



Probus Club Ellesmere



Covid-19 Lockdown 2020 Newsletter

Issue 24

Oct. 22, 2020

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From the Editor

Dear all,

Well another 2 week have gone by and Wales is now in a 2 week full lockdown. Will we be next? I can't see it carrying on like this with businesses being closed down and so many losing their jobs. If we get a Vaccine how many people will opt to have it? The average uptake in any given year for the Flu Jab is under 50%, and the Vaccine will only eradicate the Covid-19 virus if the take up is near 100%.

This year is the 100th anniversary of the formation of the Comrades Club in Ellesmere and the 50th anniversary of the opening of the club building on it's present site. John Shone has written a press release published in this newsletter.

Just a reminder about Armistice Sunday—There will be NO parade or Church service this year, and only the wreath layers have been invited to the Cenotaph, as numbers are restricted to 30.

Keep safe

Paul

View from the Crow's Nest

Well the fireworks season seems to have come early this year with rockets flying around, firebreaks and Guys on fire. It may well all end in Tiers. And just across the border we are learning new words such as 'Cyfyngiadau symud', the Welsh language translation of 'lockdown'. Strange days but in many ways all part of an evolution. We just don't know how things will develop but hasn't that always been the case with our societies?



I see no ships

We are holding our AGM on November 5th 2020 by Zoom, Paul will be sending out the invitation in due course.

Thanks for your continued support, we hope that you will be happy to maintain your subscription for 2020/21 to keep us 'afloat' and enable us to continue during the coming year.

Hopefully in due course we will be able to meet together as we did pre-Covid-19.

With very best wishes,
Jeremy

Matt Walker: Sleep is your superpower | TED Talk

https://www.ted.com/talks/matt_walker_sleep_is_your_superpower

Comrades Club celebrates a double anniversary *By John Shone*

The guns had fallen silent on the Western Front, but tens of thousands of families were still grieving for loved ones killed in the First World War. Those who had survived, many badly maimed, were struggling to rebuild their shattered lives after the horrors of the trenches. A new decade was beginning. The 'Old Order' was disappearing and it was time for change. Women had gained the right to vote; Prime Minister Lloyd promised 'Homes fit for heroes.' Britain was looking forward to the start of the Roaring Twenties.

Against this backdrop, a group of army veterans in Ellesmere joined forces to form a fellowship at the heart of the community that still endures today.

It began as the 'Comrades of the Great War' Club. Today, it is called The Comrades Sports and Social Club. But despite the slight change in name, its purpose is very much the same: to provide a hub for local people to socialise and enjoy each others' company.

This autumn, the club has been celebrating not only its centenary, but also the 50th anniversary of moving into its own permanent, purpose-built headquarters.

Sadly, restrictions imposed because of the Coronavirus pandemic have meant that plans for an open had to be abandoned.

Club president Jan Oliver, a former Royal Navy Wren, who has been a member for twelve years, explained: "For 100 years, this club has played, and still plays, a vital part in bringing the people of Ellesmere together, and it's still thriving. It's such a shame that on reaching two momentous milestones, we've been unable hold an event that would really do justice to the achievements of one of the oldest organisations in Ellesmere."

The club's origins date back to 1920-- two years after the end of the Great War -- when 63 ex-soldiers, led by the late Major W.R.O Kynaston, founded the men-only club which met on the top floor of The Old Armoury, local headquarters of the King's Shropshire Light Infantry. The Cross Street building occupied part of what is now Ellesmere's main car park, but it burnt down in 1967 forcing the club to move into temporary accommodation.

With the number of old Comrades dwindling, the club was reorganised and decided to admit women as members.

Nearly 500 applied, to join around 800 male members, resulting in a waiting list.

Three years later, in October 1970, the only surviving founder member, 76-year-old Albert Whiston, cut a ceremonial tape and raised a glass to drink the first pint, to mark the opening of the club's shining new building in Victoria Street, close to the town centre.

Costing £38,000, it included a main hall for entertainment and other activities, a members' lounge and a games room, with a central bar connecting all three. More space was created later by building an extension at the front of the premises.

One of the first events was a sell-out concert starring singer Ruby Murray, who had ten chart hits during her long career. Many other show business stars followed, including comedians Ken Dodd, Les Dennis and Jimmy Cricket, and pop groups such as the Merseybeats and The Ivy League.



New Ready for opening – the new Comrades Club in 1970

At the peak of his success in the 1970s, six-times world snooker champion Ray Reardon visited the club to play an exhibition match. A local man won a raffle for the chance to take on the genial Welshman. After making the first break, he didn't get another shot. Reardon easily cleared the table to score a maximum break of 147.

In its heyday, the club boasted up to 1,000 members, many of them working at the town's largest factory, the Uni-gate/Dairycrest dairy, which employed more than three hundred people.

Former chairman Hamilton 'Hammy' Lindsay recalls: "Back then, the club was always jam-packed at weekends and you had to arrive really early or you wouldn't get a seat."

He remembers the days when the club organised summer outings, with up to 16 coaches lined up to take members and their children to various seaside resorts, mainly in Wales.

