



Probus Club Ellesmere



Covid-19 Lockdown 2020 Newsletter

In issue 25:

- From The Editor. *Paul*
- From the Crow's Nest. *Jeremy*
- In memory of Ant Astley
- Quiz. *Editor*
- Desert Island Discs *By Jeremy*
- A tribute to Frank Bough *By John Shone*
- Royal British Legion *By John Shone*
- Extracts from the Memories Series of Booklets. *Published by the Ellesmere Society. Submitted by Paul*
- Useful Local Information. *Editor*
- Pastoral Support. *Faith groups*

Issue 25

Nov. 05, 2020

From the Editor

Dear all, Fred Williams was the lucky winner of the "Spot the wrong photo" in the last issue of the Lockdown newsletter. You may have read an article about the fire at the College in the 1960s, the photo showing the damaged roof of a burnt building captioned 1960s showed in the photo two Transit vans, obviously of a later design.

Well the news is not good, we are back in Lockdown, but the schools and universities remain open. On the plus side there shouldn't be the panic over PPE and treatment of the first Lockdown. The medical profession have found better treatments for Covid 19 and the PPE contracts have been shared out among all Domonic and Matt's mates so some must be getting through.

Keep safe
Paul

View from the Crow's Nest

Dear Probus friends,

Firstly, as ever, I hope that you, your friends neighbours and family are keeping safe, well and of good humour where possible. Yet another extraordinary fortnight has gone by with a further month's lockdown in England, foggy sight of Christmas on the horizon, dreadful acts of terrorism on the continent and now a melodrama across 'The Pond'. It can all feel a bit like a modern Shakespearean tragedy. Those troops on the battlefields of recent history, their back-ups and their families must have had an even more intense question of 'when will all this end?'. It is they who are so much in my mind as I write. Remembrance Sunday will be very different this year but not our personal thoughts. Sadly we are not able to have the traditional Ellesmere street parade to church for the 11.00am service as lock-down prohibits such gatherings. Instead our Probus wreath will be laid at the War Memorial on Sunday 8th November alongside other invited local representatives with roll-call outside and no church service. I feel privileged to do this on behalf of all our Probus members again. Special thanks go to Bob McBride on behalf of the British Legion for all he has done again to make this event so special and arranging streaming the un-forgotten names of those on our Ellesmere War Memorial through a large television screen in the window of Barlow's Electrical.

On a different note, just a gentle reminder that our £20.00 annual subscriptions are due and thanks to those who have paid to Michael Judge our valued Treasurer. I hope that you feel able and willing to maintain your membership to keep our Club running through these exceptional times and thank you for doing so. Fellowship takes many forms and I always remain convinced that Probus is a wonderful community.

With very best wishes,

Jeremy

In memory of Ant Astley

Personal



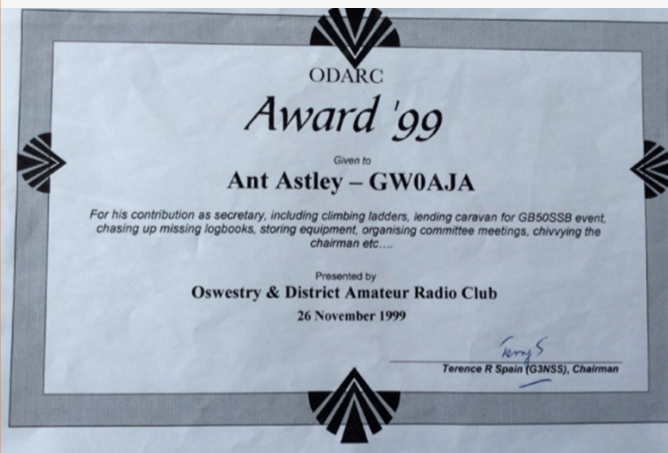
Ant

Ant around 2006/7

Ant was born in 1943 near Wolverhampton. He and Mary met in 1968 and married in 1970 at Solihull Registry Office. They have two children, Matthew educated at King Edward's School and Katherine at Shotton School. He was very fond of camping and the family would camp in Wales whenever possible, having a strong affinity with that country. Ant joined the BBC around 1961 training at Wood Norton and retired on pension in 1993 aged 50 when digitisation first came in to use at the BBC. Initially he had worked at the Audio Unit in Broad Street, Birmingham, moving to the new Pebble Mill in 1971. At that opening ceremony he and Mary met Princess Anne. After he retired he was renowned at home for listening to radio broadcasts and spotting editing 'slip-ups', saying "You just can't get the staff these days". When Ant retired the family were living at Clavendon, Warwickshire where they lived on a smallholding keeping poultry and sheep. He was Chairman of the Village Show every August for 21 years.

