



The Probus Club of Berwick-upon-Tweed

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


Issue 17 – 5th May 2021

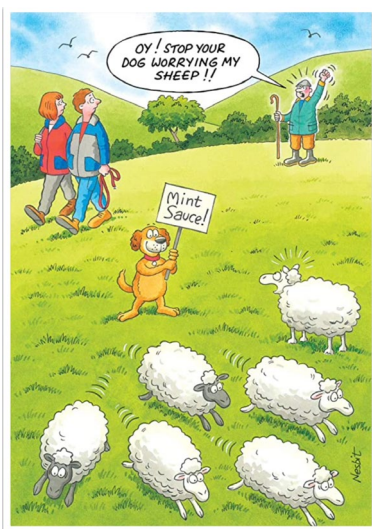
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Dear Member,

It has been six weeks since the last Newsletter; has anyone noticed? I've been busy trying to recover from a malware attack affecting thousands of websites, including three that I look after; fortunately, I maintain a good backup strategy and was able to restore them, albeit with additional security protection.

I've also been campaigning as a candidate in the only Ward in Berwick Town Council requiring an election! Wish me luck on Thursday.

Greetings to **Porthmadog Probus Club** in Wales who hosted a virtual talk on Zoom 



Courtesy Porthmadog Probus Newsletter

and enjoyed by Ian Hannah and Colin Wakeling. Colin provides a review of the talk on Nutritional advice on page 4.

Some snippets in recent Newsletters were sourced from the Porthmadog Newsletter.

Who Said?

" Once is happenstance. Twice is coincidence. Three times is enemy action."

Answer on last page of the newsletter

HI

The next stage of lockdown relaxation!

MAY



Pubs and restaurants will be allowed customers indoors



Sauna and spas will be allowed to reopen



10,000 fans will be allowed in stadiums for sport and big events



Two households will be able to mix indoors, overnight. Rule of Six will have to be followed

Living on the Edge?

I am very fortunate in living in the idyllic model village of Etal in Northumberland with its castle, manor house, chapel, pub, post office, shop, tearooms and the one main street of thatched, slated, whitewashed and stone cottages. The village is owned by Ford & Etal Estates, headed by the 5th Baron Joicey. Lord Joicey's great-grandfather, the 1st Lord Joicey, of Chester-le-Street, bought Etal Estate in 1908, having bought Ford Estate in 1907. Etal was held by the de Manners family from the 13th century until the 16th century. In 1341, Sir Robert Manners was granted permission to crenellate the castle to add to the defences against the Scots; the present ruin dates from 1513 when Etal Castle was sacked by James IV of Scotland prior to the Battle of Flodden. Scottish raids would have been a constant worry for the inhabitants of Etal, who must often have been 'living on the edge'. Sir Robert's descendants became Earls, and later Dukes, of Rutland and still retain the family name of Manners. For part of the 19th century, Etal Estate was held by Lord Frederick FitzClarence, an illegitimate son of William IV and his mistress, Dorothea Jordan. Lord Frederick and his wife, Augusta, daughter of the 4th Earl of Glasgow, are buried in the Chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Etal, along with their daughter and Lord Frederick's former aide-de-camp from when Lord Frederick was Commander-in-Chief of the Bombay Army.



Etal Village street with Etal Castle gatehouse in the distance

I am very conscious of living in such an historic area and this has reinforced my interest in archaeology. Gwen and I are members of the Till Valley Archaeological Society (TillVAS) and have taken part in local excavations on both sides of the Border, but this is such a historic spot that we are always turning up pottery sherds and pieces of clay pipe in our own garden whenever the spade enters the soil. No gold rings or gold coins so far—but a few weeks ago we did get excited by turning up a piece of green-glazed pottery which probably dates from

the 14th century and, because we are in sight of the castle, we speculated that it might have come from a soup bowl used by Sir Robert de Manners!

