

Retiree News



A Biannual Publication for Retirees of all
Chevron UK Companies



Editor's Chat

Issue 77, May 2020

After all the devastating fires in Australia, then the wettest winter here in the UK on record causing flooding and mayhem, we have the dreaded Coronavirus. Life has changed for so many people. How are those that were flooded faring? They dropped off the radar in the news and Covid-19 took over in all aspects. All we can do is take notice of the scientists and medical experts to keep ourselves safe.

Now to move onto something a little cheerier; blossom trees, Daffodils, Tulips and we have had fun watching two Magpies building their annual nest in the trees outside our kitchen window. They must start at daybreak because they are there, working away when we open the curtains. I think birds are fantastic; they are not taught how to build a nest or how to look after their eggs and chicks. We also have the return of some ducks on our lake and they have produced six chicks; they are such fun to watch waddling along then swimming so gracefully and the sound of quack quack is lovely. Nature is wonderful, seasons come and go and spring is such a lovely season with so much new growth and new life.

I have not heard from many of you over the last few months and if stories dry up, then Retiree News will diminish in size. It has already dropped from four issues to two a year and it would be a shame to see it ceasing altogether. Do you care about receiving it, or does it not really matter in the big scheme of things? As Editor I enjoy creating each issue, but I need your input, so come along, write to me with stories of you and your families, your hobbies, your time at work or if you are volunteering in some way, you can say how this has been a benefit to you. There are many of you that live abroad, tell us about your life in whatever country you moved to. You might think your story is not interesting, not so. When I do hear from some retirees, they are very positive in their enjoyment of all the contents in each issue, so don't be reticent.

Maurice and I reach a milestone this year of being married twenty-five years. I know we do not record anniversaries under fifty years, but I wonder where those years have flown to. Looking back, we have done such a lot and it is lovely to create so many memories, because memories are the one thing that no one can take away from you.

On 29 March Maurice received a text from a friend stating: Clocks go forward tonight, preferably by four months! It would be good if this virus was dead by that time. Until next time, keep well, enjoy spring and summer to the best of your abilities, also, write to me!

Life after Texaco and Chevron

Alan Jones

Having completed 36 years with Texaco and Chevron following the merger in 2001, I moved into retirement back in Scotland. I have many interests with salmon fishing, golf, hill walking, getting active in the community on local village councils etc.

My wife and I enjoyed many holidays both in Europe and on cruises around the world. Unfortunately, my wife was diagnosed with ovarian cancer in 2016 and passed away in 2018. Devastated would not be the way I would explain things, life became lonely and missing my soul mate of 45 years was very hard.

Luckily for me I met some of my previous colleagues who had worked with me on the replacement of the Erskine pipeline back in 1999/2000. Like them we were at loose ends so decided to form a company targeting the smaller independent oil operators to assist them to identify and dispose of surplus stock so lowering their costs in warehouses due to a smaller footprint. These smaller operators were gradually taking over the diminishing oil fields in the North Sea from the Oil Majors, to include Centrica, Gaz de France, some of the Total, Chevron and Conoco Phillips lower producing fields. We had good fortune and good timing and were awarded a contract to assist one small operator in reducing the footprint in warehouses and disposing of their surplus and redundant stock.

To do this we sourced and opened a small warehouse ourselves so that we could receive goods, evaluate and find serial and model numbers for onward disposal. We could not pick and choose the items that the operator identified for disposal, although we did make the mistake of telling them of items that would easily sell. Funny but those items were taken off the disposal list quite quickly - first lesson learned! Don't tell them of potential nuggets.

As the equipment gradually come our way the real effort started. Items that we thought would easily sell were not of interest because of the lack of certification. The contract did not include the vital certification required to move these items of equipment forward. Second lesson learned!

We ended up selling for scrap unused new stainless-steel tubing. To give some examples here the book value of this particular stainless-steel tubing was £86K and was scrapped for less than £3K. £1.86 million, at purchase price for 1,072 valves of various sizes and pressure rating, were sold for tens of thousands of pounds and sold to a European buyer without certification. Had the certs been available the income would have been at least four times the original buying price. Note here that part of the selling price was shared with the operator, so not all the profit came to ourselves.



Our policy was to try and not landfill any items taken over from the operators and we have succeeded in doing so to date. Lots of the metal products have been scrapped and will come back to the market as products. Items deemed past their sell by date have been re-used in a different environment. These include thick rubber matting destined for insulation and noise quieting on a platform, which were given to a couple of play groups gratis and we gained goodwill. Lifesaving equipment was given gratis to a couple of small harbours on the NE coast and line throwing equipment is now proudly displayed on various fishing boats on the North and South Esk rivers.