They also had a share in a narrow boat often inviting friends along for a cruise on the canal. From an early age he had a side-line repairing radios and running the lighting and sound effects for the local amateur dramatic group. Ant then took a job to keep occupied with a friend in Stratford fitting alarm systems and automatic doors for instance at Stratford Theatre. Richard could trust Ant implicitly and then took his first holiday in eight years since he had started the business. The job was a casual arrangement which suited them both and helped Ant's family see how the retirement pension worked out. The family moved to Erw Wen in Penybontfawr of the Tanat Valley and stayed there for 11 years and were proud that both their children went to Cambridge University before joining the world of work. They moved again and lived in Ellesmere for 14 years.

Ant joined Oswestry Probus where he became President. And was also Parish Councillor for several years. That branch met for lunch and a speaker regularly, having both a men and ladies section. When the Club folded due to declining numbers he moved to the Ellesmere Club where he was also very popular and active. He was also a keen member of Wrexham and Oswestry radio clubs, becoming Secretary at Oswestry. Ant and Frank Bailey of Ellesmere Probus Club regularly travelled together to Wrexham Ham Radio Club as members for a few years.



Ant was a licensed radio amateur, still operating from home until a few months prior to his illness. He always had a passion for classical music particularly although did not play an instrument himself. Hancock's 'The Radio Ham' was a favourite also. During retirement Ant and Mary visited older retirees at their homes or pubs etc & friends to see if they needed any help. They enjoyed the BBC Visitors weekends away to keep up to date and socialise with friends. Ant developed ataxia, a progressive physical disability several years ago causing loss of balance and his world got smaller until he was almost house-bound, but he remained true to himself and his character. After many falls without consequence, one in May 2020 broke his ankle at the site of an old injury. Whilst in hospital at Shrewsbury and Whichurch he caught Covid-19 and sadly passed away on 14th July 2020. He is very much missed by family, friends ex-colleagues and Probus members alike.



Up the ladder - again!

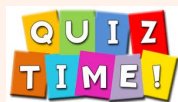
Cont. page 3

BBC history

Ant joined the BBC in 1961 in London and was sent for Engineering Training at Wood Norton near Evesham. On completion of the training he arrived at the Midland Broad Street studios in the Control Room as a Technical Operator and worked there until one of the BBC upheavals 'Broadcasting in the '70's' - resulting in him along with other Radio Studio Managers, Radio and Television Outside Broadcast and studio staff being moved to the new Audio Unit. He spent spare time at Birmingham Hospital Broadcasting Network from Edgbaston cricket ground.

Even as a trainee he showed a strong talent for radio technical work. When working at the Broad Street Control Room one day he heard a disturbance out in the street and went out onto the roof to look down to see if anyone needed any help. Whilst on the roof he broke his ankle and struggled back into the building. Ant was always looking to see what he could do to help others in need. On another occasion the automatic emergency power supply generator at Broad Street, which was supposed to be checked monthly by control room staff failed. Ant went down to the basement via an awkward spiral stair but couldn't get it started as the battery was dead. He went back up the staircase, down the main staircase to the street and his car. He removed the car battery then retraced his steps up and down carrying his car battery, coupled it up and started the generator. He got little thanks from the Engineer-in-Charge who was more concerned with chastising the Control Room staff in general. When the new Pebble Mill studios near Edgbaston cricket ground were built he was transferred there. There are thought to have been four stories underground on site. The building was demolished some 30 years later.

Ant was the technician for some time on the radio 'On Your Farm' one-hour programme which meant him having to be up at 3.30 in the morning to set up the broadcast and would be back home by 7.30a.m. If the programme wasn't live from the farm it would have been recorded the day before (Friday) then needing to play the recording from Birmingham the following morning. Mary remembers one day when he brought her a cup of tea in bed one morning and half asleep, asked him why he was still at home. "I have been to work and am back now" he replied. Often he would be invited to have breakfast with the wealthy farmers and landowners interviewed on the programmes. He always preferred radio work to television although was not keen on 'The Archers' which he thought was slow, dull and repetitive. He was highly skilled at editing and he'd a very keen ear. On one occasion he was listening to a piece of music with a colleague who said "that had five edits in it". "Five?" replied Ant, "no it had nine".



General Knowledge Quiz

1. When referring to a USB port, what do the letter USB stand for?
2. During which century did Blackbeard become famous for seafaring?
3. True or false: Amphibians are invertebrates?
4. The Ring of Fire is located in the basin of which ocean?
5. Which celebration is less commonly known as 'the eve of All Saints' Day'?
6. What sport is the Keirin event associated with?
7. Khartoum is the capital of which country?
8. The digestive system delivers nutrients to cells via what?
9. What is the time difference between London, UK and Sydney, Australia?
10. What is a cosmonaut?
11. Who was the first recorded European to reach the east coast of Australia?
12. Which sea does the River Rhine empty into?
13. By what name was Duke William of Normandy commonly known as?
14. True or False: Buzz Aldrin's mother's maiden name was Moon?
15. Which Shakespearean play features a character called Lysander?
16. What is the largest species of penguin?
17. What is the chemical symbol for magnesium on the periodic table?
18. Who invented the first full scale working railway steam locomotive?
19. What sports form an Olympic triathlon?
20. The Bridal Veil Falls, American Falls and Canadian Horseshow make up what?