"Times were different then. There was so much more going on because people used to come out more to socialise," said Mr Lindsay, who has been a member for nearly 50 years, half of that time as a committee member. "We used to have fruit and vegetable shows and cage bird events. There was something happening all the time."

The current membership is almost 400 and the building is home to more than a dozen organisations. They include the local branch of the Royal British Legion, the Ellesmere Society, Probus Club, Amateur Dramatics Society, Ellesmere Angling Club and a local Diabetic group. It is also used for line dancing, Weight Watchers' sessions, Zumba and Pilates classes, and Ballroom and Latin dancing lessons. There are also bingo sessions, quiz nights and discos, as well as various charity fund-raisers. The club also rents out two allotment, and an outbuilding serves as a base for the local pigeon-racing club.

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With a modern fully-equipped kitchen, the club caters for Sunday lunches and offers a 'lite-bite' menu on Tuesdays, (11.30-2pm and Fridays and Saturdays between 5.30 and 8pm).

Secretary Tina Evans explained; "During the lock-down we delivered lots of meals around the town and surrounding area, and they proved very popular. The service is still available for people who're self-isolating. In fact, we can cater for all kinds of functions and people can hire the facilities if they wish to do their own catering for their own private function. Membership is no longer required to make use of the facilities."

Entertainment Secretary Lionel Edge is delighted that the club has been able to resume its programme of weekend concerts after the disruption caused by the Covid 19 lock-down.

"We've organised the concert room so we can ensure there's good social-distancing," he said, "and we're looking forward to welcoming some talented all-round entertainers."

As the club celebrates two landmark anniversaries, officials are hoping to encourage a new generation of young people to use the facilities and take part in its activities.

"We already have a small group of youngsters playing snooker here," said chairman Ray Corkhill, "and we want to look at ways of getting others involved."

It would be a fitting tribute to those brave young soldiers who survived the horrors of the First World War and laid the foundations for such an invaluable and enduring community organisation.

End



The club's concert hall and function



Members of the club committee:
Lionel Edge, president Jan Oliver,
secretary Tina Evans and Hamilton Lindsay

Going to School in East Africa in the 1940s and 50s (Part 3)

Dar es Salaam to Nairobi

The journey from Dar es Salaam to Nairobi was a longer one and was made in several stages. We would leave home on the “up” mail train, departing early in the morning, and it would take us westward as far as Morogoro, a delightful town situated at the foot of the Uluguru Mountains, about 120 miles from the Coast. There we would board a Bedford bus of the same type as used on the other journeys and head northwards. Our journey would then take us through fairly heavy bush until we reached the small town of Handeni where there was the inevitable government rest house. The lunch time chicken there was always so grim that eventually we all refused to eat it but, being very hungry young school boys, we would have to have some food. One bright youngster had the idea of making tomato ketchup sandwiches, and they became our standard lunch at Handeni on all our subsequent trips. However, the road did run through several cultivated areas and at stops we would buy roasted mealies (maize cobs) sugar cane and pineapples.

The floor of the bus, already filthy from dust, was soon covered with sugar cane shavings and fruit skins. The journey continued to the major rail junction at Korogwe on the Northern Line (the only other main rail line in the country in those days) which we would reach in the early evening. There we would wait for a few hours and then board the train coming from Tanga and going on to the town of Moshi, the Provincial Capital of the Northern Province, close to the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro. A good evening meal was served on board and we would sleep until early morning when we reached Moshi. We had nothing to do there other than wander around the town until lunch time, when a good meal was served in the local hotel.

Then we would board a different train in Moshi. This railway line had been built to connect with the Kenya & Uganda Railways network at Voi, best known for its connection with “The Man-eaters of Tsavo”. This line had been built for the much heavier rolling stock of the KUR and the trains, pulled by oil fired Beyer Garratt articulated locomotives, were able to travel at much higher speeds. My memories of this journey are of the extreme heat that we experienced (no air conditioning in those days) as we passed through the semi desert.

We would reach Voi in the early evening and our coach would be shunted into a siding to await the night up mail train



from Mombasa. That train had left Mombasa at sunset and our coach would be hitched up to it at about midnight. The locomotives used on those trains were the much larger class of Beyer Garratt locos with tare weight approaching 200 tons. These locos were needed to contend with the very steep gradients of that main line. Our journey would continue through the night and we would travel on to Nairobi, arriving there in the morning and reaching school in time for a late breakfast.

(Interestingly, the rail line westward from Nairobi to Uganda

passed in a deep cutting close to the boundary of our school. My boarding house was alongside the boundary fence and at night we would hear the very heavy trains making hard work up the steep gradient of the line in the cutting below, but I’m sure that the sound of those Garratt locomotives was like a lullaby to us and we slept soundly.

During the day at weekends we would do what we were forbidden to do and we would go down to the line and smear butter over the rails. Then we would go back up and sit at the top of the cutting and watch the locomotives, as firstly the front wheels lost traction, to be joined seconds later by the rear wheels. Often complaints were made to our headmaster by the railway authorities, but we were never caught. The other pastime was to put 10 cent pieces on the line and see whose coin would stretch longest, without breaking.)