Our first warehouse was not ideal for our needs, too big. We have now moved into a cowshed on a farm with very noisy neighbours over the winter months, but it is cost efficient and friendly with additional heat and smell included.

Have we made a fortune? No not really, we have not made a loss either. We have had some fun, some serious head scratching, some laughs and great friendship between the four of us over the year. As I write this, we are developing our business plan for 2020. The small firm is growing in reputation and stature. We are currently in negotiation with three other operators for work both here in NE Scotland and opportunities exist to take the concept into Europe. My third and final lesson is to keep active, keep motivated there are opportunities in retirement to give something back to the industry. I will update our progress in later years when we are millionaires!

Chatham's Historic Shipyard.

June McCullough

We had a very interesting time when we visited Chatham's Historic Shipyard starting with a display of RNLI boats in a museum from the earliest days of its inception. There is a maritime museum, a submarine and warship where visitors can explore inside, the Admirals House and garden, a Church for the seafarers and staff of the dockyard, which is still used today and for us, the most fascinating part, was The Ropery where we learnt a great many sayings that we use today and how they originated.

There was a wonderful guide dressed in the period costume of the 1800s and our first introduction was about the ship HMS Victory, which was built in Chatham. There are many different ropes used in the rigging of such ships all with different names; the only rope called a rope is the one attached to the ships bell. We then moved on to a large cannon with a description of how cannons worked with ropes and pulleys to stop a cannon travelling too far back as it shot a cannon ball, hence our first saying **loose cannon**.

The crew were often **press ganged** onto the ships and each member had to make their own Cat-o-nine-tails from rope. Once made these were stored in leather pouches and if a crew member disobeyed, the cat-o-nine-tails would be taken out of its pouch and this is where the saying **letting the cat out of the bag** comes from. They were flogged on deck as there was no room below with the cannons hence **no room to swing a cat**. The flogging created marks on a man's back, which looked like cat scratches and afterwards they would **rub salt in the wounds**, this helped to

heal them and prevent infection. With new crews, they had to learn all about the various ropes and uses on a ship and the saying **learning the ropes** comes from this and once they had learnt them, they were able to say they **know the ropes**. Each crew member had a hammock to sleep on also made of rope and these were stored flat so when it was time to sleep, they had to **sling their hook** to erect the hammock. All crew were provided a square plate and had **three square meals a day**.

It was interesting to see how rope is made and the different materials used; the best is hemp, which makes good quality, easy to use rope. Other materials are banana leaves which makes rougher rope and coconut husks which creates very rough rope which was used at the side of ships to protect them against damage when near other ships or at a jetty. First, we have the spinners, who spun five miles of yarn a day hence the saying spinning a yarn then the weavers combed the product and wove it into strands. Rope making requires two machines, a standing (which stands still as the name implies) and a traveller (yes it travelled!) Three strands are required, one on each hook at both machines. The standing machine has a handle turned one way and the traveller has a handle turning the other way which makes the strands twist together. Once they are taught the strands from three hooks at the traveller's end are placed onto one hook, a block is used to help the strands come together as rope as the handles on both machines are then turned the same way and gradually rope is formed.

The Ropery is a quarter of a mile long and is the longest building in Europe.



Inside the Ropery

The reason it needed to be so long is that an anchor cable required for ships such as HMS Victory was 720 feet in length and as rope tightens when it is joined together, it needed to start with a length of 1128 feet.

With noisy machines running all the time it was difficult to convey messages or instructions to staff, so a rope runs along the length of the building at arms height and at each end is placed a bell and this is the way they called attention. Here is another saying from those days **Pull the other one; it's got bells on!** They still make rope at the site today using not only traditional, but also synthetic materials. Visitors can purchase rope for a souvenir and the last saying is when you buy old rope it is **money for old rope!**



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A Different Kind of Cruising

From Terry Nunn

Many of us like to go on a cruise for our holidays. The wife of a former sea going officer with Texaco has recently published a book of her memoirs at sea. Unlike cruising on a big cruise liner Carole went to sea on tankers with her husband Andy, who was a Third Officer.

Soon after Carole and Andy married, they flew to New York to join Andy's latest ship. So began a new way of life for them for the next five years. In that time Andy was to serve tours of duty on tankers of various sizes engaged in different trades. They went on very large crude oil carriers from the Persian Gulf to the Caribbean and Europe involving weeks at sea and on smaller tankers delivering oil products to various ports only a short distance apart.

