



Issue 15

July 30, 2020

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From the editor

Dear all, I hope you are all keeping well.

It has been a bit of a learning curve for me to remember to wear my mask when required, as usual the message is a bit confusing. Wear one if in a takeaway, but not in a restaurant etc, and on it goes, with changes by the day.

However, as long as it helps to keep the dreaded Virus away from the UK I don't mind.

As secretary of the Ellesmere Society and custodian of the Memory Booklets published by the Ellesmere Society. I think it is a shame that they don't get a wider audience. So over the next few weeks I intend to publish some of the memories in the newsletter.

Keep safe

Paul

From the Crow's nest

Dear Probus friends,

As ever I hope that you, your friends, families and neighbours are keeping safe and well. As the bus conductor used to say at the terminal "All Change". Not so long ago it was only bank-robbers who wore masks. It has been good to speak to folk and bump into others in the street though not literally. Travel overseas seems to be still a less preferred option and heaven only knows when Mrs S and I will get back to our beloved County Kerry. This week I bought a little tent, intended for our grandchildren to sleep in within our small garden. That's what I call social distancing! I do feel for our politicians, health /care workers, business people, the vulnerable and others (not in that order) as our entire world adapts to this new order. Best wishes to all, stay safe and well, change flows around us all as ever. As Charles Darwin once said "A man's friendships are the best measure of his worth".

Jeremy

Yes Minister clips
<https://youtu.be/nZBkP6drCqE>



Two Favourite Art Galleries *By Mike Grundy*

In the last issue I wrote about looking at paintings and, in particular, online art. This time I would like to tell you about two of my favourite art galleries/museums, both rather quirky.

First the **Fergusson Gallery**

The picture below is of a most unusual, quirky art gallery and museum dedicated to the work of one man: the Scottish Colourist J D Fergusson. (Do not confuse this with the Ferguson Family Museum on the Isle of Wight which is all about tractors!) When I visited this gallery which is on the banks of the River Tay in the City of Perth and I was impressed by the building as much as by the paintings.

The circular building in neoclassical style dates from 1832. The inscription above the door gives the reason for its original construction: “Aquam Igne et Aqua Haurio” - “by fire and water I draw water”. It was for pumping water up from the river and storing it in a tank for distribution round the city, and this it did until 1915. The lower part of the building is of stone but the entire upper story is an enormous cast iron tank which was capable of holding about 700 tons of water. It is probably the oldest cast iron building in the world.

After 1915 the building fell into disrepair and was saved from proposed demolition several times until 1974 when it was completely restored and served as an Information Office for several years. Eventually, in 1992 it reopened as the Fergusson Gallery, with a large circular room downstairs and a central stairway ascending to a doughnut shaped gallery in the former storage tank. It holds a large collection of paintings, sculptures and sketch books by Fergusson himself. There are also paintings, photographs and other items relating to his long time lover, the dancer Margaret Morris. I would love to tell you more about this incredible couple another time.



My next choice is the **Victoria Gallery and Museum of the University of Liverpool**.

It is housed in a beautiful neogothic edifice quite close to Paddy’s Wigwam (Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral). It has a small but eclectic collection of Art but lots of other collections including Natural History and Archaeology. For me the best thing is the world’s largest collection about Dentristry. Learn about “Waterloo Teeth” - dentures made of teeth extracted from the dead at the field of Waterloo.

If you need a cuppa after that then there is a very good cafe in the museum, then a short walk downhill to the Walker Art Gallery where I have spent many happy hours. Who needs to visit London?

Mike Grundy



A brief History of Marine Navigational Continued

When finished the giant optic, at Quon Island had a focal height of 197ft and a range of 20 NM (when it was electrified in the 80s this increased to 40 NM) the optic comprised of three sections with two lenses in each, and rotated every 30 seconds which gave off two intense white flashes every ten seconds. This ‘characteristic’ gives the light a unique identity which informed mariners that they were in sight of the entrance to the Gulf, and helps them to navigate through the strait’s safely. The clockwork mechanism driving the lens rotation required rewinding every six hours throughout the night with three men on watch. The total Island crew was seven men.

One problem faced by all maintenance authorities of the Lighthouse at Quoin Island was, and remains, earth tremors caused by the tectonic movement of the Arabian Plate as it slides beneath its Eurasian neighbour. While the structure has withstood the shocks, including during the great earthquake of November 1945, the glazings of the lantern house have not.

Fortunately with great foresight by the Indian Marine plenty of spare glass diamonds and triangles were included in the original shipment and have been used when required, the earth tremors also usually shook some of the Mercury out of the trough which required it to be topped up by the watch keeper.

After WW-2 more oil was exported so more money poured into the region’s economies and the approaches to ports and oil terminals such as Bahrain, Kuwait, Ras-Tannura in Saudi Arabia and Jebel-Dhana in Abu-Dhabi required more buoys for safe navigation as ships got bigger. Before 1948 this work was carried out by the then Indian Marine who worked indirectly for the British Government.

As Tankers got bigger (the biggest I saw was ½ million tonne with a draft fully loaded of 30mt) most never berthed in a port, but at Single Point Mooring buoy (SPM) buoy miles offshore. In 1948 at the “Partition of India” the British government did not want to lose all her influence in the Gulf area so it set up a company to maintain the marine navigation aids and ensure safe navigation for shipping in the Gulf. The company was called the Persian Gulf Lighting Service (PGLS), the board members were made up of one member from each of the large shipping companies i.e. P&O, Shell, BP etc plus a member from the board of trade.

The company was set up as “a not for profit company”, and was financed by imposing a ‘Nav Due’ on all shipping entering the Gulf, the ship owner had to pay a couple of pence per ton on the Net registered Tonnage (NRT) of the vessel.

