

RETIREE NEWS

A Biannual Publication for Retirees of all Chevron UK Companies



ISSUE 79 MAY 2021

Editor's Chat

We have a new lay out for Retiree News, progress and change we all have to adapt to.

A HUGE THANK YOU! So many of you have sent in articles and for me, it is a pleasure not only to read them, but to include them in Retiree News. PLEASE – keep them coming. So many stories out there and these will be of interest to each of us.

I hope this finds you all keeping safe and well and now ready to start coming out of this long lock down. At least it has been a very colourful Spring. We both love Daffodils and they have been amazing this year. We always buy a couple of bunches each week to have at home and will keep doing this until they finish. Spring blossoms have also been great and I just love to see new fresh green leaves on bushes and trees. Lovely to see life coming back to plants and trees after a dull, wet, shut away winter. Isn't nature wonderful?

Hopefully, you will get to see family and friends from now on, either in gardens or parks and even outside having coffee or a beer. I really miss being able to sit in a café and have a cup of coffee when out and about. Let us hope that with all the vaccines, we will be able to get back to some normality soon. Enjoy the summer.

Tartan Decommissioning

Alan Jones

Repsol Sinopec Resources UK Ltd. has decided to stop production on its Tartan Alpha installation after nearly forty years.

The first oil strike happened in December 1974 when the semi-submersible drilling rig "Sedneth 701" drilled the first wildcat well on block 15/16. Further drilling occurred to determine the field. Once production was approved, the platform was constructed in North Spain, Holland and in both Teesside and Methil in the UK and brought on barges

to the site where it was lifted onto the jacket by the "Hermod" a huge double crane floating lifting barge. The Aberdeen manager at that time was Jim Barbour. The first OIM was Dan Claypole and sorry I forget his 'back-to-back'.

The platform, 90 miles north-east of St Fergus in Aberdeenshire was first installed by Texaco North Sea Ltd in 1979 in 138 meters of sea and began production in 1981. In the Texaco News of April 1988, it recorded the first 100 million barrels of production from the installation. This was at a time when Texaco were emerging from Chapter 11 and the Pennzoil acquisition. Three smaller fields were discovered and tied back into Tartan, Highlander in 1985; Petronella in 1986 and eventually the Galley Field was tied into the structure in 1998 before reconfigured as a full sub-sea tie-back in 2007. In 2007 the Duart Field was also developed as a subsea tie-back.

Production ceased on 15 August 2020 after receiving approval from the Oil and Gas Authority having yielded more than 300 million barrels of oil over 39 years.

The platform will be decommissioned and removed in 2021/22. Tartan is now part of a growing number of assets ceasing production in the North Sea this year due to low oil prices making them non-commercial. The installation will have to go through plugging and abandonment of the wells, become hydrocarbon free before removal of the 28,500 tons topsides and jacket. The Tartan installation acted as the production hub for nearby fields such as Galley, Petronella and Highlander.

It still holds the record for evacuation of 527 men in the winter of 1979 when the construction barge "Hermod" broke some of her mooring wires and started to drift in a storm. All 527 men were airlifted ashore without casualties by 29 helicopters in seas of up to 60 feet. It is further noted that no word of this



appeared in the press the following day, such was the clampdown on information at the time by Texaco.

I had the privilege of going on Tartan as an escort to winners of a competition. Fantastic trip, one not to be forgotten. Ed!

It's Not Too Late

Alan Stanbrook

Like many of us retirees at some point we have been scrapping around for something to do. My children had been giving me hints for a long time, giving me books to fill in on my past life. To my mind it was a bit boring so I had avoided filling the spaces in. In one of my "contemplation" periods I realised that I now wondered why I didn't ask my parents a lot of questions when they were alive.

Ignoring the said books, I started to jot down all the things that I thought my children didn't know about me or their mum. Unfortunately, Brenda passed away five years ago so I could only write about what I knew about her past and our life together as I knew it.

For me it was a lot easier though as at nearly 80, my memory ain't as good as it used to be. Dragging up the past wasn't that easy and there had to be a little soul searching as to what I should include. In the end I thought they needed to know that their dad's life wasn't perfect; as parents we wanted to shield the children from some of the trouble we had in bringing them up. At this point I told them all that I could remember.

After many re-reads and relying heavily on "Spell Check," I whittled it down to 74 A4 size pages, with appropriate pictures. OK so now what? I only wanted five copies. My poor old printer would never stand the volume. Going on line I found a Printer that could do it at a price that I thought it would cost me to do the job. The only snag was that I would have to have 25 copies! My first thought what would I do with the

remaining copies. When I thought about it, it wasn't so difficult. My wife came from Guernsey and spent most of her life in the UK, therefore a lot of her family didn't know much of what she did over here. I now only have 4 copies left.

As a family we are spread all over the place, they all left home to follow their various careers, so there is a lot that I don't know about them. The project would also benefit their children in later years. I have now set my children the task of doing the same. I have also encouraged my sister to do her bit and I look forward to reading her side of things.

The best thing about the whole project is that they are reminding me about things that I had forgotten. All in all, a good project, all thanks to my children asking questions before it was too late.

RAF Memories

Peter Franklin

A long time ago (before mortise was a rigger) I was serving in the RAF stationed at RAF Horsham St Faith (Now Norwich Airport) and servicing Fighter Radar Equipment on 74 Squadron. 74 was known as the Tiger Squadron it's nose and tail emblems were indeed tiger's faces. At one publicity photo-shoot the keeper of Cromer Zoo, Alex Kerr of Bertram Mills fame, brought along a live Tiger called Begum.



