



# CORONA NEWS

Spring 2011

## President's Message



It is a great honour to have been elected President. I shall endeavour to serve Corona as well as Pam has done—she has been a devoted worker for Corona for as long as I can remember and CWW owes her a great deal. We are also very grateful for the help given to us all by her husband Pat Cowan, they have been a superb team. A hard act to follow.

What a superb AGM we had—good organisation, good company and good food—none of this happens by accident. Congratulations to all who did the work: our past Vice-President, Chairman and many others. Thank you all from everyone.

Now to introduce myself: I joined Corona in about 1965 in Nairobi. When Peter was posted to Dar-es-Salaam I was asked to re-establish the branch there, which I did with Stella Horner and amazingly it is still thriving. Peter and I came back to the UK

in 1976 and I have been a member of the Devon branch since then. I am a past vice-chairman and chairman of Corona and am a Life Vice President. Outside Corona I have been a school governor since 1980, and I am finally about to retire. I am a church warden of my church. I have just retired as President of my local Conservative Association, having also been Constituency Chairman. I am the SW President of the Conservative Rural Action Group.

I feel there is still a place and need for Corona. More families than ever are living overseas and many do not find their new lives easy. Our overseas branches are helping, and how we connect with those coming home—through other organisations, through other ways—is going to be the great challenge.

Greetings to you all, and ideas please.

**Christine Marsh**

## Chairman's Report



Dear Friends,

Dare I say that Spring has arrived! The outside temperature is a pleasant 15 degrees, the sun is shining and the hedgerows are full of twittering birds, the daffodils are nodding their heads & turned to the sun and the occasional bee is investigating the primroses. This is late March as I write this so by the time you receive your newsletter we should be enjoying warmer days.

Like the change in the weather, here at Corona HQ we also have several new changes. At the March AGM President Pam Cowan and her Deputy, Linda Prys Roberts stood down having served 4 years in office. They have both served Corona for many, many years and their knowledge of our branches and the members is amazing, they will be sorely missed at both our Executive & Trustees meetings but I know we will not be completely out of touch.

Christine Marsh was elected as the new Corona Worldwide President and as you will see she has done her own introduction. Connie Topping was also elected as Deputy President, she also runs our London Events programme and is no stranger to Trustees. We welcome them aboard and hope their journey for the next two years will be a smooth and effortless one!

We also have two new Trustees, Angela Mizner (who runs Jubilee Branch) and Lindy Hemsley, who has taken on the job as our new editor of the Corona Newsletter. They have taken over from Janet Rucker and Marsha Nicolson who have stood down as Trustees due to family commitments.

Wishing you all the very best for the coming summer or (winter) months.

**Kathy Cracknell**

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## Hilarity at the AGM with High Times at Heathrow

Meeting Cary Grant, private tap lessons with Roy Castle, hilarious mishaps and heartbreaking encounters were all in a day's work for our AGM guest speaker Sheila Kennedy (pictured).

'High Times at Heathrow' was the title of her entertaining after-lunch talk and what high times they were indeed. Sheila had the Corona ladies in stitches with her amusing tales of her working life as a BA 'hunter' (official title: 'customer liaison'), the people who assist travellers with 'opportunities', aka problems. In her jovial style Sheila told us about the



unforgettable highlights such as approaching Cary Grant hoping to woo him with her sophistication. Instead she she gushed and giggled and he responded with customary charm. Yet amidst the hilarity were some sad times and opportunities to truly help people in difficult situations. There was barely a dry eye as she told us about the Australian family overwhelmed by the long journey to see their son who had been paralysed in France while on his gap year. Her position also helped her fulfil a lifelong dream to take tap lessons, with Roy Castle, no less. However Sheila had not anticipated a dearth of other participants and therefore a private lesson.

### Also at the AGM . . .



See p.4 for Pam's Poem of Thanks

***Retiring office-bearers with their gifts, from l-r: Janet Rucker (former Trustee and newsletter editor); Chairman Kathy Cracknell presents to outgoing President Pam Cowan; Pam Cowan hands the President's badge to Christine Marsh; Treasurer Jennifer Atkinson presents to former Trustee and Mailing Co-ordinator Marsha Nicolson; and outgoing Deputy President Linda Prys-Roberts with her most appropriate gift resembling the Corona logo.***

## Corona Multi-Tasker Catriona Lloyd-Davies is This Year's Life Vice President

This year's Corona Life Vice Presidency has been awarded to Catriona Lloyd-Davies. One LVP is named each year in recognition of fine, long-term work for Corona.