The homeward journey was purely the reverse of the outgoing trip, but on one homecoming trip things went slightly wrong. One of the boys lived not far from Morogoro, where his family had a lovely old German colonial property high up on the Uluguru Mountains. When we reached Morogoro in the late afternoon, his parents had been told by the railway officials that our train to Dar es Salaam was delayed by several hours. The parents kindly invited us transit boys to have supper with them and we went up the mountain and had a very welcome meal, without tomato ketchup. However, when we were driven back down there was no sign of a train at the station. The official who had given the information to my friend’s parents had miscalculated and the train had been and gone. Panic at the station, but the station master was able to pass a message to his colleague at Dar es Salaam and our parents learned that we would be a day late in returning. We all went up the mountain again for the night with our friend’s parents and my main memory of that part of the trip is of waking up on the following morning high up on the mountain, looking down through gaps in the clouds on to the beautiful plains below us.

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The end of an era

Then, sad to say, following the outbreak of the Mau Mau terrorist rebellion, when some of our masters were taken into the police reserve, on a part time basis, several of us were sent to UK to complete all of our education there and then there were no more interesting journeys, only boring aeroplane travel between Africa and the UK. Except for one flight when, half way between Nairobi and Khartoum, one of the engines was shut down in our Handley Page Hermes aircraft, because of falling oil pressure.

In those days a crew member would come along and chat to passengers to reassure them, by telling them what was happening on the flight deck and, on this occasion, telling us that there was nothing to worry about because we had a very experienced flight crew. We were told also that our pilot had been a bomber pilot during WW II, and had probably had that sort of thing, and worse, happen to him many times beforehand.

Obviously, he knew exactly what to do and all that happened was that we returned to Nairobi and spent a night there in the New Stanley Hotel, one of the then top tourist hotels in that city. A replacement aircraft was found and we boarded it next morning and flew without incident to the UK. That caused me to be a day late in returning to school but no-one was too worried about that.

I have no idea of what happened to all school trips after that. All three East African colonial territories became independent republics in the early 1960s and the governments had no further use for the mainly British expatriates who had worked there. Mbeya School closed down and the buildings became the headquarters of the Chinese railroad construction company, who built the new line from Dar es Salaam to Lusaka in Zambia. Duke of York School remained as a boarding school, albeit with a non-colonial, different name and for different pupils.

Those of us who attended those schools are now scattered far and wide some, like me, having come to Britain, but the majority having gone to various countries within the Commonwealth. However, thanks to internet and email, many of us are able to keep in touch with one another, and exchange memories.

SS WARRIMOO the navigational freak of a lifetime (*By peter Sanderson*)

The passenger steamer SS Warrimoo was quietly knifing its way through the waters of the mid-Pacific on its way from Vancouver to Australia. The navigator had just finished working out a star fix & brought the master, Captain John Phillips, the result.

The Warrimoo's position was LAT 0° 31' N and LON 179° 30' W. The date was 31 December 1899. "Know what this means?"

First Mate Payton broke in, "We're only a few miles from the intersection of the Equator and the International Date Line.

Captain Phillips was prankish enough to take full advantage of the opportunity for achieving the navigational freak of a lifetime.

He called his navigators to the bridge to check & double check the ships position.

He changed course slightly so as to bear directly on his mark. Then he adjusted the engine speed. The calm weather & clear night worked in his favour.

At midnight the SS Warrimoo lay on the Equator at exactly the point where it crossed the International Date Line! The consequences of this bizarre position were many.

The forward part (bow) of the ship was in the Southern Hemisphere & the middle of summer. The rear (stern) was in the Northern Hemisphere & in the middle of winter.

The date in the aft part of the ship was 31 December 1899. Forward it was 1 January 1900. This ship was therefore not only in two different days, two different months, two different years, two different seasons, but in two different centuries - all at the same time.



Ellesmere Telephone Directory - 1906
exchanged opened by the Post Office c1905

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MALPAS.

The Exchange is open from 3.30 a.m. to 9.30 p.m. on Week Days, and from 3.30 a.m. to 10.0 a.m. and 8.0 p.m. to 9.20 p.m. on Sundays.

Postmaster—J. W. BUNNAGE.

The Sectional Engineer, Forest House Chambers, Love Street, Chester.
The Lineman, Post Office, Whitechurch.

- 1 CALL OFFICE - - - Post Office.
- 6 Bradley, Samuel - - - Lion Hotel.
- 2 Greenshields, R. L. - - - The Beeches.
- 4 Huxley, T. G., Contractor - Oldhall Street.
- 5 Jordison, Dr. C., Physician - High Street.
- 7 Morgan, G. S., Draper - Church Street.
- 8 Phillips, J. E., Surgeon - Oldcastle.
- 9 Police Station - - - High Street.
- 10 Salt, Smith A., General Merchant. - High Street.
- 12 Wyvern Hotel - - - Church Street.

ELLESMERE AREA.

ELLESMERE.

The Exchange is open from 3.15 a.m. to 9.45 p.m. on Week Days, and from 3.0 a.m. to 10.0 a.m., 5.0 p.m. to 6.0 p.m., and 8.15 p.m. to 9.45 p.m. on Sundays.

