

THE ASSEMBLY TIMES

NEWSLETTER OF SOUTHEND OLDER PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY *The Active Voice of The Over 55's*

TIMES X 30 AND TIME TO CELEBRATE !!!

It is indeed time for a small celebration, your OPA has published the *thirtieth* edition of your Assembly Times. AND I'm delighted to report that thanks to receiving a small grant, albeit less than we had hoped for, we are able to return to producing the twelve page newsletter which I hope you will find interesting and useful. We will soon have another milestone - in 2017 it's the tenth anniversary of your Assembly and together I hope that we shall be able to mark that in some meaningful way - your suggestions are welcomed. Its been an interesting ten year journey with some special moments and one or two setbacks on the way particularly when finance has been uncertain but we are still going strong AND with your support continue to be the **Active Voice of the Over 55's** here in Southend.

However in the current climate with so many striving after ever reducing resources available to support voluntary groups there has been and could in the future be a very real threat to the continuance of your OPA and the Active Voice of the Over 55's. Your committee is actively seeking ongoing funding and beavering away at the many facets of managing the activities and administration of your OPA. I make no apologies for yet again reminding you all that we do still have vacancies for committee members and help is needed with lots of other aspects as well and so I ask you all yet again to consider whether you would either join the committee or perhaps just undertake one task to assist us, PLUS we all need to spread the word about the OPA and encourage others to join and

become members. But ever positive we are looking forward to a New Year and do hope that despite the uncertainties for our country and the many local issues, 2017 will prove to be a time of change for the good and a more settled and peaceful world. So on that more positive note, on behalf of your Chairman, Vice Chairman and the Committee I send all of you our Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year AND encourage those of you who are able, to come and join us at the next meeting on 7th December. Our speakers will bring you the very latest news from their organisations and Oakhouse Foods will also have some 'tasters' for us all to try!.



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Next Public Meeting

WEDNESDAY
7th DECEMBER 2016
1.30 PM

CIVIC CENTRE
COUNCIL CHAMBER

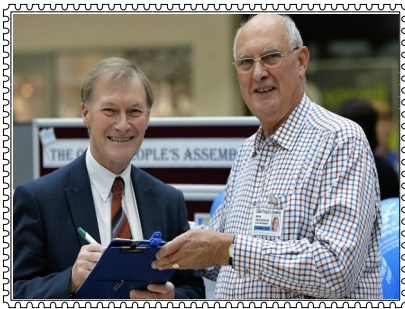
- News from the Crime Stoppers Team
 - Social Care/CCG New Approach to Service Delivery
 - Oakhouse Food Products & Services
- Members and Visitors Welcome**



Christmas Mail Last Posting dates.....

Which date applies to what??? The Post Office and Parcel Force have a range of services each with different 'last posting for xmas' dates. Don't miss the deadline - see page 2 for a summary of dates.

Sir David Amess Signs Up



Sir David Amess, MP for Southend West, one of the guests of honour at our Active Ageing 2016 Event shows his continued commitment to Southend Older People's Assembly by signing up as a full member - we thank him for his ongoing support.

Home Fire Safety



Essex County Fire and Rescue Service offer a **FREE** Home Safety Check AND this includes providing a **FREE** Smoke Alarm. If you have not had a check then your OPA recommends that you consider applying...

Essex Fire and Rescue say: *'we are committed to ensuring 100% of homes in Essex have a working smoke alarm. So, to help this happen, we carry out home fire safety visits to anyone living in Essex, completely FREE of charge'.*

A Home Fire Safety visit includes:

- Identifying and making you aware of the potential fire risks in your home.

- Making sure you know what to do in order to reduce or prevent these risks.
- Helping you put together an escape plan in case a fire breaks out in the future.
- Ensuring you have a working smoke alarm and if you don't, Essex Fire & Rescue will fit a FREE ten year smoke alarm.

To arrange a home fire safety visit, or if you know anyone who would benefit from a visit, please contact Essex Fire & Rescue: Call : 0300 303 0088 or complete an online form at: www.essex-fire.gov.uk

Christmas Mail Last Posting dates.....

