

RETIREE NEWS

A Biannual Publication for Retirees of all Chevron UK Companies



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Editor's Chat

Before I start, I wish to apologise for a mistake on page 8 of the May issue of Retiree News. The article My Time in Texaco and Beyond was provided by Paul Donaldson and not John Donaldson.

Sorry Paul.

Before I continue, please read the following Announcement from Ashley Sanders.

Announcement regarding Retiree News

Ashley Sanders

"It is with regret that I have to announce that this will be the last issue of Retiree News. The reason is that the Corporation continues to evolve. Following initiatives to further streamline activities and focus resources on supporting business priorities, and given the further reduction of the workforce in the UK and globally, it is no longer possible to support the production of the Retiree News going forward.

I would like to thank June McCullough for her wonderful professionalism and efforts in producing this over the last few years and also to wish everyone all the very best in the future".

My first issue was in September 2007, having been asked to take it over by Ian Macfarlane, who started Retiree News many moons ago. He was a real character and it was important to me that Ian thought I was capable of taking over this publication. Remember when it was monthly, then quarterly and latterly half yearly. Times really do change.

Of course, for me, I will be sorry not to continue as it has been my pleasure to create each issue. However, maybe it is time. It is becoming harder for me to obtain stories from many of you. I do thank each of you that have contributed over the past years. Another reason is that the entrants taking part in the quizzes has diminished to a very small number. There you have it. It may sound glib, but everything has a life span and this is another item that has to cease.

You all have my contact details (see bottom of this issue). If you feel like a friendly chat to let me know how you are, I will be happy to hear from you, preferably by email. As I have said before, I do not hold any contact details, data protection and all that, but if you want to, please keep in touch.

Maurice and I wish you all every good wish and hope you stay as healthy as you can so that you can enjoy life to the full.

My Varied Career with Chevron over 30 years

John Holding

I joined Texaco in Knightsbridge Green in November 1980, but not in a conventional department and not actually working on UK business. I had applied to join Texaco Denmark Inc., which was an upstream non-operating partner in the consortium that held oil and gas licences

in the Danish sector of the North Sea; Texaco had a 15% interest and, as it happened, Chevron also held 15%. In those early days, we collaborated formally with Chevron as they were our agent for accounting and tax matters related to our registered company address in Copenhagen, plus for day-to-day liaison with the operator, Maersk Oil and Gas, a subsidiary of A P Moeller - no doubt well-known to our shipping colleagues.



Shell was also a partner in the group (which was formally designated the DUC - 'Danish Underground Consortium') and Shell tended to take the lead in advising Maersk who were new to this line of business back in the day. This was an exciting era in the UK North Sea sector too - Texaco's Tartan oilfield started production in 1981.

My role with Texaco Denmark was as Senior Petroleum Engineer, which came after my Degree in Chemical Engineering from Loughborough University of Technology in 1969 and after experience with the UK subsidiary of Fluor Corp. (Houston-based) in offices in Finsbury Square and then with MacDermott-Hudson, a subsidiary of J Ray MacDermot of Louisiana, at their offices in Ealing. The 1970s were an exciting era for the North Sea and the offshore industry in general, but I wanted to join an international oil company rather than be involved purely in engineering.

The little Texaco Denmark group were moved from No.1 Knightsbridge Green into offices at 195 Knightsbridge along with the Oil Trading group, Tankships and Chemicals or Lubes? Our group consisted of the manager Jan Muelder, his secretary Dorothy Sawyer and an American geologist and a reservoir engineer, plus me. Naturally, there were times when, usually late in the day, I had to go across to Knightsbridge Green to take an urgent Telex for transmission that would have that day's date on it. Luckily, new technology in the shape of Fax machines was coming into service, so we became modernised and independent in 195K.

Our offices were directly opposite the Hyde Park Barracks of the Household Cavalry, with over 250 horses resident in the first-floor stables looking directly across at us (while we were hard at work!) Interestingly, if you were in the office before 8am you would often see two huge lorries and trailers delivering bales of hay to the barracks, they would do a 3-point turn right in the middle of Knightsbridge and reverse up the ramp to the first floor to unload all the bales Needless to say, the rush-hour traffic and

the taxis were annoyed about this but bus passengers seated upstairs had a wonderful spectacle.

In those days I became more involved in planning and budgeting and was duly transferred to the UK upstream business proper, becoming Strategic Planning Manager for Texaco Ltd under Simon Cheifetz in 1989. This continued until November 1994 when, for one year, I was appointed as Assistant to the Chairman of Texaco Limited, Bob Solberg. This was quite a different situation as my instructions there were to shadow him, take notes, prepare presentations, carry bags, but not say anything in public, however afterwards, to offer him open feedback on how it all went.