Answers page 11



Desert Island Discs Part 3

Well it has been a good while since my first contribution to our Probus Newsletter Desert Island Discs and thanks again to Mike (Grundy) for a great classical follow-up. **If any of the hyperlinks below don't work for you please cut and paste the shown link into your search-engine bar.**

It can be a bit tricky for some of us linking the actual music to the stories of why those tracks are important to us personally. So how about if you would like to give a brief story to Paul and me about a single piece of music that is very important to you for whatever reason? Paul and I will then be able to put together a compilation of 'single' Desert Island Discs from each of us rather than the whole thing from one person. If you would like to be named in the compilation, fine. If you would rather not then that's fine also. We can sort out the hyperlinks to You-Tube if you like.

So this is my next selection, some of which you may know but some may be new to you, I hope that you enjoy them:

Labi Siffre - Something inside so strong

Labi Siffre was a British singer songwriter of Anglo-Nigerian descent and poet who came to fame in the 1970's . This song reminds me of the tensions at the time of apartheid and my favourite line in the song is " The higher you build your barriers, the stronger I become" which applies to so many things in all our lives. I played it a lot when I was swotting for my finals at college.

<https://youtu.be/otuwNwsqHmQ>

2. Thomas Tallis -Spem in Alium

There are few pieces of music that I have known which can transport me to a serene place but this is on that list. Listening to this feels like a ladder to me, one step forward and the occasional one backwards but softness in the harmonies wins over.

<https://youtu.be/XJDLQZWKWe8>

3. Libera - Be still my soul

Carole and I came across Libera many years ago and without question this is our favourite of all their works. We lived on Anglesey at the time and it seems impossible to un-link the joy of this piece of music from the views of the Menai Straits from our house. It gives me goose-pimples every time I listen to it.

<https://youtu.be/C7kSnvdac2g>

4. Frank Sinatra - The way you look tonight

Well what can I say ..I guess that we all have fond memories of those days and that they remain with us, "don't you ever change, it touches my foolish heart" is my favourite line from this song. Sinatra was the man (apart from Matt Monro) that I think my Mum wished that she had met before my Dad if you know what I mean !

<https://youtu.be/h9ZGKALMMuc>

7. Fron Male Voice Choir - Going Home

Wales is a beloved country for our family. In my last job I worked with a member of this famous North Wales male-voice choir and I revered the sounds and harmonies that they produced. 'Going Home' holds special memories of driving to the Lleyen peninsula after work on Friday evening up the Tanat Valley through Llangynog and over the Berwyn mountains as it played on the in-car tape-player (anyone remember those?)

https://youtu.be/FnS_OPGfols

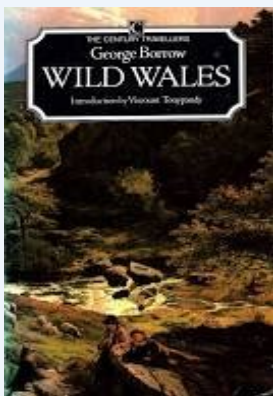
8. The Moody Blues - Forever Autumn

You may or may not have seen the film of 'The War of the Worlds' in the 1970's but if you have, this was one of the most memorable, gentle songs of the soundtrack. "The summer sun is fading as the year grows old" seems very appropriate to our time of year. It is about love, loss and reflection.

<https://youtu.be/Al-ESH-XfQc>

Book:

'Wild Wales' by George Borrow, first published in 1857. On 27th July 1854 George Borrow began a tour of North Wales which would last until 16th November 1854. The Borrow family lodged at Dee Cottage, Llangollen, and from there Borrow started local excursions, followed by a long walk via Corwen, Capel Curig to Bangor and Holyhead (and lots of other places). Then in September he headed south via Caernarfon, Beddgelert and Ffestiniog and back to Llangollen. October saw the start of a long walk to Bala, Machynlleth, Devil's Bridge, Strata Florida, Lampeter, Llandovery, Swansea, Neath, Merthyr Tydfil, Caerphilly and Newport, finally ending up at Chepstow on 16th November 1854.



During the walks he filled notebooks with tales of the people he met, the incidents and so forth. He compiled them into a fascinating and humorous record of his journeys in 'Wild Wales' in which there is a real feel for the personalities of the characters he tells us about as well as colourful descriptions of the towns and countryside. I have a well-thumbed copy of the book if any Probus members would like to borrow it if you don't have a copy. Highly recommended.

Luxury:

A solar-powered digital audio-recorder to record my life story but only for my family to read!

solar-powered digital audio-recorder



Just to go one step further, a favourite poem:

Eden Rock by Charles Causley

https://youtu.be/iHwH_JdrYjQ

We look forward to any contributions to the Desert Island Discs Ellesmere Probus compilation.