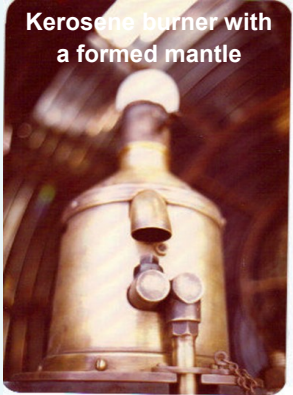
When the Persian Gulf Lighting Service was first established in 1948 it was based up the Shatt-Al-Arab river at Basra in Iraq, the new company had to Charter a vessel to carry out the maintenance of the Navigation Aids. As there were no spare vessels in the area they eventually chartered the King of Iraq’s discarded yacht called the Nearchus at £250 per day. The yacht had been built in 1925, in 1949 it was adapted for the purpose of buoy relief work, this was used until 1952 when a purpose built ship named the SS Relume was delivered to the Gulf. To be more central in the Gulf By 1950 the

company had moved from Basra to a purpose built base in Bahrain, compete with its own Acetylene Gas manufacturing plant. But for political reasons in the mid 60s the name of the company was changed from the Persian Gulf Lighting Service (PGLS) to Middle East Navigation Aids Service (MENAS). Which I joined In 1972 as a Marine Engineer. In the late 60's and early 70's MENAS set up and operated the Gulf Decca Navigator Chains in the Gulf.

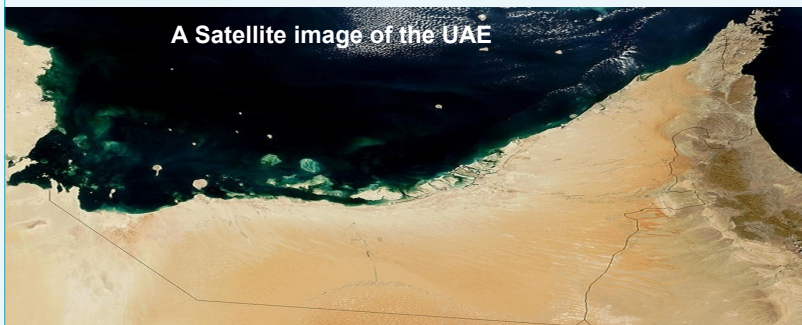
The **Decca Navigator System** was a hyperbolic low frequency radio navigation system, its primary use was for ship navigation in coastal waters. It was developed during WW2 to help with the D Day landings. Fishing vessels were major post-war users, but it was also used on aircraft. To use the DECCA system it was Necessary to purchase their special charts, DECCA produced their own navigation charts with the DECCA chain Red Purple & Green lines drawn on them. In the early days of DECCA around the UK coast the lines on the charts lead to numerous collisions between fishing boats, because they used the lines to navigate along, usually sailing along a DECCA line unknowingly approaching each other.

Decca employees used to joke that DECCA was an acronym for *Dedicated Englishmen Causing Chaos Abroad*.

Before DECCA the only other form of radio navigation aid was RDF Radio Direction Finder where tall aerials were erected on the shore with a radio transmitter sending a signal out to the sea where ships would pick it up sometimes 30 miles away and use it to navigate towards the shore. By law all ships had to carry a DRF receiver.



The United Arab Emirates (UAE) came to fruition in 1971 it was created by Harold Wilson's government to leave some stability when the British troops pulled out of the area in 1972. It

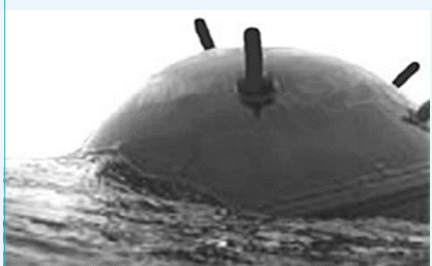


was formed as a federation of seven emirates (Abu -Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Ras -Al- Khaimah, Fu- jairah, Umm Al Quwain),

(Kuwait Bahrain & Qatar did not join) which came together as one state on the 2nd of December 1971. The federal capital of UAE is Abu-Dhabi and it is ruled by the President of the UAE. A massive construction program of building schools, housing, hospitals and roads started in the mid 70s at that time there were only two ports in the Gulf capable of berthing cargo ships, Bahrain & Kuwait. This meant that all imported building materials i.e. Steel, Cement and Aggregate etc had to be brought to shore at ports such as Dubai, Abu-Dhabi, Sharjah and Doha by Barge this was a very slow process and resulted in hundreds of ships being anchored off these ports for from three to six months at a time, some crews joined and left a ship without ever sailing anywhere.

There was such a call for imported food & goods that even places like Bahrain, Kuwait and Basra had long waiting times for berths to discharge their cargo.

The Gulf has always been a politically unstable area and while I was there, there were a few little wars and revolutions. In the late 60s early 70s there was the Oman Yemen conflict which British troops were actively engaged in. Then in 1979 was the overthrow of the Shar of Iran, then in 1980 Saddam Hussein started a war with Iran that was fully supported by the Gulf Arabs and the West, this lasted about 8 years and ended in stale mate. The latter years of this conflict was quite a dangerous time for ships sailing in the Gulf, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard in the East attacked shipping in their fast launches firing RPGs at vessels. And the Iraqis releasing floating mines from the Shatt-Al-Arab area into the Gulf, all ships were on high alert when transiting the Gulf, If a Sheep ship had gone up the Gulf the reports of Mines trebled because when a sheep died it was tossed over the side and a dead



sheep floating with its legs sticking up from a mile away through Binoculars looked just like a floating mine, so for some form of safety all ships kept well over to the Arabian side of the Gulf. During this conflict the Gulf was classed as a War Zone which put up all insurance premiums for shipping. All ships crews were on double pay while in the war zone for more than two days, with a guarantee of minimum of three days on it so the crew on our

ship Relume based in Bahrain were quid's in, 8 years on double pay.

The British & American Navies offered to escort ships registered in their countries so there were cases of Tankers anchored just outside the Gulf at Fujairah changing their country of registration to British or American. In fact the Kuwait Government reflagged their whole fleet of Tankers & Cargo ships to the American Flag.

The next major conflict was Saddam invading Kuwait, which I wrote about in issue 13.

