



The Probus Club of Berwick-upon-Tweed

Welcome to our 'It's Good to stay in touch' Newsletter –

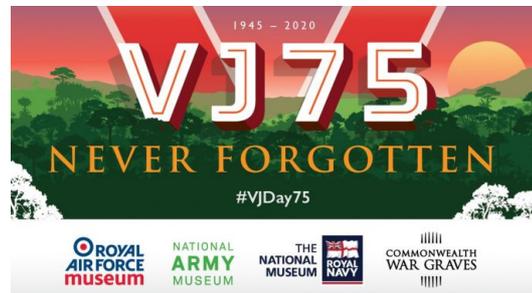
Issue 7 – 15th August 2020

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WHO SAID?

I married an archaeologist because the older I grow, the more he appreciates me.

Answer on the last page



Dear Member

It has been 5 months since the lockdown started but infection rates and deaths have lowered sufficiently to allow the Government to relax restrictions and try to kick-start the economy.

Have you been tempted yet to take advantage of the Government's Eat Out to Help Out deal? Details across the page →

It is VJ Day 75 and to remember the end of World War II **David Mumford** provides childhood memories of flight as the Japanese landed on the beaches of Singapore. **Michael Wright** wonders where he was whilst our very own **Alan Dumble** is somewhere to be found within these pages.

Don't forget, I'm now looking for content for the next issue of this Newsletter.

YOUR editor needs YOU!



Local participating establishments

Use the Eat Out to Help Out Scheme at a participating establishment:

- to get a 50% discount on food or non-alcoholic drinks to eat or drink in (up to a maximum of £10 discount per diner) every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday between



3rd and 31 August

- as many times as you like

You do not need a voucher to use this scheme and you can use it at the same time as other offers and discounts. There is no minimum spend.

You cannot claim discount on alcoholic drinks or service charges.

The discount will be automatically available to you at participating establishments. Establishments will then claim a reimbursement from the government for the discount they've given you.

Participating establishments may include:

- restaurants, cafés, bars or pubs
- work and school canteens
- food halls

All diners in a group of any size can use the discount.

In and around Berwick (source Gov. website)

Ord House Bar & Grill; Ord House Country Park, East Ord, Northumberland, TD15 2NS

Berwick Garden Centre; East Ord, Northumberland, TD15 2NS

Foulis; 25 Main Street, Tweedmouth, Northumberland, TD15 2AA

Riverside Café; 7-13, Main Street, Northumberland, TD15 2AA

Lowrys at the Chandlery; 2 the Chandlery, Quayside, Northumberland, TD15 1HE

The Lookout Berwick Ltd; Quayside, Northumberland, TD15 1HE

The Magna Tandoori; 39 Bridge Street, Northumberland, TD15 1ES

Audela; 64-66, Bridge Street, Northumberland, TD15 1AQ

Gasparro's; 50-52, Bridge Street, Northumberland, TD15 1AQ

Queens Head Hotel; Queens Head, 2-6 Sandgate, Northumberland, TD15 1EP

The Maltings Café Bar; Eastern Lane, Northumberland, TD15 1AJ

Limencello Limited; 55 Hide Hill, Northumberland, TD15 1EQ

PS Coffee Stop Ltd; 3 Golden Square, Northumberland, TD15 1BG

Foxtons Wine Bar & Restaurant; 26 Hide Hill, Northumberland, TD15 1AB

Repas7; 5-7, West Street, Northumberland, TD15 1AS

Ivy 43 Restaurant; 43 Hide Hill, Northumberland, TD15 1EJ

alachi Indian cuisine ltd; Amrans Indian Kitchen and Grill, 19-21 Hide Hill, Northumberland, TD15 1EQ

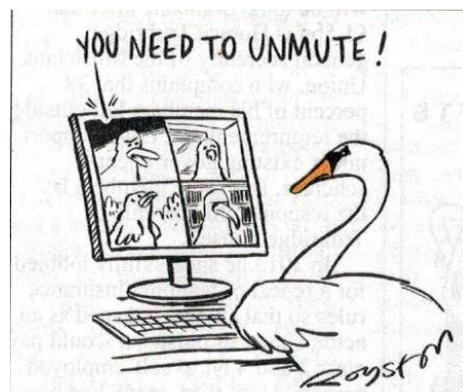
Cannon; 11 Castlegate, Northumberland, TD15 1JS

Cafe Crema; Town House, Marygate, Northumberland, TD15 1BN

Thistle do nicely; 8 Walkergate, Northumberland, TD15 1DB

The Corner House; 31 Church Street, Northumberland, TD15 1EE

Berwick Visitor Centre; Old Methodist Church, Walkergate, Northumberland, TD15 1DJ



WHERE WERE YOU WHEN?