Postmaster—

The Sectional Engineer, Castle Foregate, Shrewsbury.

The Lineman, Post Office, Ellesmere.

- 1 CALL OFFICE - - - Post Office.
- 2 Adams, T. W., Fishmonger, Willow Street.
Fruiterer, and Seedsman.
- 3 Bickley & Sons, Seedsman and Chemists. - Scotland Street.
- 7 Child, A. J. P., Land Agent - Brynypys Estate Office, Overton.
- 7a Do. do. - The Lodge, Overton.
- 5 Clayton, J. J., Chemist - The Square.
- 6 Ellesmere & Vyrnwy Breweries, Ltd., Brewers and Wine and Spirit Merchants.
- 8 Giles, H. R., Solicitor - - - Office.
- x8 Do. do. - - - Residence.

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ELLESMERE—continued.

- 9 Hawkins Brothers, Butchers, The Square.
&c.
- 10 Hoffman, A. H., M.D., Church Street.
L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S.
- 12 Knight, J. S. - - - Bridgwater Hotel.
- 13 Lloyd, R. E., Solicitor - 1, Willow Street.
- 14 Mainwaring, C. F. K. - Oteley.
- 7b Peel, Hugh, J. P. - - - County Flint, Brynypys, Overton.
- 15 Police.
- 16 Tims, Wm., Family Grocer and Provision Merchant. 25, Cross Street.
- 4 Tower Brownlow, R. C., Land Agent.

BARMOUTH AREA.

[Including Barmouth, Aberdovey, Machynlleth, and Towyn Exchanges.]

BARMOUTH.

The Exchange is open from 8.0 a.m. to 8.0 p.m. on Week Days and from 8.0 a.m. to 10.0 a.m. on Sundays.

Postmaster—E. R. JONES.

The Sectional Engineer, Post Office, Machynlleth—Telephone No. 20.

The Lineman, Post Office, Barmouth.

- 1 CALL OFFICE - - - Post Office.
- 22 Barmouth Gas Co., Ltd. - Gas Works.
- 29 Barmouth Urban District Council (Clerk's Office). Barmouth.
- 23 Cambrian Railways Co., Ltd. Passenger Station.
- 2 Cors-y-Gedol Hotel - - Barmouth.
- 3 Davies, D., and Sons - Post Office, Beach Road.
- x4 Davies, D. E., Butcher - 6, St. Ann's Square.
- 4 Do. do. - Stables, Park Road.
- 27 Davies, Gwilym, Grocer - Central Stores.
- 25 Edwards, Lewis, Grocer - Melbourne House, King Edward Street.
- 6 Evans, H. - - - Penmount, Porkington Terrace.
- 7 Evans, Robt., & Co., Wine Merchants. Barmouth.

Did you know?

Your finger *nails* grow four times faster than your toenails

Babies are born with 300 bones – adults have 206

Eyelashes last about 150 days

The heart circulates your blood through your body about 1,000 times each day

You make half a quart (500ml) of saliva each day

The smallest bone in your body is in your ear

Your blood has the same proportion of salt in it as the ocean does.

A sneeze blows air out of your nose at 100 MPH

You are taller in the morning than at night

Humans are the only animal that cry when upset

Many more boys are colour blind than girls are

Children have more taste buds than adults

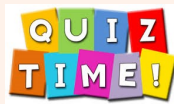
Your lungs are the only organs that float

Food spends up to six hours in the stomach being digested

Your eyeballs are actually part of your brain

Bones are 4 times stronger than concrete

The largest muscle in your body is the one you are sitting on



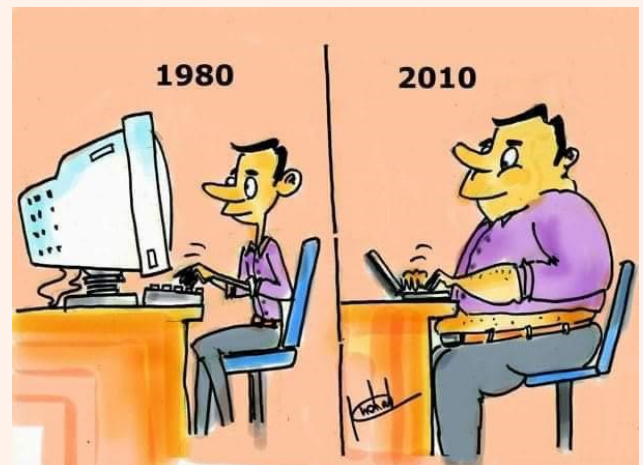
General Knowledge Quiz

1. In what part of the body would you find the fibula?
2. Hamilton has become one of the biggest musical theatre shows of all time since it debuted in 2015, but what is the name of the acclaimed star who wrote it?
3. If you have cryophobia, what are you afraid of?
4. Who won the Best Actress Award at the most recent Oscars?
5. How many of Henry VIII's wives were called Catherine?
6. According to ONS, what was the most popular boy's name in the UK in 2018?
7. Ray Davies was the frontman on which iconic '60s band?
8. Which popular video game franchise has released games with the subtitles World At War and Black Ops?
9. In what US State is the city Nashville?
10. Which rock band was founded by Trent Reznor in 1988?
11. What's the chemical symbol for silver?
12. With what sport would you associate Sachin Tendulkar?
13. What is the capital city of Switzerland?
14. Which legendary actor played Jimmy Hoffa in Martin Scorsese's 2019 film The Irishman?
15. Ataulfo, Alphonso and Keitt are varieties of what fruit?
16. In what modern day country was Nikola Tesla born?
17. What is the smallest planet in our solar system?
18. Who wrote the novels Gone Girl and Sharp Objects?
19. What is seven cubed?
20. Who is the current manager of Manchester United?