Some of you may remember the ESSO advert "Put a tiger in your tank" and you could buy a toy tiger's tail to hang from your filler cap. Our C/O persuaded Esso to give us a copy of the huge poster of the leaping tiger used on roadside hoardings. This was duly pasted onto the front of our hangar and was visible far and wide.

One evening after Lights Out our slumbers were disturbed by the rumble of very low slow flying aircraft which came directly over our barrack block. Suddenly all hell let loose and we were subjected to what we thought was an Air Raid. The explosions and flashes were deafening and blinding in their intensity. The Air Raid Warning Siren sounded and we had to pile out of bed still in Jimmies and into the blast shelters. Several barrack windows were damaged, debris was scattered all round and there was the smell of burnt cordite.

The following morning, we proceeded to work leaving the maintenance staff to restore order and repair the damage. On reaching our hangar we saw the C/O and a gathering of pilots gazing up at the front of the hangar. The C/O was puce with rage. During the night a poster of a huge boxing glove had been superimposed on our tiger's backside as if giving it a rocket assisted boost. The caption read "Regent TT packs Punch" another advert from a roadside hoarding.

It seems that the "air raid" was in fact carried out by a ground-based raiding party supported by diversionary flights to keep our heads down while the Tiger was violated. After that I was tempted to use Regent TT in my motorbike just for fun.

Purely by coincidence in later years I worked for Regent Oil Company which was soon taken over and became Texaco. I was with them for nearly 25 years. Happy days.

Portugal, A Wonderful Life

Steve Wilson

I was inspired by the "Life after Chevron and Texaco" article in the recent Retirees Newsletter, and the editorial call for stories from other retirees, particularly those living overseas, so I felt motivated to pull a few words together to share my post-Chevron story.

I joined Chevron in 1985 in London as a Reservoir Engineer, following a Masters' Degree in Petroleum Engineering after five years working for Schlumberger as a wireline engineer. After more than thirty years with the company in numerous upstream positions in various countries, I found myself in Houston at CBD, looking after Worldwide Business Development. Things had been going well until the price of oil plummeted during 2015 from the relatively stable range of \$100-\$110 a barrel which the industry had enjoyed during the previous five years. Management understandably had little appetite to spend money on New Projects or New Ventures, having difficulty in funding capital commitments on existing projects and paying the dividend to shareholders.

As I am sure many retirees will recall, like most other companies Chevron went on a cost-cutting exercise and brought in Management Consultants to help advise on the process to implement staff reductions. It was unsurprisingly deemed that an expat in Houston with not much to do was surplus to requirements and so Chevron and I parted company in February 2016; ironically the month when oil hit the recent low of \$28 a barrel. My wife and I were repatriated to the UK, but had no intention of staying there as five years earlier we had finished building a villa in Southern Portugal, which we had since been using as a holiday home. Our intention on my retirement was to have split location living; to live most of the year in Portugal to avoid the British weather, but to return to our home in the Cambridge during the summer.



During this time, I discovered an initiative which the Portuguese Government had put in place to help the economy during the deep recession which the country had been battling in the wake of the 2008 Banking Crisis known as “Non-Habitual Residency”. If one was a European citizen and prepared to buy, build or own a property in Portugal, to go through the necessary channels and processes to sign up and to then spend at least 180 days in the country during the year, any foreign-sourced income could be received tax-free for ten years, providing one satisfied the criteria for non-residency in the individuals’ home country. The government’s idea had been to entice more people to Portugal where they would spend money in the economy. As we had already put in place our plans for retirement, it seemed a no-brainer to register, as my Chevron pension would obviously qualify.

For any readers who might possibly be thinking of moving to warmer climes to escape winters in the UK, either full-time or with split-location living like we elected for, I would strongly suggest you take a look at Portugal. My wife and I are both keen golfers, and there are about forty golf courses within an hour’s drive, with five on our doorstep in Vilamoura. Apart from the months of July and August, when it is typically too hot to venture out for four hours, we play pretty much all year round on super golf courses, some of them championship standard, usually in pleasant weather.

Portugal offers some of the most glorious beaches in Southern Europe, with a coastline open to the Atlantic rather than the Mediterranean, which helps keep them clean and unpolluted. Most mornings we walk our cocker spaniel “Digger” on one of these beaches, in the neighbouring Nature Reserve or in the rural hills which are just a short way inland, quite often in a dog-walking group we discovered known as “Happy Feet”, through which we have met a number of interesting people who have now become friends.

The Algarve is not too densely-populated so apart from the high summer tourist season there is typically plenty of space and a feeling of “good to be alive” freedom. The area also attracts many naturists, as the nearby Reserves are a bird-watchers’ paradise.

There is a fairly sizeable expatriate community on the Algarve, with numerous clubs and activities available and the whole environment is very welcoming, from not only the expats here but also from the Portuguese, who are delightful people. Aside from some of the more elderly Portuguese one might encounter at places like Loule market on a Saturday morning, pretty much all Portuguese people one might encounter will likely speak good English, so it is not necessary to learn Portuguese, although we have both been taking lessons for a few years.