During the 80s the next major navigation aid to be developed was GPS (Global Positioning System). This came about mainly because the American Government who had launched the network of 24 Satellites in 1973 for military use such as guiding missiles, and as a Safety umbrella for search and rescue for Shipping. In the 80s under pressure from their tax payers they grudgingly made it available for general use. But they put an error in the transmitted signal, which they changed at random, from up to 100 to 1,000 metres in any direction and if they were firing missiles they turned it off for general use.

To use the GPS as an accurate navigation system the received signal had to be corrected to sub metre then re-transmitted either by satellite or as in our case by radio. Three base stations were set up in the Gulf one in Kuwait one in Bahrain and one on an island in the UAE called Qarnain where the signal from the satellite was

corrected then re-transmitted by radio to shipping in the Gulf. In 2001 the Americans completely removed the error from the transmitted signal, this led to the popularity of cheap in car & portable walking GPS receivers. There is still some error in the signal we receive in our in car receivers but because of the onscreen map we don't really notice it. But companies specialising in correcting the signal to sub metre or better still have a market to supply a corrected GPS signal which is used for various activities that need very accurate geographic positions such as Harvesting crops, Oil drilling or Controlling Dynamic Positioning (DP) vessels, these are ships which can stay in one exact position for days or weeks at a time when fire fighting off shore, or deep water drilling.

And so we entered the 21st century where affordable GPS meant that most buoyage and Lighthouses and beacons became redundant.

The End





General Knowledge Quiz

1. Whose ship was the first to sail around the world?
2. In music hall, who was the “Prime Minister of Mirth”?
3. “Freedom” was the first UK top ten hit for which Robbie?
4. What is the full name of BBC Radio 5?
5. What was invented by Lewis Waterman in the 1880’s?
6. Which illustrator was famous for detailed drawings of weird and wonderful mechanical inventions?
7. Which US President was nicknamed “The Comeback Kid”?
8. Following the 1963 Peerage Act, who was the first peer to disclaim his title?
9. Who is the lead female actress in “Orange is the New Black”?
10. Which instrument usually has 47 strings?
11. What is the name of Dennis the Menace’s dog?
12. For over 30 years, which tobacco company gave its name to a football yearbook?
13. Who wrote, “Help Me Make It Through the Night”?
14. Moving anti-clockwise on a dartboard what is the number next to 4?
15. Who created the detective, Paul Temple?
16. Who pricked her finger on a spinning wheel and slept for 100 years?
17. Who became Earl of Stockton on his 90th birthday?
18. Which traffic light follows green?
19. What year did Mark Zuckerberg invent Facebook?
20. Which is the first month of the year to have exactly 30 days?

Answers page 10

FUN FACTS ABOUT FLIES

Many people consider flies nuisances, but these insects are quite complex and are found all over the world. They belong to the order Diptera, which they share with other insects, including mosquitoes.

Here are seven other facts about flies that you might not have known.

SOME SPECIES OF FLIES ARE GENETICALLY SIMILAR TO PEOPLE.

According to researchers at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the genes of fruit flies match about 77 percent of the discovered human disease genes. With a short life cycle – in most fruit fly species it takes only a week to go from egg to adult – it is possible for scientists to study genetic mutations in a much shorter amount of time than with other insects or animals. Because of this, fruit flies are often used in medical research labs.

FLIES CAN SEE BEHIND THEM.

It’s a fly fact that there are thousands of tiny lenses, called ommatidia, which make up the eyes of a fly.

These compound eyes allow flies to see 360 degrees at once.

THERE ARE FRUIT FLIES IN SPACE.

NASA sent fruit flies to the International Space Station in 2014. The flies, located in the “Fruit Fly Lab,” are being used to study the long-term effects of microgravity, space flight and space radiation. The results will help inform decisions made about space travel for humans.

FLIES ARE GOOD AT MATH.

Despite having tiny brains, flies are excellent at calculating the angle of a swatting hand, newspaper or swatter and creating a flight plan to avoid it. When they see a threat coming, they are able to leap backward using their hind legs to avoid the hit, according to research done by scientists at the California Institute of Technology (CalTech). Their data on this fly fact showed that flies make these decisions within 100 milliseconds of spotting the threat.

THERE IS A RIGHT WAY TO SWAT A FLY.

According to the CalTech team, there is actually a better way to swat a fly. Instead of aiming directly for the fly, you should try to aim ahead of it and anticipate where it is going to jump when it sees you coming.

The Building, Decline and Resurgent of the Ellesmere/Shropshire Union Canal

A grand plan for the Ellesmere Canal was first proposed in 1791 by a small group of industrialists who owned coal mines, iron mines and other works near Ruabon. They wanted to link their area to the River Mersey in the north and the River Severn to the south. The northward section would link up with the Chester Canal and hence the River Dee before continuing to the Mersey at Netherpool (now Ellesmere Port). The southerly section of the waterway would pass through Overton before heading towards Shrewsbury. There would be branches to Bersham and Brymbo, where there were ironworks, to Llanymynech, where limestone was being quarried, and it would run past Whitchurch to Prees. A rival group proposed a branch from the Chester Canal to reach Ruabon, via Whitchurch, with additional lines to Llanymynech and Shrewsbury. There was support for the plans of the first group, and work began, but twelve years later, the plans of the second group had largely been implemented. John Duncombe, an engineer who was one of the original promoters, and Joseph Turner estimated that the main line to Netherpool and to Shrewsbury would cost £67,456, while the whole scheme, including the branches, would cost £171,098. The promoters then decided they needed an engineer with a track record to advise them, and engaged the services of William Jessop, to be assisted by Duncombe and William Turner. Jessop proposed a somewhat different route south of Chester. It was the time of Canal Mania, and when subscriptions were opened, at the Bridgewater Hotel in Ellesmere (now Ellesmere Hotel) 1,234 subscribers offered a total of £967,700, of which £245,500 was actually accepted. In February 1793, the two groups decided to work together, and a host of deviations and alterations were made to the plans, for which an Act of Parliament was obtained on 30 April 1793. A capital of £400,000 was authorised, with powers to raise an additional £100,000 if required, and Jessop was appointed as engineer, to be assisted by Duncombe, Thomas Denson and William Turner. On 30 October, Thomas Telford was also engaged.