Frank 'the unflappable' --a tribute to Frank Bough By John Shone

As tributes are paid to the former TV presenter Frank Bough, who died last week, aged 87, John Shone remembers working with one of the great talents of television....

Frank Bough, who hailed from Oswestry, was a thoroughly nice guy and a consummate professional. I had the privilege and pleasure of working with him on the BBC's nightly Nationwide programme for two years at the start of my broadcasting career in 1973.

He was extremely kind and helpful to junior members of the production team like me and, having previously worked as a newspaper journalist, I learnt such lot from him. Frank was totally unflappable. He never showed any sign of being under pressure, even when things were going badly wrong, as they sometimes do on live TV.

Working as a junior producer at Nationwide's Lime Grove studios in London's Shepherd's Bush, there



were times when I would be struggling with a complicated script as deadline approached. With the clock ticking down to going live, Frank would stroll over to the main production desk, lean over my steaming typewriter, and say quietly: 'just leave it to me, I can busk that easily.' And he just ad-libbed!

Once, I was producing a technically complex round-up for Nationwide on the best British hopefuls training for the upcoming Commonwealth Games, which involved linking live contributions from eleven regional studios across the UK. Frank introduced the piece and it was all going smoothly until we switched to Leeds. The presenter there clearly wasn't ready. He was lolling

back in his chair with his feet on the desk, casually smoking a cigar and joking with a technician. Without warning, the programme director instantly cut back to the London studio and, quick as a flash, Frank simply quipped: "Well he's not going to win any medals in the Commonwealth Games, is he!?"

I was mortified. Nearly twelve million viewers had watched that foul-up, but after the programme, when I went to the BBC club for a drink with Frank and other members of the team, he put his hand on my shoulder and told me not to worry. That's what they'll all be talking about in the pubs tonight" he said. "It was a great television moment."

A friend told me recently that he'd seen a clip of that sequence in a programme from the BBC archives featuring TV bloopers.

A happy life in Oswestry

Frank Bough had what he described as an "idyllically happy" upbringing in Oswestry after his father, Joe, moved his wife and young family to the town from Stoke-on Trent in 1939 to find work. While his Dad worked as a furniture upholsterer, Frank became a pupil at Oswestry Boys' High School where he developed a real passion for sport –football, cricket and hockey – as well as music and drama.

As a boy soprano, tutored by the school's late choirmaster, the late Harry Moore-Bridger, he competed at the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod and took part in some of the school's Shakespeare plays

Although not particularly academic, Frank was awarded a scholarship to Merton College, Oxford where he read history and won a soccer 'blue', playing centre half for the University football team in the annual match against Cambridge University.

Frank met his future wife, Nesta Howells, at a dance at Park Hall camp while he was training for National Service and she was a trainee physiotherapist at the nearby orthopaedic hospital.

After serving in the Royal Tank Regiment, he landed a job as a management trainee at the ICI chemical plant at Billingham on Teeside. But he was keen to break into broadcasting and after several years doing some freelance sports reporting for the BBC in the north east, he became the first presenter of the new Look North television news programme in Newcastle.

Within a few years he'd joined BBC Sport as presenter of Grandstand, later becoming one of the main presenters of Nationwide with Sue Lawley, Bob Wellings and Michael Barratt.

Frank was the main link-man for coverage of several Olympic Games and in 1977 he was honoured with the Richard Dimbleby award for his outstanding contribution to factual television. In 1983, he launched the UK's first early morning television programme, BBC Breakfast. But his career, came to an abrupt end five years later when the News of the World carried stories that he'd indulged in cocaine parties with prostitutes. It was a sad end for a genial, talented presenter man who'd given so much to broadcasting. In his autobiography, Frank wrote fondly of his days as a schoolboy in Oswestry, playing cricket at Knockin and football at Penylan lane.

"What pleasure such a place had for a growing boy...it was a natural playground. Nobody has ever devised a 'leisure centre' that can come anywhere near it."

RIP Frank.



Royal British Legion Ellesmere and District Branch

Scroll of Honour to remember The Fallen

The Royal British Legion in Ellesmere has linked-up with a local business to ensure that the names of those listed on the town's war memorial are publicly commemorated in the run-up to Remembrance Sunday. A rolling Scroll of Honour, listing 83 men and one woman who died in the two world wars, is being displayed on a large TV screen at Barlow's Electrical store in the town centre.

Restrictions imposed because of the Covid pandemic mean that this year's annual parade and church service on Sunday, (November 8), has been cancelled. Instead, The Legion is encouraging everyone to observe the two minute' silence on their doorsteps at home to coincide with the national remembrance ceremony at the Cenotaph in London. The scroll of honour will be displayed at Barlow's Cross Street store until Armistice Day on Wednesday, November 11. Bob McBride, chairman of the Legion's Ellesmere and District branch explained: "Every year at the remembrance service, the mayor and the town clerk read out the 83 names on the war memorial. But as we are unable to hold the service this year, we thought it appropriate to honour those with local connections who gave their lives by displaying the names in the town centre where everyone can see them. We are very grateful to Barlow's for making this happen."