Internet service is top-notch with fibre optic available, so using IPTV boxes rather than satellite we can receive all terrestrial UK TV channels, SKY Sports, BT Sports and the various other channels which mirror what is available in the UK. We keep in touch with UK news and British newspapers, staples like Branston Pickle, HP sauce etcetera are available in the host of shops and supermarkets which we have on our doorstep. Portuguese wines from the Alentejo, Douro and the Algarve have been improving in quality in recent years, at a rate which their price does not yet really reflect, and French, Italian, Spanish, German and New World wines are also available from the various local wine merchants and supermarkets, particularly Apolonia, “the Harrods food hall of the Algarve”!

There are plenty of beach cafes, pubs, sports bars and restaurants dotted though out the Algarve, with all sorts of diverse choices and excellent cuisine - particularly seafood, typically at a lower prices than one would pay in the UK. Whenever our three children are out visiting with their respective partners, bills are typically less eye-watering than would be the case if we were taking them out in London, even at one



of the establishments in the neighbouring Marina, which is about a five minute drive away from our house. Although I have never sat down and made an analytical calculation, I reckon our overall cost of living here on The Algarve is about a half to two-thirds of what we would be spending if we were in the UK.

It is fair to say that Buffie and I are happy with our original decision to move to Portugal. As a corollary to the concept of “life after Chevron”, I had one final hoorah as I was approached to join Anadarko in the summer of 2017, to help oversee and guide their Mozambique LNG project, to commercialise the massive gas resources discovered offshore in the northern part of the country. We were enticed back into the world of paid work in late 2017 and moved to Mozambique’s capital Maputo. Being a former Portuguese colony, an additional bonus was that we could further improve our Portuguese, which would be useful for our future life in Portugal.

Anadarko achieved the Final Investment Decision (FID) on the Mozambique LNG project last summer, and a couple of months later was then acquired by Occidental in a hostile takeover. The Mozambique assets were sold to Total to help finance their corporate acquisition and, once again, my services were no longer required. Having flunked retirement once, after this adventure it brought the curtain down on a forty-year career at the end of last year, I am now planning that this time it’s serious!

We have now settled back into retirement, and although the Coronavirus epidemic has led to a rather restrained existence in these strange times, the Portuguese government has handled the State of Emergency well, and we have felt pretty safe during our extended period of self-isolation.

If after reading this story about “Wilson life after Chevron” anyone wants to get in touch to get more information on living in Portugal, I would be happy to help. I am contactable via e-mail: brookside34@btinternet.com

Things I’ve noticed in lockdown, *probably from watching too much tv!*

Terry Nunn

Kitchen Islands - why is it that in all the major dramas and serials all the houses have exceptionally large kitchens with a kitchen island?

When the homeowner comes home, the first thing they do is open a bottle of wine - usually one from the fridge. I like a drink but there are other things to do before I sit down to relax with a glass of beer. Why don’t they turn the alarm off, switch the lights on and pull the curtains?

Door Knockers and Bells - with lockdown we get a lot of deliveries from ordering online. We only have a knocker but 90% of the delivery drivers don’t use it and thump on the door. I even noticed Davina McCall when she visits the house of some long-lost relatives doesn’t knock or ring the bell but resorts to tapping on the door.

Car Windows - why do drivers drive around with the car window open most of the time. Besides letting the cold air in it’s not economic on the fuel and you get earache in your right ear.

Car Lock - they get out of the car and walk away from it without bothering to lock it, either with the key or from a fob (at least the lights don’t flash as they would on any normal car). Likewise, when returning to the car they don’t unlock, just get in and drive away.

Why do we need programmes, or special editions, with celebrities? Who are these people? I often have to ask what they are ‘famous’ for.

That leads to comedians who dare you to laugh by using the F word or naming parts of the anatomy. Admittedly they will have learnt their craft on the club circuits before they get ‘famous’ to be on tv, but then they appear in one panel game after another.



There's more. With no traffic around the silence is broken by the sound of supermarket delivery vans. Have you noticed that each supermarket's van has a different reversing tone?

Comes the highlight of the week - a Tesco delivery! We don our masks to say 'Hello' to another human being.

And another thing, I've just seen a Waitrose delivery van go past. There must be some posh rich people who live nearby. I wonder what they're having!

London Retiree Luncheon

Rod Pesch

As you might have anticipated the previously revised date for our reunion lunch in April has once again fallen foul of Covid and will now take place on Friday 22 October 2021. This is purely a diary date at this time to keep you informed. I will be in touch nearer the time to gauge interest and numbers, also confirming on menus, costings and timings. However, the proposed format will be the same as previously with Drinks in the Churchill Bar from 12 Noon and Lunch in the Sovereign Room from 1.00pm. Might I add that if you are in contact with other ex-colleagues, please do tell them about our reunion as I am sure they would also welcome the opportunity to meet and reminisce!

I look forward to hearing from you in due course but meanwhile stay safe and keep well.

After Retirement from Texaco

Phil Thompson

After retiring from Texaco/Chevron in 2009, I was immediately taken on by Alstom Ltd who were the main contractor for the new Pembroke Power

Station owned by National Power. My contract was for three to six months, but luckily for me, they kept me on for the whole project of three and half years – that really helped the pension pot! I then assisted National Power in organising the Grand Opening of the new Power Station. I carried on staging a few of the community events we did with Texaco and Chevron as the new P.R. person/management did not want to do that. In fact, what was an original Charity Challenge weekend carried over the next few years. This has now been replaced with another different charity event.