On all the ships, Carole became involved with the routines of life on board with the British officers and Indian ratings. She took up hobbies such as macramé and tapestry and became proficient at darts and card games. Several times Carole crossed the equator (in both directions) when King Neptune came on board to conduct the ceremony of crossing the line – with photos to prove it!

Carole was asked to help the engineers to build a cement box to seal a leaking pipe for which she was awarded a golden spade. She became the "post mistress" receiving and then sorting all the mail when it came on board and became a proficient hairdresser – there are no hair salons on a tanker!

During all these voyages Carole recalls visiting ports in many parts of the world. She has been to the Pacific and Atlantic coasts of the USA; many Caribbean islands; inside the Great Barrier Reef; the Far East and West Africa. Many of them are places that cruise ships do not visit and a few of them you would not want to go to on a cruise. Carole does admit to some bad experiences - feeling uneasy ashore in some ports; being seasick, stormy weather. However, her biggest worry was when she ran out of contraceptive pills!

You can read Carole's full story in her book "A Wife On The Ocean Wave". Find out more at goldsmiths@tiscali.co.uk.

A life on the ocean waves seems to have suited Carole and to write about it must have been fun to recall so many memories. Ed!

The First Mermaid of Texaco

The following is a fun Press Release just for members of the then Public Affairs Department; it is dated 5 August 1991! I have kept it all these years because even now, it makes me chuckle.

Alison Lowe composed it; she was very clever with words. Here goes!

'It is with great pride that we today reveal the truth about June Parham, familiarly known as the First Lady of Public and Government Affairs. Despite her long and shapely legs, she's no lady, she's a MERMAID.

The signs have in fact been there for many years, for anyone prepared to do a bit of fishing. Remember the eight years that June spent with International Marine Sales, as well as her time with Texaco Tankships; and she has never moved far from watery matters. Her affinity with aquatic creatures is evidenced by the pictures of seals on her wall. Alison Lowe, a very close colleague, told us also of a watering can that Ms Parham keeps on her window sill. 'It is always full of water' says Alison, 'ostensibly to water her plants, but now I have my doubts.'

This summer it has indeed seemed that June has been preparing herself to come out into the open about her true nature. Week after week she has been away from the office. 'Where is June?' has been the repeated question. The answer has invariably been 'down by the waterside', whether it be the estuary at Milford Haven or the North Sea.

It was Derek Lloyd of the Refinery who first hinted at the fishy tail beneath the surface. 'The launching of the Tall Ships could never have been such a success without June. With greater powers of attraction than even the Lorelei, she lured Prince Andrew himself onto the rocks of Milford Haven.'

The Texaco Theatre School in Aberdeen is another of June's projects to have met with particular acclaim this year. The name of the production? 'The Wee Boats.'

It is clear that June has simply been returning to her origins and doing what she does best. This certainly explains why she has been spending so little time in land-locked Knightsbridge. We can, however, expect to see more of her next year once Texaco has relocated to the banks of the River Thames.

In the meantime, we extend our congratulations to her for being the first mermaid in the history of Texaco to have spent twenty years, one month and a day with the company. ENDS.'

I had such fun being involved with so many projects whilst in Public Affairs and had the pleasure of travelling around the UK to set up events in the areas where Texaco had a presence. The Tall Ships was an amazing time and I worked with some wonderful people. The Texaco Theatre School was run by Annie Ingles, a very special lady who loved working with young people; sadly, she is no longer with us. My career in Texaco was great, I worked with so many good people, met lots of interesting folk outside the company, but eventually my time came to an end and I moved on and started a second career working with plants and gardens, so still involved with water and they need lots of it. Thanks Alison – what a girl! By the way, my astrological sign is Cancer the Crab!

Now it is more than June Parham, marriage added another name, I am now June Parham McCullough, thanks to my dear Maurice.



Aussie Summer

Rob Cooper

Ah, the Aussie summer. One would expect the usual talk to centre around where are we going on holiday, beach or bush. Whilst around the bbq, guys hotly debate the real reason that James Boags Premium Lager went from 5% abv down to 4.6% and how the taste was affected.

But this summer things are somewhat different. Because of the bushfires right across the country, probably the largest conflagration since 1939 and the Black Friday fires of that year, hardly anyone is immune. If one lives in a city on the Eastern seaboard then one's air quality from the smoke of these fires would certainly be having or has had, a significant impact. The fact that our media, like the rest of the world, is full of the latest horror stories from the fires across five states means that bushfires are the main chat topic.