By now we were in 1 Westferry Circus and I recall that I was often under time pressure with preparing PowerPoint slides and notes for presentations he had to give. One day, I had been working on several revisions of slides and it was getting on for 5pm when he called me in to give me papers he had scribbled notes across with all sorts of comments. He told me to stay on and get them done as he was leaving for his flat (which was still in Knightsbridge) and then at 7:30 that evening departing with his driver for Heathrow and a flight to New York. Luckily I got the work done and via the office's Receptionist, got a motorbike courier organised to take the updated package over to his flat for delivery in time!

Another interesting event I remember was an executive visit by Texaco CEO Glenn Tilton, plus a small group of executives and wives to London and Bob had arranged an evening theatre visit to the Aldwych Theatre. He wanted me along too, as his assistant. We were there in plenty of time and all went upstairs to the bar where Bob told me to order champagne all round. I went to the bar and did this when I was told, 'cash only, sir'. By a stroke of luck, but possibly with foresight (I had thought that I might need cash for purchasing programmes for the group or for taxi fares), I had £200 in my pocket, which covered the champagne. A few days later, Bob reimbursed me, plus a tip!



These varied experiences all proved to be worthwhile because in late 1995, Bob appointed me to be the Upstream Country Manager for Texaco Denmark Inc. in Copenhagen. My wife Brenda willingly gave up her teaching job in North London and we embarked on what turned out to be eleven years of foreign assignments from Copenhagen to Kuwait to Lagos, Nigeria. In each case, my boss was back in London to whom I reported formally, but in reality, I had a fairly free rein in my then various roles of tactical and strategic planning, plus business analysis, where I was part of the Texaco international Planning Manager's cohort. This meant annual coordination trips to Texaco's head office, Harrison, White Plains, NY and then, from 2000, following my posting to Kuwait, visits to Chevron's head office in San Ramon, CA.

These assignments were each totally different in terms of the country, culture, religion, language and adherence to the rule of law (or not). The Kuwait posting was actually at a location an hour's drive south of the city and the airport to the camp of Saudi Arabian Texaco on the sea edge of the Persian Gulf in the 'Partitioned Neutral Zone' (PNZ). This piece of barren desert was on the border with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the oil rights were owned 50%/50% by the two countries.

The camp contained the American-style residences situated right on the beach, sports facilities (swimming pool, tennis courts and a golf course, but all alcohol-free, along with the admin offices and the oil pipelines, storage tanks, pumps and offshore loading facilities for oil tankers. Meanwhile, the Wafra oilfields were a 1-1/2 hours drive across the sand (mind the camels) deep into the desert.

My wife took on a job in Kuwait City, being driven there and back daily by a private driver, which involved educating primary school teachers to UK standards of competence and validating them for recognised qualifications.

Kuwait at the time was still engaged with Iraq in the Gulf War and consequently, there was a strong UK military presence and this offered socialising with the ladies, playing Bridge for example, or trips with the American Women's Group and events at the British High Commission, etc. Brenda learnt Arabic too.

This foreign assignment was over the year 2000 and I was leading the 'Y2K' initiative to avoid any potential perils from the millennium calendar change, but nothing happened in the end apart from the takeover of Texaco by Chevron. At this time, it was more of a worry for us expats, but we were quite quickly assured that we should continue doing what we were doing under the same terms and conditions until further notice. In retrospect, it had always been difficult to find employees willing to be assigned to the remoteness of the PNZ (where it was 50 °C most days and nights) and so we all just carried on.

Then, in August 2002, on a home visit to the UK, I was told that I was to be reassigned to the tropical beauty spot of Lagos, Nigeria, working for Chevron Nigeria Limited as their planning manager for the oil fields at Escravos in the Niger delta. My location was in the company's offices in the compound, which was a highly secure location due to the lawless nature and chaos of the city. However, Brenda and the ladies used to venture out with a company driver and a police guard (plus AK47 rifle) to play golf at the old British colonial club in downtown Lagos; the 5-mile journey could easily be done in 45 minutes.

As it happened, after two years (of four), a major gas gathering project was being evaluated to capture the otherwise flared natural gas from the oil wells in the Escravos region and a joint effort by Chevron, Conoco-Phillips, the Italian ENI plus the Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC) was formed in a separate office location to create the Brass LNG Project. I became the Corporate Planning Manager and this required several trips over the next two years to Houston, where the technology and capital cost estimates were being worked up.



At the end of the four years in May 2006, I was relocated back to the UK and, by a happy coincidence, was assigned to a similar project team working on another LNG project evaluation consisting of British Gas, Shell, NNPC and Chevron. This was in temporary project offices in London, Victoria, not far from St James's Park tube station. This was all very convenient as our house was one hour outside of London and I had feared that relocation might mean moving to Aberdeen because my experience was in the upstream side of the business. Anyway, I continued in London until early 2010 and took retirement then after 30 years with Texaco and Chevron.