Work began on the route southwards from Netherpool in November 1793, and packet boats started to run along it from 1 July 1795, although it was not quite finished. Three locks to connect it to the Mersey were completed in early 1796, and coal was first carried to Chester in February. The connection to the Chester Canal took a little longer and was completed in January 1797. The company were keen to develop the trade in limestone from Llanymynech, and cutting of the canal southwards from Frankton began in early 1794. At the time, plans for the Montgomeryshire Canal were before Parliament, which would continue southwards from Carreghofa, just beyond Llanymynech. With four locks at Frankton, and another three at Aston, the line to Carreghofa was opened in autumn 1796, and a good trade in limestone northwards, and goods southwards to the Montgomeryshire Canal, developed.

Progress north-westwards from Frankton towards Trevor was hampered by the need to cross two rivers, the Afon Ceiriog at Chirk and the Dee at Pontcysyllte. Both would require tall aqueducts, but to save construction costs at Pontcysyllte, plans were drawn up for three locks at each end, to reduce the height of the main arches by 50 feet (15 m). However, on 14 July 1795 Jessop proposed that the aqueduct should be built 125 feet (38 m) above the Dee, and that the costs should be saved by using an iron trough. He also proposed a similar trough at Chirk, instead of an embankment at Pont-faen, writing that "instead of an obstruction it would be a romantic feature in the view", and this was a major factor in persuading the landowner to allow it to be built at Chirk, rather than at Pont-faen. The foundation stone for Pontcysyllte was laid on 25 July 1795, although the committee did not formally approve the new plans until 10 August.

Again, the company was keen to get trade moving on the canal and pressed on with the line from Chirk to Frankton. The Vron Ironworks were at Chirk, with coal mines nearby, and goods from Ruabon could also be brought there by road, until the canal was completed. Work started on the Chirk aqueduct in January 1796, and when finished, it was 600 feet (180 m) long with ten arches, each with a span of 40 feet (12 m), carrying the canal 70 feet (21 m) above the Afon Ceiriog. It was constructed with a cast-iron bottom to the trough, but the sides were of masonry, an unusual choice given the decision to use a cast-iron trough at Pontcysyllte.

The 8-mile (13 km) section from Chirk to Frankton included six locks and was completed in 1801. The section onwards through the Chirk and Whitehouse tunnels, to reach the southern end of Pontcysyllte, opened in June 1802. In July 1795, the company hired contractors to start work on the branch from Hordley, near Frankton locks, to Weston common, which was completed in 1797. A wharf, public house, stables and other features were constructed near Weston common, and four lime kilns were built, to burn lime from Llanymynech using coal from Chirk. Plans for this branch to continue onwards to Shrewsbury were dropped, because lime from Weston would have to compete with that brought along the Shrewsbury Canal, and coal to supply the domestic market at Shrewsbury would not be available until Pontcysyllte aqueduct was completed. It did not appear that the route would be profitable, and this remained true when the plans were reconsidered subsequently. Plans for joining the southern sections to the northern one were revisited by Telford in 1795, and after approval by Jessop, were authorised by Act of Parliament in 1796. They involved a heavily engineered line from Trevor to Chester, via Ruabon to the Dee at Chester, with a branch to Coed Talon, which would serve the Brymbo ironworks near Ffrwd. Locks would lift the line by 76 feet (23 m) from Trevor basin to Plas Kynaston, after which it would run on the level to Poolmouth and the junction with the Coed Talon Branch. It would then descend through a long flight of locks, roughly following the line of the later Chester to Wrexham railway, to enter the Dee opposite the branch to the Chester Canal. A second branch would run from Pulford to Farndon and Holt. Just over 2 miles (3.2 km) of the Coed Talon branch was built, to a basin near Ffrwd, and although it was filled with water, it seems that it was never used, and was filled in again from 1809.

Cont. page 7

In early 1794, a shareholder and a local landowner took out a patent for a canal lift, and offered to build a trial one. If it proved successful, then the Ellesmere company would pay for it, and if not, the inventors would meet the costs. A site was chosen on the proposed line, and by May 1796, it was ready for trials to begin. John Rennie and Jessop examined it, but like several similar ideas of the time, it was not felt to be robust enough to withstand the rigours of daily use. The company eventually paid £200 to the inventors, one quarter of the actual costs, Jessop decided in 1800 that the route between Trevor and Chester should be abandoned, due to the changes in circumstances, and coal being available in Chester from a number of other locations.

The Chester Canal, which had not been a financial success, had hoped that links with the Ellesmere Canal would improve their prospects, but when the Ellesmere Act of 1796 had failed to mention any connection with the Chester Canal, they had taken action, and had cut off the water supply to the northern section from Chester to Ellesmere Port. When agreement was reached on a new line from Frankton Junction to Whitchurch, the water supply was reinstated, and work on the new line started in February 1797. The work was difficult, as it had to cross Whixall Moss, and a 261-foot (80 m) tunnel was required near Ellesmere. It also included a branch to Prees Higher Heath, but only 3.75 miles (6 km) of this was built, terminating at Quina Brook, where the company built some limekilns. By 1804, the main line had reached Tilstock Park, some 4 miles (6.4 km) short of Whitchurch

Further agreement had been reached in 1802 on a route from Tilstock Park to Hurleston Junction, on which work started immediately. It was completed on 25 March 1805. In order to keep the system supplied with water, an Act of Parliament obtained in 1804 had authorised the construction of a navigable feeder from the north end of Pontcysyllte aqueduct to Llangollen on onwards to Llantysilio, where the Horseshoe Falls weir would be constructed on the

River Dee. Once this opened in 1808, the system was not short of water.

The Ellesmere company attempted to buy out the Chester Canal in 1804, but the offer had been refused. In 1813, they agreed to an amalgamation, on terms much worse than those offered in 1804, and the two companies became one from 1 July 1813.