The Vicar of Ellesmere, the Rev. Pat Hawkins said: "Though we are not able to keep Remembrance Sunday in the usual way, people can still join in by 'remembering at home' in a similar way that we clapped for carers during lockdown, by standing at your door as we honour the fallen and keep the two minutes' silence. You may like to join me in saying the prayer that I will be saying on Sunday morning ***"O God of truth and justice, we hold before you these people who have been injured or who have died in active service. "As we honour their courage and cherish their memory, may we put our faith in your future; for you are the source of life, peace and hope, now and for ever. Amen."***



Picture Ellesmere Legion branch chairman, Bob McBride, (right), with Peter Nicholas, Barlow's assistant store manager who arranged the scroll of honour display.

The Covid 19 restrictions mean that there are no house-to-house collections for the Poppy Appeal this year and the annual street collection in Ellesmere has been cancelled.

With the introduction of the second lockdown, you can still buy poppies from Ellesmere Newsagents, Tesco, TSB Bank, Ellesmere Post Office, Duddleston Heath Post Office, Mere Motors, Ellesmere Co-op store.

Last year's appeal in Ellesmere and district raised more than £9,000 You can donate to the appeal online:

www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/ways-to-give/donate?gclid=CjwKCAiA-f78BRBbEiwATKRRBD0PKIHqjVawm_QamdVKTNs7K9n4P72izcxpbw8hbEIDSX38meKwRoCQ6wQAvD_BwE&gclid=aw.ds

CRICKETING DAYS

Norman Dawson & Peter Giles

As to the origin of Ellesmere Cricket Club, I am afraid I know very little, except to say that it was founded a long time before I became associated with it. I first played for the Club when I was about 13. I had won my First XI colours at Oswestry Boys' High School. In those days the pavilion was at the other end of the field, at the bottom of the canal slope, and the actual playing pitch was near enough where it is today, so it was quite a long walk out to the wicket, and a much longer walk back if one made a 'duck' - or so it seemed. The playing pitch in those days was fearsome. Oswestry and Whitchurch, who both had lovely pitches, refused to make fixtures with Ellesmere because of the dangerous ground. Charlie Hesp, the Ellesmere fast bowler, could almost be credited with inventing bodyline bowling long before Larwood, Voce & Co., but, seriously, given a bone dry wicket, Charlie at his fastest, every short pitched ball was a head high flier.

Again, the fashion in those days on any ground was to apologize for a bumper, and you can imagine that on the Ellesmere pitch there were plenty of cries of 'Sorry, old boy'.

The Captain of the Club was William Ernest Oswald Rulter, a young solicitor who had his offices on the ground floor of Trimpley Hall. The opening batsmen at that time were Mark Hesp, and Ted Drury. Mark was in charge of the Bridgewater Estate Yard in Wharf Road. His looks he reminded me of W.G. Grace, but there the similarity ceased, because Mark Hesp was a notorious stonewaller. Ted Drury was quite a stylish bat and a good wicket 'keeper. In fact he was, like his son Gordon, a very good all-rounder, but he did not like keeping wicket to fast bowling, and if Charlie Hesp, son of Mark Hesp, was bowling his fastest (and, on form, Charlie could sling them down) it was not an uncommon sight to see Ted take off his pads and hand them to Charlie Price, who was not as good as Ted at stumping and catching, but who would stand up to anything.

Bill Bennet went in at number 4 or 5. He kept the Railway Hotel. He had a good eye and he could hit, He was for ever trying to land the ball in the Gas Works, or, at the other end, into a sand pit on the other side of Birch Road. He also kept wicket when Ted or Charlie Price were not available, and whilst playing in a match at Whitchurch, the bowler hit the stumps and the ball flew and hit Bill in the eye. Regrettably, he lost the sight of the eye and never played again. Also playing at that time was Jack Boliver Evison, He was a good all-rounder. Going in at No.3 or 4 he could always be relied upon to make some runs, and as a medium paced bowler with an off-break was always well up in the averages.

Harry Lambert was also a regular. He was a farmer and a Canadian, a medium fast bowler and quite a good bat. Isaac Price was another regular. He was also secretary for some time. He was a fairly fast bowler but rather erratic. He kept a fish and chip shop in Watergate Street. Eric Lee was a big chap, about six foot three, who looked as though he could hit sixes off every ball, but who in reality was another stonewaller.

