

Capital Wings

I'm starting this month's Report where I left off the last time - with the 'boat people'. Johnny and I booked a week's narrowboat holiday for the beginning of May to amuse ourselves on the Shropshire Union Canal. Since we had to collect our boat at the Blackwater Meadow Marina at Ellesmere, I thought I would call Big John to ask where he and Julie were moored currently on their boat. They have been travelling on numerous canals in England and Wales but had been marooned on the Shropshire Union because of lockdown restrictions. By a happy coincidence, they happened to be moored up just outside our Marina. Couldn't have planned it if we'd tried. It was great to catch up with them both, as well as Brian and Shirley, as we had only seen them on our Zoom calls over the past year.



Big John - Hello Sailor



Happy Julie

We had a very pleasant meal and chat one evening with John and Julie on 'Just Us' and moored up together at the Frankton Junction on the Montgomery Canal on our final evening to watch beautiful scenery bathed in sunshine before seeing a fantastic sunset. We were the only two boats in such a quiet and idyllic place.



Togetherness

Pity that it rained all night and morning so we gave John a boat lift back to the Marina so that he could retrieve his car and do a few jobs. The rules for mooring mostly say 48 hours only so Brian and Shirley, meanwhile, had cast off on 'Alys' from the Marina in the opposite direction of travel through Whitchurch to Quoisley on the Llangollen Canal. And guess what? we passed them too on our travels. I think Brian was down below brewing up but a toot on our horn attracted the attention of Shirley who popped her head out to wave at us.



Happy Shirley

Johnny and I enjoyed our week on the waterways on board 'Joy Bringer No. 42'. Here he is entering one of the many locks



Johnny - Hello Sailor

The highlight of our holiday was a trip across the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct. A World Heritage Site, the Aqueduct was opened in 1805 and is 126ft above the River Dee. With a length of 1,007ft, the excitement is all about travelling across the structure whose offside is completely unprotected, so a big drop if you're not careful.



Pontcysyllte Aqueduct

If you're planning a canal boat holiday, give Big John a call. You might pass him somewhere on the water.

Family and personal matters occasionally take Big John and Julie away from the boat which is why the car comes in handy but they have now retrieved their GoldWing to explore and holiday elsewhere in this country. One recent family trip was to visit Jo and Chris in Norfolk to celebrate her birthday. Chris has been busy renovating

his house and is now moving onto the finishing touches which have included laying a gravel driveway. As a biker, this sounds a bit dodgy but who am I to say? Anyway, on John's arrival, Chris stopped him to give himself time to get a piece of wood for the side-stand. Big John waited with the stand down while Chris rushed to the right-hand side of the bike with the wood. His name is Chris Wood after all. Oops! When did side-stands move to the right? The moral of the story is use it i.e. the bike or lose it i.e. your marbles.

An invitation was sent out to enjoy Dave and Bev's hospitality over the weekend of 5/6th June. Thus a great gathering was had at Mersea - the first one with lots of Moles for a long, long time.

As you would expect, much food and beverages as supplied by Dave and Bev were consumed, along with the contents of a butcher's cold room from the Taylor's, huge trifles from the Peskett's and nibbles, cakes and other delights from everyone else. Wayne stepped in to man the BBQ and the girls rallied round doing all the other bits for the day's feasting on Saturday.



Where's Wayne



Ladies take a Well Earned Rest

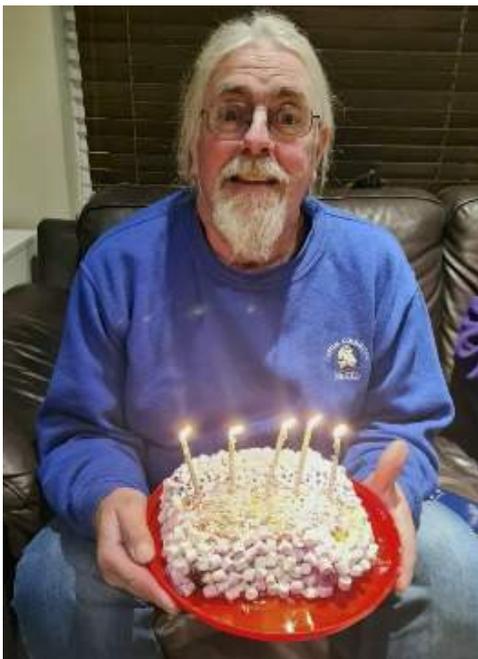
As Yetti has reported, it was great to just sit and talk to all our mates after so long. It didn't take long before Bev's Kevin was asked questions on when he was being evicted (Bev is selling her place and moving in with Dave - we are all so happy for them both). Kevin apparently was offered a shed to sleep in or a tent. He joined in the banter and gave as good as he got.

Dave and Bev's new outside bar was a great success even though he had a pristine Moto Guzzi Le Mans Mk2 in there and not a Wing. Other stories released were that the upstairs toilet was hard to find..... wasn't it Joe?..... Oh, it's a bungalow! Also, Rocky featured in a video in which he pretended to be the Manneken Pis in Brussels. I hasten to add that he was fully clothed though.

After the BBQ, half the group went for a stroll down to the sea whilst the other half, who were either too full to move or were happy to sit, talk and drink, stayed put.

A big thank you goes to Dave and Bev. The gathering was what we all wanted after so long a day doing what Moles do best and it was at the seaside for us Townies.

Those who enjoyed the day were: Al, Kerrie, Chloe, Wayne, Ingrid, Danni, Yetti, Ginny, Joe, Margaret, Phil, Liz, Rocky, Colin, Suzie and Kev..... Oh and Dave and Bev!



All of me

And finally, some birthday congratulations. Carol Hennigan celebrated a super 60th birthday in early June and Yetti managed a 60+ birthday on the late May Bank Holiday. Here he is about to devour his surprise cake. That's all for now.

Enjoy the sun and the rides out and let's hope all the Chairman's Challenge cafes are open. Miss (Helen) Whiplash