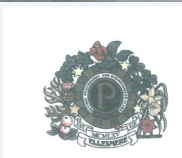




Probus Club Ellesmere



Covid-19 Lockdown 2020 Newsletter

Issue 22

Sept. 24, 2020

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From the Editor

Dear all,

I hope you are all keeping well.

This week I have a sense of déjà vu we seem to have gone back in time and Boris has set this semi lockdown in place for up to 6 months, so another U turn after promising Christmas. As a result of this it doesn't look like we will be able to meet together for the foreseeable future and this temporary newsletter has a while to run yet.

So please send me some articles to help me out.

As you will see further down in the newsletter the committee agreed to donate £100 to Effie Cadwallader's fund raising to purchase a duty car for her to carry on with her first responder work.

I hope to see some of you at 10am today at the Probus virtual coffee morning. If this is a success we will look to getting some speakers arranged.

Keep safe

Paul

View from the Crow's Nest

Well well, another two weeks gone by in a shot and Covid rules changing all the time as the pandemic evolves. I hope that you and yours are keeping safe and well, at least as much as possible. Living in the countryside is always a joy and it must be difficult for the folks in local lockdown again. Unfortunately it is still not clear when we will next be able to meet up face to face. Our first virtual coffee-morning today will give us an idea of how many of our members may be happy to join in a Probus general meeting by Zoom. We may well be able to arrange a speaker in due course if our numbers are sufficient. Although we have been unable to meet together for six months we have made charitable donations to Ellesmere House for a 'trolley' and to Effie Cadwallader (First Responder) for which John Shone managed to get us some good publicity in the Oswestry Advertiser and Wrexham News. Effie would be grateful for any further donations from individuals towards her fundraising for a new car that she has to provide for her First Responder work. A link to her donor page is attached to this Newsletter.

Thanks as ever to everyone keeping in touch by phone with other members.
Best wishes and stay safe as things unfold. Let me know if there is anything we can do to help you if you are in difficulty.
Jeremy

2 Ronnies - My Blackberry Isn't Working!
<https://youtu.be/ii0PNk4DjQs>



Urambo to Mbeya

During the late 1940s, my family lived in the then small town of Urambo, in the Western Province of Tanganyika. In those colonial days there were only two prep schools in the country, one at Arusha in the Northern Province, and the other at Mbeya, the capital town of the Southern Highlands Province. Although Mbeya was over 500 miles away from our home, it was closer to us than Arusha hence that was where my sister and I were sent. Nowadays 500 miles is no great distance and it can be covered in a very short time but, 60 or 70 years ago, in an underdeveloped part of Africa which had very primitive communications, 500 miles was a very long journey. Our journey to Mbeya was covered in two stages; the first by a Tanganyika Railways train to the road/rail crossroads of Itigi in the centre of the country, and the second stage was by Tanganyika Railways bus from Itigi. The rail journey was on the main line which ran from Kigoma on Lake Tanganyika, to the Capital, Dar es Salaam, on the Indian Ocean, a distance of more than 600 miles. This line was the original line as laid by the German colonial administration before the First World War and it was a single track of one metre gauge. Passing places for trains heading in opposite directions were provided by sidings at rail stations. The locomotives, mainly Beyer Garratt articulated units, when travelling close to the coast, were either coal or oil fired, but upcountry they were wood fired. They had large cow catchers at the front, to contend with the many game animals that wandered on to the line, particularly at night. The first class coaches were like those in Wild West movies and had verandas at each end. Maximum speed on those narrow gauge lines was not much more than about 30 mph, but average speeds were very much lower because frequent fuel and water stops were required.

We would depart from home at about 6.00am on the down mail train, which had left Kigoma on Lake Tanganyika on the previous evening. We would reach the major rail junction at Tabora at about 8.00am. There we would meet the mail train from Mwanza on Lake Victoria, and passengers from that train would transfer to ours. That part of the journey was uneventful, apart from being uncomfortable from the heat inside the coaches, and from the ash from the wood fired locomotive entering the compartment when the windows were opened for ventilation. The train would reach the Itigi junction in the early evening and our coach would be shunted into a siding, where we would spend the night. In the morning, after breakfast in the railway station, we would transfer to a bus. By today's standards these buses were very primitive vehicles. Based on Bedford 3 ton chassis, they had a wooden "box body". The driver's cab and the 1st and 2nd Class passenger accommodation at the front of the bus had glass windows. However the 3rd Class compartment in the rear, where we children travelled, had sliding wooden shutters in place of windows. Even when the shutters were closed, a considerable amount of red dust found its way into the compartment and, by the end of the journey we children all looked like Red Indians. Alternatively, during the rains, water in large quantities would be blown through the shutters, and those children sitting close to the sides could become quite wet. Comfort was not a major consideration, and in the back where we were accommodated, there were no seats but benches along each side of the body with another in the middle, and these were all fitted with very thin loose cushions.