Even so, my strong association with the American upstream energy industry had offered me the opportunity to be involved with the US Association for Energy Economics, which I had spasmodically participated in through their annual conferences in various locations around the States. At their conference in Washington DC in 2011, I was approached and invited to organise a poster presentation competition for students with a single cash prize. This was to complement the regular paper presentations and plenary speakers which are at such conferences, plus to encourage more student memberships. Today, I have been doing this annually for twelve years (two missed during COVID) and with the \$1,000 prize, it has become very popular and well-contested. Obviously, I enjoy this involvement and it enables me to travel annually to the States and to reconnect with old friends and colleagues and of course, Chevron, including ex-Texaco ones, some of whom have held senior offices in the USAEE. This present year, the conference is to be held in Fort Worth TX, and I expect to continue my contribution further to the next generation.

Anson Flight or no

Peter Franklin

I was in the Signals workshop in 74 Squadron's hangar at RAF Horsham St Faiths (now Norwich Airport). I was watching an Avro Anson being prepped and ready for flight. The Anson was a twin-engined monoplane, a reliable old design with lots of windows and perfect for today's navigation training flight. I had been promised a trip in it if there was a spare seat. The arrangement was that I would watch for the pilot's signals, a nod if there was a seat for me and thumbs up if all checks were complete and he was ready for me to get on board. The Anson was only 30 yards or so from the window and we could both see each other clearly.

The engines were started and gradually revs were increased to warm them up. A nod signified that there was a seat for me and I eagerly awaited the thumbs up. A big grin on the pilot's face and I was delighted to see thumbs up. Then I realised that the pilot's grin had turned into a grimace with frantic activity in the cockpit. I thought I was imagining things, but I was convinced that the Anson was slowly sinking lower. It was definitely! The undercarriage was retracting and the propellers were getting nearer and nearer to the ground.

The engines continued to run at high speed and suddenly, the side of the hangar and my window were being sprayed with gravel. As the aircraft inexorably sank lower, the propellers dug in deeper and deeper and the gravel became quite large lumps of tarmac, but the engines continued to run. I was completely mesmerised by the events unfolding and could not tear myself away, even though it was becoming increasingly dangerous standing at the window.

It was fascinating to watch as the propellers finally curled neatly around the engine cowlings and hit the ground for the last time.

Both engines stopped dead with loud bangs and clouds of smoke and I quickly moved away from the window to avoid embarrassing the pilot. My trip had gone up in smoke. Nothing was ever heard about the accident; it was never discussed, so I thought it best if I didn't ask questions. I do not know if it was pilot error or if some safety device had failed catastrophically, but I never did get a flight or saw the Anson again.

Thanks Peter and condolences on the passing of your wife. Take care. Ed!

Words & Music – Recipe for Retirement

Phil Howells

Texting our Editor the other day raised the question from June 'Just how long have you been retired?' That focuses the mind somewhat and despite the thought that we are all only as old as we feel, it's a bit frightening to think the answer is 23 years!

I first joined the Operations Department together with a typical bunch of great characters that Texaco recruited to man Pembroke Cracking Company – including a mechanic and a carpenter, a teacher and even an organ builder, all to be trained 'the Texaco way', plus an experienced group of Operators from the adjacent Texaco plant, Llanelli Chemicals and the partners Gulf Refinery over the Haven.

Sadly, some have passed on and weren't able to enjoy a long retirement so richly earned. Not so with yours truly, who, as many of my colleagues would tell you, was able to nurture a love of words and music thanks to a highly supportive management at all levels.

Welsh Male Choirs are synonymous with choral singing and right from the start of employment, I could continue my membership of Côr Meibion De Cymru – that's The South Wales Male Choir to those not blessed with the language of heaven (including me!). Texaco sponsorship and extra commitment by the company in the Texaco Young Musician of Wales Competition ensured not just financial security for us,

but wonderful performances over ten years with some of the most accomplished instrumentalists in Wales. We have been fortunate to sing in some of the greatest concert halls and cathedrals of the world, including Sydney Opera House, Roy Thompson Hall, Toronto and the Royal Albert Hall, together with Notre Dame, Paris, St John the Divine, New York and not forgetting our own St. Davids in Pembrokeshire, virtually every year since 1987. Last year as Concert Presenter, I was honoured and privileged to read the Message of Greetings to all present from our Royal Patron, His Majesty King Charles III; that's a memory to treasure for sure.