Catriona's overseas postings, with her husband Em, have included Benghazi, Libya (where they met in 1968); Lusaka, Kitwe and Ndola in Zambia; Freetown in Sierra Leone; Gabarone in Botswana and Hong Kong.

Corona involvement for Catriona began in Gabarone where she held the emergency kits and was called upon at all hours.

Her time abroad was often not easy. In Zambia there were curfews and major shortages so Sierra Leone made a welcome change in the 70s with full supermarket shelves, glorious beaches and no civil unrest. Botswana, she recalls, was the easiest posting at that time, despite having to drive to Mafeking or Pretoria for a variety of foods.

In 1986, back in London, Catriona attended the AGM where Margaret Fahmy was catering short-handed for 200, Catriona offered to help and the rest is history. She became secretary of the General Purposes Committee when Jo Lawrence was in the Chair, and eventually took over the overseas courses (20 people every two months) from Virginia Watkins and joined the Executive. When the courses became personal briefings,

Catriona did all the research in the Commonwealth Library, found a recent returnee from the country in question and, with the help of Margaret Brayton and the Tropical Diseases Hospital, helped them to adjust for a life overseas, there being no Internet for information-gathering back then.

Catriona was involved in the establishment of a computer database of the then 7000 members' details, with the help of Patricia Farrant's husband Frank. At one stage, Catriona manned the office four days a week, with much help from Margaret Harwood, as well as continuing her voluntary roles. She gave the first talk for which Corona was paid a fee: to 150 personnel managers of International Removers' Association worldwide companies at the Hilton Park Lane.

In 1991 serious surgery forced Catriona to resign and, when recovered, she joined Em in Zambia to which he had returned, and then Sierra Leone from where the war forced her return in 1997. Catriona eventually became Deputy President under Elizabeth Hunter and arranged three lunches at the House of Lords, visited many UK branches—as well as Mauritius, and Gibraltar for Kay Welsh's anniversary dinner— and edited Corona News. In 1999 Em closed Barclays Bank for the last time in Sierra Leone and retired to Yorkshire where Catriona is organiser of a small Corona group.

## Pinky and Perky and Other Olympic facts You Might Not Have Known

A very interesting London events visit to the Olympic Park was held on Saturday March 5th. Here, Jacky Fray shares with us some interesting facts that you might not have known about the Olympic Park:

- The first buildings one sees from the coach are two pink buildings which deal with the sewage from the site. The construction workers have nicknamed them Pinky and Perky!
- Almost 2000 newts and hundreds of toads have been relocated to specially-constructed ponds.
- An artificial nest has been built for sand martins within the waterworks reservoir. Other creatures, eg pike, eels and roosting bats, are carefully monitored and some roofs were made bird-friendly.
- 75% of the land was contaminated with oil, tar and heavy metals like arsenic.
- Remains of a Bronze Age settlement, including skeletons, were found when digging the tunnels.
- An Iron Age settlement was unearthed on the site of the Aquatics Centre.
- The velodrome is nicknamed Pringle as it looks like one of their crisps!



**At Olympic Park were, l-r: Dagmar Welch, Eileen Torbet, Mary Winnard, Doreen Hall, Ann Leslie, Lilian MacDonald, Connie Topping, Marsha Nicolson and Jacky Fray.**

Corona members may be interested to know that there is a view tube, where anyone can go to watch the progress of the construction of the site. It is free, there is a small café and lavatories and only a five-minute walk from Pudding Mill Lane DLR station.



### Final Allocation of Walk The World Funds: Malta, Zimbabwe, Bahamas

Three overseas branches have each received £200 as the final allocation of Walk the World funds. Malta will donate to a charity supporting homeless youths, Zimbabwe to educationally disadvantaged people and Bahamas to Help the Children's supply of basic school items. We hope to have more news and photographs of these charities in future editions of Corona news.

## Communing with Nature and Renewing Connections in the Falklands Corona Worldwide President Christine Marsh on her November 2010 Falklands visit

I had the joy of spending nearly three days cruising around the Falklands. The weather was very kind: dry and sunny. The country reminded me of Dartmouth with its flowering gorse, now a problem, but it looked lovely!