Answers page 11

**I found \$20 in a
parking lot and
thought to myself,
What Would Jesus
Do?**

**So, I turned it into
wine.**



The Series of Memories of Ellesmere Residents
Extracts from book 3 of the "Memories" Booklets Published in early 2000 by the Ellesmere Society

Memory No 15

Days Gone By
Remembered by Dorothy Rogers

The following is a transcript of an interview on 31 January 1997 with Mrs Dorothy Rogers (nee Jones)

I lived at Criftins until I was twenty. My parents died then, (1921) and so I finished that life. It was a very nice life at Criftins. Then I married in 1927, and so it would have been 70 years this next month since I was married. We should have had our 70th Anniversary if he had lived until the next month. So I have been around Ellesmere area quite a lot, and we have lived in this house all that time. *"In this house here?"* Yes - we went in- well it was his mother's really you know. She married again and she went out, and we have been here ever since.

My husband died nearly two years ago. Of course, I can remember things as happened in Ellesmere more when I was a girl than later years d'you see. And then there's a question I've wondered many a time - in Ellesmere, in those days, there used to be charities - and people would leave money and call it "A charity". And there was one; when I was about twelve or thirteen - they had a Criftins school girl and a boy to go to the old Town Hall in Ellesmere and do this exam - for this charity - and if you passed you had £1 - well, it was to set you up in clothes when you went out to work. I never heard anything of that ever. *"So that must have been about 1912 - before the war?"* Oh, yes, it was, and I remember going to the old Town Hall for this exam, and in this room across from us there was a boat - it was supposed to be on show I think, and it was almost like a coracle. I've never seen anything of it since. It was strange that, wasn't it?

(Note; There is a coracle and the Ellesmere punt in the Rowley's House Museum in Shrewsbury.)

The old Market Hall was used for selling poultry and that kind of thing when I was a girl, and I remember - we used to keep a few fowl at home and Mother would say, "Now you take these to Ellesmere and mind you don't get done down - because they called them "huxters" and they came from Liverpool and up North- to buy these - by train, you see - to buy all these things - and it was really very interesting, really. There was eggs and chickens and cheese and butter, all sold at the old market. Yes, it was very I interesting. Now - I remember when there was a neighbour of ours used to keep a lot of poultry and she used to take them to a house - half way to Ellesmere from where we were, on a Monday evening. And this person would sell them on Tuesday in the market. And I used to watch her - she'd be talking away, and as she'd put the eggs down - to eleven and then the next one she'd put on the window and then by the time she'd finished she'd know how many dozen she'd done. I used to think that was wonderful really

And the old market was also used for rummage sales; we used to have splendid rummage sales - in aid of the hospital. And there were some very nice things there because there were well-to-do people around then you know.

Yes, my Sister was married then and she had young children and she used to go and buy tennis rackets and books - piles of books. It was really a very good sale for the hospital.

Now when I was a girl, the surgery, it must have been almost opposite the Methodist church, a house there when you first went down Trimpey, an open space It was a Dr. Bathurst, and oh, I used to be terrified of him. He had a loud voice if you'd go in the surgery for medicine or something, he'd say hello kiddie - that loud, and we really used to be afraid of him, but he was a very good doctor. I don't know what happened to him after. The next doctor was Rogers - two brothers I believe, and their surgery was in Church Street in those days. And then of course we had the cinema on the corner by the centre. It was where they built those houses, and then on the other side of the street there were quite a lot of cottages. And there used to be a little cafe where you used to be able to go and get a cup of tea. And the confectionery shop, that was opposite the centre, I know, there's the pub on the corner and then a house and then this, Mr. Thomas used to keep it. And they used to make all kinds of buns, and one thing particular, there was waggon wheels, they were all sugar over, oh, they were lovely we used to like those - when we were coming out of town. And then there was the cinema, and the cafe, and apart from that, the shops. Now Dawson Owen's. That's been open, well I can remember it when I was a little girl mother always used to go there for her bedroom linen. You know, sheets and that kind of thing. Yes, and when I came to shop in Ellesmere, I remember it was someone else ran it but it was still Dawson Owen's. And he had a centenary celebration didn't he? Not many years ago, yes, he had a centenary celebration, and there was a newspaper from when he opened it, from 100 years before, and I've looked for that paper, but I can't find it. The shop in those days was only very small. You know, it wasn't the size it is today. No - but it was a very nice shop.