Just prior to Christmas, I drove to deliver some gifts along the west of Adelaide, looking east towards the hills (Adelaide is on a coastal plain), one could distinctly see and smell the smoke haze hanging over much of the metropolitan area. The haze is usually cleared by the heat of the day, but the wood smoke smell lingers on. For a lot of people that means keeping doors and windows shut and the air-conditioning turned on. All in all, we city dwellers have got off lightly.

Part of the human cost of these fires is that holiday makers swell the populations of beachside towns and villages, ranging South from Sydney and North from Melbourne. Most of these towns do not have roads capable of handling the equivalent of rush-hour traffic when an evacuation order is given. Nor do they have the infrastructure to support large numbers of people with no roof over their head and no access to food and water. This is one of the reasons that the Australian Defence Forces were mobilised - for humanitarian assistance.

In terms of the frontline firefighters, the bulk of them are volunteers. These guys and girls work selflessly and often bravely to defend their communities. They do this without reward, some sacrificing defence of their own properties in order to help others, these are the outstanding heroes of this summer.

The scale of the fires is difficult to imagine. I've heard estimates varying from greater than the size of Denmark, to four times larger than the area of greater London. Reports of fires burning with a 100-kilometre (62 miles) front have been regularly broadcast in both New South Wales and Victoria. These fires are usually away from the coast and in areas that, for the most part, are sparsely populated. Whilst lives have been lost and homes destroyed in rural country, most of the fire damage has been sustained closer to the coast.

On a personal level, I have family, a son, daughter-in-law and three grandchildren, that live about 20 kilometres west of Horsham, Victoria, which is about 450 kilometres South-East of Adelaide and some 300 kilometres North-West of Melbourne. That region, known as the Wimmera, has been, I'm happy to say unaffected by the fires.

My son did say that when they drove home from Adelaide on the 2 January, they could see smoke from fires near Bordertown in South Australia/Victoria border area.

Just 100 kilometres South of Adelaide is Kangaroo Island, Australia's third largest island. The island has been devastated by fires since the new year and has burnt out around a third of the island's habitat. Many koala's and other marsupials have suffered significant losses to their populations, the sight of these distressed animals is heartbreaking. The island is also home to the world's only pure strain of Ligurian Bees, the honey from which is both delicious and a source of revenue that has been largely lost. Tourism, the island's main source of income has been affected by the destruction of significant properties including the much-lauded Southern Ocean Lodge. Yes, they'll recover, but it will take time, money and the dedication to rebuild lives as well as the bricks and mortar.

Before the fires are even out, or at least under control, the blame game has started. Our prime-minister, Scott Morrison has come under attack from many quarters. Some say he shouldn't have gone on a family holiday to Hawaii whilst this crisis was ongoing. Some say that his government's cutting of some \$85 million from the budgets of rural emergency services, meant that only minimal prescribed burning (creating firebreaks in the winter) was undertaken. Some say his approval to use the Defence Forces came too late and now their role is largely clean-up instead of being frontline.

Now there are calls for a Royal Commission to be held. Earlier I talked about the 1939 fires. A Royal Commission was held after that. The conclusions of this current one will, I fear, be much the same as the one eighty years ago. It leaves me asking what did we learn? There will be another summer and there will be bushfires, our politicians need to ensure that adequate funding is available for fire-fighting personnel and equipment.

Like most Aussies, I thank each of you for your thoughts and prayers, they were needed this summer.

Received from Rob in January. Thanks for this Rob and we have seen that the devastation is immense. The loss of habitat and homes is awful; however, I cannot stop feeling for the wildlife that could not escape and how much pain they must have suffered with the fires. It seems the world is unbalanced as Australia has been in drought for some two or more years and other areas are suffering floods and other weather disasters. It will take time to rebuild properties and to see new growth and hopefully this will be a new beginning, however it will take a long time and the wildlife may never recover. Ed!

A Pleasurable Walk

By Elizabeth Sherrill (via Guideposts Greetings)

On my morning walks I always pass a little roadside cafe nestled in a spectacular garden setting. For years, I've stopped to stare at it and enjoy its beauty, nearly an acre of colour changing with the seasons. I've often thought that anyone could have a garden like that, if we only had the same gardening staff employed by this restaurant.