All good things come to an end eventually and while The Choir continues – 28 foreign tours to date with Madeira and the Irish Republic this past year – the TYMoW Competition ended through company changes of ownership. Now being only one of three founder members from a choir of over 500 in 1983, my role focuses on, among other things, safeguarding our Archive. Don't much like 'filing' but history is a different thing. A fascination with research and truth led me to discover the real story behind the American occupation of South Wales in WWII during the build-up to the D-Day Landings and subsequent operations. Believe it or not, 143,870 GIs and SeaBees landed in South Wales ports and Avonmouth during the twelve months leading up to 6 June 1944. Many occupied camps here for training and on the eve of the greatest amphibious operation in history, 42,000 troops in the single largest force of all sailed down the Bristol Channel as the Pre-loaded Build-up.

You can read more in 'Oxwich To Omaha' published on Amazon. It's been reviewed as 'a work of scholarship', which is a bit of over-praise, me thinks.



I would have preferred a British publisher, but as Covid was still rife in 2020, I had to go elsewhere, having spent 25 years researching the subject, little realising the huge amount of protectionism that goes on here – Trump clearly learned a lot from us!

Incidentally, a sequel is in preparation, which includes much detail regarding the steps taken in the US and here to get fuel to Europe, both before and after D-Day. It's a big story in itself and how amazing that I still, even in retirement, seem to be reading and learning about the oil industry. A little matter of a second eye cataract to sort out first and a trip to OZ with wife Ros to see our daughter Claire over there. Oh - and seeking another publisher over here!

Phil Howells. Former PPC for PCC!

Gardening

June McCullough

As many of you may be aware, I am a very keen gardener. I love working in a garden and I love visiting them, my favourite being RHS Wisley. It is great being out in the fresh air, enjoying being, whether working or visiting. I read a lot of gardening books too and found the following quotes which I want to share with you here.

There's little risk of becoming overly proud of one's garden; by its very nature, it is humbling. It has a way of keeping you on your knees.

Joanne Berwik



My garden is my most beautiful masterpiece.

Claude Monet

One of the worst mistakes you can make as a gardener is to think you're in charge.

Janet Gillespie

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

Very true and made me chuckle. Ed!

?? QUIZ

Answers to the quiz in the November 2021 issue of Retiree News were:

1 May tree or Hawthorn, **2** Holly, **3** Lemon: the plant's common name is lemon balm, **4** Fuchsia, **5** Fronds, **6** It was true but not now, so True or False would be accepted, **7** Sand, silt, clay and hummus, **8** Mulching, **9** c) 1913, **10** Hamamelis, **11** Nebuchadnezzar II, **12** Laburnum, **13** 1800s (1804), **14** The Rothschilds, **15** They grow partly or wholly in water, **16** Tea, **17** In a pond, **18** Apples or pears, **19** House Sparrow, **20** Good Friday/Spring

The winners were:

Rosemary Wenzelul, St. Albans. Lois Herrington, Portugal.

That's All Folks, no more quizzes. Ed!

90 Birthday

Roderick Duff (T) Peter Franklin (T)

Anniversary

Leonard and Josephine Jarrold celebrate 70 years of marriage on 22 October. Leonard started with Regent Oil, then moved to Texaco and finally to Chevron. A fantastic milestone to reach and we all wish you, many congratulations.

RIDDLES

(answers towards the end)

- 1 What comes once in a year, twice in a week and never in a day
- 2 What has a neck but no head
- 3 What starts with a P, ends with an E and has thousands of letters
- 4 What can fill a room but takes up no space
- 5 What runs all around a backyard yet never moves
- 6 What gets sharper the more you use it
- 7 What can you serve but never eat
- 8 What has many teeth, but cannot bite
- 9 What can you catch, but not throw
- 10 What has words but cannot speak.
- 11 What is so fragile that saying its name breaks it
- 12 The more you take the more you leave behind
- 13 What begins with T, ends with T and has T in it
- 14 What can only live where there is light, but dies if the light shines on it
- 15 I have branches, but not fruit, trunk or leaves
- 16 You can see one in June, twice in November but not at all in May
- 17 What begins with an E, but only has one letter
- 18 How many months in a year have 28 days
- 19 What can travel around the world whilst staying in the corner
- 20 What has a head, a tail, but does not have a body
- 21 Why was the maths book sad
- 22 What is orange and sounds like a parrot
- 23 Why can't a nose be twelve inches long
- 24 What did one plate say to the other plate
- 25 I'm light as a feather yet the strongest person cannot hold me
- 26 What flies without wings
- 27 What goes up but never comes down
- 28 What has one eye but cannot see
- 29 What question can you never answer yes to
- 30 What is full of holes but still holds water

Thought Provoking

This is right on the nose – read it slowly. I don't know who wrote it, but I am guessing it was a senior! I first started reading this very fast until I reached the third sentence. I stopped and started over reading slower and thinking about every word. This is very thought-provoking, makes you stop and think.,

AND THEN IT IS WINTER You know time has a way of moving quickly and catching you unaware of the passing years. It seems just 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 the 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. But, 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. Yet here it is, my friends are retired and getting grey, they move slower and I see an older person now. Some are in better and some worse shape than me and I see the great change. They are not like the ones that I remember who were young and vibrant but, like me, their age is beginning to show and we are now those older folks that we used to see and thought we'd 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's mandatory! Cause if I don't on my own free will, I just fall asleep where I sit!