Cross-border living can create situations which may seem anomalous. For example, some residents in Etal and elsewhere in north Northumberland, are registered with Scottish general practices and dentists. Therefore, in order to receive Covid-19 jags (jags being the Scottish term for jabs) or flu jags, attendance was necessary at vaccination clinics administered by NHS Scotland in Coldstream and Kelso. Another interesting anomaly is that the letter box in Etal, which is post-1952 in date, is of a type found in Scotland, despite the village being situated in Northumberland. This is because the postal service in the area is part of the Scottish postal system, administered from Coldstream in the Scottish Borders. There is no EIIR cipher on our village wall box, reflecting the fact that when the first Elizabethan post boxes were unveiled in Scotland in 1952/3, a number were vandalised and some even blown up, challenging the Queen's title of Elizabeth II, instead of Elizabeth I of Scotland. Although a legal challenge by protestors failed in 1953, the General Post Office, as it was then, decided that, for a quiet life, all post boxes in Scotland (and by extension boxes in this area of Northumberland administered from Coldstream) would have the image of the Scottish crown only rather than the St. Edward's crown and the EIIR cipher.



Fortunately, we are not 'living on the edge' like previous inhabitants of the village must have done at times, but we are aware that living so close to the border does create some unexpected aspects.

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LOCAL NEWS

On Thursday morning last an accident occurred on the Old Bridge about 10.15 a.m. Two large motor wagons belonging to Messrs Johnson and Darling, and to Messrs Spring, fish curers, Berwick and Hull, colliding. There was very little damage done, but traffic was delayed for a short while.



A recent photograph of the Berwick Bridge (Old Bridge), where in August 1920 a number of incidents were recorded on the roadway. Copyright: Bill Harrison – (CC-BY-SA-2.0) – <https://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/5593766>

On the afternoon of the same day, while a woman was wheeling a perambulator across the Bridge, a pony and trap passing knocked the perambulator over, upsetting the two children in it. Fortunately the children were little the worse. The most regrettable part of the incident was that the party driving the trap did not consider it worth while to stop and enquire what damage had been done. On Friday two motor lorries again collided on the Bridge one of them having been in the smash the previous day.

PORTHMADOG PROBUS – STEPHANIE DANIELS - NUTRITIONAL ADVICE

A review by Colin Wakeling of a Talk delivered on Zoom

I enjoy our regular meetings in Berwick because they provide food for thought, so here was an invitation too good to resist – advice on nutrition, brought to me courtesy of Zoom from dwellings in North Wales.

I was glad to have ‘attended’ the session – and glad that I had been able to do so from the comfort of my sitting room without the need to navigate the Motorway Network between here and the Welsh coast. Glad also because neither biology nor nutrition, let alone cooking or home economics, featured on the curriculum of my single sex grammar school. Latin scansion was probably better for the soul than worrying about dietary intakes. My mother was a good cook but concentrated on giving me ‘what was good for me’ (greens though had to be eaten) without explaining why. However, what was good for me as a child or adolescent is not necessarily good for me now.

I am also only too well aware of the competing, frequently changing and often contradictory range of dietary advice with which we are bombarded. Last year eggs were ‘out’, now they’re ‘in’. Not so long ago we were told our weekly alcohol intake should not exceed 21 units (whatever they are), now it’s 14 – I fondly remember several happy conversations on the

subject (and especially the merits of a 'good' malt) with the doctor who performed my regular CPC medical check-up, and gladly pocketed his fee for keeping on the road for another year. So it was I connected with Stephanie Daniels ([Stephanie Daniels Nutrition | Nutritional Therapist, Gwynedd](#)) who rattled through nutritional and digestive issues especially those which affect older people. She probably raised as many questions in my mind as she answered, but she did make me look at my food and drink intake in a new light. It's not so much what we eat as what our bodies absorb that matters, especially as our bodies and lifestyles change with age, so we should discard 'empty' calories and concentrate on nutritional-rich content.