Ellesmere College was represented by two very stylish bats - The Reverend Hedworth, Headmaster, and D.R Evans, Bursar; and a man named Hepplewl was a former Kent professional and was full time cricket coach at the College. I was a good all-rounder. Of course, cricket in those days was a very leisure affair. On a hot and sunny afternoon - and there seemed to be plenty of those quite a goodly number of spectators would be sitting or lying dotted around the boundary line. Bees would be buzzing around; batsmen walking in and out, and the ball would click on the bat raising an occasional clap from players and the spectators who were still awake. In most cases, who won or lost did not seem matter. It was all so very peaceful and serene; all so terribly British. All kinds of ways of improving the ground were tried. Money was a problem, but one season the whole of the area was marled and allowed to season. This, couple with other methods tried out, did bring about a great improvement, and e. fixtures with Oswestry and Whitchurch were arranged.

As time went on the team changed. Laurie Bland and I took over as openers, and I recall that on six consecutive occasions we passed the hundred mark before being parted. Frank Hockenhull joined the club and was a dour bat and a bowler whose easy action fooled many - the ball coming off the pitch much faster than one would think. Major IR Kynaston, Hardwick Hall, also played quite a few times. He was a hard hitting batsman with a beautiful straight drive. Vine Williams was an effective fast medium bowler and a good bat.

Ellesmere College supplied further useful additions to the team. Probably, best remembered is O.H. Chapman ('Chappie') as he was affectionately known by his many friends. He was a medium fast bowler who could trundle them down and never seemed to tire. Another useful player from the College was Hopkins (known, naturally, as 'Hoppie'), a very good attacking batsman. The banks, at this time also seemed to have some useful talent. Jim Crow Manager of the then National Provincial Bank was a good fast bowler with wicked late swerve, and was usually good for some runs. Also from this bank K.T. Baker, a very keen player who practiced for hours to improve his game. became a good all-rounder - a marvellous fielder. From Lloyds Bank we had Jones - a useful bat, good fielder and very keen. O.A (Killer) Davies, a very fast bowler, was rather unpredictable but on form he could be just about unplay. What always amazed me about 'Killer' was that, whereas practically every bowler takes quite a long run, Davies would take only about 4 or 5 steps and then 'wham', down it would come. If he had taken his bowling seriously and developed a run then goodness knows what his pace would have been.

Ted Hassall, at that time headmaster of Cockshutt School, was, in my opinion, just about the best bat ever to play for Ellesmere. He had a fine cover drive, and a splendid variety of other shots. He did play for Wem, but we managed to lure him to Ellesmere. Another excellent all-rounder (batsman, bowler and fielder) was Don Boyling. He gave good service to the Club for many years. He must be remembered as one of Ellesmere's greats. Bernard Oakley had a marvellous eye and could certainly knock them about when he got going. He was the top scorer when Ellesmere knocked up 212 in one hour in the Wem Knock Out.

Joe Lloyd was an excellent wicket keeper and a stylish bat. His loss at an early age deprived Ellesmere of a sportsman with great potential. His elder brother Bill, became the ever present umpire for many years, and his snarling 'not out' in answer to the loud cries of 'How's that', made one feel that it was hopeless to appeal unless there was very good reason for doing so. It is perhaps interesting to note that over a period of many years, and covering quite a few years before I joined Ellesmere until some years after the war.

Ellesmere Cricket Club was served by mainly two umpires only - Alec Leach and Bill Lloyd. Between them they must have created a record. It was safe to say that Ellesmere had a team of which the town could be proud.

This team began a new era in cricket in Ellesmere, and there is no doubt in my mind that the man to whom much of the success of this era can be attributed was Tom C. Price. He was Hon. Secretary during those successful years and he and his wife were so enthusiastic. At this time knock outs were being held at Wem and Whitchurch, although up to then we had not entered either of them. However, the first year that T. C. Price was Hon. Secretary, a team was entered in the Wem and Whitchurch Knockouts. Both competitions had 8 players in a team. Whitchurch restricted each team to bat for 22 overs, but in the Wem KO. each team batted for one hour. This, however, was soon changed to 22 overs, because it did give loopholes for sharp practice. For instance, in my own case, I normally took a run of 15 yards, but in the Wem KO. I extended this run to 21 yards, thus wasting time, and most fast bowlers, of course, adopted the same tactics, and fielders also had their own ways and means of wasting time. Ellesmere's first entry into the Knock Out world was the organization of a local KO. Competition. Each team consisted of eight players who had to live within a radius of so many miles of Ellesmere Town Hall. A list of recognised first team players was compiled and each team was allowed only two of these players. In most cases teams gave themselves unusual names. In the first competition, Law Bland and I played for a team called 'The Creamy Bits', a team organised by the Milk Factory, and we managed to beat 'The Scouts' in the Final. The next seas, it was decided to run an open competition; the local one having been such success, and in that season both the local and the open were great successes. For the open, teams from Rhos, Brymbo, Marchwiel, Wem, Whitchurch etc. he entered and on this occasion, if my memory serves me well, Rhos and Marchw met in the final. Jack MacAlpine, who fancied himself as a fast bowler, w captain of the Marchwiel team. Both teams, Rhos in particular, brought crowds of supporters to the two-night final to swell the local crowds. The next year enthusiasm was even greater, particularly as we reached and won the final of our own Knock Out. We beat Rhos, and to crown a great season we also won the Whitchurch and Wem Knock Outs. The team achieving the treble consisted Laurie Bland (Captain), Ted Hassall, J. Crowe, D. Wimmill, D.F. Boyling, N. Dawson, C.H. Hesp and J. Vaughan.

