

Shell Travel Club Newsletter

ISSUE 364 January 2023

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**Wednesday 8th March, STC AGM, Silvermere
Golf and Leisure, KT11 1EF, 10.30am**

Dear Shell Travel Club Members,

I hope that this finds you and your family well and having had an enjoyable and relaxing Christmas. Your committee wish you a very happy, healthy and successful 2023 and we look forward to seeing you on one of our trips or functions during the year.

As you may recall from the September newsletter, David Dungate, our Treasurer, had taken the decision to step down from the committee due to ongoing health problems. We believed that we had found a replacement for David but unfortunately, this did not come to pass. As such, David has continued in the post keeping everything running while at the same time receiving regular medical treatment. I cannot thank David enough for his continued help and support to the STC in, what are, very challenging times for him. I am pleased to advise that we have recently received an offer from Rex Sinden, whom many of you will know, to take on the role of Treasurer. Rex has been a member for many years and along with Margaret are regular attendees on the various trips and functions we run. Rex joined our first 2023 committee meeting earlier this week and I would like to thank him for coming to our rescue and his contributions at the meeting. We all look forward to working with Rex in the years ahead. In keeping with our Rules, Rex will formally be elected as Treasurer at the AGM in March.

Since our last newsletter, our first trip since Covid took place. It was a wine tour of Devon where 45 members visited 7 vineyards during the 5 days we were away. I think everyone was amazed at how good English wine was and this was confirmed by the number of bottles purchased along the way! The holiday was based from the Belmont Hotel in Sidmouth, where we have stayed as a club several times in the past.

During October, Frieda arranged two walking trips around the City of London which was very well supported and members found to be of great interest. Many thanks Frieda for your ongoing work and time finding interesting day venues for our members to visit.

Our Festive Lunch at Denbies Vineyard in Dorking took place on the 1st December. Feedback from those members attending was very positive and I would like to thank Bruce for all the work that goes into organising this event for our members, not to mention the time he gives to it. As such, it is extremely disappointing that for some reason this year support was low to a point that we did not meet our contracted numbers, which had already been renegotiated downwards in the autumn. As a result, the STC had to pay for the shortfall in the numbers. For future planning, it would be really helpful to understand why numbers were so low this year and I would ask those members who did not attend to send a quick message to Bruce on brucestc75@gmail.com giving an indication of what it was that made them not attend. Thanks.

Looking forward to 2023, our AGM is booked at Silvermere, Cobham for Wednesday 8th March. This will comprise of a two course buffet lunch followed by a guest speaker. The lunch will be £29.00 per person. We are currently finalising all the paperwork and this will be emailed to you in the next week or so. However, in the meantime, in order that we can get an idea of numbers for lunch, could you please confirm your intention to attend the AGM to Bruce on brucestc75@gmail.com. It is a great opportunity for members to meet and socialise

with past colleagues and friends and I hope that you will support it.

Frieda will be running a day trip to Westminster Abbey early in the new year. For more information on this please contact Frieda on friedaboase@gmail.com, Frieda is also looking at a host of other day trips around London to run during the year and more details will follow in due course.

On Sunday 4th June, 2023 we will be heading off to Reims for our annual Champagne Tour. We will be staying for 5 nights at the 4* Holiday Inn in the centre of Reims and from there will visit a number of first class vineyards where we will sample many of their Champagnes. Since the last newsletter, several places have become available due to members having had to cancel because of health issues so if you would like to join, then let me know on robert.jenkins@hotmail.co.uk.

On the 17th September, 2023, we will be running a 5 night Mystery trip to Worcestershire where we will be staying at a 4* hotel where old meets new! Although this trip is a while away, it is already full. If you wish your name to be added to the 'Wait List' or require any information on the trip then please let me know on robert.jenkins@hotmail.co.uk

The cruise that was planned for December to go with Fred Olsen to the Caribbean has been cancelled. Fred Olsen have advised that the ship 'Braemar' will no longer form part of their fleet and will be sold. All cruises on this ship have been cancelled. Fred Olsen will contact those members booked on this cruise but if you have not heard anything from them, you need to call their Customer Services to arrange either a refund or credit to be applied to your FO account.

Unfortunately, the trips that Steve was working on, namely, a five day break at Potters in the UK, a eight day holiday to Northern Cyprus and a eight day holiday to Croatia have had to be cancelled due to a lack of interest from members. This follows on from the trip to Montenegro that too had to be cancelled by Steve for the same reason. This is incredibly frustrating as so much work goes in to arranging these trips on a voluntary basis only to find that the time and energy has been to no avail. As a final attempt to attract interest from members, Steve will be working on a trip to Croatia likely to be in May, 2024 and more information will be available in the next few weeks.

Other potential trips for 2024 are likely to be another wine tour of the south west of England probably in early July run by myself and Allison and a river cruise along the Duero, Portugal in September, which Bruce will organise. More information on both these trips will be given once information becomes available.

Behind the scenes, Bob Fowler, our Secretary, has been working through and updating the various paperwork we have, namely the Booking Procedures, Booking T & C's and the STC Rules. There has been a huge amount of time spent on this exercise which Bob has willingly undertaken and I would like to thank him for all his hard work. A copy of each of the documents will be sent to every member for their records and the STC Rules will be an agenda item at the AGM for members to vote on and adopt.

I hope that by reading this newsletter, you will realise how much work has been going on behind the scenes and continues to do so in the running of the club for you, our members and all we ask in return is that you support us accordingly.

The Committee and myself look forward to seeing you at the AGM and hopefully on one of the 2023 trips. In the meantime, we send you and your families our best wishes.

Kindest regards

Rob