

Meridian Friends

NEWSLETTER

News, Events, Holidays, Meetings for January, February, March 2012

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Dear Members,

A Happy New Year to all Meridian Friends. I am looking forward to 2012, organising some special events such as a Diamond Jubilee Party in June, strengthening my relationship with Angela Holidays and Sally Pullen of Travel Counsellors who has been organising members on a cruise to the Norwegian Fjords in May 2012.

The Christmas lunch at The Hermitage was a great success, the ambience at this now 4* hotel was fantastic, the food excellent and Sarah McNaughton entertained us well – a good old sing-along!



The venue for coffee in Poole – **Mixed Fillings**, 27 Kingland Crescent, Dolphin Centre is working well. We will continue using the upstairs section of this friendly, privately owned cafe. It is on the **left** as you **exit** The Dolphin Centre (by H Samuel's the jewellers).

Sea View Coaches day trips were extremely popular last year. The programme re-commences on Saturday 3rd March with Bletchley Park. I have a preview of the programme which looks great with a few new outings like "Kate Middleton Country" on Saturday 10th March, Westfield Stratford City Retail Park on Thursday 22nd March, Mystery Nautical on Tuesday 12th June and Hampton Court Flower Show on 6th and 8th July. I am waiting for the new guide to arrive, it should be available at coffee mornings in January.

Angela Holidays Summer Brochure was available late 2011. I have looked through and highlighted some of the European tours and UK Tours which look fantastic, including several for single travellers with no supplements and a large allocation of single rooms.

An impressive 150 tour brochure covering the months of April – October 2012 inclusive.

In the European section the following took my eye:

Page 82 **Connoisseurs Belgium** – Diamonds, Beer and Chocolates a day in Antwerp with a tour of Diamondland, a day in Leuven home of Stella Artois with a tour of the brewery and a day in Brussels with a visit to a chocolaterie. 4 nights dinner, bed a breakfast departing Thursday July 12th at The Novotel Mechelen £397 single room supplement £87.

Page 84 **Floriade and Southern Holland** – Floriade is an international horticultural exhibition held in Holland every ten years. The venue for 2012 is Venlo in Holland's north Limburg. Floriade will feature pavilions, themed show gardens, flowers, plants, trees and vegetables, combined with a cultural programme of music, dance, literature, theatre and art. The tour is combined with other excursions to Maastricht and the Mondo Verde Gardens, 's-Hertogenbosch capital of Brabant and Valkenburg. Departure dates May 06, June 17, July 29, Aug 19, Sept 23 staying at The Best Western Walram Hotel on the banks of the River Geul for 5 nights dinner, bed and breakfast £429 single room supplement £42.

Page 76 **The Rhine in Flames** The Rhine in Flames is a magical event attracting thousands of visitors. On the Saturday evening the tour joins a river steamer which, along with a large flotilla of steamers and small craft, slowly proceeds along the Rhine. As each village is passed, castles are internally illuminated to make it look as if they are on fire and you are treated to spectacular firework displays. Total 7 nights dinner, bed and breakfast in Assmannshausen (5) with overnight stops in Belgium (2). Departing Thursday 5 July £569, single room supplement £84.

Page 65 **Monet's Garden and The Normandy Coast** a courier conducted tour with a visit to Giverny and Monet's House. 3 nights dinner, bed and breakfast staying at The Hotel Kyriad in Rouen departing June 17 £339 and August 19 £322 single room supplement £57.



In the UK section:

Page 34 **Heart of England Singles Break** 44 single rooms available on this tour which visits Warwick and Warwick Castle, Worcester, The Malverns, Kidderminster, Bridgnorth, Shrewsbury, Telford, Stafford, Cannock Chase and Bourton-on-the-Water. Lots of lovely scenery! Staying at The Menzies Strathallen in Birmingham, which is well known and liked by members. Departing Friday June 1st for 4 nights dinner, bed and breakfast £309 no supplement!

Page 46 **A Cotswolds Singles Break including Bath** Cirencester, Stroud, Painswick Rococo Gardens, Gloucester, Stow-in-the-Wold and a cruise on a steamer along the Thames to Oxford. Departing

Thursday July 26th for 3 nights dinner, bed and breakfast staying at The Brook Madison Hotel in Stratton St Margaret £229 no supplement and 48 single rooms available.

Page 47 **The Malvern Spring Show** the Malvern Spring Gardening Show the first national RHS show of the year. Day two at the show with time in the Cotswolds and Gloucester on days 1 and 3. Staying at The Thistle Hotel 4* in Cheltenham for 2 nights dinner, bed and breakfast departing Thursday May 10 £198 single room supplement £30.