One of the games we all like to play from time to time is to remember what we were doing and where we were when particular events took place and perhaps to compare our own memories with other people. Depending upon your age, you will perhaps remember the death of King George VI, the end of World War II and General Election days. For my part, I remember the Queen's Coronation in June 1953 (watching it on my aunt's small black and white TV at her house in Durham City - the curtains were closed as usual - that is one of my earliest memories). Some years later, I remember my mother doing the ironing when the death of President Kennedy was announced (November 1963) just before I went off for the weekly meeting of the Boys' Brigade. A year or so later I recall the funeral of one of my grandfathers on the day of the 1964 General Election. It also was the day on which Nikita Khrushchev was formally deposed as leader of the Soviet Union.

However, one of my strongest and most pleasant such memories in recent times dates back to 2005. The occasion was the fourth and final day of the second cricket Test between England and Australia. It was Sunday 7th August. Many of you may well remember it. The Ashes were held by Australia. In the first Test of the series, England had lost quite heavily at Lord's and if they had lost the second Test at Edgbaston, it would have been very difficult to regain the Ashes that year. At the end of the third day, England were in a strong position with a lead of over 100 runs and requiring to take only two wickets on the morning of the fourth day. After a very exciting hour and a half or so, the record books show that the final wicket fell with Australia just two runs short of reaching the England total. Replays showed that the umpire may have made a mistake in declaring the last Australian batsman out but so be it. The margin of victory was the smallest ever in an Ashes Test. The third and fifth Tests were drawn and England won the fourth Test at Trent Bridge. Hence, the Ashes returned to England after a gap of nearly twenty years. The draw in the final Test at the Oval was secured as I was on a bus after watching Newcastle United play at St James' Park. Different sport but equally pleasant.

I am not particularly a cricket "buff" although I follow most big sporting occasions. The reason I especially remember the events described in the preceding paragraph is that I listened to it in the idyllic setting of a riverbank in France. We were on a driving holiday. We often did this in the years when we lived in East Kent since access to the Dover ferry port was especially easy. I was listening to the cricket on the car radio and we decided to stop for our picnic lunch just as the cricket reached its climax. The weather was balmy and the surroundings perfect. I really enjoyed listening to the cricket on that occasion. My wife was more interested in our surroundings. She remembers that she saw a beautiful kingfisher. For different reasons, we both remember that morning very well

Before and since that happy morning in August 2005, I recall other events by reference to what I was doing at the time. Regrettably, none has coincided with Newcastle United winning the Premier League!!! What memories do you have?

© Michael Wright

Facebook snippet:

The Lone Ranger and Tonto were camping in the wilderness. After they got their tent set up, both men fell sound asleep. Some hours later, Tonto wakes the Lone Ranger and says, "Kemo Sabe, look towards sky, what you see?"

The Lone Ranger replies, "I see millions of stars."

"What that tell you?" asked Tonto.

The Lone Ranger ponders for a minute then says, "Astronomically-speaking, it tells me there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets. Astrologically, it tells me that Saturn is in Leo. Timewise, it appears to be approximately a quarter past three in the morning. Theologically, the Lord is all-powerful, and we are small and insignificant. Meteorologically, it seems we will have a beautiful day tomorrow. What does it tell you, Tonto?"



"You dumber than buffalo... It mean someone stole tent."

Childhood Recollections: Malaya, New Zealand, V.J.Day

I was born in Singapore in January 1937. My first recollections are of my parents and their house at Kota Baru (K.B.) and my Amah (Chinese nanny).



My father was the Chief Police Officer (C.P.O.) for the state of Kelantan on the east coast of Malaya and before marriage, my mother was a theatre sister in London and then transferred to the hospital for tropical diseases. The house was on the edge of the K.B. golf course and had large airy rooms with ceiling fans; servants did the cooking, driving, gardening and cleaning. I learnt later that some of the cleaners came from the local prison and their crimes included manslaughter. The family dog was called Bill and was a wire-haired terrier.