Now I enter into 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 and I'm not sure how long it will last, but this I know that when it's over on this earth it's not 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 many things I'm happy to have done. It's all in a lifetime. So, if you're not in your winter yet, let me remind you that it will be here faster than you think. So 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, 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, live it well, enjoy today – do something fun – be happy and have a great day!

Remember

"It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver."

"Live happy in this year and every year."

Lastly, consider the following:

Today is the oldest you've ever been, yet the youngest you'll ever be – enjoy this day while it lasts

Your kids are becoming you.

Going out is good, coming home is better!

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

You realize you're never going to be really good at anything.

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, old friends.

Stay well, "old friend!" Send this on to other "Old Friends!" and let them laugh in agreement.

It's Not What You Gather, but What You Scatter That Tells What Kind of Life You Have Lived.

How many of these observations can you identify with?

The biggest joke on mankind is that computers have begun asking humans to prove they aren't a robot.

When a kid says "Daddy, I want mommy", that's the kid's version of "I'd like to speak to your supervisor."

I don't mean to interrupt people, but I just randomly remember things and get really excited. I thought growing old would take longer.

It's weird being the same age as old people.

I'm at that delusional age where I think everyone my age looks way older than I do.

Just once I want a username and password prompt to say CLOSE ENOUGH.

Do you ever wake up in the morning and look in the mirror and think, "That can't be accurate.?!"

Last night, the internet stopped working, so I spent a few hours with my family. They seem like good people.



Weight loss goal: To be able to clip my toenails and breathe at the same time.

Some of my friends exercise every day, meanwhile, I am watching a show I don't like because the remote fell on the floor.

I just got a present labelled - From Mom and Dad, and you know Dad has no idea what's inside.

The Green Thing

Anon

Yesterday after shopping in our local supermarket, I was in the queue at the Check Out and heard when the young cashier suggested to the much older lady that she should bring her own grocery bags, because plastic bags are not good for the environment. The woman apologised to the young girl and then sighed, "We didn't have this 'green thing' back in my earlier days." The young clerk responded, "That's our problem today. You folk didn't do enough to save our environment for future generations."

The older lady said "Ahh yes you're right -- our generation didn't have the "green thing" in its day." She sighed then continued:

Back then, we returned milk bottles, lemonade bottles & beer bottles to the shops. The shops then sent them back to the plant to be washed, sterilized & refilled, so those same bottles were used over and over, thus they were really recycled. But we didn't have the "green thing" back in our day. Grocery stores put our groceries into brown paper bags that we reused for numerous things. Most memorable was the use of brown paper bags as book covers for our school books. This was to ensure that public property (the books provided for our use by the school) were not defaced by our scribbles. Then we were able to personalise our books on their brown paper bag/covers. But too bad, we didn't do the "green thing" back then.

I remember how we walked up stairs because we didn't have an escalator in every store or office building; walked to the grocery store and didn't climb into a 300-horsepower machine every time we had to go 200 yards. But she was right. We didn't have the "green thing" in our day. Back then we washed the baby's nappies because we didn't have the throw-away kind. We dried clothes on a line, not in an energy-gobbling machine burning up 220 volts. Wind and solar power really did dry our clothes back in our days. Kids got hand-me-down clothes from their brothers or sisters, not always brand-new clothing. But that young lady is right; we didn't have the "green thing" back in our day.

Back then we had one radio, in the house - not a TV in every room and if anyone did own a TV, it had a small screen the size of a handkerchief (remember them?), not a screen the size of a football pitch. When cooking we blended and stirred by hand coz we didn't have electric machines to do everything for us. When we packaged a fragile item to send by post, we used layers of old newspapers to cushion it, not Styrofoam or plastic bubble wrap. Back then, we didn't fire up an engine and burn gasoline just to cut the lawn. We used a push mower that ran on human power. We exercised by working so we didn't need to go to a health club to run on treadmills that operate on electricity. But she's right; we didn't have the "green thing" back then.

We drank from a tap or fountain when we were thirsty instead of using a cup or a plastic bottle every time we had a drink of water. We refilled writing pens with ink instead of buying a new pen, and we replaced the razor blade in a razor instead of throwing away the whole razor just because the blade got dull. But we didn't have the "green thing" back then. Back then, people took the bus and kids rode bikes to school or walked instead of turning their mothers into a 24-hour taxi service in the family's expensive car or van, which cost what a whole house did before the "green thing".