I'd always walked by too early to see any of the staff at work. One day, however, I couldn't get out for my walk until the afternoon. As I passed the cafe, I saw an elderly man emerge from a garden shed, carrying a tray of begonias. Seeing me as I stood there appreciating the garden, he invited me over for a closer look. I asked him if he was the Head Gardener. He shook his head and replied, "Just the assistant."

He explained that he had arrived here 27 years ago, from Hungary, and went to work at the cafe as their cleaning man. In his free time, he tended the restaurant's potted geraniums. At that time, they were the only flowers in the garden. When he saw that the geraniums thrived, the owner allowed his custodian to plant some rosebushes.

My puzzlement grew as this old gardener explained to me how, year after year he'd plant just a little more. A lilac here, a marigold there, a patch of tulips near the parking lot, until the garden had become the showplace it is today. I asked wonderingly, if he had done all this, "what does the Head Gardener do?" The old Hungarian smiled and looked heavenward, then happily said, "He makes the flowers grow."

And then it's winter.

Found by Maurice McCullough

You know time has a way of moving quickly and catching you unaware of the passing years. It seems like yesterday that I was young, just married, and embarking on my new life with my mate. Yet in a way, it seems like eons ago, and I wonder where all those years went. I know that I lived them all. I have glimpses of how it was back then and of all my hopes and dreams. Here it is - the winter of my life and it catches me by surprise. How did I get here so fast? Where did the years go and where did my youth go? I remember well seeing older people through the years and thinking that those "older people" were years away from me and that winter was so far off that I could not fathom it or imagine fully what it would be like.

Here it is, my friends are retired and getting grey, they move slower and I see an older person in myself now. Some are in better and some worse shape than I am. I see the great change, not like the ones that I remember who were young and vibrant, like me their age is beginning to show and we are now those older folks that we used to see and never thought we would be. Each day now, I find that just getting a shower is a real target for the day! Taking a nap is not a treat anymore, it is mandatory, because if I don't on my own free will, I just fall asleep where I sit!

Now I enter this new season of my life unprepared for all the aches and pains and the loss of strength and ability to go and do things that I wish I had done but never did! At least I know that though the winter has come, (not sure how long it will last), this I know that when it's over on this earth, it's over. A new adventure will begin!

Yes, I have regrets. There are things I wish I hadn't done, things I should have done, but indeed, there are also many things I'm happy to have done. It's all in a lifetime. If you're not in your winter yet, let me remind you that it will be here faster than you think.

Whatever you would like to accomplish in your life, please do it quickly! Don't put things off too long! Life goes by quickly, do what you can TODAY, as you can never be sure whether this is your winter or not!

You have no promise that you will see all the seasons of your life therefore LIVE FOR TODAY and say all the things that you want your loved ones to remember and hope that they appreciate and love you for all the things that you have done for them in all the years past.

"Life" is a GIFT to you. The way you live your life is your gift to those who come after. Make it a fantastic one. Remember: "It is Health that is real Wealth and not pieces of gold and silver."

Your kids are becoming you but your grandchildren are perfect! Going out is good, coming home is even better!

You forget names but it's OK because other people forgot they even knew you.

You realise you're never going to be really good at anything, especially golf.

The things you used to care to do, you no longer care to do, but you really do care that you don't care to do them anymore.

You sleep better on a lounge chair with the TV blaring than in bed. It's called "pre-sleep."

You miss the days when everything worked with just an "ON" and "OFF" switch.

You tend to use more four-letter words "what?" "when?"

Now that you can afford expensive jewellery, it's not safe to wear it anywhere.

You notice everything they sell in stores is "sleeveless?!"

What used to be freckles are now liver spots.

Everybody whispers.

You have three sizes of clothes in your closet, two of which you will never wear.

But "Old" is good in some things:

Old Songs, Old movies ...

and best of all, our dear OLD FRIENDS.

Stay well, "OLD FRIEND!"

QUIZ



The answers to the quiz in the November 2019 issue of Retiree News were:

1 Alderney, 2 Steven Gerrard, 3 La Boheme, 4 Eight, 5 Gregorian, 6 Guitar, 7 Portsmouth, 8 Katrina, 9 Seven, 10 Rome, 11 Goat, 12 25 years, 13 Australia, 14 Adkins, 15 Waterloo, 16 Thursday, 17 Lilliput, 18 Aardvark, 19 Seven, 20 David Walliams.

The winners were:

Roger Banks, Aberdeen.

Tony Brearton, Cyprus.

Carol Davies, Milford Haven.

Diane Flynn, Haverfordwest.