We first visited New Island where we were welcomed by a family of artists who share the island with Rockhopper Penguins, thousands of cormorants, four buzzards, geese (all amazingly tame) and one could walk to within a few feet, and breeding albatrosses. We next went to Westpoint Island where one could literally fall over breeding penguins and albatrosses, all nest together. The Napiers, four generations, farm the land. They have over 1000 sheep but it is tourism which makes the farm economic. We had the most wonderful 'West Country' farm tea and it made me feel homesick! Their farmhouse was built, like many Scottish remote farms, tucked into the hill to give protection. It was spring with really lovely daffodils. We then sailed to Stanley which is a town of about 1600 people. There are two UK supermarkets, Sainsbury's and Waitrose. We landed near the Information Centre and I hopefully went in and asked if anyone knew Teresa Laing. Oh yes, they said, Teresa is one of our guides, can we ring her?

***“A great experience and very positive to have reconnected”***

Yes please. Teresa was very welcoming and met me 20 minutes later. Teresa is a life member and Pam Cowan knows her. She has agreed to be our link with the Falklands which is wonderful. Teresa very kindly drove me around Stanley and showed me the sights outside town. I then went to the fascinating little museum and signed the visitors' book at Government House. The main war memorial thanked all those who liberated "us", which I thought was a lovely way of expressing it, more personal.

Following the freeing of the islands it was decided to close the Corona branch and form the Falklands Women's Association. I took with me some Corona goodies and gave them to the Association as a goodwill gesture and I had a very nice letter of thanks from their President.

I could have spent much longer in Stanley, which I found very friendly. It is a land of bungalows which have corrugated iron roofs as do the churches and the main buildings to better withstand the wind. I was lucky, there was little wind while I was there but usually it is strong and biting cold, a formidable problem. It was a great experience and very positive to have reconnected with Teresa.

## Immortalise a Day in *Your* Life: Contribute to the RCS Jubilee Time Capsule

The Commonwealth Jubilee Time Capsule will be an online resource of contributed memories of the past 60 years from people all over the world. The Royal Commonwealth Society is inviting people to attempt to fill every one of the 21,915 days by picking a day which was memorable for them and telling its story. A capsule of the best entries will be presented to Her Majesty The Queen as a gift from the Commonwealth to mark her Jubilee in 2012. Other entries will be part of an ongoing website to showcase all the contributions as an important resource for the future. Internet access is not essential: contributions, to be submitted during 2011, can be made offline and can include stories, photographs or films. The RCS says that the involvement of the whole Commonwealth family will be crucial to ensuring the project's success. They are asking people to help by: submitting an entry, promoting the project, volunteering as a judge, and helping to collect offline material from parts of the Commonwealth with limited Internet access. To find out more, visit [www.jubileetimecapsule.org](http://www.jubileetimecapsule.org). For handwritten submissions, a form is available at the website or from the RCS.

## Old Vic, Book of the Dead and Olympic Park were London Event Highlights

We ended 2010 with very interesting visits to the BBC TV centre in November and to the Old Vic for a behind the scenes tour in December. The BBC limited us to a group of 20 people so we are sorry that so many people were disappointed that there was no place for them but the Old Vic offered us three separate tours on the same day, so 60 of us were able to enjoy the tours. We learned a lot of the interesting history of the Old Vic and some hair raising facts about the early days performances long, long before Health and Safety came into being or sanitation!

In January a small group of us enjoyed an interesting afternoon in the Fire Brigade Museum. We suspect they don't have too many visitors because our guide was delighted to entertain us for the whole afternoon.

In February we visited the Book of the Dead Exhibition which was a well-ordered exhibition up to the high standards of the British Museum.

In March over 40 Members were able to enjoy a bus tour of the Olympic Park on several different dates. It was interesting to see the excellent progress in the construction of the various arenas and halls and the layout of the Park making the

best of the waterways with plenty of seating and picnic areas said to be planned for the public. You will see from the list below that we are visiting Broadcasting House in November. This tour has to be on a Sunday and we are limited to 10 people so we would like to hear from those interested in this tour so that we can book more tours, maybe on different Sundays in November. We do need to know of your interest in the near future as we have to make bookings in May. We are sorry our September tour of Lancaster House has been deferred to October but all bookings to Government Buildings are subject to change.