The network expanded with the opening of the Middlewich Branch on 1 September 1833, and the completion

on the Birmingham and Liverpool Junction Canal from Nantwich Basin to Autherley on 2 March 1835. In May 1845, the Ellesmere and Chester Canal Company obtained an Act of Parliament to enable them to absorb the Birmingham and Liverpool Junction Canal, the Montgomeryshire Canal, the Shrewsbury Canal and the Shropshire Canal. The name was changed to the Shropshire Union Railways and Canal Company in 1846, with powers to build a number of railways or convert their canals into railways, but this vision was short-lived, and they agreed to a lease with the London and North Western Railway in late 1846. An Act of Parliament was obtained to authorise this in 1847 but was not formally enacted until 1857. This ended their aspirations to build railways, but they remained remarkably independent despite railway control. The Shropshire Union was absorbed by the London and North Western Railway in late 1922, which itself became part of the London Midland and Scottish Railway soon afterwards.

Decline

After the takeover by the London Midland and Scottish Railway, regular maintenance was often not carried out, and gradually the canals silted up, so that boats could not operate with full loads. Traffic declined and was significantly affected by a breach that occurred at the Perry Aqueduct, about 1 mile (1.6 km) to the south of Frankton locks, which effectively closed

the Montgomeryshire Canal to all traffic. Traffic beyond Frankton to Llangollen had ceased in 1937, and the Frankton to Hurleston section was not used after 1939. The London Midland and Scottish Railway obtained an Act of Abandonment in 1944, allowing it to close 175 miles (282 km) of canals, including much of the Shropshire Union system. However, the line from Hurleston to Llangollen and onwards to Llantysilio was saved, as it was the main supply of water to the rest of the system.

On 6 September 1945, due to inadequate maintenance, the canal breached its banks east of Llangollen near Sun Bank Halt. The flow of hundreds of tons of water washed away the embankment of the railway further down the hill, creating a crater which was 40 yards (37 m) long and 50 feet (15 m) deep. This caused the first traffic of the morning, a mail and goods train composed of 16 carriages and two vans, to crash into the breach, killing one and injuring two engine crew. Despite the canal being officially closed, the breach was repaired, so that water could continue to reach the main line at Hurleston. The use of the canal as a water supply channel was further bolstered by an agreement with what became the Mid & South East Cheshire Water Board who used it to supply water to their Hurleston reservoir, and agreed to maintain it.

To be continued next week.



Frankton Locks

The Series of Memories of Ellesmere Residents
from the 8 “Memories” Booklets Published in early 2000 by the Ellesmere Society

Whilst the start of the 20th century saw Ellesmere much as it would remain until the end - a rural market town - life was considerably different. With the 1990's Social Security orientated society it is difficult to realise that for the first thirty years of the century. the Poor Law and workhouse loomed large over those unable to support themselves.

In the early part of the century Ellesmere was essentially an outlet for the agriculture of the district, which was largely dairy farming and stock raising with some barley being grown for malting. Several shopkeepers in the town combined malting with their business. There was also a commercial brewery.

These memories of a bygone Ellesmere is from a series of booklets the Ellesmere Society published as a millennium project.

To achieve this objective the society collected memories from the residents of Ellesmere who kindly allowed us to share them and to include their reminiscences in future editions.

Memory No 1

ELLESMERE BOWLING GREEN
Remembered by Ron Roberts

Ellesmere Bowling Club is the proud possessor of what is reputed to be the oldest Bowling green in the country, the first recorded reference to it being in 1763, when the Bowling Green House was rebuilt. This green occupies the top of the motte of the Ellesmere Castle, and for the first two hundred years of its life was much the preserve of the Egerton family. However, in 1900 the Club was described as flourishing and well supported by the older members of the town. There is a reference about this time to the Annual Meetings of the 'Ladies' Club' which took place on the first Wednesday of July) when the Ladies assembled at Town Hall and walked in procession to the Parish Church where a service was They then ascended to the Bowling Green preceded by a band. Tea was taken and dancing on the turf followed'.

A press report of 1913 states that the following year (1914) would be the centenary year of the formation of Ellesmere Bowling Club; however, the Ladies' club was disbanded at that time due to the 'Insurance Act'. Even so, a dance was d in July of 1913 when one hundred couples danced to the music of Whixall silver Band from 5pm until 9.30.

During the war years the green was unused and became wild and unkempt; however, it was brought back into condition without the need to re-turf, in fact there is no knowledge of the surface of the Bowling Green ever having been re-turfed. In the early 1950's the 6th Baron Brownlow disposed of his properties in the Ellesmere area and the Ellesmere Bowling Club were able to purchase their beloved green. 1957 saw the connection of mains electricity to the club-house and 1966 competitive bowling began in the Whitchurch League. Previously all matches had been played on a friendly basis – which sometimes raised a wry smile on the faces of some competitors. Flood lighting, available from 1974, made it reasonable for the green to be in use from Easter until October or even November in a mild dry autumn. After a period of complex negotiations an area of land was purchased at a lower level than the original green and made into a second bowling green usually called the bottom green. It is on this green that the Australia Cup is completed for.

The Club's main social event is an annual dinner which over a period of years has been held at various venues. A peculiarity of the last few years is that whilst membership of the Bowling Club has increased, attendance at the dinner has somewhat declined.

A game of bowls and eventual membership of the club was usually brought about by an invitation from an existing member 'to come up to the green tonight'. The leader of the Bowling Club is always known as 'The Mayor' of the green, rather than Chairman or President. Many well-known personalities have occupied the position over the years. It may be that the club has records of the tenures of these Mayors but at any rate we know that Mr. H.H. Tims, a member of a well respected Ellesmere family held the position in 1935. Over a very long history, the Ellesmere Bowling Club has as yet elected only one Lady Mayor.

Current members of the club are appreciative of the fact that over the years they have had good managers, fine green keepers, and have enjoyed playing bowls on what they are convinced is the best bowling green in the world.