The road on which we travelled was hardly a road by present day standards. It was classified as a highway within the country but it was only gravel surfaced and on many parts, rain had washed the gravel away and there was very little remaining. Those sections had only a very bumpy dirt surface. The only maintenance of the road was by small tractors towing broom drags and these were not very effective. In the dry weather the whole road became very corrugated and extremely dusty but in the rains it could become a mud bath with dreadful traction problems for all vehicles. Our buses always did manage to get through eventually but could be delayed considerably on the severe gradients on the mountainous areas to the south. I cannot remember precisely, but I think that we must have had a sandwich lunch on board the buses. For an evening meal we would have stopped at a government rest house and had the inevitable roast chicken. The chickens there were similar in size to pigeons and must have been very old because what little meat was on them was incredibly tough and barely edible. Back on board for the next part of the journey which was much the same at night as the day journey except that trying to sleep on the benches was not at all easy.

On the following morning we would be awake by sunrise and find that we were in very different country from the flat forest of the previous night. Now we were in hilly light bush country and usually there was a fair amount of game to be seen. On one trip, as we woke, we saw a pack of wild dogs chase and pull down a Grants Gazelle. We did not see the end of the gazelle because the driver had more serious matters to attend to than slowing down to let a bunch of youngsters see the sights. Although I did not see any large game, on one journey our deputy head master was on board a bus which was charged by a rhino. The rhino's horn went through the wooden side of the bus, fortunately, without hitting any of the passengers.

At about 8.00 am we would reach the derelict mining town of Chunya, once the centre of the thriving Lupa Goldfields which had been very productive in the 1920s and 30s. At Chunya there was still a functioning hotel and we would have a reasonable breakfast there. There was nothing to see of the town itself other than the derelict buildings that had long been deserted and the doors of which would slam shut and then open again in the dusty wind. However, the town was situated on the edge of the escarpment above the Rift Valley and on a clear day one could look down into the valley and see Lake Rukwa in the distance. That lake was best known for the extremely high number of hippo deaths during the drought of the late 1940s, when the lake became an enormous mud bath, through which hippos were unable to move and would eventually drown, and an article about it was featured in The Illustrated London News.

Then we would board the bus for the last stage of the journey. This was down into the Rift Valley and then up to the foothills of the Southern Highlands range and we were at generally much higher altitude than before (The town of Mbeya is at 6000 ft above sea level). Because of the severe gradients on this section, 1st gear had to be used frequently, and the resulting average speed was extremely low. Unfortunately, we children did not take in the beauty of the magnificent mountain scenery – how I wish I could see it now. In late afternoon we would reach our destination at Mbeya School, where the first activity was a hot bath. Because the journeys out and back took so long, we had only a two term year, with no Easter Holiday and with the longer term being of 20 weeks duration. A very long time indeed for 6 and 7 year old children (such as my younger sister) to be away from their parents. However, we survived and in most cases we really enjoyed the journey.

Why Teachers Drink *Submitted by Mike Grundy*

The following questions were set in last year's GED examination These are genuine answers (from 16 year olds)

Q. Name the four seasons

A. Salt, pepper, mustard and vinegar

Q. How is dew formed

A.. The sun shines down on the leaves and makes them perspire

Q. What guarantees may a mortgage company insist on

A.. If you are buying a house they will insist that you are well endowed

Q. In a democratic society, how important are elections

A.. Very important. Sex can only happen when a male gets an election

Q. What are steroids

A. Things for keeping carpets still on the stairs (Shoot yourself now , there is little hope)

Q... What happens to your body as you age

A.. When you get old, so do your bowels and you get intercontinental

Q. What happens to a boy when he reaches puberty

A.. He says goodbye to his boyhood and looks forward to his adultery.