Chris Miller, Pembroke.

It was good to see a winner from overseas. How about more of you entering from around the country?



The quiz for this edition: further general knowledge questions:

- 1 In Spain what is the word for an afternoon nap?
- 2 Who wrote "The Pit and the Pendulum"?
- 3 How long is there between rounds in boxing?
- 4 Which public school did Sir Winston Churchill go to?
- 5 What is the thirteenth letter of the English alphabet?
- 6 Which is the largest land carnivore in Britain?
- 7 Who made the album "Confessions on a Dance Floor"?
- 8 Which UK driver won the F1 World Championship in 2008, 2014 and 2015?
- 9 Which country does Bryan Adams come from?
- 10 Who was known as the lady with the lamp?
- 11 What is the plural of the word sheep?
- 12 Where is a horse in the coffin joint?
- 13 Which substance is most used for pencil lead?
- 14 To ten years either way, in which year did Charles Dickens die?
- 15 What name can be a lettuce or a mass of floating frozen water?
- 16 Which vegetable did Sir Walter Raleigh bring to England?
- 17 In the strip cartoon, what is the name of Snoopy's brother?
- 18 Soyuz was the name of a Russian spacecraft, but what does the name mean?
- 19 Which lady became George W Bush's Secretary of State in his second term of office?
- 20 In Shakespeare's "Othello", who is the female lead?

Answers to the Editor (whose decision is final) by email or post, please include your address. Details of where to send your answers are at the foot of this issue. Answers to be received by 15 July please.

BIRTHDAYS

80

Paul Dixon, Pembroke

90

Derek Bond, Droitwich

Diamond Wedding Anniversary

Brian and Joan Coombes celebrated their anniversary on 26 March. Brian worked at Hallen, Bristol.

Malcolm and Anne Owen celebrated their anniversary on 27 February. They celebrated with their family and then flew to Spain on 3 March for three weeks. Malcolm was Shift Manager at Texaco Avonmouth.



Balloons

Anon

A teacher brought balloons to school and asked the children to blow them all up and then each write their names on their balloon. They tossed all the balloons into the hall while the teacher mixed them from one end to the other. The teacher then gave them five minutes to find the balloon with their name on it. The children ran around, looking frantically but as the time ran out - nobody had found their own balloon...

Then the teacher told them to take the balloon closest to them and give it to the person whose name was on it. In less than two minutes everyone had their own balloon.

Finally the teacher said, "Balloons are like happiness. No one will find it looking for theirs only. Instead if everyone cares about each other, they will find theirs as quickly as possible

An Obituary printed in the London Times.

Absolutely dead brilliant.

David Greenwood.

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend. Common sense who has been with us for years.

No one knows how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape.

He will be remembered for having cultivated such valuable lessons as:

Knowing when to come in out of the rain.

Why the early bird gets the worm.

Life isn't always fair.

Maybe it was my fault.

Common sense lived by simple, sound financial (don't spend more than you can earn) reliable strategies, (adults, not children are in charge). His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a six-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student only worsened his condition,

Common sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children. It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer sun lotion or an aspirin to a student, but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and wanted an abortion,

Common sense lost the will to live as churches became businesses and criminals received better treatment than their victims. Common sense took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home and the burglar could sue you for assault. Common sense finally gave up the will to live when a woman failed to realise that a steaming cup of coffee was hot! She spilled a little in her lap and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

Common sense was preceded in death

By his parents, Truth and Trust

By his wife, Discretion

By his daughter, Responsibility

By his son, Reason



He is survived by his five step-children
I know my rights
I want it now
Someone else is to blame
I'm a victim
Pay me for doing nothing

Not many attended his funeral because so few realised he had gone.
If you still remember him pass this on, if not, join the majority and do nothing.

Responsibility

Anonymous (of course!)

Once upon a time, there were four people...
Their names were Everybody, Somebody, Nobody and Anybody.

Whenever there was an important job to be done,
Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it.

Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it.
When Nobody did it, Everybody got angry because...
it was Everybody's job!

Everybody thought that Somebody would do it,
but Nobody realized that Nobody would do it.

So, consequently, Everybody blamed Somebody...
when Nobody did what Anybody could have done in the first place!