Memory No 2

FISH and CHIPS in Ellesmere

In the first half of the century virtually the only "fast" or "takeaway" food was fish and chips. The chip shop was very much a social centre and in the 1920's one in St. John's Hill had a curious succession of owners.

It was kept by a man named Buckley. He originally came from Burnley, and was, in addition to running the Chip Shop, Sergeant Major in charge of the O.T.C. at Ellesmere College. He also had been a steeplejack, and returned temporarily to that occupation to build the tall chimney at the "Milk Factory", which he did, more or less, single-handed. The story goes that it was intended the chimney should have been taller, but the bosses refused to pay Mr. Buckley's demands for more pay for the extra height, so he there and then finished, and soon after left Ellesmere and went back to Burnley. When one looks at it, the chimney does seem to have the look about it that it should have gone higher.

The next chap at the Chip Shop was "Bartley", also from Burnley, and later he was to be succeeded by "Hartley" also, - yes, you've guessed it, from Burnley. All three went back to Burnley having first made their money in Ellesmere. All very nice chaps. I remember going into the Chip Shop one evening when Bartley was there, and him saying "I have a new drink, it's called "Vimto" and I think you will like it".

I believe this drink is still going strong.

Cont. page 9

WHITE LION ANTIQUES, Market Street,
Remembered by Peter Davies

The origins of The White Lion, Market Street, together with a stable block which is on the West side, date back to the late 16th Century; Originally it was a public house and has had additions to the East and to the North of it. The East is now a fruit and vegetable shop, and to the North side is the yard. The front of the West side is original, with half-timbered walls hidden by a covered way. in 1870 it was managed as a public house with a few cows kept in the yard.

By 1920, John Lewis became the landlord, until the Clutton family took it over in 1938. The Cluttons were there until about 1967 or 1968. In 1970, Bill Weeldon and his wife bought it together with the shops that are now Hall's Estate Agents the fruit and vegetable shop on the corner of Market Street. This shop was then the Corner Vaults.

The stable block was in a terrible state at the time, and Bill Weeldon, helped by his stepson (the present owner Peter Davies) carried out repairs to the shop and to the stable block. Planning regulations were not so strict then, It had a plain brick wall bulging out which needed a lot of pointing. So a half-timber frame was made, which served a dual purpose. It was



bolted to the internal main beams to retain the bulging walls, and to match the same pattern as the shop front, both s facing Market Street. The windows on the stable block were shutters at that time and there was a stable door all of which was rotten and dilapidated. The stable door has since been replaced with a black framed half windowed door.

Since then a carved frame; that's not original, has been added.

On the front side of the shop, general repairs were carried out, around 1971, and the old inside was renovated and put back in its place. Both ground floor windows and the door windows, which had been rectangular, had arches added on to them. A carved door surround was put on the front door, with a date on top; 1577. As there no attic window, an old window was substituted. Since then, no more exterior alterations have been made.

The first hanging baskets were put up in 1972. This has become a feature in Market Street ever since. Inside, it has been turned into a shop and has been completely rewired and re-plumbed. Practically, it was a nightmare. The gents' toilet was in the outside yard by the stables. The ladies' toilet was approached through the yard adjacent to the Comer Vaults. There was a brick lean to built on the kitchen. The present kitchen was a washhouse, with a bungalow range. To enter this, you had to go outside. Mr. Weeldon took out the bungalow range and chimney and knocked the wall through, and made the washhouse into a kitchen. The ladies' toilet was removed, The yard entrance was covered with corrugated perspex roofs, and used as a conservatory for several years. Access to this was from a door under the stairs. In the 1970's, the kitchen North wall was knocked through to the old ladies' toilet under two Spanish style arches, to house a gas fire and a bookcase.



The East kitchen wall to the yard was knocked out to take two George 3rd arched, metal framed windows, and arched metal framed glazed door. For several years Mr. Weeldon grew orchids in this yard, which is now a conservatory. In the early 90's the roof was reproofed and made it into a saleroom. When Linda and Peter Davies took over the premises this was made it into a seating area for the coffee shop. The large fireplace in the shop was just a bare hearth in the 1970's and was covered with a large bookcase where china was displayed. Some eight feet up on the right hand side of the fireplace had been a recess, which was a priest hole with room for two people to sit in. It was a smoke free area as the chimney took smoke to the other side. Unfortunately, this was closed up when the early Victorian kitchen range was fitted, in the mid 1980's. All the upstairs rooms have been repeatedly wall-papered, and painted and repainted. In the spring of 1998, most of the old cladding on the stable was removed as it was rotten, and had to be replaced on the outside, repainted and pointed.

ELLESMERE CHARACTERS
Remembered by Norman Dawson

Just before the first World War, Ellesmere was served by a Town Crier. His name was John Rogers, and he was quite a character. He was of no fixed abode, but whenever anything was about to happen in the town, such as the arrival of a circus, and there were plenty of those, concerts, political meetings, etc., then John would appear with his bell, and after posing with his 'Hear ye, hear ye, hear ye', he would give particulars of the event, and then, standing at attention, he would salute and shout 'God save our gracious King and the Royal Family and also your noble town crier, John Rogers'. He would then march off to his next port of call, with his familiar forward leaning walk.

Also about this time I became aware of the evil character who paid periodical visits to the Ellesmere area. He was known as The Dartmoor Shepherd who specialised in robbing the Church poor boxes. The word would go around that the Dartmoor Shepherd was in the district, and all the children would be warned not to go out at nights unless accompanied by an adult. The Shepherd had a terrible reputation, and yet, come to think of it, I never remember hearing of anyone being molested by him, or of anyone seeing him, but apparently he was there all right. There were a lot of unusual characters about at that time. The Workhouse, which stood on the site of the present house which faces the Haughton entrance to the Cremorne Gardens, was going strong at this time, and there were always plenty of tramps about calling at houses in the town, very often with their little grubby tins containing a few tea leaves, on which they asked hot water to be poured. The tramps would leave various marks on or near houses indicating to their pals whether or not they were good ones at which to call.

