

DISTILLATIONS

February 2006

Dear Member,

The members of the DC Retirees' Association Committee hope that you will enjoy the new format of the newsletter. I would like to thank all the contributors to this issue of Distillations. Please send any comments or articles to me at the address on the last page

Val Caple (Membership Secretary)

Five (41 actually) Go Off to Scarborough (with apologies to Enid Blyton)

The months of planning have ended as 41 of us board one of Edwards new blue 56-seater coaches and set off on our latest adventure – Scarborough.

First stop Strensham Services for a 'comfort break' and a chance to stock up on newspapers and provisions for the journey then it's back on the coach and off to Chesterfield for a 2-hour lunch stop. Here we also had an opportunity to view the 'twisted spire' of the local Church, caused when unseasoned timber was used to re-build. When the contractors eventually came to tile the spire the wood had become warped and the spire took on its twisted appearance. Following lunch and a quick browse around the market square - it was 'market day' so this took a little longer than a quick browse - we settled back for a snooze as we carried on northwards.

Our hotel, the Granville Lodge, was situated a short distance from the cliff top with spectacular views over Scarborough bay and town, a spot guaranteed to blow the cobwebs away on a pre-breakfast stroll.

Following a good night's sleep and a 'full English' we set off for another cliff top – overlooking Whitby. If you managed to stay upright in the howling gale that was blowing there were some magnificent photo opportunities including the Abbey, Captain Cook's statue and the massive jawbone of a whale – a tribute to the whaling fleet that used to operate out of Whitby. Safely back on board we headed down the hill into Whitby itself. Several hours were spent exploring this fascinating town followed by lunch in, what is reputed to be, the best fish & chip shop in Britain. Luckily one of our group noticed they served 'smaller portions' – just as well as the standard meal appeared to be a fillet of whale and a sack of Maris Pipers! The meal was delicious but the jury is still out regarding their claim.



Relaxing

Time to move on – once we'd managed to rescue a couple of stragglers whose watches were still on Welsh time! Next stop Goathland – setting for 'Heartbeat'. Passing the train station (as used in the Harry Potter films) we park up and step back in time to explore 'Aidensfield'.

There are photo opportunities galore at Scripps Garage/Funeral Services (complete with copies of vehicles used in the series), the Aidensfield Arms (actually the Goathland Arms) – and time for a swift half before visiting the rest of the village. Armed with even more souvenirs we rejoin the coach to hear the driver is hoping to take us to 'Greengrass's' cottage, unfortunately low bridges and large coaches don't mix so we had to miss that one. [We had the same problem at Robin Hood Bay when coach access was impossible]. However the journey through the North Yorkshire Moors National Park more than compensated.

It must be a pain for the locals when 'Heartbeat' is being filmed as road markings, signs etc. have to be covered up for authenticity. 'The Royal' is filmed in Scarborough and the main building is actually a block of apartments disguised as a hospital. A lot of locals appear as extras in the series and receive around £75/day for their involvement.

Our hotel provided entertainment in the evenings, mainly a keyboard player/singer, as a result several impromptu sing-alongs took place, much to the amusement of other guests. The driver also ran a nightly game of bingo and Bert (who had previously never won a penny or a prize in any raffle) suddenly hit a winning patch and ended up £31 richer.

Wednesday was our visit to York. We had arranged a step-on Yorkshire Belle guide who gave us an excellent introduction to the city. She also took us to the New Earswick Garden Village, founded by Joseph Rowntree (of chocolate fame) in 1904. He was a Quaker and was so shocked by the living conditions of lower paid workers that he built good, affordable housing on the garden village theme, insisting that each house had a garden large enough to contain fruit trees and vegetable plots. This scheme was used as the basis for Welwyn Garden City in later years.

Leaving the coach near the National Railway Museum the party spread out in all directions. An all too short look around the museum (worthy of a future visit), then on a road-train to York Minster followed by an amble in the Shambles. York has so much to offer that several days are needed to do it justice but as a 'taster' it served its purpose.

