

Cheadle & Gatley 41 Club – Chairman's report 2018-19 – Peter Lee

I have now recovered from the rigours and responsibility of steering Cheadle & Gatley 41 club for the past 11 months. Some may argue we were like a ship lurching from one sandbank to another. At least we didn't encounter any huge ICE BERGS!!

The Car Treasure Hunt.

England and especially Cheshire had endured tropical weather for several weeks and the gardeners were crying out for just a little water. On the appointed evening we met in a pub in Lymm. Sir James Fairbrother handed out our sheets with clues and questions and after a swift half we departed for a leisurely saunter round the village to start answering the questions. No sooner did we step outside than it pissed down. There was much whooping and hollering from the local gardeners in stark contrast to the multitude of expletives uttered from our wet 41ers.

The next stage of the treasure hunt necessitated driving in the direction of Knutsford whilst attempting to answer questions on soggy paper. The gardeners must have thought it was Christmas as the rain turned into a torrential downpour. Finally we floated into Knutsford where we were to park up and trogg round the town on foot answering clues. Mercifully the gardeners had shut up as it was now fine. We parked the car and just as we were about to start our walkabout there came from nowhere, a deluge of sustained rain of truly biblical proportions. The sloping roads became torrents and the stream that we had parked alongside grew in size and depth to allow Noah and his menagerie to gracefully glide past with hoards of sodding gardeners whooping and hollering yet again!!

The rain ceased, we trogged around Knutsford and enjoyed a nice meal. So what did I learn from the evening?

Firstly my black shoes are not waterproof!

Secondly Mr Fairbrother could make a fortune by doing Car Treasure Hunts in Africa and similar drought stricken areas!!!!

History Tour of Manchester

Another enjoyable evening was had in Manchester where with the guidance of a chap called Ian who treated us to history stories about several of the older pubs. Situated on an island of land between Chepstow Street and Bridgewater Street, an unusually lurid pub with an even more unusual name was our first port of call.

Dating back to the early 19th Century, The **Peveril of the Peak** is said to have been named after the Manchester to London horse-drawn stagecoach of the same name, while scholars will argue that the pub is named after a story by Sir Walter Scott. We can only assume that the pub was named after the stagecoach, which is in itself a reference to Scott's 1823 novel.

For those of you left wondering what a “peveril” is in the first place, it refers to Peveril Castle in Derbyshire.



Whilst enjoying a swift half or 4 we were encouraged to partake in a small quiz on aspects of Manchester life. However, our concentration was distracted by a tall, slim, Kiwi girl playing pool with a friend. The banter started and she readily joined in. Quite how the subject arose I can't remember, but she openly declared she did Yoga and could stand and bend over and put her head between her ankles. I winced at such a thought but when egged on by some of our members she readily demonstrated this ability. It was impressive in itself, but I happened to be standing slightly to the back of her!!!! My lack of height and her long legs certainly gave my stents something to react to and prove yet another test for the work of my Cardiologist.

Our next pub was; **The Briton's Protection Manchester**



It was here, that over a few more halves in glorious sunshine, Ian regaled us with more facts about Manchester and the opportunity to finish our quiz. Sadly there was no long legged Kiwi playing pool, hardly surprising as there was no pool table. The quiz was won by our elder statesman Mr Kellett which given his specialist subject is BEER was no great surprise.

After a short stroll we dined in Albert's Chop House in Albert Square where, following the meal NK was presented with his prize. A collector's item of a very rare photo of a Man City player holding a TROPHY.





July

July saw the untimely and very sad passing of Ian Clarke alias Clarky. He had battled and fought hard to overcome a horrible brain tumour but alas it was all in vain.

Liked as he was by many, the attendance at his funeral by past and present 41 club members only served to show in what high regard Clarky was held. Funny beyond words, sensitive and helpful beyond measure, a sheer joy to be in his company. Sadly missed but without doubt never forgotten, as are all our departed 41ers.

Shortly after his death the family arranged for a commemorative bench to be sited in Bruntwood Park to his memory. It was at this occasion Cheadle & Gatley 41 club presented a cheque to Kerry, a representative of the Brain Tumour Charity.



Christmas

Christmas saw the usual festivities but unlike previous years there was no Spectacular Pantomime and instead this was replaced by a trip down memory lane.

There had been suggestion to show 2 videos of past Christmas contributions by members.

The first viewing was of Dave Curran and his version of Cinderella with him playing all the parts by way of wearing different wigs, headgear and hats. A true masterpiece of comedy and very well received.

The second viewing was of a more poignant nature as it starred our dearly departed Clarky performing his rendition of RINDERCELLA, loosely based on the more well known Cinderella. His performance was totally unique and although it was great to hear his infectious laughter and voice again there was a distinct sense of sadness that in real life it would be no more.



Both videos were viewed in the company of our visiting National President Phil Ellis. A man from the Emerald Isle he was great company and regaled us with several witty stories as only the Irish can.

Because our annual International Trip was scheduled for early April the AGM had to be held in March. This would be the time I would relinquish the role of Chairman and not a moment too soon. Although it was a privilege to hold the office and all the banter that went with it, I was completely out of my comfort zone when having to stand and address / conduct formal meetings. Such meetings never went exactly to plan nor the format associated with them.

The AGM was certainly conducted in such a manner. Chaotic in the extreme, hugely entertaining and personally speaking, very enjoyable. My sense of desire to push along the agenda, hand over the gong and relinquish office was thwarted and delayed at every opportunity. Never has there been so many propositions, points of order, questions to the Chair, sub propositions and amendments, wording clarification and general filibustering.

After what seemed an eternity the moment finally arrived and I seized it with relish. No kisses or cuddles or welcoming speeches were afforded to Mike Heyes. It was a quick handover of the gong, best of luck and I could sit down and relax.



Looking back now after a few weeks of 'retirement' will I miss being Chairman? Definitely NOT !!!!