Whole foods are good – fruit, grains, fish, for instance – and brown rice is better than white (and red wine better than white wine!!) but I didn't relish the notion that cakes and booze are not so good! I've always eschewed beans on toast, but apparently the combination of beans and grains do provide a good protein balance. I basked in the knowledge that porridge for breakfast is better than commercial breakfast cereal – adding an egg provides a welcome boost. I also came away with some ideas for making my morning and afternoon snacks healthier.

The importance of our vitamin D intakes through sensible exposure to sunlight was emphasised, as was the need for adequate hydration to reduce constipation and as an aid to better digestion and concentration. She has had me paying slightly more attention to my non-alcoholic fluid intake and evaluating the colour of my body's liquid evacuations – her eight-point colour chart reminded me of litmus tests conducted in school labs.

She concluded by emphasising the need to achieve a healthy life balance – good diet, active lifestyle and adequate rest and relaxation. A balanced life-diet in fact.

I'm afraid that at the end of the meeting I shuffled off to the kitchen for a coffee and chocolate coated biscuit, but I assure you some tweaks in some aspects of my nutritional balance are under active consideration.

I would like to record my thanks to Porthmadog Probus not only for organising this talk, but also for allowing us to join.

HISTORY of PRINTING as a BOOK PRINTER

© George Martin

China is claiming to be the originators of printing but there is another Country which is also claiming to be the originators and that is North Korea! Some of you will remember a talk given by a representative of North Korea many years ago at one of our Probus Meetings where we were shown the 'proof' of early printing. Although the first printing press was invented in 1440, printing actually started in China in 888 AD with the Diamond Sutra, a Buddhist scripture. This was the first known dated example of block printing with Bi Sheng in China inventing movable clay type. The Europeans first started printing in the year 1423 using xylography which is the art of engraving on wood, doing block printing to produce books.

The first printing machine was invented by Johannes Gutenberg, who was born in Mainz in 1400, and moved to Strasburg in 1430 where he made the machine. This machine was made of wood. I'm sure that seeing the wine and olive presses of his day gave him the idea for the printing press as it was very similar. Originally, Gutenberg started with wood letters where each one had to be cut and carved individually – a very long, arduous task. These wood letters were placed on a flat bed and were inked by a pad or roller, the paper was then laid on top of the letters and the



An artist's visualization of Johannes Gutenberg in his workshop, showing his first proof sheet.

Fine art image/Heritage Image/age fotostock

screw of the 'press' turned to impress the paper on to the wood letters. As you can imagine, all these letters had to be exactly the same depth. Any letter standing proud got more pressure and held off the pressure on the next, or adjacent, letters, giving a poor impression or print and the high letter either broke or wore down very quickly. This is where Gutenberg's expertise as a Goldsmith came to the fore. He decided to make metal letters from a mold. In this way he could produce multiple letters of the same size and

design. He was obviously a real craftsman making individual molds for each letter. Because of his expertise as a metallurgist he was able to produce a metal easy to melt yet be hard enough to withstand the pressures of printing. The main ingredient was lead with the addition of tin and antimony to harden it. This process started book production. To give you an idea – a monk writing a copy of the Bible in script took 20 years, whereas Gutenberg produced his famous Bible in 3 years in 1452. He did this by printing 42 lines per page at a time, printing 200 copies. Remember that each time all the metal letters had to be separated in special boxes and new pages reset by hand from scratch!

I'm going to jump now to the present day, bypassing the stages of 'Letterpress' and 'Offset Litho' – and what a difference that even I could not believe. A Book can now be produced in 24 hours! An author sends his written story from his computer to the printer by e-mail. The printer then pages it up adding a folio and running head. The book is then transferred to the printing machine which is now almost a replica of everyone's home computer and printer. Printing four or more pages at a time at 10,000 sheets per hour, the sheets are then folded and bound into either a 'paperback' edition or a 'cased' edition.