Thursday was our 'option day'. Because you rarely get a chance to see much of your destination on short-break trips we decided to offer free time in Scarborough or visits to Castle Howard or Eden Camp. Mary took charge of the Castle Howard group and they thoroughly enjoyed their time at the castle. What I don't understand is how Mary always manages to find a celebrity – this time it was Alan Titchmarsh. (On a recent Organisers trip to North Wales she went swimming in the hotel pool with Bryn Terfel and his family!).

Eden Camp is a former P.O.W. camp which has been converted to a wartime museum complete with tanks, planes etc. from the war years and other campaigns. Each of the 29 huts feature a different

theme, including one where you are in a submarine under attack – this was quite frightening on dry land and must have been terrifying in real life. Other huts represented the home front, London blitz, National Service, Aden, Suez, Korea, the Falklands, Gulf etc. There is a very good cafeteria serving all types of meals and snacks. If you are interested in this type of museum it is well worth a visit if you are in the Malton area.

If anyone is interested in a private visit to any of the above mentioned venues I can supply information, phone numbers, contacts etc.

Brenda Dowdell, Tel 01446 -410437, Email brenda_dowdell@msn.com



Comparison of Membership (July 2001 compared to January 2006)

From July 2001 to December 2005, there were 49 new members, so in the same period we have lost 108 members. (479 + 49 = 528- minus 420 = 108).

	Singles	Doubles	Total	Male	Female	Total
July 2001	91	194	479	234	245	479
Jan 2006	88	166	420	199	221	420

Angus Crockett (Treasurer) Tel 01446-710189, Email crockettolympia36b13@fsmail.net

Newport Rugby Football Club Historian

How do you become an historian for a rugby club you may well ask? I'm not sure if there is a laid down procedure but I can tell you how it happened for me.

I was a young boy living in Newport who had started to play rugby in school and someone suggested that I should go and watch Newport RFC play. They were, I was told, a very famous team not only in Wales but world-wide. So along I went and even though Newport lost that day I was hooked. There were world famous players such as Ken Jones and Bryn Meredith, who had played for Wales and the British Lions, in the famous Newport Black & Amber shirts. I started to keep records by writing down the results, teams and other information. I carried this on year after year and still do to this day some nearly 50 years later.

Some years ago Newport RFC set up a web-site which at the time was essentially a forum where supporters could air their views and ask questions. I found myself answering many of the questions raised about the history and the past of the club - so much so that I was asked to run a web-page which we called "*Sorcerer's Vintage Port*". This was a place where people could ask questions or just indulge themselves with a bit of nostalgia about the good old days! It was then that the club approached me and asked me if I would write articles for match day programs. This would be some history about the visiting team, a past match or an article about a past player. I was being asked if I would write about some of my boyhood heroes! I jumped at the chance. To cut a long story short this has now expanded to keeping the official records for the club as well as helping to run the Official Newport RFC web-site. I keep saying that "enough is enough" but I am still doing it and I still get a kick when a past player contacts me - and with the advent of email this can be from anywhere in the world - and asks a question or just says that they have enjoyed what they have read.

PS : Historians don't know everything of course but interestingly former Newport player Matthew Watkins recently told BBC Wales that he had never played a competitive match with fellow Wales centre Hal Luscombe before playing with him for Wales against England at Twickenham. You should have checked with the historian Matthew because you both played for Newport RFC together in 2002!

Mike Dams, Midland Silicones / Dow Corning 1968-1999. Tel 02920-418174 Email mike.dams@ntlworld.com



The Favelas of Brazil

It was in April 2000 that I retired from Dow Corning, people told me that I would not have time to work and

they were right. I am really enjoying this retirement phase of my life. My time spent gardening has had to be reduced as holidays have taken over.

I started to learn to play the electronic keyboard and attend Radyr Adult Centre on Mondays for practical keyboard lessons and on Wednesdays for music theory. I have taken three theory exams, passing two with distinction and one with merit, and am now studying for Grade 4.