When I retired, I was on seven Boards and Committees, however these have now been reduced to just one, this being a Trustee and past Chairman of the Paul Sartori Foundation, which is a Hospice in the Home organisation and believe me, that has been very challenging in the year of Covid. At the same time my involvement with Folly Farm Management carries on helping with PR advice and again this has been another great challenge in this year of lockdowns etc. There is a very old Ministry of Defence base in Trecwn. North Pembrokeshire. Helping the owners with development of new engineering business is a little more than I feel I can cope with at this time.

I buy and renovate then sell Classic Cars and have handled about eight in the last ten years and have now reached my goal of owning an Aston Martin DB7. Another string to my bow is the building and selling of two properties, the last one in Laugharne. Now I have downsized to a two-bedroom bungalow in Hundleton, four miles from the refinery.

Two weeks before the lockdown in March 2020, Valero were hosting a Welsh Business Conference and I represented the Trecwn Project. I met up with Paul Bray reminiscing on the 'old days' so many happy memories.



Most recently I have been asked to join Rotary (after being awarded the Paul Harris Fellow by Rotary in 2009 for Community work and fundraising for them) so I thought it was about time to say yes. My induction was on 9 December 2020!

It is amazing how one can fill up so much time after retirement, keeping us active and interested in all aspects of the new period in our lives.

More Tales from the Past

Roger Colomb

I joined Regent Oil Company in the mid 1950's as a Supernumerary Clerk. It was, in effect, a training programme where for three years one was placed in different parts of the Company to learn the ropes.

Initially I was posted to Portslade Depot where I carried out every manner of clerical work as well as being a Driver's Mate, Storeman and working on the tank farm. The most prominent sign in every depot was the slogan THE CUSTOMER IS ALWAYS RIGHT. Regent was a very sales-oriented operation. I moved to Poole Depot, Wisbech, Canvey Island Terminal and to Dagenham Lubricants Blending Plant and the Bulk Storage Division in the Head Office as well as the Sales Department.

I also assisted the Training Manager T.R. Williams who was responsible for training all the sales representatives. Regent had thirty perpetually in training. TR was a unique character. His home was on a farm in Wales, but virtually every Monday he arrived in London to interview new recruits and I sat in. I particularly remember one occasion when TR was under great strain because his Land Rover, which he kept on the farm, had developed a problem and during the interview he was receiving reports from the garage with updates on how they were proceeding with solving the malfunction. The trainee, Ken Campbell by name being interviewed only said

'yes' or 'no' to TR's questions but at the end of the thirty minute session, TR said 'You know your trouble Ken you don't think before you speak.' As I escorted Ken outside to brief him on the detail of his training programme Ken said 'you know he's right!'

The highlight of the training programme was a three week course conducted by TR where the subtleties of the Regent Selling Method were practised and visiting Managers explained the roles of their Departments. At the end you either made it or left.

Every recruit was interviewed by either the Managing Director Mr Walton Ball or the Sales Director Mr J Nicholas. I remember the advice Mr Walton Ball gave me. 'Don't marry until you are 30! I made it to 26!'

I was posted to Wandsworth Division and as a General Representative with retail and commercial accounts covered areas in West London, Central London and South West London for nearly six years.

I was then promoted and took over a Group of eight representatives covering part of Somerset, Devon and Cornwall. The Branch Office was in Bristol and I was known as the Country Member!

Regent had depots in Exeter and Truro and I based myself in Plymouth. Regent was not blessed with good retail outlets in the City and about a year before I came on the scene Tony White, one of the eight representatives in the Group, had been transferred there with the express objective of gaining sites. He was a live wire and had already purchased Crownhill Service Station a small site adjacent to the Plymouth Waterworks on the A386 Plymouth To Tavistock Road. The idea was to acquire a small additional tract of land from the Waterworks owned by Plymouth Council. However, this had proved impossible so a proposal to develop only on our own land was put together and planning permission applied for.



At the same time Tony had acquired an option on a tenement block on the A38 as it approached the centre of Plymouth as well as an option on a small backstreet site from which we proposed to transfer the retail petroleum licence. This was a common practice in those days. Planning permission had been refused by Plymouth Council and an Appeal against this was to be held the very week I arrived in Plymouth. The Company had hired a consultant to present our case named Howard Sharp. One of the main reasons for the rejection was there was no need for a service station as there were sufficient retail sites within a three-mile radius. All Howard Sharp had asked Tony to do was photograph every site within the three-mile radius.

The Deputy Chief Planning Officer of Plymouth presented the Council's case. When it was Howard's turn, he complimented Mr Gillingham on the excellent way the City of Plymouth had been redeveloped in the aftermath of World War Two. He then referred to the Council's grounds for rejection of the application and slowly put in front of Mr Gillingham the first photograph with the question. 'Does this meet your standards?' He threw the photos down with comments such as 'Are you happy with this?' Mr Gillingham started to colour and Howard Sharp continued very much in the way Perry Mason would have conducted an examination.

The next morning Tony had a phone call from Mr Gillingham enquiring whether it would be possible to have a meeting with our Consultant before he left Plymouth to discuss our application on Crownhill Service Station. We attended and to our dismay he stated that it was the Council's intention to build a dual carriageway on the A386 in five years' time and our service station would be part of the northbound carriageway. However, he didn't want a repeat of yesterday and was willing to grant Regent a five-year planning permission for a very much scaled down redevelopment.

Reluctantly we did as he suggested and a planning permission was granted almost by return of post.

However, in December Tony received another call from Mr Gillingham. It appeared Barbara Castle, Secretary for Transport had unexpectedly produced the funds to redevelop the A386. Unfortunately, there was insufficient funds to buy out our site with its five-year planning life. Needless to say, Tony negotiated that Regent donated our site in return for which Plymouth Council granted us part of their Waterworks land on which a Folio 3 service station was built!