Q. Name a major disease associated with cigarettes

A.. Premature death

Q. What is artificial insemination

A... When the farmer does it to the bull instead of the cow

Q. How can you delay milk turning sour

A.. Keep it in the cow (Simple, but brilliant)

Q. How are the main 20 parts of the body categorised (e.g. The abdomen)

A.. The body is consisted into 3 parts - the brainium, the borax and the abdominal cavity. The brainium contains the brain, the borax contains the heart and lungs and the abdominal cavity contains the five bowels: A,E,I,O,U.

Q. What is the fibula?

A.. A small lie

Q. What does 'varicose' mean?

A.. Nearby

Q. What is the most common form of birth control

A.. Most people prevent contraception by wearing a condominium. (That would work)

Q. Give the meaning of the term 'Caesarean section'

A.. The caesarean section is a district in Rome

Q. What is a seizure?

A.. A Roman Emperor.

(Julius Seizure: I came, I saw, I had a fit)

Q. What is a terminal illness

A. When you are sick at the airport. (Irrefutable)

Q. What does the word 'benign' mean?

A.. Benign is what you will be after you be eight (brilliant)

Q. What is a turbine?

A.. Something an Arab or Shreik wears on his head. Once a Arab boy reaches puberty, he removes his diaper and wraps it around his he

For another holiday our group chose to visit Kenya. After being picked up by our driver at Mombasa airport we had to take the ferry across to the main part of Mombasa. This was an experience in itself as it turned out to be a ferry for everyone and everything from cars vans lorries motor bikes bicycles and carts full of fruits and veg, poultry and pets. The boat was a big old vessel which was loaded up very quickly as the crew were intent on embarking as soon as possible before the sister ferry arrived from the mainland. Their job seemed to be to cram as many people as possible on board without any regard to health and safety and the boat looked massively overloaded. It was only a short

crossing of about 20 minutes which was just as well for our minibus was jam packed on all sides by dozens of locals.

Anyway we got across safely and made it to our lovely hotel in another part of Mombasa where there was a very nice beach close by and we spent four days soaking up the sun.

We then headed off inland to Tsavo East National Park our base for the next few days. We were surprised and impressed by the comforts and mod cons provided at our hotel lodges - as those of you who have been on safari holidays will know things have come a very long way from the spartan pioneering days of David Livingstone. The main frame of the hotel was constructed of massive wooden pillars with the interior completed - with different types of woods all beautifully finished. It consisted mainly of three long buildings with thatched roofs where storks nested and most days there were about a dozen storks perched up there .. From our hotel we went out on safari trips each day in jeeps to view elephants, water buffalo, lions, giraffe, zebras, hippos, warthogs, hyenas and numerous beautiful types antelope such as kudu, impala and springbok which we had seen in South Africa. . We occasionally saw a few cheetah plus many different birds. Tsavo East is over 13,000 square kilometres and is understandably logistically difficult for rangers to patrol. In the 80's there was massive poaching of wildlife when the elephant numbers were reduced from some 45,000 to 5,000 and there are only a few rhinos left.



Kilimanjaro elephants

After a few days we moved to Tsavo West National Park towards the border with Tanzania and had a panoramic view of the magnificent snow capped Mount Kilimanjaro not far over the border. At over 19,000 ft it is Africa's highest mountain and from a distance appears to have gradual and gentle slopes suggesting the ideal sort of place for a day climb on a Sunday. Far from it! We were informed that the terrain is very rugged and the low temperatures, fierce high winds and altitude sickness can overcome the abilities of lots of very fit climbers. You may remember in 2019 a group of celebrities went out to climb it for Comic Relief fund raising and the TV cameras showed just how tough it was. About 100 yards from the front of the hotel was a large waterhole and in the evenings we would sit on the veranda and watch the animals coming to

drink. As the light faded into dusk different species would gradually appear from the bush and silently approach to drink. It was all very peaceful with what appeared to be a recognised pecking order among them. It was fascinating how they seemed to appear from nowhere - some more wary than others. We watched and spoke in whispers. After they had all quenched their thirst they calmly faded back into the bush leaving us to the chorus of croaking frogs and the buzzing of cicadas in the trees. It was a lovely ending to a day. It was such a privilege to see these wild animals free in their own habitat. I can understand why there are still misguided people in our world who kill elephants because there is considerable monetary gain to be made from the ivory but it is completely beyond me to understand why people kill wild animals for trophies to display in their homes. They are absolutely despicable. Four days later we moved north to Amboseli National Park which is renowned for its large herds of elephants. This was certainly true as we sometimes came across herds of between 50 to 100 containing everything from small calves to huge bulls with massive tusks. Compared to the rough terrain in Tsavo West we now had large areas of savanna with plentiful long grass ideal for grazing elephants. Occasionally we came across elephant skeletons which our driver said were either the results of poachers or the severe drought the area experienced some years earlier when many animals died.