I have been on a journey of a life time to Belo Horizonte in Brazil where I spent time with a missionary working in the Favelas (slums). Belo Horizonte is a city of immense contrasts with the unbelievably rich living in luxury overlooking favelas where families of five or more live in two rooms, each the size of a bathroom. The hospitality of the people in the favelas was amazing, everyone was so warm and welcoming. I went into the house of an old lady where there was no electricity or running water and bottled gas was used for cooking, the poverty is just

unbelievable. The missionary friend that I stayed with also runs a school, in the centre of the favela, this is where I saw hope for the future, as the children were so keen to learn, especially as most of their parents cannot read or write. I have made a video (30 mins.) of the time that I spent in Brazil and am available to give a presentation to any group that would like to know more. Please contact me

My wife, Lynne, also retired this past year and we are celebrating our 40th wedding anniversary in the spring of 2006 with a cruise around the Canary Islands and a week on the island of Madeira.

Retirement is never dull with three grandchildren, voluntary work with meals on wheels, music, gardening, Church activities, Dow Corning Retirees' Association and playing bowls etc.!!

David Townsend Tel 01446 413307 Email david.townsend2@ntlworld.com



Favela Friends



David's 15 foot Sunflower

Walking is Good for You, Honest!

Motivation? Get Healthy!

To boot up, or not to boot up? There are always days when the weather is looking miserable, the sofa's looking inviting and it would be really easy to stay at home and catch up on some quality snoozing. Here are five reasons to walk instead.

1. **Avoid heart attacks:** Walking halves the risk of developing coronary heart disease.
2. **Cut the risk of a stroke:** Walking significantly reduces the risk of having a stroke.
3. **Lower your blood pressure:** Walking helps to lower your blood pressure and it can help to prevent high blood pressure in the first place.
4. **Don't get diabetes:** Moderate exercise such as walking can prevent you from developing diabetes in later life. It also helps in the treatment of diabetes.
5. **Reduce your risk of cancer:** People with the lowest cancer risks are those who engage in the most physical activity and who have a healthy body weight (all other risk factors being equal). Walking helps on both counts.

More and more segments of medical information are indicating that walking really is good for you, as it provides many benefits including exercise and muscle toning, reduction in osteoporosis, weight control and keeping depression at bay, especially important during winter months. Another plus of walking is that it can be undertaken and enjoyed by all ages in a family together, across the generations. If you are willing to walk briskly for 30 minutes a day for 5 days a week you can expect to lose 21 lbs, or almost 10 kilos, in a year without any other changes such as dieting, plus the many other benefits mentioned earlier. Walking does give you a feel-good factor.

We are fortunate to be living in South Wales as we are well blessed with a choice of coastal, countryside or hill walks virtually on our doorstep. Additionally the overall condition of our public footpaths is above national average, thanks to the local Authorities and in the Vale of Glamorgan area, to the volunteers of Valeways. But walks can just as easily be undertaken in towns, parks or country parks like Cosmeston Lakes, Margam Park, or Dunraven Park, without any fear of becoming lost, or subjecting yourself to any unreasonable danger.

Whilst day walking has become increasingly more popular in the past ten years for exercise and as a hobby, so there has been an increase in walking holidays in the UK (and abroad), where the walker books a weeks walking holiday

with a company organised with its own walker's hotel (4 star, en-suite, full board) that provide the accommodation, escorted and guided walks of usually three grades daily, with often one day off mid-week for yourself, with mini-buses transporting the walkers to the start, or from the finish of the walk back to the hotel. This type of holiday is set up for couples, singles and single sexes. If you would like to find out more, the monthly magazine "Country Walking" available at most newsagents will have many adverts of such services and is a very good and practical read. For example, HF Holidays is a well-established, reputable company with brochures available on 08452606066.