Author in Progress

Simon Moffatt

I seem to have acquired a career as a writer since I stopped work. Apart from anything else, retreating into other people's worlds is not at all stressful and can be a good cure for insomnia. On a miserable wet day when there's nothing going on what could be easier than typing another thousand words into your magnum opus?

I completed my book and then discovered that there is a whole new world of publishing. There's as much work to do after you've finished your book as there is writing it. I persevered and a year ago my novel was published. I've yet to work out how you get people to buy the book. Most people who read it find it a bit hard at the beginning but then get caught up in it and have to read on to find out what happens. Coronavirus means that I've now more or less finished the sequel and I am starting the tedious process of getting it to print. Here are some thoughts on the book publishing business.

"Dear John." Never start with dialogue, so I've failed already. "Dear John" is a cliché too and those aren't allowed either. My offering is supposed to have one protagonist that the reader can empathise with, but my novel has five so I've fallen at that fence as well.



I've come late in life to this writing business and I am discovering the hard way about the "Dear John." To compound the misery the letter may also contain a sentence like: "I like your writing, I just can't get passionate about it." I suppose it's meant to sugar the pill, but it would be fairer if they either offer some constructive criticism or let "Dear John." do it. "Dear John." is an anachronism, which is not allowed. Actually, you don't get a letter now, you get an email. As in the worst case of a failing affair, these days it could even be a text: "You're dumped." or more likely "Your dumped." with an emoji of a pile of poo.

I'm supposed to follow a three-act structure. Shakespeare would have fallen at that fence as he stuck to five. I was led to believe that he knew a thing or two about successful writing, but these days it would be: "Dear Will." I've been to a class and learned a lot about creative writing. Naively I went along thinking that the creative bit would be the hard part, but then discovered that it's the writing that has all the pitfalls. Publishers and agents fall in line with the rules of creative writing and if you don't comply, then "Dear John." I've said rules, and they say guidelines, but that's politician speak! Guidelines means that they are rigid rules for me, but it gives them wriggle room. I wonder what it's like in their offices when they get an offering they are passionate about. How do they cope with all the passion?

Now I am supposed to put you in context. I'm typing this into my laptop at our dining room table which doubles up as our workplace because it's a nice room with a view over the garden and you can't hear traffic. What you can hear is a variety of small birds working hard to find breakfast, all the time chirping to each other. The trees have no leaves and in them there is a flock of starlings who will all swoop down if one of them spots something of interest in the lawn. Now I notice that the lawn needs mowing, but it's too wet, so I can't, anyway I prefer writing. Publishers want things to be as explicit as possible.

I heard that an editor told a writer: "It's lovely darling, but where's the sexual tension?" Elisabeth Bennett was cheated! She went the full length of "Pride and Prejudice" fully clad and without a sniff of sex. "Dear Jane." Anyway, I decided that lots of great literature uses implication rather than graphic description so I leave it out. In the same way, there are some comedians who swear because it gets cheap laughs. If the joke is clever enough (and doesn't hurt someone) there's no need to swear. In a nutshell, what needs to be on the page is what is essential to move the story forward. Apparently, this qualifies my style as staid. "Dear John."

The family influence what one writes. The first time I released my great work to my family, each member dived in to work out either if they feature or if they can recognise another family member in the text. They are certain to recognise situations that have happened even if they've been modified. They may think that these are private events. "How can you tell our secrets?" On the other hand, when they don't understand how you've made up a situation. "Where did you learn about that?" "I read it in a book." "That's plagiarism." "I saw it in a film." "Which one?" We've been going to films together for forty years and I don't remember seeing anything like that. "I imagined it." I can't see a successful escape route from any of these discussions, so my text has been filtered to avoid anything that will offend my family and I always take the safe route. "Dear John."

Eventually I have found a nice man who believes that my work is publishable, so it is in print. Then a friend said "I read it to the end." I thought this was a bit grudging, but then remembered how many books I read to the end of chapter two and don't have the will to carry on. Perhaps, after all, this book isn't one to be "...thrown with great force." Others have said they stayed up late to find out what happens. I'm on a roll, until a friend says "I can't wait till the sequel." "Why?" I ask. "I want to see what happens to X." I've



written some of the sequel, and there's not much about X in it. Perhaps it is a good idea to stick to one protagonist.

Now I expect I'll get a letter from your editor: "Dear John."



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Emails received for which I thank you very much. Ed!

Thank you so much for your work on Retiree News. The November edition was exceptionally good (and large) and I have pretty good idea how much effort you put into it. Not surprisingly, like most oldies I look carefully at the obituaries. It seems that it would be remiss to miss the passing of friends and colleagues; in your listing you honour them all.

I hope that you and your family have been able to avoid the Covid 19 affliction and isolation not too taxing. For my part, as an old mariner I found it not unpleasant and, in any case, it was a glorious Summer.

Brian Goodland

Just a short note to thank you for another issue of Retiree News. You do a great job and everybody should appreciate that!

Roderick Duff, (aged 85) Texaco, Scotland

Your Retiree News arrived this morning and really brightened up my day! As one who worked in the past for Texaco, Chevron and Caltex I probably get more out of it than most. Keep up the good work.

Stay safe

Gordon W Smith

'Many thanks for recent Retiree news - you do an excellent job!