**Connie Topping, Clare Bartram**

**May 14 Buckingham Palace Gardens**

**June 7 Docklands Museum**

**July 19 Fulham Palace**

**August 11 Regents Park Tour/Matinee**

**September Deferred to October 3rd**

**October 3 Lancaster House**

**October 14 Barts Hospital Heritage Tour**

**November 6 Broadcasting House**

**December (tba) Theatre Royal Drury Lane**

## A Creative Thank You from Past President Pam Cowan for her Gifts

Yes – Stepping was quite a wrench but Hey! – I've got a Garden Bench!  
I'll sit and while the hours away. I'll now have time or so they say?  
Time to admire the lovely plaque – Corona Logo (on the back).  
I'll maybe even read a book, then turn round for another look.  
My thanks to all both near and far, I fear I left my jaw ajar,  
When gawping at the awesome cheque so kindly given to this old wreck.  
So much support for four whole years has left me very close to tears,  
Yet what a grateful 'girl!' I am. My love to all



## Century-Old Images of Africa now Available Online

Images documenting African history from as early as the 1860s have been published on the Internet, with an invitation for the public to add comments and captions. This might be of interest to many of our members who have lived in Africa. The images—documenting people, places, national and imperial events, conflict and natural disasters—were transferred digitally to the National Archives from the Colonial Office Library's collection. About 10,000 images have been added so far. As some of them have minimal context it is hoped that people will comment to fill in knowledge gaps.

The collection, called 'Africa Through a Lens' is available at [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/africa](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/africa).

# Around the Branches



**June Bartlett, Harare Corona member (on right), with a member of the Embassy team and the Foreign Secretary William Hague at Lancaster House for the presentation.**

## Zimbabwe Award for Program to Resettle British Citizens

The British Embassy Consular Resettlement team in Harare, including Corona member June Bartlett, was presented with the Foreign Secretary's Award for Public Service.

The Resettlement Program was set up by the UK Government for older and vulnerable British citizens in Zimbabwe who wished to resettle in the UK. June said that since the application period of February to December 2009 more than 350 citizens have been resettled in the UK. She said that candidates were resettled near family or areas of their choice wherever possible and that feedback from many resettled has been very positive.

## Other Harare News

An enthusiastic group of 27 members meets weekly for coffee or 'bring and share' lunches. Speakers have included charities we support, a patchwork quilting demonstration, a Toastmaster and a member's Himalayan adventure. We provided a good supply of blankets and woolly hats for Kidzcan, children's cancer relief, as well as gifts of wristwatches and cakes to distribute at the local hospital. We also donated clothing to raise funds for the Cancer Centre, and items for the Shingirirai Trust which provides pre-school teaching for vulnerable children and orphans. Our blanket/knitting program continues as do our contributions to Island Hospice and Senior Citizens' Centre. We sent Christmas food hampers to the Homefields Centre for mentally challenged adults and sold poppies for the Harare Branch of the Legion.

Eilidh Craster, a member, has had her first book published. Let's Make a Plan, true anecdotes of daily family life in Zimbabwe, is a heartwarming read.

Corona's 60th anniversary was celebrated with a lunch at Leonardo's enjoyed by 17 ladies.

**From the annual report of Muriel Jennings, past Chairlady**

**New officers: Jane Fahy Vice Chairlady/Treasurer**

**June Bartlett Vice Chairlady/Librarian/Secretary**



*Harare members give blankets, woolly hats and toys to Kidzcan, children's cancer relief.*

## MAURITIUS PLATEAU

**From the newsletters of Mauritius Plateau:** their guest speakers' topics have included the experience of an English newly-wed in primitive Africa, the promotion of women, painting and crystal jewellery.

Other events included: a guitar trio charity concert and Italian charity dinner.

**HONG KONG**—Amongst speakers' topics were: origami; reverse ageing through the art of qigong'; ceramics amongst disabled people; and 'Soul Talk', a charity for women in emotional & relationship crisis. Outings included Happy Valley Cemetery, Wanchai evening 'ghost tour', Disneyland's Sunny Bay, and Tung Chung fort. Hikes and book club continue. Donations will be made to Soul Talk (as above) and The Society for Promotion of Hospice Care (for those with terminal illnesses).

**From the AGM Minutes**

## WEST SURREY

Several members attended the splendid Diamond Jubilee last year and four were delighted to don their hats and be among Corona representatives at the Royal Garden Party.