Oh and we had one electrical outlet in a room, not an entire bank of sockets to power a dozen appliances. And we didn't need a computerised gadget to receive a signal beamed from satellites 23,000 miles out in space in order to find the nearest leisure park.

But it's so sad this current generation laments how wasteful we old folks were just because we didn't have the "green thing" back then. I think you should forward this on to another selfish old person who needs a lesson in conservation from some smarty-pants young person. We don't like being old in the first place, so it doesn't take much to annoy us, especially from a tattooed, multiple-pierced, smarty-pants who can't make change without the cash register telling them how much.

Poetry Corner

The Poppy

I am not a badge of honour
 I am not a racist smear
 I am not a fashion statement
 To be worn but once a year
 I am not a glorification
 Of a conflict or war
 I am not a paper ornament
 A token, I am More
 I am a living memory
 Of a father or a son
 A permanent reminder
 Of each and every one
 I'm paper or enamel
 I'm old or shining new
 I'm a way of saying thank you
 To every one of you
 I am a simple poppy
 A reminder to you all

That courage, faith and honour
 Will stand where heroes fall

I Still Believe...

I believe in miracles
 And dreams that will come true,
 And I believe in happiness
 And friendship, through and through
 I believe that when you cry
 Your tears are not in vain
 And when you're sad and lonely,
 Someone knows that you're in pain.
 I believe that when we laugh
 A sparkle starts to shine
 And before you know
 These sparks will spread
 From more hearts than just mine.
 I believe the gifts you have
 Are there for you to share,
 And when you give them from the heart,
 The whole world knows you care.
 I believe that if you give,
 Even just to one,
 That gift will grow in magnitude
 Before the day is done.
 I believe that comfort comes
 From giving part of me,
 And if I share with others,
 There's more for all to see.
 I believe that love is still
 The greatest gift of all,
 And when it's given from the heart
 Love will conquer all.

Thinking of You

When you are lonely, I wish you love

When you're down, I wish you joy

When you're troubled, I wish you peace.

When things are complicated, I wish you simple beauty.

When things are chaotic, I wish you inner silence.

When things look empty, I wish you hope.

Farmers Donkey

Anon

One day a farmer's donkey fell into a well. The animal cried piteously for hours as the farmer tried to figure out what to do. Finally, he decided the animal was old, and the well needed to be covered up anyway; it just wasn't worth it to retrieve the donkey. He invited all his neighbours to come over and help him. They all grabbed a shovel and began to shovel dirt into the well. At first, the donkey realized what was happening and cried horribly. Then, to everyone's amazement he quieted down.

A few shovel loads later, the farmer finally looked down the well. He was astonished at what he saw. With each shovel of dirt that hit his back, the donkey was doing something amazing. He would shake it off and take a step up. As the farmer's neighbours continued to shovel dirt on top of the animal, he would shake it off and take a step up. Pretty soon, everyone was amazed as the donkey stepped up over the edge of the well and happily trotted off!

MORAL:

Life is going to shovel dirt on you, all kinds of dirt. The trick to getting out of the well is to shake it off and take a step up. Each of our troubles is a stepping stone. We can get out of the deepest wells just by not stopping, never giving up! Shake it off and take a step up.

Remember the five simple rules to be happy:

1. Free your heart from hatred - Forgive.
2. Free your mind from worries - Most never happens.
3. Live simply and appreciate what you have.
4. Give more.
5. Expect less from people but more from yourself.

Interesting Facts:

Stewardesses is the longest word typed with only the left hand

And 'lollipop' is the longest word typed with your right hand

No word in the English language rhymes with month, orange, silver, or purple

"Dreamt" is the only English word that ends in the letters "mt".

Our eyes are always the same size from birth, but our noses and ears never stop growing.

The sentence: "The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog" - uses every letter of the alphabet

The words 'racecar,' 'kayak' and 'level' are the same whether they are read left to right or right to left (palindromes).



There are only four words in the English language which end in “dous”: tremendous, horrendous, stupendous, and hazardous

There are two words in the English language that have all five vowels in order: “abstemious” and “facetious.”

Typewriter is the longest word that can be made using the letters only on one row of the keyboard.

A cat has 32 muscles in each ear.

A goldfish has a memory span of three seconds.

A “jiffy” is an actual unit of time for 1/100th of a second.

A shark is the only fish that can blink with both eyes.

A snail can sleep for three years.

Almonds are a member of the peach family.

An ostrich’s eye is bigger than its brain.

Babies are born without kneecaps. They don’t appear until the child reaches 2 to 6 years of age.

February 1865 is the only month in recorded history not to have a full moon.

In the last 4,000 years, no new animals have been domesticated.

If the population of China walked past you, eight abreast, the line would never end because of the rate of reproduction.

