

## Capital Wings

It was with great sadness that we heard the news of Peter Russell's death in March. His obituary was published in the April issue of WingSpan.

Peter was a very active Capital member for many years until his health deteriorated and he had to give up his Wing. He still supported our Region at hotel-based events and, like everyone else, joined in with the Capital madness and fancy dress themes. Peter was a generous man and was always raising his hand at charity auctions, usually bidding up against Taz and Ted.

Peter opened up his house for many a Capital gathering. On our 30th Anniversary, we had over 90



*The 70s Revisited*



*Teddy Boys in Swanage*



people in his garden and house in Mottingham and he even convinced his neighbour to let us remove a fence panel so that people could camp overnight in their garden.



*Birthday Surprises*



*75th Birthday Speech*

Later in the evening, we enjoyed marshmallows around the bonfire while Lady Julia stood by with her fireman's helmet on and water hose, ready to tackle any incident. When Peter and Lady Julia moved to Wicken, he opened up the paddocks at the rear of his house for the weekend so that we could celebrate again his and Madeline's birthday - they shared the same day. We loved any excuse for a get-together and Peter loved his celebration food too.



*Time for Cake*



*Trifle before Big John*

Peter was a great ambassador for the GWOCGB and also GWRRA. He was also a great speaker and with his powerful voice always put his points across strongly. Above all, he was a great friend of everyone at Capital and he will be sadly missed by us all.





*Wicken Housewarming*



*Fireman Forever*

Many years ago, Peter, Lesley, Ted and Madeline travelled together on their GoldWings to the Belgium Treffen which at the time was always the first one of the year. That year it was very cold and Peter hired a gite which was about two miles from the Treffen site. They were all very comfortable and there was even a large barn to put the bikes in. The

other people on site were freezing (it was minus 13) and those in tents were packing up to go home, so Peter and co just went and picked up the tents with everything inside and moved them into the 'quiet' rooms, out of the terrible weather.

When the group eventually got back that night to the gite, it was snowing hard and they were slipping all over the place. Back in front of the fire, Lesley wondered how Big Ted was back at home in London so Peter said with a laugh: "Give him a ring." Madeline was the only one with a mobile so she gave it to Lesley, again as a laugh. Madeline was really amazed when she heard Peter and Lesley leaving a message for Big Ted, hoping that he was OK and telling him to go to bed! Madeline reflected afterwards with Ted saying: "Do you know I've just paid to speak to a big bear." Those Belgian beers must have been good.

With the easing of lockdown, Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2021 was a date long booked in the diaries of Barry, Paul, Colin, Tony and Joe. It was engraved on their minds for a bike ride to the seaside at Walton-on-the-Naze. A couple of days before their small escape to the coast, Taz showed an interest in joining them. Everyone probably knows that Taz is hardly ever on time for a meet up so after a few messages to him from Joe making it crystal clear that plans were in place and departure from Witham would be at 9.30am SHARP, well you could of have knocked Joe down with a feather because Taz was extremely early. As Joe said: "I guess there is a first time for everything."

After Barry and Paul's arrival, the four of them set off to meet Colin in Colchester. He then led them on to meet Tony en route. As they were all being led through Colchester, they passed quite a few pot holes and Joe could swear that he saw the earth's core through a couple of them. Anyway, it made it all a bit of an adventure.

Tony was like a kid at Easter who had just been given the keys to the Easter egg store because he was on his new, to him, white 63 plate 1800. To say that Joe felt intimidated was an understatement because he was on his black trike surrounded by three white 1800s and Paul's white BMW. Thankfully Taz was on his black 1800 which



helped even up the colour score a bit.



*Walton Black and White Run*

Paul was on call as a Blood Runner and might have been called away at a moment's notice but thankfully he managed to stay with the group until after lunch.

After meeting Tony, all six then rode to Revved Up, the bikers cafe, at Walton-on-the-Naze where a welcome, warming cuppa awaited them. It had been a tad cold that morning.



*Tony's New 1800*

Barry gave the owner's little lad a ride on his Wing and apart from being cold, he seemed to really enjoy the ride.

After a couple of hours, they moved on to Frinton for a fish and chip lunch where they sat on a park bench, eating and looking almost like a bunch of oldies out on day release. Joe said that they must have still looked hungry as a lovely young lady came over and offered them a packet of crisps which our grandad, Colin, gleefully accepted after he had finished a double fish and large chips. Man can he put it away.

The group left Frinton after a couple of hours and went their own ways home. Needless to say, it was great to get out on the Wings and enjoy some socially distant banter.

My thanks go to Yetti, Madeline and Joe for their contributions.

Finally, our April Fools joke was meant to be a bit of fun. Little did we think that it would claim such a big scalp but Pete Fisher was caught hook, line and sinker after he announced our 'news' on Facebook. Lots of laughs followed and some thought that the fake news would even promote wider readership of Wingspan. Let's hope it did! We now have to report that there was little enthusiasm for the proposed creation of a Super, or in one case, Supper Region, so all discussions have ceased. I guess there may be recriminations next year though.

Be good and alert out there.

Miss (Helen) Whiplash