We wondered why some elephants were reddish brown in colour instead of the usual grey and this was explained one day when we came across a few adults pawing up a patch of the red brown soil then using their trunks to suck up and blow it all over themselves. Our guide informed us that Amboseli is the Masai word for salty earth.



Tsavo elephant

Apart from going on safari we also had interesting trips to villages where most of the housing was 'mud huts'.

The locals were always glad to receive us when they displayed their wares and crafts. These were well made, brightly coloured with lots of red. Some of the locals belonged to the Masai - people who favour red clothing. They wear lots of colourful beads in their hair, necklaces, bracelets and we always made some purchases for souvenirs usually after considerable friendly haggling. Both men and women at the villages laughed and joked a lot revealing numerous damaged or missing teeth - a dentist could have been kept in work for months! We never came across any fat people - all adults were slim with good upright posture and it looked so easy for the women to carry baskets and pots on their heads.

The Masai people are semi-nomadic and live by herding cattle and goats so there were always animals at the villages. Their staple diet consists of a thick maize-based porridge and they drink milk from their goats and cattle. A traditional drink on special occasions is blood freshly taken from a cow and mixed with milk - certainly an acquired taste which none of us requested! One day when our driver was taking us through the bush we came upon a few herdsman leisurely moving their goats. There must have been almost 100 goats all in remarkably good condition. There were a few male goats in the herd and noticed that under their belly they each had a large piece of firm plastic - rather like the lids of Growmore tubs we buy from garden centres held in situ by pieces of string tied up on top of their backs. I asked one of the drovers what the significance of the plastic lids was whereupon he grinned widely, tapped the side of his brow and with a knowing look said 'family planning!' That was the best laugh I had all day and had to admire the simplicity and ingenuity of his homemade plastic 'condom' to stop the males mating until he allowed them.

The schools were particularly interesting usually consisting of one or two very basic buildings in the countryside with several well worn paths radiating towards the bush from where the pupils walked daily to lessons. Despite the meagre amenities the pupils were always well dressed, so happy and full of smiles and were so keen to sing and dance for us. Just a couple of hundred yards from our lodge there was a big pool with lots of hippos who spent most of their day lazing in the water or grazing nearby. Occasionally there would be



a family dispute accompanied by lots of snorting, bellowing splashing and threatening behaviour with massive jaws wide open. Fortunately there was some fencing between their pool and us so we felt safe enough. These ungainly animals can run at 30 mph, are very aggressive and extremely dangerous as they kill hundreds of humans every year. Not the sort of animal you would stand close to in your holiday snapshot. After several days we moved north back towards Tsavo West where we were in a tented village. Our tents were very spacious, cool and had such comfortable beds. In front of the village was a small lake which had crocodiles in it so we gave the morning swim a miss. One day when our guide took us for a nature stroll to point out the various plants and wildlife he showed us a couple of crocs basking close by in reeds at the edge of the lake. He said they did not usually venture far from the

lake which was reassuring although every time we walked past it on the way to the dining room we kept a good look out! We had not seen any leopards on our travels but the guides said they could guarantee we would see them here. On a lawn in front of the hotel dining room there were two small trees which had been lopped back so that just the basic framework remained. One night as soon as it became dusk the rangers tied a goat carcass in each tree and asked us to be quiet. After about 20 minutes just when we were beginning to think the cabaret had been cancelled a leopard darted across the lawn and leapt up a tree, took several chunks of meat and fled. This was repeated at about ten minute intervals with sometimes a leopard in each tree chewing at the carcasses until eventually they grabbed the remains and disappeared into the night leaving a very satisfied audience. During our travels we occasionally drove on main roads which carried all sorts of traffic including big lorries some of which had seen better days as they belched out lots of filthy smoke and looked in urgent need of an MOT. The roads were not very well surfaced and had some serious potholes. There were sometimes roadblocks manned by armed police who appeared usually sullen and threatening. Across the road they had placed 'stingers' not the type a traffic policeman swiftly throws across a road here - but were made of a few large heavy planks with lots of 6" nails driven through them so they meant business! When we stopped at roadblocks none of us spoke except our driver and he said as little as possible and always seemed relieved to be let through - serious stuff!