Things that Lift my Spirits

Alan Titchmarsh

The blackbird's evening song on the chimneypot.
Walking on dew-laden grass with bare feet.
Spring growth on topiary.
The scent of Lilac.
The sound of gently bubbling water.
The first brimstone butterfly of spring.
New Potatoes.
Mowing.
New-laid eggs for breakfast.
The first April asparagus.
Sun through newly unfurled beech leaves.
Hearing the thrush breaking open a snail shell.
Michaelmas daisies in autumn.
Cowslips in the spring meadow.
Cherry blossom.
The first cuckoo calling over the valley.
Feeding the wild fish in the pond.
Sitting outside with that first cup of tea early on a summer morning. The scent of old-fashioned roses.
Newly arrived swallows wheeling over the barn.
Tulips.
The sound of my grandchildren laughing in the garden.
For all these, I smile and am grateful to be a gardener.

I am a fan of Alan Titchmarsh having learnt a lot from his television programmes and books about gardening, along with my college studies. I was fortunate to meet him at RHS Wisley last year and he really is a warm hearted and friendly guy. He also writes novels and recently published a book of poems. Some rhyme, others don't. This is one of them. I can relate to most, can do without new potatoes or new-laid eggs and I don't have grandchildren! Ed!

So That's Where It Comes From

Tommy Talk from WW1, Trench slang.

A Fair Whack: Camaraderie when someone received a parcel, he'd 'whack' (share it around) equally.

Ace: a pilot who has brought down five or more enemy aircraft, comes from the French word as meaning champion.

Argue the toss: to have an argument, related to the gambling game of flipping a coin.

Blighty: Britain from Hindi for foreign which was pronounced 'bilayati'. British troops posted to India were referred to in this way so began to associate it with home.

Blotto: drunken. A reference to famously unstable bicycles made by Blotto Freres of Paris, also Binge, old Lancashire dialect for 'to soak'.

Chatting: lice, known as 'chats' were everywhere in the trenches. The hours picking them off were spent in small talk, or chatting.

Cop it: to die or be mortally wounded. Cop comes from the old French caper meaning to catch, in this case probably a shell.



Time for a Chuckle



An elderly woman and her little grandson, whose face was sprinkled with bright freckles, spent the day at the zoo. Lots of children were waiting in line to get their cheeks painted by a local artist who was decorating them with tiger paws. "You've got so many freckles, there's no place to paint!" a girl in the line said to the little fella. Embarrassed, the little boy dropped his head. His grandmother knelt down next to him. "I love your freckles. When I was a little girl, I always wanted freckles, she said, while tracing her finger across the child's cheek. "Freckles are beautiful!" The boy looked up, "Really?" "Of course," said the grandmother. "Why, just name me one thing that's prettier than freckles." The little boy thought for a moment, peered intensely into his grandma's face, and softly whispered, "Wrinkles."



OBITUARIES

Sadly, we record the passing of our colleagues. RIP.