Other events held were a Founder's Day Coffee Morning, a lunch by the river and a 60 Years' Celebration International Lunch with a wonderful display of food from many countries. At our usual autumn meeting members enjoyed trying on hats after a talk on the history and making of hats by the owner of the The Mad Hatter shop. The year ended with a Christmas gifts and goodies stall. At our New Year Lunch in January we were transported back to Christmas with an entertaining talk by a Danish member who brought beautiful tree decorations from her country, spoke about their traditions and even brought special festive cookies for us to try.

**Alison Latter  
Chairman**

# Around the Branches

## Special Learning Centre Visit to Mauritius North

Children from the Gonzague Pierre Louis Special Learning Centre, a beneficiary of Corona Walk the World funds, enjoyed an 8-day visit to Mauritius in October. The 15 children from Rodrigues met with Corona Mauritius North members Ann Laurette, Katy Roberts and Heather Chettiar (pictured below with Susan Auguste of GPL), as well as Eric Roberts and Robert Laurette.

In other news from Mauritius North, they have enjoyed a variety of guest speakers including a jazz singer, a Mission Verte representative on waste management and UK journalist/author Mary Allen. Other events

have included the annual year-end party for physically and mentally challenged youngsters from Amour sans Frontieres School, a year-end dinner at Casa Negra restaurant, a fundraising International Tea Party at the Grand Gaube home of Francoise Hauck, a collection of household items for those in need, and a craft fair for the charity fund.

*From the newsletters of Editor Katy Roberts*



*The children with Mauritius North members. Photos by Eric Roberts*

## London Jubilee

The Jubilee Branch celebrated Christmas 2010 with lunch at the Old Bank of England pub in Fleet Street . . . on December 2nd, the day of major snowfall throughout the country. Several members were unable to attend due to being snowed-in at home! Happily, 13 ladies managed to get there, including a most welcome visitor Yvonne Mamtora from our twin branch of Corona North in Mauritius, who was in the UK visiting family. It was a fun lunch with traditional fayre, all the more so with the relief to all at having got there through the snow.

The Jubilee Branch meets on the first Thursday of every month in the café/bar at the Royal Court Theatre in Sloane Square, next door to the Underground station of the same name. Please come to visit us if you are passing through London, we are a very friendly informal group and you can be assured of a warm welcome.

**Angela Mizner**

## Malawi

Blantyre branch is thriving and departures have been offset by new members. Charitable work included: food and clothing aid to older people, hands-on projects with three orphanages, gifts of toiletries to 280 student nurses and a hospital toy library.

There were speakers on: security, embroidery/stitchcraft, belly dancing, hanging baskets and coffee growing. Other notable events included the Queen's Birthday lunch and Diamond Anniversary champagne and coffee at Newlands Homes for the Elderly. The economy remains buoyant with good rains and crop predictions and, with uranium mining ongoing, should be sound for the medium term.

**from Chairman Daryl Sheppard's 2010 report**

## Cotswold

It will be 25 years this summer since Susan Mole and the late Lady Grey held the first meeting of the Cotswold Branch, so we have decided to celebrate in style with a luncheon at The Washbourne Court Hotel in Lower Slaughter. The hotel is beautifully situated with lawns running down to the stream which winds through this pretty village - so we are hoping for a fine day so that we can make the most of the picturesque setting.

Our membership remains constant at 28, though several members live some distance away from our usual meeting place in Stow-on-the-Wold and, these days, can only get to meetings if they have someone to accompany them.

The annual program includes two luncheons with a speaker, a summer garden visit, a fundraising luncheon in the autumn in addition, of course, to our AGM and a Christmas Luncheon. We send out a Newsletter to members about four times a year and would be happy to welcome any Corona member living locally to our meetings.

**Pat Yaxley**  
**Joint Chairman**

**Devon** had a very successful Christmas lunch at the Exeter Golf and Clay Club in November while the 2011 program opened with a visit to Topsham and tea at Mrs E. Hunter's home.

The AGM will be on 27th June at Christine Marsh's home. We hope to welcome representatives from other branches.

**Christine Marsh, Hon. Secretary**

**Berkshire** recently held a coffee morning to plan the program for 2011 up until October. We are a small group now of 18 members and we rarely get more than 10 to each meeting but we are enthusiastic and look forward to meeting each month. In addition we have two mahjong groups who usually meet each month.