Page 58 **Bristol Singles Break** staying at the 4* The Grand by Thistle in the city centre. On this tour visit Bath, Cheddar, Weston Super Mare, Dunster, Cotswolds and spend a day with a local guide in Bristol including a visit to SS Great Britain. Departing Monday April 9th for 4 nights dinner, bed and breakfast £369 no single supplement 44 single rooms available.

Page 61 **London – Queen’s Diamond Jubilee** watch the Thames Diamond Jubilee Pageant to commemorate the Queen’s sixty year reign. Free time in London to please yourself on this special Bank Holiday weekend. Staying at The Hilton Paddington 4*, departing Saturday June 2nd for 2 nights bed and breakfast. £199, single room supplement £100.

Page 62 **London – The Houses of Parliament and Cabinet War Rooms** 2 day tour walking in Churchill’s footsteps during a visit to the Cabinet War Rooms and the Houses of Parliament for a tour, free time to explore before heading home. Departing Sunday September 23rd staying at The Thistle, Euston recently refurbished and 4* one night bed and breakfast £127 single room supplement £25

Planning Ahead and Booking Now

Crazy For You the musical by the Gershwin brothers at the Novello Theatre. This show has been nominated for six WhatsOnStage.com Awards, including **Best Actress in a Musical** (Clare Foster), **Best Actor in a Musical** (Sean Palmer), **Best Supporting Actress in a Musical** (Harriet Thorpe), **Best Supporting Actor in a Musical** (David Burt), **Best Choreographer** (Stephen Mear) & **Best Musical Revival**. It is my intention to organise a trip to see this show. Please let me know if you are interested then I know how many seats to reserve. I am thinking of taking the train from Bournemouth to Waterloo/Charing Cross and walking the short distance along the Strand to the theatre which is on The Aldwych.



CRUISE TO THE NORWEGIAN FJORDS FROM SOUTHAMPTON

ABOARD FRED OLSEN'S BALMORAL – 29 MAY 2012 FOR 8 NIGHTS

Members booked, a lovely group. Single cabins available. Discount from brochure price for Meridian Friends. Please ask Julie for full details



Starlight Express - on tour to Bournemouth, good seats reserved for the 7.30pm performance on 9th August 2012 at the BIC £33.50 *Starlight Express*, which was written for two of Lloyd-Webber's children as a tribute to the era of steam trains, is performed entirely on roller skates. The musical originally opened at the West End's Apollo Victoria on 27 March 1984, playing 7,406 performances during its 18-year run to 12 January 2002. The musical is billed as a "futuristic tale about love and hope in the face of adversity" which promises to "take you on the ride of a lifetime – with two hours of speed, spectacle, energy and turbo charged excitement, combined with an electrifying sound track, dazzling sets and costumes, extraordinary roller-choreography and some of Andrew Lloyd Webber's most memorable musical hits."

JANUARY

Monday 2nd January – Paignton at Leisure – “Cosy Break” departs with Angela Holidays.

Thursday 5th January 10.15 am Coffee at Mixed Fillings, 27 Kingland Crescent, Poole.

Upstairs in this friendly, lively cafe. Good coffee and a warm welcome.

Thursday 5th January 1 pm Organ Concert Pavillion Theatre Ballroom, Bournemouth an hour of light music £3.00

Tuesday 10th January 10.15 am Coffee at The Westbourne, Poole Road, Westbourne catch up with the latest news, see friends, coffee and cake £1.49. Meet Julie

Thursday 12th January 1 pm Organ Concert Pavillion Theatre Ballroom, Bournemouth an hour of light music £3.00

Tuesday 17th January 11.00 am Coffee at Boscombe Conservative Club, Havilland Road, BH1 4JW conveniently situated by the Boscombe Bus Station. Coffee and biscuits £1.25 meet Julie and other members for a chat and catch up with latest news.

Thursday 19th January 10.30 am Coffee at “THE SHIP”, CHRISTCHURCH. The Ship can be found in the centre of Christchurch High Street. Come along and meet Julie and other Meridian Friends.

Thursday 19th January 1 pm Organ Concert Pavillion Theatre Ballroom, Bournemouth an hour of light music £3.00

Saturday 21st January Bournemouth Male Voice Choir a concert at St Ambrose Church, West Cliff Road, Bournemouth, BH4 8BE further details from Julie

Monday 23rd January 12.30 pm Lunch at Escoffier Restaurant, Bournemouth and Poole College, Meyrick Road, Bournemouth. The training restaurant at the college. Fine dining at an incredibly good price £9.50 for three courses, copy of menu available.

Thursday 26th January 10.15 am Coffee at The Westbourne, Poole Road, Westbourne catch up with the latest news, see friends, coffee and cake £1.49. Meet Julie.