Amah was in charge of me, my clothes, and personal hygiene (i.e. pots and baths). I recall a few regular events. A monkey on a chain trained to climb coconut trees, twist the nuts and thump them with his bottom until they fell to the ground; "playing" golf, with miniature golf clubs, with my first and continuing friend (James); holidays in the relative cool of Frasers Hill eating raw carrots; my father having grilled snipe for breakfast which he had shot at day break. Two other incidents stand out. The first was meeting my brother Michael. He is three years older than me and in common with most

young children in the tropics with British parents, had been sent back to England to primary school cum home in Ringwood, Hampshire, for children with parents working overseas. When some German bombs fell near Ringwood, the owner of the school (Constance Marriott) decided to move the school and the children to Christchurch, New Zealand. The ship they were on docked at Singapore for supplies, so in, I think late 1940, while James and I were in the bath, brother Mike poked his head round the door to say “hello”! (*I must have met him before then, but I don't remember it!*).

The second incident was life changing although I didn't realise it at the time. On the evening of 7th December 1941, I expect that my father gave me my usual piggyback up to bed and as usual shared with my Dutch mummy (bolster)! I woke up in the dark to hear heavy bangs and thumps some distance away and shortly afterwards the telephone rang advising us that the Japanese were landing on the beaches near K.B. My mother came in and told me to get up and dressed (helped no doubt by the worried Amah) who made sure that I had my large teddy bear. Very quickly it seemed we were in our car and then on the train to Singapore. We stayed with friends, and I assume my mother was very occupied with getting berths to Christchurch, New Zealand and other arrangements.

At this stage, of course, my mother had no idea that Singapore would fall and that her house and contents were lost forever and that she would not see her husband for nearly four years while he was interned in Changi jail. For a child not yet five, I don't recall any thoughts about the past or future but I guess I was excited at the thought of a sea trip and my imminent



birthday; and I understand that I was quite possessive about my teddy bear, one of the few things I had from my former life (*but see later*). I learnt at some stage that my father stayed a short while in K.B. to reorganise his responsibilities and to shoot Bill the dog.

The sea trip to New Zealand (via Australia) was uneventful in that there were no Japanese attacks. On arrival, my mother arranged for us to share a house with a very generous widow (Vesta Godfrey). I went to a kindergarten for a period before joining my brother Michael at “Aunty Cons” who we lodged with during term time and could walk to the local primary school, Medbury. While still at the kindergarten stage, I was walking through the shopping area with my mother and the teddy bear when a local boy, I guess two or three years older than me, stopped my mother and looking up at her saying, “Lady, you ain't half making a sucker out of that kid”. I don't think I knew what “sucker” meant in either English or kiwi but I realised quickly that it was not complementary; and that was the teddy bear's last public outing!

On the whole New Zealand was a marvellous place to live for a small boy. I recall happy holidays at the coast in Sumner, (apart from a head wound from using seashells for ducks and drakes); Akaroa (fish hook in finger); Hamner sulphur springs (sexes were divided as swimming was in the nude and our mother couldn't come in to get us out!).

Meanwhile news of the Japanese and German wars meant little to the young. We received very infrequent and heavily censored letters from my father. My mother bought a powerful radio so that she could hear the few radio messages from the prisoners and take part in a 24-hour listening watch kept by the wives. I was not a very attentive pupil at school and I don't remember being inspired by any particular subject, or any sport although I enjoyed them all. Odd incidents: I still remember, like falling out of a tree at Auntie Cons; riding to school on Mondays on the back of my brother's bike; watching paper boys delivering papers by throwing them like a boomerang into people's gardens and trees; getting beaten by the headmaster for allowing myself to be tripped up into a puddle (perpetrator also beaten!); a teacher whose false teeth flew out when he sneezed!

After three and a half years we started on our return to the U.K. from Christchurch on board SS Thermistocles, top speed 13 knots. The voyage got off to a bad start as we had to call at Wellington which is situated on Cook Strait, notorious for rough seas in strong winds. At dinner a waiter dropped a bowl of soup and the next waiter, carrying a tray of soup, slipped in the soup left by the first waiter! Before leaving Wellington our mother bought a box of apples thinking, I suppose there would not be much fresh food on board. The voyage took 13 weeks because, apart from the slow speed, we had to stop at Wellington and then follow a right-angle course from N.Z. to near Chile and then north up the South American coast to Bilbao at the west end of the Panama Canal. This was to avoid Japanese submarines which still could be operating in the Pacific. On this leg of the voyage, we celebrated V.J. Day. One of the crew built a raft with the Japanese flag flying and this was launched astern so the crew could operate a stern gun and have some target practice. No shell went near the raft but, as there was a good sea running the raft disintegrated and honour was satisfied.