The other unbelievable difference is the reproduction of colour. In my early days every colour photograph or picture had to be 'colour separated' into the basic colours of yellow, magenta, cyan and black. This was a very lengthy process using filters and colour separation film. Each 'colour' film then had to be screened into half-tone dots. Do you remember the black and white newspaper photos of the old days when you could see every dot! They had about 80 dots to the square inch. Now photos are 150 dots to the square inch! You can only see the dots under a magnifying glass. Now, colour pictures are scanned by the computer and

converted into half-tone separated colours in seconds. The digital printer prints these pics off in seconds like your home computer.

Let me now jump back just like some of the TV series one gets. The consumables of paper and ink: Taking ink first – Gutenberg’s ink was water based and made mainly from soot and gelatin from animal skins. A favourite recipe of his was a combination of ferrous sulphide, tannin from gallnuts (they grew on trees), and a thickener. This mixture, although quite black when applied, turned a dull brown after some time. He overcame this by starting to use a viscous oil-based ink made from soot, turpentine, and walnut oil. Coloured inks were made from various berries. Nowadays inks are rubber based and made to suit the paper.

Paper: The word paper comes from the ancient Egyptian writing material called papyrus. Papyrus was produced as early as 3000 B.C. in Egypt and was also used in Ancient Greece and Rome. Indeed it was a good export material for Egypt. Papyrus was made from the pith of the papyrus plant. It was understood, however, that paper was first made from wood pulp from the Mulberry tree in AD105 by a chap in China called Cai Lun. Just a few years ago, however, archaeologists found specimens of paper, bearing written characters in North West China’s Gansu province, which carbon dated to 100 years before Cai Lun! The ingredients of paper have not changed much since those far off days! In Gutenberg’s day paper was made from wood pulp, hemp, and rags as a source of fibre. Paper was made from grinding the wood in boiling water to get the pulp. The water was drained from the mush, pressed, and hung up like washing on a line to dry. Today the process is very similar using the wood from Spruce and Aspen, as well as other vegetable fibres from cotton, hemp, linen, and rice. There are 2 methods today to get the mush – one is by mechanical means (the cheapest, and mainly newsprint) and the other by chemical means to break down the wood pulp. Whatever method a lot of water is required and the mush ‘cooked’ to a high temperature, squeezed to get all the water out and dried through hot rollers. The paper would then be sized, or coated with china clay, and put into rolls ready to be guillotined for the Presses.

© George Martin

Toby’s Tailpiece (a dog’s eye view of the world) is now written by us, Leo and Freya, two Dalmatians who live with Eileen and Harry Wilson here in Bowsden. This month we are still concerned about the huge increase in the number of puppies sold during the Lockdowns. The number of visitors to the RSPCA website searching for “puppies near me” increased between March and August 2020 by 650% compared to the year before. This despite many less scrupulous breeders raising prices for fashionable breeds, in particular French Bulldogs and the popular cross-breeds such as Cockerpoos and Labradoodles.

Unfortunately some members of the underworld have noticed the potential for dog theft and ransom. The most publicised example of this was the recent US “kidnapping” of two of the three French Bulldogs owned by Lady Gaga. The third escaped but returned to guard the injured dogwalker until help arrived. Happily despite a large reward being offered, the missing dogs were returned safely a few days later. It is unclear whether the reward was paid.

The growing problem of dog theft is now recognised by Police forces all over the country but only one (Nottingham) has appointed a specialist dog theft officer.

Purloined from the April 2021 edition of the Bowsden Bugle, with the permission of its editor, Harry Wilson

Probus Photography Challenge:

Introducing a new feature to the Newsletter, an idea shamelessly stolen and adapted from the Porthmadog Probus Club's Newsletter. Who can submit the most interesting photograph of Berwick? Entries to be judged by the Chairman and Secretary with the winner to be announced at our first Meeting since March 2020. Submit your photograph(s) (digital or print) with a short description of the scene and story behind the image to the editor.



Berwick Street Photography while taking a rest from leafleting! © Homer Lindsay

Who Said?

"Once is happenstance. Twice is coincidence. Three times is enemy action."

It was Ian Fleming, who was born on this day in 1908.

Author and Creator of James Bond

Born: 5th May 1908

Birthplace: London

Died: 1964



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.