Thursday 26th January 2-5pm Grand Tea Dance at Poole Light House in the Concert Hall. £8.50 to include refreshments.

Thursday 26th January 1pm Organ Concert Pavilion Theatre, Bournemouth and hour of light music by David Ivory on the Compton Organ £3.00

Friday 27th January 7.15 pm a fundraising dinner at The Queens Hotel, Meyrick Road, Bournemouth organised by BTEC Sport students of St Edward's School, Poole to raise money for Help The Heroes and Sports Aid. Tickets cost £20.00 for a 2 course sit down formal meal and entertainment which the students are also organising. Be good to have a Meridian Friends table of



supporters.

Friday 27th January Burns Supper at the Norfolk Royale Hotel - Tkts £29.50 to include 3 course dinner, haggis & whisky in aid of Mayor of Bournemouth's Charities.

FEBRUARY

Thursday 2nd February 10.15 am Coffee at Mixed Fillings, 27 Kingland Crescent, Poole. Upstairs in this friendly, lively cafe. Good coffee and a warm welcome.

Tuesday 7th February 10.15 am Coffee at The Westbourne, Poole Road, Westbourne catch up with the latest news, see friends, coffee and cake. £1.49. Meet Julie.

Tuesday 14th February 11.00am Coffee at Boscombe Conservative Club, Havilland Road, BH1 4JW conveniently situated by the Boscombe Bus Station. Coffee and biscuits £1.25 meet Julie and other members for a chat and catch up with latest news.

Thursday 16th February 10.30 am Coffee at "THE SHIP", CHRISTCHURCH. The Ship can be found in the centre of Christchurch High Street. Come along and meet Julie and other Meridian Friends.

Saturday 18th February 7.30 pm "Brassed Off" 15th Anniversary Tour the Grimethorpe Colliery Band at The Lighthouse Poole. Good seats reserved £22.50.

Thursday 23rd February 10.15 am Coffee at The Westbourne, Poole Road, Westbourne catch up with the latest news, see friends coffee and biscuits £1.20. Meet Julie and other Meridian Friends.

Monday 27th February 4 nights themed mock "Mediterranean Cruise" at The Queens Hotel. A fun week with 4 nights dinner in different Mediterranean "Ports" and entertainment. £139 per person dinner bed and breakfast, some single rooms available.

MARCH

Thursday 1st March 10.15 am Coffee at Mixed Fillings, 27 Kingland Crescent, Poole. Upstairs in this friendly, lively cafe. Good coffee and a warm welcome.

Tuesday 6th March 10.15 am Coffee at The Westbourne, Poole Road, Westbourne catch up with the latest news, see friends, coffee and cake £1.49. Meet Julie.

Saturday 10th March Day Trip to Kate Middleton Country with Sea View coaches. £21.00

Tuesday 13th March 11.00 am Coffee at Boscombe Conservative Club, Havilland Road, BH1 4JW conveniently situated by the Boscombe Bus Station. Coffee and biscuits £1.25 meet Julie and other members for a chat and catch up with latest news.

Thursday 15th March St Patrick's Day Outing to The Golden Lion, Arlesford. A fabulous day last year, lovely food, an authentic peat fire, lots of decorations plus some time in Winchester in the morning. Coach £13.50 per person, food to be pre-booked and paid for at the pub.



Saturday 17th March St Patrick's Day traditional 3 course Irish Lunch at The Queens Hotel with entertainment and Irish Dancing after lunch. £15.95 per person.

Tuesday 20th March 7.30 pm "Yes, Prime Minister" following two sell-out West End seasons, this show comes to The Lighthouse for one week only. Good seats reserved £23.50 starring Graham Seed and Michael Simkins.

Thursday 22nd March 10.15 am Coffee at "THE SHIP", CHRISTCHURCH. The Ship can be found in the centre of Christchurch High Street. Come along and meet Julie and other Meridian Friends

Thursday 22nd March 2-4 pm Tea Dance Poole Lighthouse £5.00 including tea and biscuits.

Saturday 24th March Ideal Home Exhibition day trip with Sea View Coaches £20.50

Thursday 29th March 10.15 am Coffee at The Westbourne, Poole Road, Westbourne catch up with the latest news, see friends, coffee and cake £1.49. Meet Julie.

Friday 30 March, Quiz with Quizmaster Robert Kimber at the Premier Inn, Westover Road, Bournemouth. In aid of Mayor of Bournemouth's Charities. Tickets £10.00 to include quiz and buffet.

Visit to Westbourne Fire Station is planned – very interesting morning or afternoon, have a cuppa with the firemen, look around the station and hear about their work. Date to be confirmed.