Of course, if you are already an accomplished walker and wish to strike out on your own walking holiday, Wales has a number of national long distance trails, the longest being Offa's Dyke Path, 177 miles from Chepstow to Prestatyn (12 to 15 days), Scotland has the West Highland Way, 95 miles from Milngavie (Glasgow) to Fort William (6 to 8 days), whilst England has the well known Pennine Way, but the "big-daddy" is reserved for the South West Coastal Path, 630 miles from Minehead to Poole (6-7 weeks at least!). Closer to home, the (Brecon) Beacons Way opened in 2005, 100 miles from



DC Ramblers on Picws Du, Carmarthen Fans, Oct 2005



DC Ramblers, Merthyr Mawr, Feb 2006. Photo by Roger Bennet

Abergavenny to Llangadog (near Llandeilo) a fantastic walk taking 8 days. There are over 60 long distance walks available in the UK, starting at 35 miles, or 3 days walking available, as well as the long walks broken down into short more manageable chunks. A number of companies offer an accommodation booking service,

daily luggage transfer service from B&B to B&B and emergency transport if necessary for a very reasonable fee for such walks. "Country Walking" has the detailed adverts.

Margaret and I used SherpaVan in 2005 for the Coast to Coast Walk (192 miles from St Bees in Cumbria, across the Lake District, Pennines and North York Moors to Robin Hoods Bay) in 15 days and had a brilliant holiday. This year we are walking the Pembrokeshire Coast Path from St Dogmaels to Amroth (180 miles in 13 days) to experience the true delight of a holiday coastal walking in Wales! Pure magic.

Whatever your choice is, remember walking is good for you. Just put on your boots, pick up a bag of sandwiches and a drink and go out and enjoy yourself. If you are interested in joining the Dow Corning Retirees' Association Walking Group, we meet the first Wednesday of each month, for a mix of easy, moderate and challenging walks in the countryside, on the coast or on the hills, to enjoy the countryside and each other's company. Please contact me for more information. You will be most welcome. We are a happy group and have a good day out. Happy walking to you all. (Some information extracted from Country Walking.)

Stuart McMillan Tel 029 2070 5234,

Email mcmillan@margaretandstuart.fsnet.co.uk

RESIDUES

Photographs

Please send photographs which would be of interest to other members for inclusion in future issues of Distillations to Val Caple. These could include historic MS or DC photographs or those from recent DC Retirees' Association Events. Prints or .jpeg files are acceptable, prints and CD's will be returned

Retirees: The Whole Truth, Nothing But...

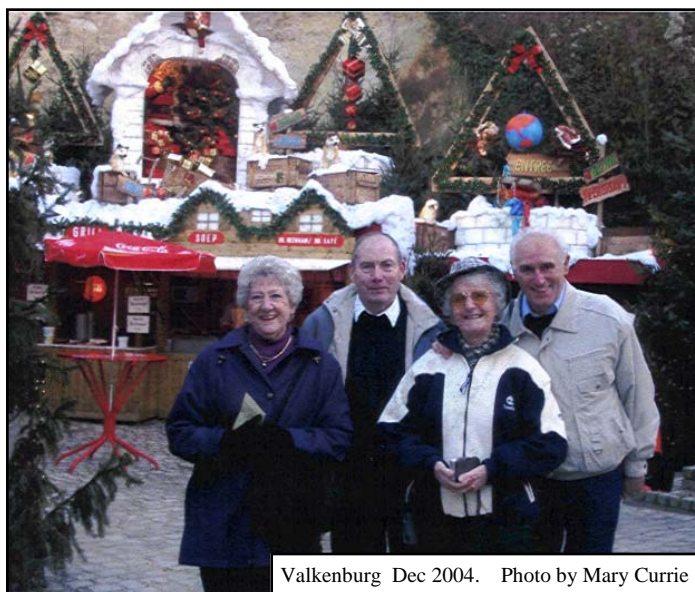
Q: When is a retiree's bedtime?

A: Three hours after he falls asleep on the couch.

Q: How many retirees to change a light bulb?

A: Only one, but it might take all day.

David Townsend



Valkenburg Dec 2004. Photo by Mary Currie

DOW CORNING

Val Caple, Dow Corning Retirees' Association Membership Secretary, Milestone, Penllyn, COWBRIDGE, CF71 7RQ

Phone: 01446 775794, Email: val.t.caple@care4free.net