As we headed back on the return journey to Mombasa we reflected on how wonderful and exciting our holiday had been.

Kenya had fulfilled all our expectations and everywhere we stayed had been a pleasure to visit. The staff at our hotels and lodges had been brilliant - so friendly, welcoming and treated us like family - and served excellent food throughout. Unforgettable Kenya.

Bill Ferries



General Knowledge Quiz

1. What is the childrens game, Noughts and Crosses, called in the USA?
2. Who was the Prince of Denmark?
3. Which stage musical tells the story of an Argentinian dictators wife?
4. What two names are given to a group of swans on the ground, beginning with B?
5. What was the name of the spaceship in Blakes 7?
6. Which of the sciences is regarded as the oldest?
7. Who sang with UB40 for their 1985 hit, 'I Got You Babe'?
8. Born on 5 May 1818, who was known as the father of communism?
9. Which word can go after PUPPY and before LETTER to make new words?
10. Which animals English name means earhpig in Afrikaans?
11. What name is given to the chalk rocks situated in the Solent, just off the Isle of Wight?
12. Which book features a pub called 'The Admiral Benbow'?
13. Which horror film used Mike Oldfields 'Tubular Bells' as its theme?
14. Who played the title role in the 50s/60s TV show, 'Dr Kildare'?
15. In which year did Jesse Owens become the first black athlete to win 4 gold medals at the Olympic Games?
- 16 Which city is home to Colmans Mustard?
- 17 Which drink was invented by John Pemberton in 1886?
- 18 In which country was ice cream invented?
- 19 What is used to make rosti?
- 20 Which country gave us couscous?

Answers page 10

A CROWD-FUNDING appeal to provide a Community First Responder with a dedicated car to attend emergency medical calls along the Wrexham-Shropshire border has topped £2,000 within three weeks of its launch.

Effie Cadwallader, who now volunteers for the Welsh Ambulance Service after serving a similar role with West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS), admitted she was humbled by the response.

Among the latest donors are members of Ellesmere Probus Club – a social group for retired business people – who have chipped in £100.



Jeremy with Effie

Jeremy Stretton, its president, said: "Effie is well-known in the community for her hard work and dedication.

"She devotes many hours to being a First Responder and it is an understatement to say that she's a real life-saver. More often than not, she is first on the scene of a medical emergency, providing crucial help until a professional ambulance crew arrives.

"She also devotes time giving talks and demonstrations to show people how to use first aid equipment such as a defibrillator. I

hope that other groups similar to ours will support this appeal. "Effie's on-line GoFundMe page will remain open until the end of October and she is also investigating other sources of funding.

In addition to the purchase price, an extra £1,000 must be found to cover the cost of livery for the car, plus £1,000 a year for running costs, including the road fund licence, insurance, servicing and MOT.

Donations can be made via <https://www.gofundme.com/f/effies-community-first-responder-car>

For information about donating by cheque or BACs, please contact Effie at alovevera13@outlook.com

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 9

Events During World War 1

Remembered by Norman Dawson

Soon after I went to the Wharf School, World War I broke out. Donald Quin, a master at the school, soon answered the call to join up, and I well remember him visiting the school in his dark blue uniform and pillbox hat whilst on leave. I believe, soon after his visit, he was off to the front in France, and was one of the fortunate ones to survive that terrible carnage. I also remember being on Wrexham Station soon after the war had started and a train load of five hundred so of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers were being seen off by relatives and friends. It's all very bewildering and exciting to me, because everyone was shouting and cheering and saying they would be back soon. I also remember a few weeks later someone telling my mother that nearly all of them had been killed or wounded.