Going by railway - oh, it was lovely that was. It does seem a shame. The longest ride had on that railway was to Runcorn, in Cheshire; we had some relations living there. The whole family of us went up there once to stay for a holiday - on the Ellesmere train. It was very good - very nice - yes.

I expect you've got the book Mrs Chapman wrote, have you? "Charles and Mary Alice", it's here; there's the book, now that's very interesting. And, of course, that's Ellesmere, almost before me. It really is. Of course, there's quite a bit of politics in it, which is amusing really. I should imagine it'll be in the library. Yes, there's quite a bit about the suffragettes in it. Now, that was when the railway was running. There used to be Sunday School outings, from up Rochdale and Oldham. They brought children for a Sunday School holiday - a treat. And one train with a load on got off the rails the other side of Welshampton. That's before - I don't remember it, but it's in that book, and I heard them talk about it, you know, it was a nasty accident. And I remember it particularly for one reason. When I was a little girl, the chapel in our village was going to Aberystwyth - the Sunday School there, and one of the teachers said to my father, "I'll take Dolly if you like, I'll see that she's all right, I'll look after her." I'd never been to the seaside then you see.

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Oh, I was thrilled to bits to think I was going you see. And when the morning came, my father said, "You are not going to Aberystwyth. I'd been dreaming of an accident on the railway and you're not going." It was the greatest disappointment I ever had. I never forget it for that, but you see, he must have thought of that accident that happened before and it bothered him. Yes, well in that book, they use Wheatley when they mean Oteley, but I don't know the names of the people much that are in it because they're a bit before me. But I noticed where they've got Wheatley for Oteley. Yes, I enjoyed reading it.

There's a little ruin, when you go, perhaps it's best to say, canting out of Ellesmere. You pass all those Elson houses - all of them - there's a lane that goes to what they call The Loop, well, when you come along on the left, there's an old ruins, it's tumbledown, and there's only where a window or a door was and that's supposed to be a tollgate.

The church had high pews (St. Martins Parish) - box pews, and a 3-tier pulpit. There was such a feeling of warmth and love when you went in - it was good - but one vicar, he took it to bits. It's a nice church now, I admit. They modernised it. But all the old things went out. My husband said "Let's have a look in the church", and the pulpit had gone - everything had gone. "Oh, I can't stand this", he said. And the architect was there, and I told him about the beautiful atmosphere. He said, "It'll come back". But it never does, not to the same extent, and we started going to the little chapel. It was nearer home, you know, and we've been going ever since.

They used to have a grand carnival in Ellesmere. A neighbour of ours had gone to this carnival - she was an old woman when I was young. I wasn't far from her and people were crowding her, pushing and shoving you know, like they do. She in such a state - she said "I've been stung by a bee - I've been stung by a wasp", Everybody moved away. It's little things like that stick in your mind. I remember buying my bike in Ellesmere, in Scotland Street, the far end. He had a little shop, Jack Hughes was it? 30 shillings it was and it stood me for years that first bike.

I can show you my School Certificate. It was a C of E school at Criftings - it got burnt down.. When I was 14, the master said "Would you like to go and help Miss Gleaves in the Infants' room?" I stayed there until I was 20; I did enjoy it. There used to be a young woman lived at the back of here used to cycle every day Cockshutt to teach.

Memory No 16

Ellesmere College - from 1920's *Remembered by Colleen Cubberly*

St. Oswald's College, as it was then known, was strictly a boys' College. Only there were women; the Headmaster's wife, Ma-tron, and the Housekeeper, being the most important. Next came the dining room maids, laundry maids dormitory, sewing, scullery, kitchen maids who all 'lived in'. There were a

Porters who did likewise, but Gardeners and Groundsmen lived in Ellesmere, as did some of the daily women.

Tom 'Cockie' Hayward baked all the bread for the College. They were great long loaves - two feet long and square. On Sundays his ovens cooked sides of beef the traditional lunch and of course there was always lots of good beef dripping over, so the poor families from the village went to the back kitchen door to collect a basin of this Hence it got the nickname 'Dripping Hall'.

In the dining room, the china was blue and white almost like a willow pattern. The tables were solid oak and also the benches. On the walls, almost reaching the roof were displayed the silver cups won for rugby, cricket etc. At the top the dining hall was the beautiful Headmaster's table with its matching sixty chairs. It was the tradition that one boy from top and junior school sat at H Table each evening. They put on their stiff white collar and black blazer, a were inspected by the prefect, and woe betide them if they did not pass muster.

About 1940, there were so many china breakages that the Governors decided have steel plates with Ellesmere College engraved on them.

In the 1930's, George Thomas came to the College as a porter. All the rooms then had coal fires and 'Old George' had the task of carrying sticks and coal three flights of stairs. In spring Mr. Prosser-Evans would order 'no more fire but if George found out he went straight to the Headmaster, no messing. The boys were very good to 'Old George'; he had white cricket flannels, a blue collar blazer and a boater hat, and always a buttonhole in his coat. That was Sunday gear. He was also well known at the Carnival. Talking about the Carnival fires reminded me of the maid who brushed too near the flames and her nightdress was set alight. She died in hospital a few days later.