More next week

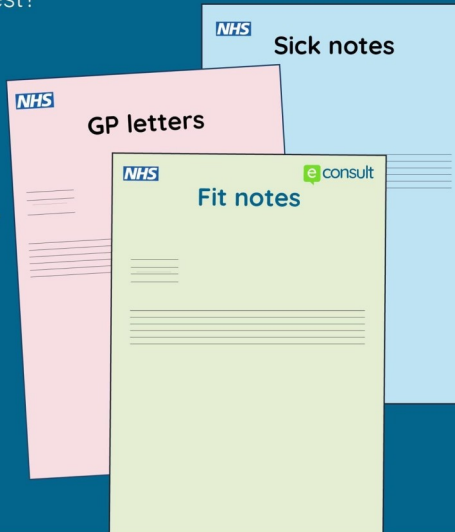
Local information

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'



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.

Quiz Answers
1. Ferdinand Magellan, 2. George Robey, 3. Robbie Williams, 4. Radio Five Live, 5. Fountain Pen, 6. Heath Robinson, 7. Bill Clinton, 8. Tony Benn, 9. Taylor Schilling, 10. Harp, 11. Gnasher, 12. Rothmans, 13. Kris Kristofferson, 14. 18, 15. Francis Durbridge, 16. Sleeping Beauty, 17. Harold Macmillan, 18. Amber, 19. In 2004, 20. April



Pastoral Support from the Churches in Ellesmere

Rev'd Pat Hawkins St Mary's Church

[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://](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmxif6AT5w7IJH4Yxkbi6tQ)

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.



Local Businesses providing Services - updated 22nd July, these services can change anytime.

Many thanks must go to Ismay and Nicki Stokes members of Ellesmere Chamber of trade for compiling this list each week.



Ellesmere Businesses	Opening Hours
P&G Vehicle Repairs Tel 01691 622849	Monday to Friday 8.30am - 4.00pm Cargotec Industrial Park, Elson SY12 9JW
Post Office & Party Shop Tel 01691 622623 bkaur.po@gmail.com singh.po@gmail.com	Mon, Tues & Fri 8.30am - 5.30pm Wed & Thurs 9.00am - 5.30pm Sat 9.00am - 1.00pm Post collections 12.45pm & 17.15pm Free local delivery. Please contact for more details.
Richards Auto Services Tel 01691 622421	Monday - Friday 8.00am - 5.30pm More details on Facebook page.
Rightways	Monday - Saturday 9.00am - 5.00pm
Sanchi Jewellers Tel 01691 622282	Open Tues, Wed, Fri & Sat 10am - 3.00pm Details on Facebook.
Shampoochies Dog Spa Tel 01691 238288	Monday - Friday 9.00am - 4.00pm Saturday 9.00am - 1.00pm
The Ellesmere Pharmacy Tel 01691 623118	Monday - Friday 9.00am - 6.00pm Saturday 9.00am - 5.00pm
The Washing Well Launderette	Open every day. 7.00am - 9.00pm
TG Builders Merchants Tel 01691 622540	Monday to Friday 7.00am - 4.30pm & Saturday 8.00am - 12 noon
TSB Bank TSB Customers can be issued with a cheque book if required. Also, any TSB customer who is self isolating and needs to withdraw money please contact the TSB on 01691 594999.	Monday - Friday 10.00am - 12.30pm. 1.30pm - 4.00pm TSB Customers: If you have no mobile phone or internet banking please call the branch on 01691 594999 and the TSB will make a one-off payment for you.

Ellesmere Food & Drink inc Cafes, Restaurants, Takeaways, Hotels/Inns	Opening Hours
(In alphabetical order)	
Asian Spices Tel 01691 623689 Delivery 6.00pm - 9.00pm every day (except Monday). After 9.00pm collection only.	Friday & Saturday 5.00pm- 10.30pm Tues, Wed, Thurs & Sunday 5.00pm - 10.00pm. Closed Monday. Home deliveries.
Black Lion Hotel Booking advisable on 01691 623937 info@blacklionhotellellesmere.co.uk	Sunday - Thursday 11.00am - 11.00pm Friday & Saturday 11am - midnight
Cherry Tree Cafe Tel 01691 624400 cherrytreecafe13@gmail.com	Wednesday - Saturday 9.00am - 3.00pm Sunday 10.00am - 3.00pm Eat in/takeaway. Telephone orders recommended. Updates on Facebook.
Coco Coffee Bar 01691 623000	Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri & Sat 9.00am - 2.30pm
Comrades Club Tel 01691 622419 & 07871 733374 Sunday lunch deliveries available.	Mon - Thurs 4.00pm - 9.00pm Fri 4pm - 10.00pm. Sat 12 noon - 10.00pm Sunday 12 noon - 9.00pm
Coral Chinese and English Food to Take Away Tel 01691 622853	Sunday & Monday 5.00pm - 9.00pm Thursday 4.00pm - 9.00pm Friday & Saturday 4.00pm - 10.00pm
Ellesmere Hotel Tel 01691 622055	Open from 9.00am on Saturday 4 July. Hours as usual.
Ellesmere Kebab House Tel 01691 624638	Tuesday - Sunday 4.30pm - 9.30pm Closed Monday. Home delivery.
Meze Greek Restaurant Tel 01691 622660	Dine-in. Reservations only. 5.00pm - 9.30pm. Takeaway - Tuesday - Sunday 4.30pm - 9.00pm
More than a Sundae Tel 07711 986694	Takeaway/Eat in. Ice Cream and Waffle Shop. Wednesday - Saturday 12 noon - 5.00pm
New Wan Lay Tel 01691 623479	Tuesday - Sunday 5.00pm - 9.00pm Closed Monday.
Pete's Sandwich Bar and Pete's Meals on Wheels Tel 01691 623414	Monday - Saturday 8.00am - 2.00pm Takeaway only. Details on Facebook. Please telephone to place an order.
Shropshire Fish Bar Tel 01691 624287	Open every day 11.30am - 10.00pm
Thai Gate Restaurant Tel 01691 239478 5 High Street, Ellesmere www.thaigate.co.uk/order-online	Tuesday - Saturday 12 noon - 9.00pm Sunday 12 noon - 8.00pm Closed Monday. Takeaway available. Collection only.
The Red Lion Coaching Inn Tel 01691 622632 & 07854 191238	Open every day. Bar open 12 noon - 10.30pm. Food served 12 noon - 9.00pm. Takeaway available. More details on Facebook.