E J Alford (T) on 12/10/19 aged 74, Minehead
 K G Allen (T) on 10/02/20 aged 71, Dyfed
 Geoffrey Arnold (C) on 18/01/20 aged 70, Tamworth
 Albert Arthur Arran (G) on 04/10/19 aged 87, Milford Haven
 David George Bierley (G) on 30/01/20 aged 73, Cheshire
 Patrick Arthur Brunt (T) on 14/12/19 aged 93, London
 Raymond Leslie Bunn (T) on 08/01/20 aged 99, Colchester
 Dave Burgoyne (SO) on 16/10/19 aged 69, Milford Haven
 Caroline Mary Butler (T) on 31/03/20 aged 86, Crowborough
 Peter Coney (C) on 25/12/19 aged 72, Cleveland
 David John Cook (T) on 09/03/20 aged 83, Dyfed
 G M Davies (T) on 07/12/19 aged 92, Dyfed
 Norman George Dickens (G) on 12/12/19 aged 86, Poole
 Ronald William Dines (T) on 13/03/20 aged 90, Benfleet
 Rodger John Edwards (G) on 17/03/20 aged 82, Pembrokeshire
 Thomas Morrison Edwards (G) on 26/02/20 aged 81, Renfrewshire
 Alfred Elliott (G) on 10/12/19 aged 84, Manchester
 Allan Flannigan (C) on 25/10/19 aged 78, Tyne and Wear
 Peter Robert Fletcher (T) on 23/02/20 aged 90, Belgium
 Michael Henry Fowke (T) on 28/03/20 aged 71, Pembrokeshire
 Dennis France (G) on 02/12/19 aged 90, Leeds
 Christine Rose Gazzard (T) on 31/10/19 aged 70, Cheshire
 John Morris Griffiths (T) on 10/01/20 aged 85, Dyfed
 Margaret Florence Griffiths (G) on 15/01/20 aged 87, Surrey
 David Hallows (G) on 31/03/20 aged 77, Ashton-under-Lyne
 Kenneth Arthur Harris (T) on 12/01/20 aged 76, Swansea
 Norman Harrison (C) on 02/10/19 aged 91, Surrey
 Donald James Hatchett (T) on 19/11/19 aged 86, Carmarthen
 Michael Hepburn (T) on 19/12/19 aged 70, Norfolk
 Henry Hector Houghton (T) on 17/12/19 aged 78, Kent
 Thomas David Hughes (T) on 14/01/20 aged 80, Dyfed
 Michael William Jones (G) on 14/12/19 aged 69, Milford Haven
 Ronald Joyce (G) on 13/01/20 aged 90, North Shields
 Thomas Richard Knott (T) on 03/11/19 aged 91, Essex
 Edward S Kularatna (T) on 31/10/19 aged 83, Essex
 David Graham Lawrence (T) on 14/01/20 aged 77, Dyfed
 R E Lloyd (T) on 11/02/20 aged 88, Nottingham
 R I Lockwood (T) on 27/02/20 aged 75, Scunthorpe
 Eric Walter Lowe (T) on 16/12/19 aged 90, Dorset
 Anthony Maguire (G) on 13/10/19 aged 80, Worcestershire
 R J Mason (G) on 28/10/19 aged 89, Pembrokeshire
 John Stuart McNeill (C) on 04/12/19 aged 75, Ayrshire
 O S Meria (T) on 09/01/20 aged 101, Hereford
 George Peter Moffatt (T) on 18/01/20 aged 86, Ellesmere Port
 Robert James Moore (G) on 16/02/20 aged 88, Essex
 Jonathan Morgan (T) on 02/11/19 aged 59, Dyfed
 Jack Nolan (T) on 08/10/19 aged 98, Teddington
 Dennis John Perrin (T) on 06/11/19 aged 71, France
 Yvonne Elizabeth Sell (T) on 17/11/19 aged 86, London
 Edward Edwin H Sexton (T) on 25/03/20 aged 90, Essex
 Stuart Brian Slade (G) on 12/11/19 aged 83, Pembrokeshire
 David Charles A Smith (T) on 01/02/20 aged 69, London
 Maxwell Ian Smith (T) on 25/12/19 aged 79, Pembrokeshire
 Peter Thomas Stevens (G) on 29/11/19 aged 77, Portugal
 Joseph Richard Thomas (G) on 26/10/19 aged 88, Dyfed
 Alec Terence Thompson (G) on 05/12/19 aged 88, Wootton

Robin Ticehurst (T) on 21/10/19 aged 86, Essex
 Andrew Townsley (C) on 06/02/20 aged 66, Texas
 Leslie John Tuttiett (T) on 21/02/20 aged 85, Bristol
 Roger Udall (C) on 26/12/19 aged 74, Worthing
 David Ian Wadsworth (T) on 11/02/20 aged 72, Somerset
 Graham Wainwright (T) on 12/01/20 aged 70, Pembrokeshire
 Jane Mary Warr (SO) on 16/11/19 aged 64, Pembrokeshire
 William Wellins (G) on 21/12/19 aged 98, Australia
 Harold Ambrose Welton (C) on 30/11/19 aged 93, Dorset
 Michael Charles Williams (T) on 16/11/19 aged 75, West Sussex
 Thomas Williams (T) on 08/10/19 aged 88, Manchester

Quotes



People forget what you said or what you did, but they never forget how you made them feel. *Maya Angelou*

The glory of gardening: hands in the dirt, head in the sun, heart with nature. To nurture a garden is to feed not just the body, but the soul. *Alfred Austin*

I grow plants for many reasons: to please my eye or to please my soul, to challenge the elements or to challenge my patience, for novelty or for nostalgia, but mostly for the joy in seeing them grow. *David Hobson*

Three Things...

Author unknown

Three things in life that once gone and never come back:
 Time, words, opportunity.

Three things in life that can destroy a person:
 Anger, pride, unforgiveness.

Three things in life that you should never lose:
 Hope, peace, honesty.

Three things in life that are most valuable:
 Love, Family and Friends, Kindness.

Three things that are never certain:
 Dreams, success, fortune.

Three things that make a person:
 Hard work, sincerity, commitment.

Editor's Last Word

Let us hope by the time the next Retiree News is out that Coronavirus will be far behind us. Take care of yourselves.

June Parham McCullough Editor

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