When war broke out, many of the men and boys were called up. This was when women teachers appeared at the College. This was also the time of the blackout and there came to the College Dr. Kratz

(I think he was Austrian). He wore long black coat, black Homburg hat and always walked into Ellesmere carrying black case. Rumour has it that he was a spy and he was warned for showing light. Then, suddenly, he disappeared. Perhaps some of your readers know the answer.

Ellesmere College created lots of jobs in the town. At the end of term time there was not a room to be had at any of the hotels. Parents would arrive in their Bentleys and Jaguars, stay over night, and drive home the following day. Before they left they liked to treat their boys to a slap up meal. The Boathouse Restaurant was a favourite place. Well into the 1950's this happened, but it is so easy to commute in a couple of hours now.

Quite a few personalities have been to the College. Bill Beaumont, Al Read's two sons. Richard Burton and Billy Connolly made a film there. One of the longest serving secretaries was Mr. Simpson, who when a young man had a motor cycle accident which left him with a limp. But he was a true gentleman. Matron, Kathleen Bates also generations of boys have passed through the College. Miss Watts was Housekeeper when rationing was in force, and didn't the staff know it? Alf Edwards was head painter for years. He told us of the boy who must have hated it there, so decided to run away, but before leaving he took paint and brushes and daubed very rude words in big print on the Headmaster's study. Of course Mr. Prosser-Evans had to call on Alf to repair the damage.

Cont. page 10

Anthony Ireland was a teacher there in the 1950's, with several books to his credit. Mr. and Mrs. Nankervill were in charge of the library. I believe several of their children were born in Ellesmere College. Mr. Nankervill researched and wrote several books on Ellesmere's History.

Every Armistice Sunday, the parade was led by the bugles and drums of Ellesmere College Band. Fine strapping young men in full regalia followed by the College Scout Group. You could hear them coming before they reached Birch Road. They led Church Parade up to the 1980's. I suppose their school lessons were more important, so the military side of it was phased out. Under the dining room was the 'Crypt'. There were classrooms and spaces for storing games, bats, canoes etc. There must also have been a secret passage with a trap door leading into the dining room, just by the high table. The ladies on night duty were laying up for breakfast when they smelled smoke. On investigating, some of the boys were having a quiet smoke before bed. The ladies did not cant on them.

Each 'House' was known by its colour; Reds, Yellows, Blues or Violets. In each House they had a Day Room where the boys spent their free time. There was in everyone, a tea chest for rubbish, which was emptied daily by a Porter. My sister and I think that this was where the tragic fire started.

On June 23rd 1966, the bell sounded throughout the College for the evening meal. The boys would take their places with a Master at the end of each table. Then the Headmaster would walk to the High Table, turn and Grace was said always in Latin. This was always a special moment for me. After the 'Amen' was a burst of sound as the boys ate their meal.

Perhaps someone in a hurry did not stub out their fag properly. Perhaps; electric gadget was left on, we will never know, but when they came out of the dining hall the fire had taken hold. Of course, the evening ladies carried on with their duties and were only aware of the danger when a staff member told them leave everything and go to safety.

When we arrived for work on the following morning, it was devastating. I climbed the solid stone steps to what had once been the buttery; from here I looked down on a sea of black ashes. Around the dining hall used to be two green pipes to heat the room and the hot plates, but they were sagging and twisted

everything was gone. The Chapel was destroyed also, as the sparks had set alight. There is a story that one of the boys braved the smoke and flames to bring out a valuable Bible; he was given a hero's welcome. Even the kitchens were gutted. They used to have white tiles, but they were all black and streaked. But the boys had to be fed, so field kitchens were loaned from Park



Hall Army Camp as were trestles and chairs which were put in the gymnasium. When the ash, from the fire were cleared, they were used as land-fill on the 'rec'. All the burnt beams went there. If I stand by Blackwater Cottage and look toward the canal, that is where they are buried. I wonder if they ever rescued those silver cups before the fire, or did they melt into a lump of silver? Maybe someone with a metal detector could unearth a find one day. The High Table silver cutlery was all stamped with H.T. Could this also have gone in

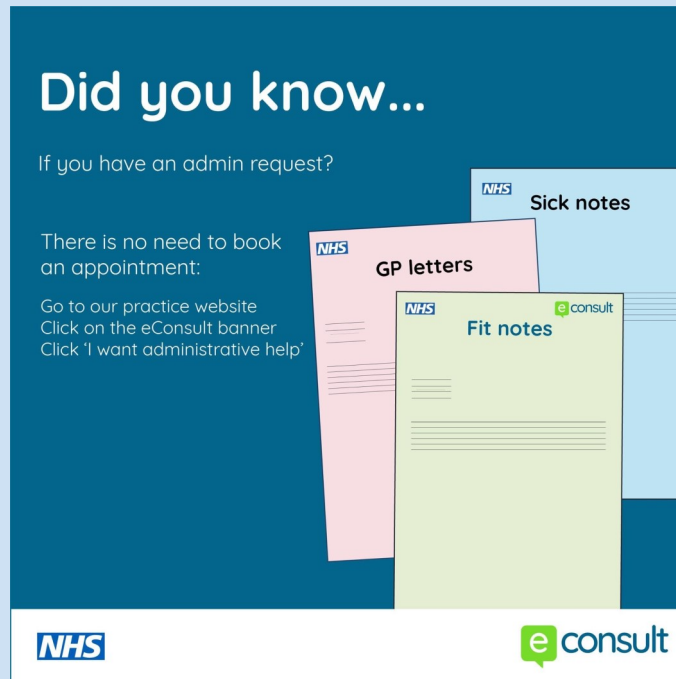
the land-fill site? All this I record for future generations.