German prisoners were brought to the town to work on the farms, and were used in what was known as the dead house' at the Workhouse. This was a three storey square building. It stood in its own piece of ground with access to it from Workhouse and from the road leading from Haughton. It looked as gloomy as principle use, which was to house those who died in the Workhouse until burial was arranged in the cemetery. Part of the land on which the house stood was used a burial ground for German prisoners who died there, and I seem to remember a stone cross being erected. I wonder if it is still there, if not, what happened to it.

During World War 1, There was a period when a large number of farm fires occurred. German spies were blamed, and one farmer, who was a retired cavalryman, paraded each night on horse back and with drawn sword. He did this every night until he thought the danger was past. The first night he went to bed his farm went on fire.

During World War I, St George's Wood was felled for timber. I was just a youngster at the time. The tree felling was being carried out by a couple of old experienced woodsmen assisted by young women from Ellesmere who were members of the Land Army, and each evening these young women would march back to Ellesmere singing all the then current war songs - 'Tipperary', 'Rolling home', 'Pack up your Troubles', 'Keep the Home Fires Burning', etc. We youngsters would walk out to meet them and march back with them singing our hearts out. In winter they would be coming home in the dusk, carrying lanterns, and as we marched to meet them we were thrilled to hear them singing in the distance. The voices gradually came nearer, and then would appear the flickering lights of the lanterns. Also, I remember the beautiful view from the tunnel bank across Blakemere when the trees were felled, and I also remember the present trees being planted, and this view gradually disappearing. One wonders which it best to have - the view or the trees.

Memory No 10

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Ellesmere Carnival started in 1935. this first carnival was started more or less on the spur of the moment. Carnivals were quite established at Wem, Whitchurch, Market Drayton, etc., but Ellesmere, up to that year, had not seen fit to join in. However, rather late in the year, June or July, it was decided to run a carnival. Other towns, more than those I have mentioned, had made their arrangements some months previously, so all the jazz bands and dancing troops had already been booked, and none of these were available. It was, therefore, apart from a few entries of decorated cycles, tableaux, etc., from outside, a question of Ellesmere going it alone. In any emergency or local event Ellesmere has, traditionally, never been found wanting and so it was with this carnival. It seemed that every resident of Ellesmere and district contributed in some way and when Carnival Day arrived, it was a great turn out. The entries consisted mainly of tableaux and decorated cycles and prams, and, of course, individual characters. Milk lorries from the milk factory were borrowed. In fact, I think just about every lorry in the district was put into use. It was, of course, the last carnival in the carnival programme. Huge crowds came in from the outlying towns. It was a great success.

Traffic in those days was practically non-existent, and the ideal place to play was the street. The gutters made admirable places for playing marbles, and we tore around the town with our hoops (iron and wooden ones). Sometimes, running down streets like Victoria Street and Market Street, the hoops would gain momentum and control of them would be lost. Away the hoop would bound, and the owner would stand in horror - eyes staring and hands clasped together praying whatever one did at that age) that the hoop would land up against a wall and not a window. Other games played in the street were football, cricket, (stumps chalked on a wall), skipping, hopscotch, rounder's, 'tick', hide and seek etc., and the only time we had a breather was when a herd of cattle, sheep or pigs went by, a cart carrying turnips swedes, in which case no-one bothered if one picked a turnip or swede from the cart, least of all the driver, although I must say there was the odd one who would twirl his whip round the back end of the cart and the back end of the thieving nipper.

Another event in the lives of young Ellesmereans occurred on All Souls Day, which I believe is on 1st November. On this occasion most youngsters in Ellesmere went from door to door reciting the following rhyme, which I hope is reasonably near correct:-

"Soul a Soul a Soulcake,
 Apple or pear, plum or cherry,
 Any good thing to make us merry.
 Go down in the cellar and see what you can find,
 The barrel's almost empty, but would you be so kind,
 We have a little pocket to put a penny in.
 If you haven't got a penny, a ha'penny will do,
 And if you haven't got a ha'penny, then God bless you.
 God bless the master of this house, and the missus too,
 And all the little children around the table too.
 We only come a-souling once in every year,
 And what we come a-smiling for - some apples or some money."
 (knock, knock.)

During the evening on this day, most of the kids would wend their way to the abode of Mr. Charles Moore, one of the landed gentry, who lived at the pillared house at the top of Scotland Street. In the hall would be placed a long bench, about a foot high, and each child would stand on the bench and recite the foregoing poem. If one performed successfully the reward was a 'Soul Cake'. It was a lovely tasting cake, pale yellow in colour and about the size of a saucer. A consolation prize on failure to recite the poem took the form of an apple.