**Margaret Powell**

## Obituaries

### **Philipa Kirkpatrick, MBE (November 1947-August 2010)**

Philipa spent half of her adult life in Gulf States and arrived in KSA in 1974, first in Jeddah and then Riyadh. She was a passionate and positive thinking lady.

She qualified in 1999 to become a psychotherapist and used this qualification to help many people throughout her life. Philipa was put to the test in May 2002 during the bombings in Riyadh, she just jumped in and was in the thick of it, helping everyone who was shot, maimed, or others who needed help adjusting. She was taken on by several companies in the Kingdom to be their in-country trauma specialist and counsellor. She was yet again put to the test in 2003 in Al Khobar. Philipa during the above treated families both in Saudi and abroad and in her private time she helped 100s of individuals and families.

Philipa was also concerned with life outside the Kingdom and immediately offered her skills to Russia over the Beslan school tragedy, and the for the tsunami in Sri Lanka. Unfortunately she was turned down as she was a woman. When the Israelis bombed the Gaza strip, she organized, through a network of friends and professionals, to help and assist the people on the Egyptian side of the border.

Concurrent to this, she was the Chairwoman of Corona in Riyadh. During her tenure she organized massive charity events, culminating in a typical Village Fete (1400 attended) and the Phantom Ball in the British Ambassador's gardens. Both of these raised a great deal of money for charity.

Philipa was awarded an MBE by the request of the British Ambassador and she very proudly and joyfully received this from the Queen at Buckingham Palace. She continued with her charity work until the end. She will be sadly missed by her husband William and all of her friends in Riyadh and around the world.

**Kath Pitley, Riyadh Branch**



### **Josephine Amato-Gauci (June 1916-December 2010) Corona Life Vice President**

As the wife of one of Malta's top civil servants, Mrs Amato-Gauci was one of a group of Maltese women invited to join the British women who had set up Corona Malta. She became first Chairman in 1962 for three years and was keen to encourage the educational aspect of Corona, which she saw as not simply a social club but for cultural enrichment, and her policy carried on. In 1964 Mrs Amato-Gauci became the first President of the National Council of Women Malta, largely because of her Corona experience, as well as her broad background as the wife of a UN expert involved in many overseas missions. The pioneering work of Mrs Amato-Gauci and her colleagues led to the provision of equal pay for work of equal value in 1976 (at a time when women in Government service received two-thirds of equivalent men's salary and had to resign upon marriage) and the adoption by Malta's parliament of the European Convention of Human Rights in 1987.

In 2007 her contribution to the promotion of the rights of women in Malta was recognised in her appointment as Honorary President of NCW (following Honorary Life Membership in 1984).

She was involved with the St Vincent de Paul Society, visiting the sick and needy, the Association for the Physically Handicapped, where she organised a car pool for many years, and the Meat Fund, providing an adequate supply of meat for orphanage children. She also sat on a number of Government boards.

A cultured woman who had been a journalist on the family newspaper before her 1941 marriage, she had a wide range of interests, from music and theatre to books and current events, tennis, and local and international politics and she could hold her own on any subject right up to her death. Her gentle ways, generous advice and love will be missed by her husband Frederick and children Ann and Sandra as well as the Maltese community. **Ann Gingell Littlejohn, daughter of Mrs Amato-Gauci**

### **Joan Russell, MBE**

I first met Joan Foster (as she then was) many years ago in a remote part of Northern Nigeria in quite bizarre circumstances. Joan was then Service Women's Education Officer in Kadera, the regional capital. I was a newly wed with my husband Frank, a young ADO, touring in the bush. Catherine Dinnick-Parr was in domestic science, experimenting in teaching in a local village. Sadly, a child ran out in front of her car on a clear, empty road and was killed. The local police charged her with murder. Frank then had to summon the big guns, including Joan, who came in support as quickly as she could. While the police and admin officers sorted things out, I looked after both ladies. Later when Corona came to Kadera we all joined. Later still in London when I was Corona Treasurer, Joan was Education Officer at the Commonwealth Institute. Needless to say I put her up for the Executive, knowing that her experience, sound common sense and enthusiasm would be an asset. Joan remained a member of many Nigerian and Commonwealth bodies well into her old age and was a treasured member of mid Sussex after she retired to Lewes.