Leonardo Da Vinci invented the scissors.

Peanuts are one of the ingredients of dynamite!

Rubber bands last longer when refrigerated.

The average person’s left hand does 56% of the typing.

The cruise liner, QE 2 moves only six inches for each gallon of diesel that it burns

The microwave was invented after a researcher walked by a radar tube and a chocolate bar melted in his pocket.

(Good thing he did that.)

The winter of 1932 was so cold that Niagara Falls froze completely solid.

There are more chickens than people in the world.

Winston Churchill was born in a ladies’ room during a dance.

Women blink nearly twice as much as men.

Bonus! All the ants in Africa weigh more than ALL the Elephants!

Now you know (a little) more than you did before!



Time for a Chuckle

Sent in by Chris Belcher

My wife looked in the mirror and said ‘I feel horrible, old, fat and ugly. I need you to give me a compliment’. I replied ‘Your eyesight is perfect’. Then the fight started.

My wife said ‘If you won the Lottery, would you still love me?’ ‘Of course’ I said. ‘I’d miss you, but I’d still love you’.

A friend was telling me about the present he’d just bought his wife to celebrate their Silver Wedding Anniversary. I asked him what it was. “A table. A really beautiful table. I really hope she likes it - even though she doesn’t play snooker.”

A pensioner drove his brand new BMW to 100 mph, looking in his rear view mirror, he saw a police car behind him. He floored it to 140 , then 150, ... then 155, ... Suddenly he thought,

“I’m too old for this nonsense !” So he pulled over to the side of the road and waited for the police car to catch up with him. The officer walked up to him, looked at his watch and said,

“Sir, my shift ends in ten minutes. Today is Friday and I’m taking off for the weekend with my family. If you can give me a good reason that I’ve never heard before, why you were speeding... I’ll let you go.” The Man looked very seriously at the policeman, and replied:

“Years ago, my wife ran off with a policeman, I thought you were bringing her back!”

The Cop left saying, “ Have a good day, Sir”.