Swimming the mere was another feat which most youngsters aimed to achieve when they reached the age of eleven or twelve. The next achievement was to swim it across and back, and then the ultimate - swimming around it. I recall that about half a dozen or so of us did this quite regularly - Clive Jones, Laurence Walker, Bill Edwards, Fred Roberts, 'Bub' Bedson and Frank Higginson. We were never accompanied by a boat. This is not as stupid as it may sound. For instance, our ages ranged from about seventeen to twenty five, and at no time during the swim were we very far from the shore, or each other, and there were never less than three or four of us. However, we did tend to speed up a bit when passing the Oteley Boathouse. It always seemed a bit eerie. It was said to be the deepest part of the mere. It was certainly the coldest.

One summer, we decided we would swim all the meres, across and back. We did this with the exception of Sweat Mere, which we did not even see, let alone swim it, and Hanmer Mere. Our conclusion was that each mere was much of a sameness, except that in the middle of Whitemere we encountered a very cold current. I wonder if it is still there.

About the time when I was aged from eleven to fourteen, the Crimps was a very dangerous place to swim or bathe. Incidentally, at that time it was referred to as the 'Girls' Crimps' and the 'Boys' Crimps'. Through the Cremome Gardens and into the first field and this was called the 'Girls' Crimps', because girls only bathed there.

Then through the wood and into the next field, which was the 'Boys' Crimps' where only boys bathed, but the trouble at the 'Boys' Crimps' was glass. Some years before I started going to the Crimps, glass had been tipped into the water in an effort to stop bathing there. It took years to clear but it never did stop bathing. The police were asked to try to prevent bathing here, but to no avail. In fact, I remember on one occasion the policeman stripped off and came in with us.

Eventually the tenancy of the farm was taken over by Mr. John Edwards, and there was never any more trouble.

When I started bathing at the Crimps it was more unusual to come away 'uncut' rather than 'cut'. As time went on the glass cleared, and also the two Crimps came together. Boys mixed with girls, and strangely enough, or is it strange, the girls vacated the 'Girls' Crimps' (forward hussies) and established themselves in the area which had previously been 'Boys only'. One would have thought that with the glass hazard, the boys would have invaded the girls' pitch, but no. It would seem that even in that day and age, the girls were determined to go through glass and water to be with the boys!

Referring to the 'Girls' Crimps', seeing it as it is today, one can hardly imagine that one time this was a clear expanse of land running down to the edge of the water and the water being a very safe bathing spot, with its very gradual slope to deeper water. Other features involving the mere was snow. About seventy-five years ago, when snow fell, the roads were not as important as the footpaths. To get about on foot it was more important, there being little traffic, and in any case in thick snow, farmers in their carts found it very difficult to get into town.

Every shopkeeper and businessman in the town would sweep the pavement side his or her particular building, and pile the snow up in the gutter. Then, following this, two or three horse drawn carts or lorries would appear on the scene, and as much snow as possible from the piled up gutters would be loaded on them and taken down to the mere, into which it was tipped.

Memory No 11

Further Memories of World War ii

Remembered by Yvonne Rowell

The railway station was always beautifully kept and busy, but during the war the staff were extra busy dealing with the hospital trains arriving with war casualty patients. The trains, with red crosses on, were met by long convoys of ambulances.

The porter at the station was Mrs I. Parry, who never lost her sense of humour. She helped to lift patients and worked very hard. I remember her cheery banter to the lads on stretchers. I was the local reporter for the Shrewsbury Chronicle. Hence my being there.

There were three (or even more) hospitals in the area. One was at Oteley, across the mere, and I was employed there by Henry Boot & Son (Builders) as a wage clerk. On completion of the hospital I was transferred by the Labour Exchange to Penley and Llana Panna, two hospitals being quickly built by Sir Robert McAlpine (Builder).

After completing these hospitals McAlpines moved to Swindon, and I was sent to the R.A.O.C. Depot at Elson as a clerk/typist in Major Wilderspin's office.

I was there for seven months and then got transferred to the Ministry of Supply Depot down two fields beside Randle Jones' farm. It stored all grades of cordite and also cannon powder!