Jim Bond

'Keep up the excellent work with the news'

Ian Macfarlane

Really enjoyed Retiree News, a great mixture of interesting tales, humour, knowledge and mental challenges'.

John Donaldson

All power to your elbow, June. You do a great job getting the Retiree News out to us a couple of times a year. I enjoy the quizzes and various articles, and look with trepidation at the Obituaries where, unfortunately, I often spot the names of old, respected colleagues from my days in first Regent, then Texaco and finally Chevron.

Chris Bayley

World Facts

Amazing what I find in my archives. Enjoy. Ed!

More than half the coastline of the United States is in Alaska.

The Amazon rainforest produces more than 20% of the world's oxygen supply.

The Amazon river pushes so much water into the Atlantic Ocean that more than 100 miles at sea off the mouth of the river one can dip fresh water out of the ocean. The volume of water in the Amazon river is greater than the next eight largest rivers in the world combined and three times the flow of all rivers in the United States.

Antarctica is the only land on our planet that is not owned by a country. Ninety percent of the world's ice covers Antarctica. This also represents seventy percent of all the fresh water in the world. As strange as it sounds, however, Antarctica is essentially a desert; the average yearly precipitation



is about two inches. Although covered with ice (all but 0.04% is ice) Antarctica is the driest on the planet with an absolute humidity lower than the Gobi Desert.

Brazil got its name from the nut, not the other way around.

Canada has more lakes than the rest of the world combined. Canada is an Indian name meaning 'Big Village'.

Next to Warsaw, Chicago has the largest Polish population in the world.

Woodward Avenue in Detroit, Michigan, carries the designation M-1 so named because it was the first paved road anywhere.

Damascus, Syria, was flourishing a couple of thousand years before Rome was founded in 753 BC making it the oldest continuously inhabited city in existence.

Istanbul, Turkey is the only city in the world located on two continents.

The full name of Los Angeles is I Pueblo de Nuestra Senora la Reina de Los Angeles de Porciunculan and can be abbreviated to 3.63% of its size; LA.

New York. The term 'The Big Apple' was coined by touring jazz musicians of the 1930s who used the slang expression 'apple' for any town or city. Therefore, to play New York City is to play the big time - 'The Big Apple'.

There are more Irish in New York City than in Dublin, Ireland; more Italians in New York City than in Rome; more Jews in New York City than Tel Aviv, Israel.

There are no natural lakes in the state of Ohio, everyone is man-made.

Pitcairn Island: The smallest island with country status is Pitcairn in Polynesia, at just 1.75 square miles/4.53 square kilometres.

The first city to reach one million people was Rome, Italy (in 133 BC).

There is a city called Rome on every continent.

Siberia contains 25% of the world's forests.

S.M.O.M. The actual smallest sovereign entity in the world is the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. It is located in the city of Rome, Italy and has an area of two tennis courts and as of 2001, has a population of eighty; twenty less than the Vatican. It is a Sovereign entity under international law as is the Vatican.

In the Sahara Desert there is a town called Tidikelt, Algeria that did not receive a drop of rain for ten years. Technically though, the driest place on earth is in the Antarctic near Ross Island. There has been no rainfall there for two million years.

Spain literally means - the land of rabbits.

St. Paul's Minnesota, was originally called Pig's Eye after a man called Pierre 'Pig's Eye' Parrant, who set up the first business there.

Chances are that a road is unpaved in the US is 1% and in Canada 75%.

The deepest hole ever drilled by man is the Kola Superdeep Borehole in Russia. It reached a depth of 12,261 metres (about 40,266 feet or 7.62 miles). It was drilled for scientific research and gave up some unexpected discoveries, one of which was a huge deposit of hydrogen - so massive that the mud coming from the hole was boiling with it.

United States. The Eisenhower interstate system requires that one mile in every five must be straight. These straight sections are usable as airstrips in times of war or other emergencies.

Waterfalls. The water of Angel Falls (the world's highest) in Venezuela drops 3,212 feet /979 metres. They are fifteen times higher than Niagara Falls.



QUIZ

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

1 Persia, 2 Turkey, 3 The Doors, 4 Twelve, 5 France, 6 Maria Callas, 7 Quarto, 8 2,4,6,8,10,11,13,15,17, 20,22,24,26,28,29,31,33,35, 9 Two, 10 Hangman, 11 Kidneys, 12 Parterre or Knot garden, 13 Billy J Kramer, 14 17th, 15 Greta Garbo, 16 None, 17 Four, 18 Backstroke, 19 St. Albans, 20 Shanghai.

The four winners were:

Melvin Horn, Milford Haven. B M Makin, Cheltenham. Tony Shapcott, Newport. Edward Gordon Sim, Lerwick. Well done to you all.

The quiz for this edition is:

FOOD AND DRINK

- 1 Which berry is used to give gin its distinctive flavour?
- 2 What is a shaddock?
- 3 Which pulse is used to make hummus?
- 4 Both the fruit and flowers of British plant Sambucus can be made into wine. What is its common name?
- 5 Which fruit features in the dessert named for Dame Nellie Melba, the opera singer?
- 6 True or false. The Irish drink poteen (or poitin) is named after the potatoes from which it is distilled.
- 7 Which fruit flavours the cordial used in Kir Royale?
- 8 What is the principal ingredient of guacamole?
- 9 What was the name of the Second World War initiative that encouraged people to grow their own food?