OBITUARIES

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

Albert Victor Adams (C) on 01/01/25 aged 79, Aberdeen

Richard Cameron Aitken (G) on 10/10/25 aged 95, Dunblane

Mike Atkinson (T) on 11/02/25 aged 89, Milford Haven

Anthony Richard Barlow (T) on 10/12/24 aged 84, Tamworth

Peter Edwin Berriman (T) on 14/01/25 aged 92, Winslow

Cyril Birch (T) on 02/01/25 aged 96, Middleton

Derek Arthur Bond (T) on 07/10/24 aged 94, Worcestershire

Robert Aylmer Brewis (T) on 28/01/25 aged 84, West Sussex

David Roger Brice (T) on 15/02/25 aged 76, Swindon

Marjorie L J Carter (T) on 03/01/25 aged 94, Chelmondiston

Keith Hugh Connor (T) on 16/03/25 aged 90, Dyfed

Alan James Davies (G) on 10/01/25 aged 97, Sir Benfro

David Emlyn Davies (T) on 01/11/24 aged 79, Staffordshire

Ian Stewart Dempster (T) on 22/11/24 aged 89, Edinburgh

Terence John Donnelly (G) on 19/03/25 aged 86, Nr Penarth

Sandra Rosalind Dukelow (G) on 10/08/24 aged 83, Ireland

Paul Gibbons (T) on 14/09/24 aged 91, North Shields

James Hadley (C) on 28/01/25 aged 74, Epsom

Peter Brian Hamilton (G) on 17/06/24 aged 83, Helston

Terence Sidney Hann (G) on 29/11/24 aged 85, Evesham

Charles Robert Harling (T) on 13/10/24 aged 92, London

Christopher John Harris (G) on 15/02/25 aged 80, Surrey

Leslie Smith Hartill (G) on 24/11/24 aged 91, Milford Haven

Barry John Herbert (T) on 29/08/24 aged 74, Pembroke

George Malcolm Higgs (G) on 08/07/24 aged 91, Burton on Trent

Steven Holloway (T) on 30/01/25 aged 67, West Sussex

Alex P Hunt (T) on 12/06/24 aged 66, Radcliffe

John Harries James (G) on 19/12/24 aged 81, Haverfordwest

Russell Kenneth Jones (Std) on 28/08/24 aged 60, Pembrokeshire

Ethel Lena Keevil (T) on 19/12/24 aged 96, Hailsham

Richard J Kelly (T) on 30/01/25 aged 76, Dyfed

Anthony Kennedy (G) on 09/09/23 aged 90, Worcestershire

Grazyna K W Lapczynska (T) on 04/01/24 aged 61, London

William McNab (G) on 13/11/24 aged 88, Liverpool

Ronald McNeill (C) on 22/11/24 aged 77, Perthshire

Heather Miller (T) on 25/08/24 aged 66, Aberdeenshire

Marion Thomson Miller (C) on 20/09/24 aged 66, Melksham

Peter Miller (C) on 18/09/24 aged 85, Clacton on Sea

John Norbury Milnes (T) on 05/10/24 aged 88, Harrogate

Christopher J Morris (T) on 05/11/24 aged 77, Cornwall

Michael Ernest Mothersole (T) on 04/12/24 aged 82, Berkhamstead

Terry Nunn (T) on 04/09/24 aged 85, Cuxton

Nicola Elizabeth Owen Kempt (G) on 14/10/24 aged 64, Cheltenham

Victor Paterson (G) on 01/05/24 aged 77, London

Nina Popat (G) on 15/05/24 aged 70, London

Geoffrey Alfred Rowley (G) on 11/03/24 aged 94, Canada

Alan David Saville (T) on 15/03/25 aged 91, Billericay

John Dudley Smith (C) on 05/01/25 aged 86, Aberdeenshire

Raymond Smith (C) on 18/12/24 aged 87, York

Victor Paul Starkey (T) on 05/10/24 aged 83, Cambridge

Ian Stuart Swift (T) on 10/08/24 aged 80, Milford Haven

James Taylor (T) on 24/01/25 aged 88, Greater Manchester

Jean Van Den Berg (C) on 17/12/24 aged 93, Surrey

Rekha Vokketur (T) on 27/10/24 aged 90, Harrow

James Edward Warner (G) on 14/10/24 aged 93, Kidderminster

Barry Webb (G) on 18/04/24 aged 95, Suffolk

Ernest Richard Wheeler (T) on 22/10/24 aged 88, Ascot

William Wilson (G) on 27/11/24 aged 97, Berkshire

Susan Jane Wright (C) on 27/02/25 aged 65, Lancashire



They call us “The Elderly”

from Chris Bayley

We were born in the 40-50-60's.

We grew up in the 50-60-70's.

We studied in the 60-70-80's.

We were dating in the 70-80-90's.

We got married and discovered the world in the 70-80-90's.

We venture into the 80-90's.

We stabilised in the 2000's.

We got wiser in the 2010's.

And we are going firmly through and beyond 2020.

Turns out we've lived through eight different decades...

Two different centuries...

Two different millennia...

We have gone from the telephone with an operator for long-distance calls to video calls to anywhere in the world.

We have gone from slides to YouTube, from vinyl records to online music, from handwritten letters to email and WhatsApp.

From live matches on the radio, to black and white TV, colour TV and then to 3D HD TV.

We went to the Video store and now we watch Netflix.

We got to know the first computers, punch cards, floppy disks and now we have gigabytes and megabytes on our smartphones.

We wore shorts throughout our childhood and then long trousers, Oxfords, flares, shell suits & blue jeans.

We dodged infantile paralysis, meningitis, polio, tuberculosis, swine flu and now COVID-19.

We rode skates, tricycles, bicycles, mopeds, petrol or diesel cars and now we drive hybrids or electric.

Yes, we've been through a lot, but what a great life we've had!

They could describe us as “exennials,” people who were born in that world of the fifties, who had an analogue childhood and a digital adulthood.

We've kind of “Seen-It-All”!

Our generation has literally lived through and witnessed more than any other in every dimension of life.

It is our generation that has literally adapted to “CHANGE.”

A big round of applause to all the members of a very special generation, which will be UNIQUE!

Class dismissed



Quotes

If Japanese Wisdom

If it's not yours, don't take it

If it's not right, don't do it

If it's not true, don't say it

If you don't know it, be quiet.

People may not remember exactly what you did, or what you said, but they will always remember how you made them feel.

Life takes you to some interesting places

Love brings you home.

Anon



Answers to RIDDLES

- 1 The letter 'E'
- 2 A Bottle
- 3 Post Office
- 4 Light (or air)
- 5 A fence
- 6 Your Brain
- 7 A Tennis Ball
- 8 A Comb
- 9 A Cold
- 10 A Book
- 11 Silence
- 12 Footsteps
- 13 Teapot
- 14 A Shadow
- 15 A Bank
- 16 The letter E
- 17 Envelope
- 18 All of the twelve
- 19 Stamp
- 20 A Coin
- 21 It had too many problems
- 22 A carrot
- 23 Because then it would be a foot
- 24 Lunch is on me
- 25 Breath
- 26 Time
- 27 Your age
- 28 A needle
- 29 Are you asleep
- 30 A sponge

Editors Last Word

It's not what we have in life, but who we have in our life that really matters.

Thank you for being in mine. June

June Parham McCullough

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So, it's goodbye from me and it's goodbye from Him!

(Thanks to the Two Ronnies for this and the Him in this instance is my lovely Maurice.)