This should be the end of my recollections apart from one incident. When the ship reached the Panama Canal, our mother decided that the remaining rotten apples from the box she bought should be thrown out. My brother and I were on deck watching the pilot boat come alongside, when a stream of rotten apples came through a port hole on to the pilot boat. We realised eventually that it was our cabin and rushed below to see the last rotten apple flying through the porthole.



The final leg of the trip included calling in at Jamaica for coaling where everything got covered in soot and then across the Atlantic to rain soaked Liverpool.

Letters to the Editor:

Dear Editor,

May I both congratulate and thank you for the time and effort you put into our monthly magazine.

Actually, I did make an attempt to contact you via one of those old-fashioned things called telephone calls, only to find I was talking to what sounded like a dog who named herself Magan. We had an interesting chat about how busy you kept her for very little reward - shame on you - but she added that she really enjoyed her job!

Anyhow, getting to my point. In one of that chap Dumble's meanderings I was intrigued to learn that Mr 'Po-face' had relinquished his interest in geology for a strange hobby of 'man-hole covers' listing them by manufacturer. How could this be a worthy diversion I wondered? Foolishly I went looking for the 'Jennings of Sunderland' one that was mentioned as being beside the Berwick Bowling Club. Now I find that, on my daily 'keep fit' walks around the area, I am scanning the footpaths and, slumped over my walking stick much more than usual, looking to see if I can add any fresh names to an ever-lengthening list. This now includes smaller water and gas covers etc. There are of course a few drawbacks as people tend to give you rather strange looks as they obviously are wondering, "Is he from the gas or water board or more likely, which psychiatric ward has he escaped from?" Perhaps they have a point. My wife the other day, after a week or two of this, sarcastically pointed out to me that I hadn't yet noticed there was a cover only a few

yards away on our drive! I assume that Mr. Po-Face is a nickname and would be grateful if you would let me know his identity so that I can get in touch and we can discuss our findings.

Well I hope this lock-down is not having too much affect on yourself, Magan and her friends' lives. Please give them a bark from me. If I could remember it, I would sign off with my name but, unfortunately, it escapes me at the moment. I guess either 'lockdown' or that large gin and tonic is responsible. Probably Magan will be able to tell you my name!

Editor's note: Name and address not supplied, but I know who you are, even if you don't; and no, I cannot give out information of a personal nature, not even that of Mr Po Face!

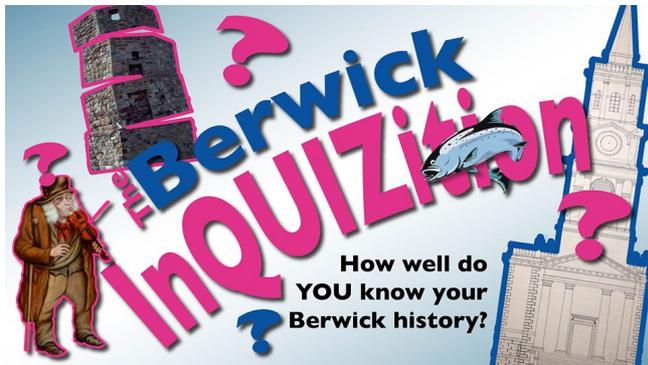
Who is This?



This is a photograph of a member of Probus a little while before he joined.

Answers by email, text or phone to the editor

Pub quizmaster and local historian Jim Herbert will wrap up this year's **Berwick Heritage Open Days** with this special family-friendly online quiz on 20th September 2020 at 20:00 – 20:30.



How well do you know Berwick and its history? Many of the answers (but not all) will be found through everything we post on the Berwick HODs website, so get watching those films! All you need is a pen and

paper. Form teams at home or online if you can. No prizes but remember; the knowledge is the real treasure.

WHO SAID?

I married an archaeologist because the older I grow, the more he appreciates me.

It was Agatha Mary Clarissa Christie [also wrote as Mary Westmacott] who was born on this day, 1890

Agatha Christie was a prolific writer of novels, short stories and plays. She is best known for her series of crime books featuring detectives Hercules Poirot and Miss Marple. Guinness World Records lists Christie as the world's most-translated author and her works have sold more than 2 billion copies worldwide.

Christie also wrote the world's longest-running play "The Mousetrap" which opened in London's West end in 1952 and is still running.

Born: [September 15, 1890](#)

Birthplace: Torquay, Devon, England



Was this Newsletter worthwhile? Your feedback would be appreciated, along with suggestions and contributions for future editions during the COVID-19 crisis. Contact details on page 1.