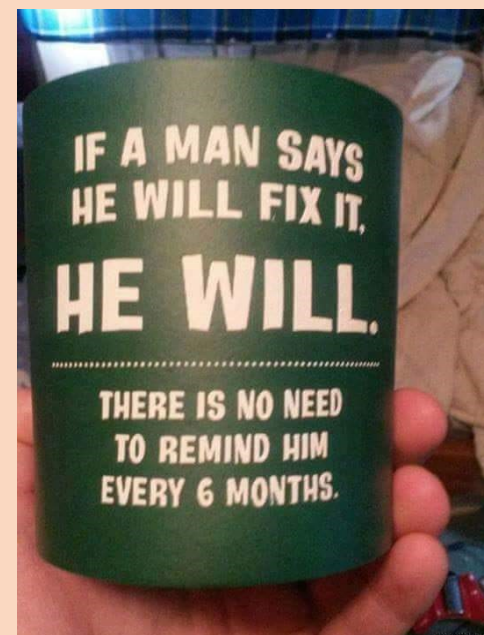
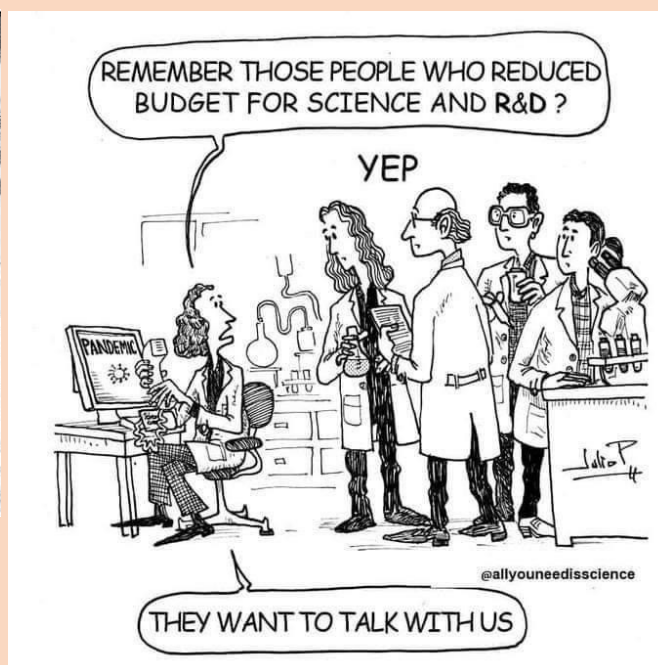
Everything at the depot was done in quintuplicate. The five copies of our stock were sent to five different major offices for retention and action as needed. All boxes were recorded by weight to a quarter of an ounce.

We had two Alsatian security dogs, and two watchmen were sent at separate times to Melton Mowbray - not for pies - but to be trained as an individual handler. The dog and handler walked the perimeter of the depot, which had barbed wire fencing some twenty feet high.

I was taught fire drill with hydrants and how to fire a rifle. My rifle was kept beside my desk. I also had my own Labrador dog in my office. I worked there until September 14th, 1945.

I married on September 17th, 1945, and moved to Lancashire.

Further fascinating memories in the next issue



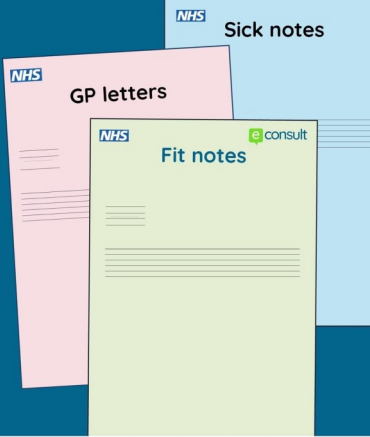
Local information

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'



NHS Sick notes
NHS GP letters
NHS Fit notes
econsult





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. Tic Tac Toe, 2. Hamlet, 3. Evita, 4. Bevy or Bank (A ballet is swans in flight)
5. Liberator, 6. Astronomy, 7. Chrissie Hinds, 8. Karl Marx, 9. LOVE, 10. Aardvark
11. The Needles, 12. Treasure Island, 13. Exorcist, 14. Richard Chamberlain, 15. 1936 (Berlin)
16. Norwich, 17. Coca Cola, 18. China, 19. Potatoes, 20. Tunisia.



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)