- 10 In which tropical fruit would you find the natural digestive aid papain?
- 11 Which part of the cardoon plant would you eat?
- 12 Which grain is used to make semolina?
- 13 In the children's nursery rhyme, what grew on 'my little nut-tree'?
- 14 Which part of the vanilla orchid is dried for use as a culinary flavouring?
- 15 Which fruit is used to make the French spirit Calvados?
- 16 What is the main vegetable ingredient in moussaka?
- 17 Of which family is endive a member?
- 18 Cider is made from apples. What is the name of the similar drink made from pears?
- 19 In the stories of Persephone in Greek mythology, what is said to be the fruit of the underworld?
- 20 What was the first vegetable grown in space?

There must be a great deal of you that can answer these questions, so come along and have a go. Answers please to the Editor, (details at foot of Retiree News) to be received by 15 July 2021 by email or post. Editors' decision is final.

I have been informed that voucher prizes will no longer be possible, however, that does not mean we cannot have some fun as any future winners will have their name in print! It will be like having your name in lights and just as rewarding as receiving a voucher. Just to let you know, if there is a drop in the number of entries, then the quiz in future editions will cease. *Ed!*



BIRTHDAYS

80

Chris Bayley, nr Chichester
Tony Fernand, Bournemouth
Maurice McCullough, Surrey
John Pruden, Lymington

90

Peter Kershaw, Buckinghamshire

Golden Wedding Anniversaries

Geoff and Patricia Goody on 4 July 2020. They celebrated quietly at home due to the Pandemic restrictions. Geoff worked for Texaco for over thirty years first in Comptrollers and finally at Brighton Depot. *I recently heard from Geoff with the sad news that he has terminal cancer and have since heard he has passed on. Ed!*

Ian and Christine Phillip celebrated on 4 July 2020 with immediate family under Covid restrictions. Ian worked for Gulf and they live in Glasgow.

Diamond Wedding Anniversary

David and Wendie Davies celebrated on 23 December 2020. He joined Regent in 1961 then moved to Texaco. He joined Chevron as Construction & Maintenance Engineer in 1970 after resigning from Texaco. As their anniversary was so close to Christmas, they usually have a celebratory lunch out, however on this occasion they had a home cooked meal prepared by their son who is an excellent cook.

Peter and Wendy Franklin celebrated on 24 September last year. However, Wendy is suffering from Vascular Dementia and is in a care home, therefore the celebrations were very muted. Peter has been unable to go into the home as lockdown started as Wendy went into the home. Hopefully, soon, with due precautions, he will be able to visit and hold hands meeting inside.

So That's Where It Comes From

Tommy Talk from WW1, Trench slang.

Spit and Polish Parade: an inspection by a general.

Swinging the Lead: shirking duties from the term used to describe sailors given the task of checking the depth who instead just swing the lead plummet around and give a false answer.

Third Man: to be unlucky after the superstition that the third man to light a cigarette from the same match would be shot by a sniper.

Tommy: a British soldier; the example used by the Army to show how to fill in recruitment forms included the name Tommy Atkins. To an American his British ally was a Woodbine or Limey.

Trench Coat: a jacket invented for officers to wear in the trenches.

Zero Hour: when an attack was scheduled to begin.

Poetry Corner

Leisure
William Henry Davies

What is this life if full of care?
We have no time to stand and stare
No time to stand beneath the boughs
And stare as long as sheep or cows
No time to see when woods we pass
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass
No time to see in broad daylight
Streams full of stars like skies at night
No time to turn at Beauty's glance
And watch her feet how they can dance
No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began
A poor life this if full of care
We have no time to stand and stare



A Computer Science Course

A group of adults were on a computer science course. After a few weeks, the Professor set a project with men on one side of the room and women on the other side. In ten minutes, they were to come up with reasons computers should be referred to as either male or female gender.

The men said they should be female gender and gave these four reasons:

- 1 No one but their creator understands their internal logic.
- 2 When computers communicate with each other they speak in code language that only they and experts understand.
- 3 Every mistake you make is stored on their hard drive for later retrieval.
- 4 Because when you commit to one you find yourself paying half your salary on accessorising it.

Then the women followed with their reasons computers should be classed in the male gender.

- 1 In order to get their attention you have to turn them on.
- 2 They have a lot of data but still can't think for themselves.
- 3 They are supposed to help you solve a problem, but half the time they are the problem.
- 4 As soon as you commit to one you find if you had waited a little longer, you could have got a better model.

