so Bernadette, Linda, Maggie, Julie and Ros bagged it up and took it to the "Cash for Clothes" drop-off point next to "Go Outdoors" along Norse Road. They pay 50p per kilo for clean wearable clothes and shoes.

After adding up all of the money and taking into account expenses, like the hire of the Hall, FLAG ended up with a profit of £??????.

It was a lot of work to organize and run the event. A big thank you to all our volunteers who gave up their Saturday morning to support FLAG. I think we all agree that we won't be doing another Jumble Sale any time soon.

by Tracey Brightman.



Raffle Prizes and Winners.

Bottle of Shower Gel - Kayleigh.
Tin of Biscuits - Gavin.
Food & Wine Hamper - Tracey.
Perfume - Bernadette.
Bottle of Wine - Jo (member of public).
Fruit Hamper - Bernadette.

"Cash for Clothes" Statement.

We recover and buy unwanted reusable clothing for instant cash which we pay on the spot; the clothes are then sold on to second hand clothes shops in other parts of the world (Europe, Asia and Africa).

Easter Bonnet Bonanza.

On Thursday 29th March at our FLAG drop in FLAG members gathered to decorate Easter Bonnets/Stetsons in honour of Easter. We had feathers, psychedelic chicks, eggs, stickers, ribbons, and funky foam carrots galore!

Tracey Brightman was inspired by an Australian theme, using carrots instead of the traditional corks.

Of course Easter would not be Easter without chocolate! A large bar of Chocolate was awarded to the three most inventive creations, namely Tracey, Keith and Beverley.

If any members have any ideas of what activities they would like to do on a Thursday afternoon please come and tell us and we will see what we can do!

by Laura Peggs



Kelly



Tracey



Bernadette



Ann



Bernadette



Beverley



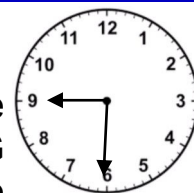
Gordon



Keith

Tips for Trips.

FLAG aims to hold three coach trips a year, while these events are always enjoyable they are often long and tiring. For this reason FLAG thought it may be useful to give our members some tips to make the most of their day.



Before the Journey

- Be aware of the times and place of pick up.
- Make sure you have everything you need for the trip.
- Arrive in good time for the coach - it does take time for everyone to board the coach, especially if you need to use the lift.

The Outwards Journey

- Drinks - while it is very important to keep hydrated, please remember the more water we drink the more we need the loo. We do not usually do loo breaks, the reason for this is, stopping for a toilet break would add time to the journey and would mean less time at our destination. The most common complaint we have from members is "*We did not have enough time there*".
- When the coach arrives at the destination please stay seated so the event organisers can give you instructions, such as when to be back at the coach and tickets can be sorted out.



The Trip

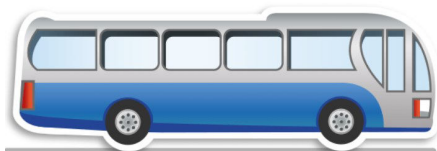
- People often like to go round in small groups or with friends, one of the most common problems is people getting separated. Take down a phone number of someone in your group then if you are split up you have a contact number. Tell members of the group if you are heading in a certain direction and make sure you have everyone before you head off.
- If you wish to go around with a volunteer just ask.
- It is a good idea to have the FLAG phone number in case you find yourself on your own or in case you need any other help.



07815 196357

The Return Journey

- Again be careful with what you drink as there are often no loos available when we get back.
- When the coach parks back at Bedford please remain seated while notices are given out.
- Make sure you have all your belongings when you leave the coach.



Hampton Court Palace

FLAG members went on a trip to Hampton Court Palace on the 12th of April. A report will be in the next issue.



Word Search Solution.

ANN
HANNAH
KAYE
KELLY
KERRY
LINDA

T	B	Z	P	I	R	N	B	P	U	W	C	G	F	D
L	Y	H	X	V	N	P	L	A	M	N	Y	Y	B	V
E	K	J	T	A	J	Y	X	P	T	M	H	P	K	V
M	O	M	Q	V	K	B	S	A	G	O	G	M	A	W
K	B	L	M	X	Q	K	M	Y	P	A	Y	L	Y	R
I	S	R	G	L	A	L	E	W	X	Y	R	X	E	U
N	N	P	L	X	K	R	G	R	L	Y	D	X	F	L
Y	K	L	B	A	A	T	X	L	R	N	G	Y	W	U
V	R	D	N	P	A	A	E	L	Z	Y	F	N	V	N
F	K	O	O	J	U	K	E	Y	I	S	Y	S	M	W
Z	X	O	B	U	D	E	C	F	Z	N	V	L	G	D
R	D	B	T	A	T	E	F	P	O	O	D	W	G	W
V	X	H	A	N	N	A	H	W	H	Q	T	A	R	B
Y	Q	B	T	R	Q	N	V	G	G	U	E	B	E	C
A	E	N	D	T	Y	H	F	H	R	C	R	F	U	V

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FLAG
Bedford



Friendship Link
& Action Group