It is difficult to explain, but Ellesmere, for about 4 years, just went cricket era The Open Knock Out went from strength to strength. Gwersult, Overton Wrexham, and even Oswestry and Shrewsbury, who had hitherto both frowned on KO. Cricket, entered teams.

At this time, had one looked at the score books of the Ellesmere Club covering Saturday matches one would have seen that the name of Jack Vaughan" conspicuous by its absence. However, his name did figure prominently in Knock Out teams; the reason being that, as well as being quite a useful bat , was a very fine medium fast bowler with a natural swerve or break; I just for. which. He was so good a bowler that he was much sought after for the Knock out team, but was not available for Saturday matches. I think that KO. Cricket in Ellesmere began to subside in about 1934 or '35. Tom Price finishing as secretary I feel had something to do with it, and players " had become household names disappeared from tile scene - most of tile chaps from the banks had moved away, also Hopkins from tile College. O.H. Chapman did not play as often, and Laurie Bland left to live in Shrewsbury and played for them. I got married in 1936, and played only rarely in that year and 1937.

I believe it would be right to say that the cricket was just as keen, but the fervour of the spectators had cooled off as a result of the 'big guns', Rhos, Brymbo, dropping out of the Open K O.

Memory No 18

Fair Days - The Smithfield

Stan Horton

The Fair Day of Tuesday, March 11th, 1902 saw a sharp increase in the price of beef - best quality making up to ninepence (4p) per pound. Numbers of stock forward at a fortnightly sale at about this time were 150 cattle, 200 head each of calves and sheep and well over 500 pigs.

Advertisements in local newspapers in February 1912 indicated that the auctioneering firm of Messrs. Thorn and Bessell would commence sales of cattle in Ellesmere Smithfield on March 25th of that year. Frank Lloyd and Sons also began sales in the Smithfield at about this time apparently replacing Charles Cooke and Son. In 1913, a cow with her calf was worth up to £22, yearling cattle about ten guineas (£10.50p), and a sow with pigs £14. At the same time, the wages of a farmworker were sixteen shillings (80p) per week plus a free cottage and garden.

The period around 1912-1913 seems to have been a highly productive one for agriculture, for advertisements by the three firms of livestock auctioneers indicate that as many as 3,500 head of stock would be presented at each fortnightly sale. It may be that this figure was somewhat inflated in order to attract as many buyers possible! Even so, it follows that great numbers of farm animals were being sold by auction, for not only was Ellesmere Smithfield being well supported, the markets at Overton-on-Dee, Baschurch, Wem, Wrexham and Whitchurch, as was the much bigger venue at Oswestry, were also transacting substantial business.

Although the market at Overton barely survived the First World War, Baschurch Smithfield was still operating in 1934 and probably later.

Cont. page 10

At the Christmas Fatstock Auction of December 11th, 1928, prize-winning stock made to £53 for an animal weighing fifteen and a half hundredweight. However, it was in the early 1930's that much excitement was aroused by the vast numbers of pigs offered for sale at the special Christmas auctions. In 1930, in an action conducted by Messrs. Thorn and Bessell, one thousand two hundred pigs were penned with buyers coming to Ellesmere from Birmingham, Nottingham, Wolverhampton, Stoke, Burslem, Coventry, Huddersfield, Manchester, Liverpool Bolton, Birkenhead and many other towns. Bacon pigs were sold to a price of each for a live weight of 260 lbs i.e. 13sc.) and to £5.17.0 (£5.85p) for lighter weights.

At the 1933 Christmas pig auction, prices were considerably higher, bacon making £11.5.0 (£11.25p), and the prize-winning "smallholder's" pig was sold Mr. George Hayward, the pork butcher, of Scotland Street for twelve pounds half a crown (£12. 12 1/2p).

In the days before fast road transport, large numbers of livestock were moved by rail. A press report of the 1933 sale reads, "The Great Western Railway made special arrangements and pigs were dispatched by express goods trains to various destinations much to the satisfaction of the buyers".

In the spring of each year, special sales of store stock were held In the *Shrewsbury and Border Counties Advertizer* of April 11th 1934, Messrs. Thorn and Bessell advertized a "Prize Sale of Dairy Cattle" to be held on Tuesday, April 24th with top prizes of one guinea to be given for various classes of stock. Just two days later, Batho and Son held their Special Prize Sale of store cattle. It may well have been that the modest capacity of the Smithfield made it impossible to hold both sales on the same day. The Christmas auction of 1934 was postponed from Tuesday, December 11th, until Thursday, 13th to allow for the lifting of foot and mouth disease restrictions on the movement of livestock. A large attendance of buyers justified the alteration. The top price for the best two butcher's beasts (which won the Ellesmere Tradesmen's Cup) was £39.