OBITUARIES

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

Morgan Thomas Allen (T) on 05/12/20 aged 85, Dyfed

Ernest J Atkinson (C) on 15/11/20 aged 84, Sunderland

Brian Thomas Ayto (Std) on 18/11/20 aged 82, Chard

Michael John Ball (T) on 19/01/21 aged 86, Bristol

David Barnard (C) on 15/12/20 aged 88, Hampshire

L J Bohin (T) on 15/01/21 aged 94, Bristol

Karen Brett (T) on 02/01/21 aged 69, Kent

Roy Bridgeman (T) on 25/11/20 aged 91, Gloucestershire

Colin Norman Burks (T) on 03/12/20 aged 80, Kilgetty

Alan Mason Chapman (T) on 27/02/21 aged 85, Hull

Graeme Cheyne (T) on 17/11/20 aged 65, Swindon

Brinley Thomas Churchill (G) on 12/12/20 aged 81, Cumbria

Derek Alfred Coe (T) on 13/11/20 aged 82, Pembroke

William James Currie (C) on 22/01/21 aged 78, Ayrshire

David William Dickons (C) on 23/02/21 aged 74, Middlesbrough

Leonard Gilbert (T) on 28/11/20 aged 74, Worcestershire

Geoff Goody (T) on 29/03/21 aged 73, Worthing

Donald Grimster (T) on 12/02/21 aged 96, Surrey

Thomas Hamilton (T) on 16/11/20 aged 79, Surrey

C B Hardy (T) on 08/02/21 aged 95, Kent

Michael Edward Harley (C) on 13/02/21 aged 89, West Sussex

Michael George Harries (T) on 03/12/20 aged 75, Pembrokeshire

Linda Margaret Harrison (T) on 13/01/21 aged 83, London



Ian Leslie Honnor (G) on 10/12/20 aged 77, Berkshire

William Burgoyne Horst (G) on 08/02/21 aged 90, Milford Haven

Norman Leonard Jordan (T) on 30/01/21 aged 90, Basildon

Sheila Margaret Kemp (C) on 02/02/21 aged 68, Tadworth

Nawzad Rafiq Khurshid (T) on 19/12/20 aged 76, West Sussex

Christopher Lacumber (C) on 05/03/21 aged 84, County Laois

Colin Lamming (T) on 31/01/21 aged 88, NE Lincolnshire

Alexander Mackay (T) on 14/10/20 aged 81, Scotland

D J Maggs, (T) on 04/12/20 aged 95, Aberdeen

John Edmond Morrissey (G) on 03/02/21 aged 75, Tewkesbury

Michael Thomas Mowbray (T) on 14/01/21 aged 84, Lancashire

Edward Patrick Murphy (T) on 21/11/20 aged 82, Gosport

Angela Beryl Norton (T) on 17/12/20 aged 91, London

Leslie Derek Palmer (G) on 25/10/20 aged 87, Pembrokeshire

Alfred Parker (T) on 01/02/21 aged 93, Essex

Ronald Fredrick Pearson (G) on 10/02/21 aged 95, Twickenham

Geraldine T Perry (T) on 11/03/21 aged 76, Ruislip

Brian Roy Poulter (T) on 17/03/21 aged 88, Essex

John Powell (T) on 19/03/21 aged 88, Pembrokeshire

Vivian Arthur Rees (T) on 29/10/20 aged 87, Dorset

Pamela June Rentell (T) on 20/12/20 aged 91, London

Bruce Rothnie (T) on 03/12/20 aged 79, Aberdeen

Malcolm A Royle (G) on 07/11/20 aged 78, Cardiff

D Russell (T) on 22/12/20 aged 86, Gwynedd

Philip Stjohn Shrubbs (G) on 19/01/21 aged 87, Milford Haven

Victor Claude Smith (T) on 14/10/20 aged 86, Norfolk

Robert Jonathan Steel (G) on 01/01/21 aged 77, Bridgnorth

Frances Ross Sykes (T) on 06/11/20 aged 79, Aberdeen

Clive Harry Thompson (T) on 11/12/20 aged 87, Wotton-under-Edge

B Trueman (T) on 13/10/20 aged 89, London

Raymond Gordon Tucker (C) on 05/10/20 aged 88, Gwynedd

Tessa Gordon Vernon (G) on 16/03/21 aged 84, High Wycombe

Michael John Vickars (C) on 22/12/20 aged 80, Surrey

Frederick Brian Wall (T) on 26/12/20 aged 74, Surrey

Terence Richard Watts (T) on 31/10/20 aged 81, Gwent

Ronald James Whiting (T) on 08/11/20 aged 94, Kelso

Philip William Winterton (G) on 17/02/21 aged 86.



Time for a Chuckle

A husband comes home after work to his wife still in her pyjamas and the house is a mess. He asked her what the matter was. She answered, “you know you ask what I do all day, well today I didn’t do it”.

A cowboy, who just moved to Montana from Texas, walks into a bar and orders three mugs of Bud. He sits in the back of the room, drinking a sip out of each one in turn. When he finishes them, he comes back to the bar and orders three more. The bartender approaches and tells the cowboy, “You know, a mug goes flat after I draw it. It would taste better if you bought one at a time.”

The cowboy replies, “Well, you see, I have two brothers. One is in Arizona, the other is in Colorado.

When we all left our home in Texas, we promised that we’d drink this way to remember the days when we drank together. So, I’m drinking one beer for each of my brothers and one for myself.”

The bartender admits that this is a nice custom, and leaves it there.

The cowboy becomes a regular in the bar, and always drinks the same way. He orders three mugs and drinks them in turn. One day, he comes in and only orders two mugs. All the regulars take notice and fall silent. When he comes back to the bar for the second round, the bartender says, “I don’t want to intrude on your grief, but I wanted to offer my condolences on your loss.” The cowboy looks quite puzzled for a moment, then a light dawned in his eyes and he laughed. “Oh, no, everybody’s just fine,” he explains. It’s just that my wife and I joined the Baptist Church and I had to quit drinking. It hasn’t affected my brothers though.”



Quotes

One word frees us all of the weight and pain of life. That word is ‘Love’. *Sophocles.*

Today is the tomorrow we worried about yesterday and all is well. *Taken from a notice in The Repair Shop, a TV programme.*

Constant use will not wear ragged the fabric of friendship. *Dorothy Parker.*

Editors Last Word

An English nine letter word can keep making another English word by removing one letter at a time. First: Startling remove l gives Starting, then t for staring, a for string, r for sting, t for sing, g for sin, s for in and finally n gives I. Words are fascinating!

Until next time take care of yourselves.

June Parham McCullough Editor

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