

Old Fashioned by Ray Pearce

Before I start this week's topic matters arising from my St. Gabriel's Cockbrook, Ashton under Lyne article two weeks ago .I sent copies to my brother Don and my sisters Daphne and Joan. Daphne has a neighbour in Ormskirk who used to live in Manchester so she sent her neighbour a copy of the article. It transpired her neighbour lived in Audenshaw and knew Ashton market. The neighbour's father, as it happened, also knew Bill Sowerbutts. You will recall that my father knew Bill so quite a coincidence. There ought to be a song in there somewhere, to the tune of Onward Christian Soldiers, "Bill Sowerbutts knew my father, father knew him too."

It has not been a good week for me with batteries, car and smart phone. I sought the help of the AA with whom I have been a member for over 50 years. I have a battery trickle charger but this not seem to be working and after five minutes started a whistling noise. On Saturday morning I phoned the AA to ask about their battery charger which did not seem to be working. I told them I was in no danger and had not broken down in a dangerous. Once we established that I had a home start service with them and had given them all the details one of their Yellow vans was in my drive in the hour. Big Dave from Sutton Coldfield, a Birmingham City supporter, was very helpful. I needed a new battery. It was outside the warranty of the previous one so I would have to buy a new battery and have it fitted. This Dave did and I can use the car.

The next problem was my mobile smart phone which went dead on Sunday afternoon. Readers, I missed it so much. I was not able to visit or phone a mobile phone shop on Monday morning as they are all closed because of the current lockdown. I sought the help of a friend who has ordered, on e-bay, a new battery which is due on Friday. I did not realise how important it had become. No googling to ask the phone the length of Southport pier, no text messages, no up to date football scores and worst of all not being able to phone anyone when I am out. Also a useful time check on one of my nocturnal visits to the bathroom. Watch this space next week.

Am I old fashioned? Was to be this week's essay so here goes. I have never had a pair of jeans, or a t-shirt, or a pair of trainers. I have never had a pizza," get a life I hear you cry. I like listening to the wireless, pronounce schedule as "shed" and not "shed". I shout at the TV when told 17cms of snow are due overnight I remind the forecaster that this is England and can we have the snowfall in

inches please. Finally I now never go out without a tie. I did one hot summer's day several years ago and my friend said, you look different today Ray, then she said ooh you've not got a tie on. From that moment a tie for all occasions.

I have been to my wardrobe and reckon I have about 80 ties. These include the Water Orton Cricket Club tie, which in the cricket season is taken from the wardrobe every Friday night for duty on Saturday .I have Waterloo Grammar School Old Boy's Association tie which I wear at reunions. The same applies to my regimental tie which I wear every Armistice Day and at any army functions. I also have a Malay Regiment tie which was presented to me at the end of my tour of duty in Malaya .I recall being with a friend having a quiet drink at a pub in Devon when someone walked in wearing what I thought to be the Malay Regiment tie. As the evening wore on I was so certain it was so I went and asked him, No he said in a broad Devon accent. It be the Totnes Cricket club. There is Jack Bannister's Benefit year tie, he being a former Warwickshire cricketer, sorry about that John, but not everyone follows cricket. Continuing the sporting theme there is Liverpool Fc tie, ties from Lancashire and Malta. Institute of Bankers tie, of which I have been a member for 65 years. Several Lloyds Bank ties as well as the RSPB and National Trust although membership has lapsed .An Indian doctor friend brought me back some silk ties from India. Finally what is my favourite tie, The Flying Scotsman tie which I bought on the train on a 3 day holiday based in Edinburgh and starting at York? The train was surrounded by well-wishers where ever we went and we were often behind schedule because of people on the line. I now have a pile of ties to put back in the wardrobe so best wishes to all.

Ray Pearce 20.1. 2021