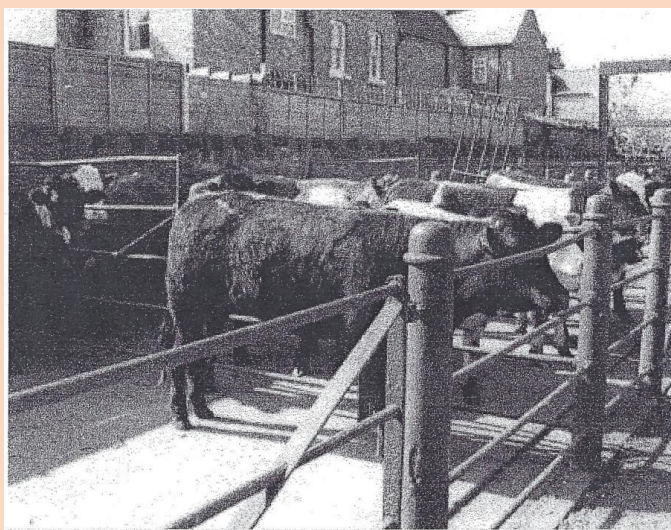
By 1941, the auctioneers operating in Ellesmere Smithfield were Messrs. Norman R. Lloyd and Co. and Thom and Bessell, both with offices in Market Street. During the 1939-1945 War, and the years of rationing, a good deal of fat stock had to be sold directly to the Ministry of Food, leaving the auctioneers to handle mainly store animals. A further outbreak of foot and mouth disease affected parts of Shropshire in 1941. Fighters of the epidemic designed a tie for themselves called the "Black Lion badge", the format being a black lion on a white shield with a green background. It would be interesting to know if anyone recollects these ties, or if any of them still exist .

After the end of the war and the de-rationing of animal feeding stuffs, numbers of livestock began to increase in the market although the sales of store stock never recovered to their 1930's levels. In May 1958, fat cattle were selling at about £65 each, 311d spring lambs were worth a maximum of £7.10.0 (£7.50p).

The Christmas auction of Friday, December 11th 1964, found cattle at around the same price as they had been six years earlier, although a small government subsidy of about £1.10.0 (£1.50p) per animal was being paid.

During the 1970's and 1980's, livestock numbers in Ellesmere Smithfield steadily declined. Only hard work by the joint auctioneers (by now Bowen, Son and Watson, and Norman R. Lloyd and Co.) and support from a few loyal farmers maintained sufficient entries to make the attendance of a mere handful of buyers worthwhile.

Thursday, March 25th, 1993 was a bright and sunny spring day as a score or mo each of cattle and sheep were delivered to the Smithfield Early in the afternoon the hammer fell on the last beast to be sold at Ellesmere Fair. So ended an era which enormous changes had been seen in all aspects of agriculture, not least the marketing and transport of the livestock for which the rich farmland surrounding Ellesmere had for so long been renowned.



**The Last Day of the Smithfield Market, Ellesmere
25th March, 1993.**

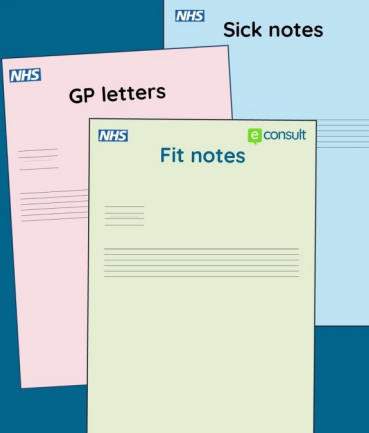
Local information

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 **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

1. Universal Serial Bus, 2. 18th century, 3. False: Vertebrates as they have backbones, 4. The Pacific Ocean, 5. Halloween, 6. Cycling, 7. Sudan, 8. The bloodstream, 9. Nine hours (Sydney's 9 hours ahead of London), 10. A Russian space traveller, 11. Captain James Cook, 12. The North Sea, 13. William the Conqueror, 14. True 15. A Midsummer Night's Dream, 16. Emperor Penguin, 17. Mg 18. Richard Trevithick, 19. Swimming, cycling, running, 20. The Niagara Falls



Pastoral Support from the Churches in Ellesmere

Rev'd Pat Hawkins St Mary's Church

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

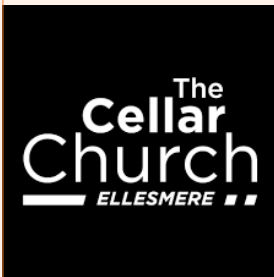
St Mary's Ellesmere:

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)