In the 1970's, two young men from Ellesmere discovered there had been a land fill on Blackwater Meadow, where the Marina is now. When word got around scores of people and children descended on the site to dig. Quite a number of Victorian bottles and knick knacks were discovered.

I do not know how they found out, perhaps they read it in an old book on Ellesmere.

This is the story of St. Oswald's College. Four generations of my family have worked at the College; my daughter and granddaughter are still working there today, they have a fine new Chapel and a modern dining hall, but I will always remember how it was.

Local information



Did you know...

If you have an admin request?

There is no need to book an appointment:

Go to our practice website
Click on the eConsult banner
Click 'I want administrative help'

The banner features three overlapping document icons: 'Sick notes' (light blue), 'GP letters' (pink), and 'Fit notes' (light green). Each icon has the NHS logo. The 'Fit notes' icon also has the eConsult logo. The NHS logo is at the bottom left, and the eConsult logo is at the bottom right.



Take 1 minute each day and help fight the outbreak.

Get the Covid 19 Symptom Tracker App from the App store or Google

Urgent Care Centres

Urgent Care Centres (UCCs) at Princess Royal Hospital (PRH) in Telford and the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital (RSH) will temporarily relocate to the Minor Injury Units (MIUs) in Whitchurch and Bridgnorth to form two Urgent Treatment Centres (UTCs).

PLEASE CONTINUE TO KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR YOUR NEIGHBOURS

Key contact details: Ellesmere Covid-19 Community Support Group:
01691 596290 / 622689

www.ellesmerecovidsupportgroups.org.uk

Shropshire Council Helpline: 0345 678 9028

For people living in the Welshampton or Lyneal area - please contact the Parish Council on 01948 710672 or go on their website <https://www.welshamptonandlyneal-pc.gov.uk/> where you will find information about their local Community Support group

1. Leg, 2. Lin-Mannuel Miranda, 3. Ice/cold, 4. Renée Zellweger, 5. 3, 6. Oliver, 7. The Kinks
8. Call of Duty, 9. Tennessee, 10. Nine Inch Nails, 11. Ag, 12. Cricket, 13. Bern, 14 Al Pacino
15. Mango, 16. Croatia, 17. Mercury, 18. Gillian Flynn, 19. 343, 20. Ole Gunnar Solskjær



Pastoral Support from the Churches in Ellesmere

Rev'd Pat Hawkins St Mary's Church

Tel [01691622571](tel:01691622571) email revpat.hawkins@gmail.com.

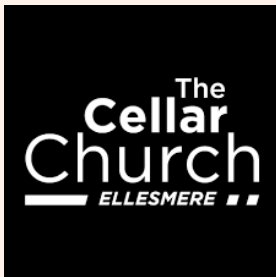
St Mary's Ellesmere:

Weekly services from 25th July:

Saturday 17:30 Said Holy Communion in the Nave
Sunday 08:00 Said Holy Communion in St Anne's
Sunday 10:15 Said Holy Communion in the Nave
Sunday 16:00 Said BCP Evening Prayer in Quire
Numbers are restricted.



Pastor Phil Wright 'The Cellar Church'.



[07711 986694](tel:07711986694) email: pastor.phil@me.com

The Cellar Church online every Sunday 10am and Wednesday 6pm

Follow the link Directly on our Youtube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmxif6AT5w7IJH4Yxkbi6tQ>

On the cellar church website: <https://www.cellarchurch.co.uk/audio-video/>

Rev Julia Skitt Ellesmere Methodist Church

[01691 657349](tel:01691657349) email: rev.julia@mail.com

Ellesmere Methodist Church Services can be streamed from:

Wesley's Chapel in London - on Wednesdays 12.45, Thursdays 12.45 and
Sundays 9.45 and 11.00am

<https://www.wesleyschapel.org.uk/livestreaming/>

Methodist Central Hall, Westminster - Sundays at 11.00am

[https://www.youtube.com/user/MCHWevents?](https://www.youtube.com/user/MCHWevents?utm_source=Methodist+Church+House&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=11417259_Update)

[utm_source=Methodist+Church+House&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=11417259_Update](https://www.youtube.com/user/MCHWevents?utm_source=Methodist+Church+House&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=11417259_Update)



Ellesmere Catholic Convent Chapel

The Chapel is open, the building on the left as you drive in. 8:30am - 6pm.

If you have anything that you'd like to ask the sister to pray for you: Phone [01691 622 283](tel:01691622283)