Ellesmere Businesses CONTACT by telephone, email or Facebook ONLY.	
(In alphabetical order)	Updated 22 June 2020 (Subject to change)
A Mere Cycle Hire and Sales Tel 07988 842038 Email amerecycle@gmail.com	Working mobile until NEW shop opens in August. More details on Facebook. Monday - Saturday 9.30am - 5.00pm
Concept Town Planning Tel 07890 428918 mail@concepttownplanning.com	Office hours Tues & Thurs 10.00am - 4.00pm Available all other times Monday - Friday 8.30am - 6.00pm via email or mobile.
Gough-Thomas & Scott, Solicitors Tel 01691 622413 Email ellesmere@gtssolicitors.co.uk	GTS are still open for business however to protect both staff and clients they are not allowing visitors to the office. GTS can still be contacted by telephone or email.
J A Milton Upholstery Supplies www.jamilton.com	Online and telephone orders Open Monday - Friday 9.00am - 5.00pm
Lily the Pink, Florist Contact via Facebook	Contact to place an order. Delivery only.
Morris Cook, Chartered Accountant Tel 01691 622098 Email megan@morriscook.co.uk	Open most weekdays Email or telephone if you need to bring anything into the office. Letter box on Watergate Street.
Ortho-Bionomy UK Tel 07377 315865 Email dr.anna.hoves@outlook.com www.ortho-bionomy-uk.com or via Facebook	Open Monday - Friday 9.30am - 4.30pm Self-care packages tailored to cover your individual pain requirements. Contact Anna by email or telephone.
Princes LHS Ltd The Rennet Works, Market Street Tel 01691 624336	Still operating during the lockdown and providing essential plumbing, heating, electrical and renewable energy services.
Pure Beauty www.tropickincare.com/helenhale	Shop online for Tropic products.
Sanchi Jewellers Tel 01691 622282 or via Facebook	For any purchases, leave a message by phone or Facebook. Payment made via card over the phone. We will be post free of charge any item chosen.
Susan Haskey, Chiropodist Tel 07974 091984	Open as usual, Mondays and Fridays

Ellesmere Businesses - Food Shops.	Opening Hours	Home Delivery
(In alphabetical order)	Updated 2 July 2020 (Subject to change)	
Co-op Vulnerable workers, NHS & key workers	Open every day. 6.00am - 10.00pm 8.00am - 9.00am (Sunday 10.00am - 11.00am)	
Ellesmere Newsagents Tel 01691 622498 Delivery of newspapers and provisions inc bread, alcohol, tinned, frozen & chilled food, pet food, tea, coffee, biscuits, toiletries and cleaning products.	Monday - Friday 5.00am - 5.30pm Saturday 5.00am - 5.00pm Sunday 6.00am - 11.00am	YES
Hawkins Butchers Tel 01691 622329 Welcome to ring ahead to place your order or for any enquiries.	Monday - Saturday 8.00am - 3.30pm. Local delivery services to those self-isolating.	YES
Moolah - Local Food Tel 01691 623532 Homemade ready meals - mains & puddings (inc freezer-ready). Savoury and sweet delights. Fresh veg, meat and dairy. Pizza. Teas & coffees.	Open every day. 9.00am - 6.00pm Deliveries undertaken within Ellesmere and to outlying villages during the Covid-19 lockdown.	YES
Stokes of Ellesmere Sausages & Pork Pies Tel 07814 889421	Local delivery service. Ring to place order. Ellesmere Market every Tuesday.	YES
Sweetmere Sweet Shop Tel 07896 881242 or Facebook	Tuesday, Friday & Saturday 10.00am - 3.00pm Contact to place an order for delivery.	YES
Tesco Elderly and Vulnerable Priority time: NHS Workers Priority Time	Monday - Saturday 7.00am - 10.00pm. Sunday 10.00am - 4.00pm Monday, Wednesday & Friday 9.00am - 10.00am Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday 9.00am - 10.00am	ONLINE ORDERS
Vermuelens Tel 01691 622521 Bakery (bread, baps, rolls etc), cakes, hampers, cold meats and speciality pies. Delicatessen. Sandwiches.	Monday - Saturday 7.00am - 4.00pm. Orders delivered 10.00am - 12 noon to those self-isolating. Order anytime.	YES
Pet Shop including pet/animal feed		
Pets Pantry Tel 01691 624492	Monday - Saturday 9.00am - 3.00pm.	YES

Hair Salons & Barbers

in Ellesmere	Opening Hours
(In alphabetical order)	
All About You	Monday 10.00am - 4.00pm Tues 9.00am - 6.00pm Wednesday & Saturday 9.00am - 4.00pm Thursday & Friday 9.00am til late
Ceri's Hair Salon Tel 01691 622114	Monday - Saturday 9.00am - 5.00pm
Guys and Molls	Open every day 9.00am - 7.00pm for 1st week.
J5 Hair Tel 01691 622443	Tuesday & Wednesday 10.00am - 5.00pm Thurs 10.00am - 7.00pm, Friday 9.00am - 7.00pm Saturday 9.00am - 4.00pm
The Mancave Barber Shop Tel 01691 624765 Email themancavebarbershop1@gmail.com Booking link: https://themancavebarbershop.nearcut.com	Monday - Thursday 9.00am - 6.00pm Friday 9.00am - 7.00pm Saturday 9.00am - 5.00pm Sunday 9.00am - 2.00pm
The Town Barbers Appointments only. Call Ellen on 07583 128419	Mon, Tues, Wed & Fri 8.30am - 6.00pm Thursday 8.30am - 8.00pm Saturday 8.30am - 3.00pm