Joan and Catherine and I remained friends for life. Catherine died 20 years ago, but not before she had sent me a large cheque when I was raising funds for Corona's 40th anniversary. Joan and I were latterly only Christmas card senders but I will always treasure her memory. **Patricia Farrant**

### **We also say farewell to . . .**

**Mary Rowland**, Mid Sussex

**Lesley Margaret Bivar**, late of Nigeria and Afghanistan

**Bridget Mary Wood**, formerly Cameroon

**Jean Learmonth**, Edinburgh

**Iris Ellway**, of Southampton

**Emilia Humphreys**, Corona Uganda 1964-1972

**Mair Beamish**, Dorset South

# More Around the Branches

## Cornwall

We continue to grow! We have been joined recently by Jenny Dabbs who has moved from Dorset and also by past President Pam Cowan and have been delighted to welcome them both and in due course they will no doubt be sharing with us some of their experiences of life overseas. We also continue to attract women who had never previously heard of Corona - and wish they had when they were trying to settle into a new environment overseas. It is so lovely to be surrounded by people who are really interested in your stories! In fact our conversations roam over a wide variety of topics, and not just "When we" and since we started using round tables for lunch it has gone even better. This year we have heard from newcomer Gillian Holmes of life working in the former Iron Curtain countries, and from long term member Carolyn Scantlebury what it was like to live in the middle of nowhere in Guyana - pretty horrific it was too! Forthcoming speakers will cover Burma and Korea, so all rather exotic - but any of us agree that moving anywhere new can be daunting and retiring to Cornwall sometimes present just as big a challenge! We are producing a Cookery Book, to honour and celebrate the Corona Diamond Jubilee - better late than never but our editor, Wendy Hindle, has had to be overseas a good deal recently; we are all looking forward to it, composed as it is mainly of recipes for the delicious dishes we have all contributed to the annual International Luncheon, in July. Newcomers have often been invited along by members but also have read the piece we put into the various Parish Magazines or local free papers - one woman rang me and introduced herself by saying "I have had the cutting from the paper on my kitchen notice board for nearly a year - time I did something about it". She has proved a wonderful supporter and used her own networks to bring along newcomers. We have wives of diplomats, Armed Forces, big banks, oil companies and other conglomerates as well as missionaries and teachers, and also women who have never lived abroad but are well-travelled and enjoy the tales we tell, so we're a diverse bunch. Alverton Manor treats us very well (is it something to do with the spend over the bar?) and makes no room hire charge for the private dining room (but the buzz of conversation from over 30 women would be daunting to outsiders!). We look forward to having soon to face the challenge that we may be too large a crowd for them! Do remember to tell friends or relatives who may have moved to Cornwall what a great time is to be had on the last Wednesday of alternate months, they'd be made very welcome.

**Abigail Kirby-Harris**

## HATS OFF TO FIJI



A Breakfast at Tiffany's high tea in Fiji raised an amazing \$2100 towards renovation of a paediatric intensive care unit. In a combined effort with the International Women's Association, Corona members enjoyed a wonderful morning to which they wore extraordinary hats they made themselves from newspaper! In addition, Corona members put together a plan to upgrade the unit in question, choosing the colours and making curtains.

***In the photo are, from left: Jen Warnett, Kathie Jones and Sue Halabe***

## Bath

At our AGM Pauline Bates, President, welcomed Margaret Hunt and Catherine Montgomerie on to the committee, the officers remaining in their positions. A bouquet was presented to Brenda Totterdill, who is regretfully leaving the committee, to thank her for serving 10 years, mostly as Raffle Secretary. Jenny Cathpole has taken over as resident photographer.

Anne Christie's Secretary Report showed what a successful and social anniversary year 2010 was. A visit to the Malvern Flower Show, Founder's Day Coffee Morning, Summer BBQ, Tea and Fashion Show were all enjoyed. The highlight was a coach full of members and husbands attending the excellent 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Lunch.

The fortnightly mahjong and monthly bridge afternoons are still very popular. Thanks to Gurli Klingenberg we have had varied and interesting talks at the monthly lunches at Bath Cricket Club. The staff there provides us with excellent food and attentive service.

We have monthly newsletters to keep all our members informed of our own and Headquarters events. Several members were thrilled to have their anecdotes printed in the terrific Jubilee Newsletter. Bath also managed to appear in most of the lunch pictures - even if it was husbands!

To celebrate the Royal wedding we are going to wear hats at our April meeting and, thanks to winning first prize in the 100 club, we shall splash out on champers!

**Rosemary Brown, Chairman**

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