Dates vary depending on the mail option you choose and the most commonly used services are listed here but for more information visit :www.postoffice.co.uk/christmas/last-posting-dates

UK Destinations...

Letter Post: Tuesday 20th December . UK 2nd Class and 2nd Class Signed For
 Wednesday 21st December UK 1st Class & 1st Class Signed For
 Thursday 22nd December Special Delivery Guaranteed
 Friday 23rd December Special Delivery Saturday Guaranteed

Parcel Post:

	Delivery on Friday 23rd December	Delivery Saturday 24th December (£9.00 extra fee)
Timed Services Express9, Express10, ExpressAM, EpressPM	Send by Thursday 22nd December	Not available
Next Day Services Express24	Send by Thursday 22nd December	Send by Friday 23rd December
Two Day Services Express48, Express48 ^{large}	Send by Wednesday 21st December	Not available

Overseas Destinations...

International Standard (formerly Airmail) and all International Tracking and Signature services (formerly Airsure® and International Signed For®) :

Saturday 3rd December
 Wednesday 7th December

Thursday 8th December
 Saturday 10th December
 Wednesday 14th December
 Thursday 15th December
 Friday 16th December

Saturday 17th December

for Africa and the Middle East
 for Asia, Cyprus, Far East, Japan and Eastern Europe (ex Poland, Czech Republic and Slovakia)
 for Caribbean and Central & South America
 for Greece, Australia and New Zealand
 for Czech Republic, Germany, Italy and Poland
 for Canada, Finland, Sweden and the USA
 for Austria, Denmark, Iceland, Portugal, Norway, Netherlands, Slovakia, Switzerland and Spain
 for Belgium, France, Ireland, Luxembourg



Note: International Economy (formerly known as Surface Mail) : no dates shown as last postings were during November.

DO YOU TRAVEL BY RAIL ??

As a disabled rail traveller its important to me that I know how to obtain assistance whilst travelling and to have a current timetable to hand so I thought that those of you who also use the train might find this little update helpful:

- * New trains will start running on November 14th and at the same time a new timetable will be published although that timetable will not commence until January 9th 2017.
- * If you need a large print copy of the timetable you can request this at your local rail station.
- * If you require assistance to travel C2C help line number is 03457 444 422 then select option 3.
- * The number is available 24 hours a day.
- * You can book this assistance from as little as 4 hours in advance of your journey.

I have recently become a member of the C2C Rail Passenger Committee and so if you have any problems when travelling please contact me and I can then highlight this on your behalf with C2C.

Call me: Jill Allen-King O.B.E. on. 01702 477899



COOKS CORNER



LOO'S EASY MIX CHRISTMAS CAKE

If like me you still want that homemade cake but find all the heavy mixing/beating too difficult then this easy to make alternative is for you..

Preparation Time: 60-75 minutes **Cooking Time:** 2 Hours 30 minutes: **Makes:** 20cm Round Cake

INGREDIENTS:

175g Butter chopped	200g dark Muscovado Sugar
750g luxury mixed Dried Fruit (must contain mixed peel and glacé cherries)	
Finely grated zest and juice of 1 Orange	Finely grated zest of 1 Lemon
100ml + 4tbsp Cherry Brandy or Brandy	85g Macadamia Nuts
3 large Eggs , lightly beaten	85g ground Almonds
200g Plain Flour	½ tsp Baking Powder
1 tsp ground Mixed Spice	1 tsp ground Cinnamon
¼ tsp ground Allspice	Baking Parchment & Foil



METHOD:

Put the **butter, sugar, fruit, zests, juice** and **100ml brandy** in a large pan. Bring slowly to the boil, stirring until the butter has melted. Reduce the heat and bubble for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Remove the pan from the heat and leave to cool for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 150C/gas 2/ fan 130C and line a 20cm round cake tin. Toast the **nuts** in a dry frying pan, tossing them until evenly browned, or in the oven for 8-10 minutes - keep an eye on them as they burn easily. When they are cool, chop roughly. Stir the **eggs, nuts** and **ground almonds** into the fruit mixture and mix well. Sift the **flour, baking powder** and **spices** into the pan. Stir in gently, until there are no traces of flour left. Spoon the mixture into the tin and smooth it down evenly - you will find this is easiest with the back of a metal spoon which has been dipped into boiling water. Bake for 45 minutes, then turn down the heat to 140C/gas 1/ fan 120C and cook for a further 1-1¼ hours (or about 1¾ hours if you have a gas oven) until the cake is dark golden in appearance and firm to the touch. Cover the top of the cake with foil if it starts to darken too much. To check the cake is done, insert a fine skewer into the centre - if it comes out clean, the cake is cooked. Whilst still in the tin make holes all over the top of the warm cake with a fine skewer and spoon the extra **4tbsp brandy** into the holes and ensure all has soaked in. Leave the cake to cool in the tin. When it's cold, remove it from the tin, peel off the lining paper, then wrap first in baking parchment and then in foil. The cake will keep in a cupboard for up to three months or you can freeze it for six months..... *ENJOY!*

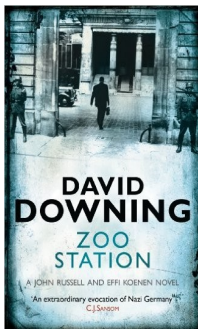
Brian's Book Review

As we only ran a two page newsletter this Autumn and I had been busy reading I thought it was time for two for one again....

My first critique is of a book by an author new to me, David Downing and his book 'Zoo Station' (Published 2007). It is a book of historical fiction, and the action takes place during a time most of us will remember- the start of the Second World War. The author is post war born and in setting the scene has undertaken plenty of research.

It is post 'Kristalnacht' and begins at the end of 1938 and the start of 1939 in Danzig, and highlights the brutality the Nazi regime inflicted on one Jewish family and the anguish of mothers whose children are part of Kindertransport.

The hero John Russell an expat and a journalist involves himself in assisting the family and at the same time is asked by the Russians to observe and pass on, through his writings for



Pravda, information about the German Military.

Questioned by the Gestapo and approached by British Intelligence he feels the pressure as he sets about satisfying all spymasters and do what his conscience wants of him. Its a good read...



My next reading choice was 'The 'Sacred Sword' by Scott Mariani an English author (Published 2012) and this is a book in a different vein.

It is about the exploits of Ben Hope a former SAS member now employing his skills rescuing kidnap victims and training members of various police forces in how to deal with hostage situations at his establishment in France.

Returning to England for a concert in honour of his late wife, he meets old friends, from his student days. Simeon now a vicar and his wife Michaela. He accepts an invitation to stay at the vicarage for a few days and

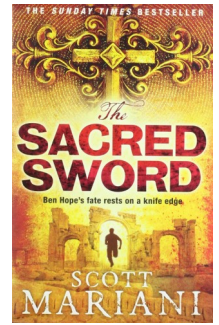
learns that their meeting was no accident.

Simeon admits he is scared and arranged the meeting having learnt on the internet what his friend Ben did for a living. Having enjoyed a meal at a local restaurant they make their way back to the vicarage. On the way, his friend's car is forced off the road into a river. He manages to rescue Simeon, who dies despite the efforts of the paramedics.

With nowhere to go Ben heads for the Vicarage and while resting is disturbed by intruders who are armed and very professional. Ben needs all his skill and knowledge to survive the situation his friends have placed him in and so starts a journey that will take him across Europe and beyond as he seeks to find out more about his friend and much more....

Brian Dillon November 2016

If you have recently read a book that you think other OPA members might like please let us know ..



Your Older People's Assembly Needs You" Yes..YOU!
We are still in urgent need of new committee members and others to help us remain the Active Voice of the Over 55's in Southend. I don't wish to sound negative particularly as we are a very positive and pro - active group but without new blood to join our small committee team there is indeed a very real possibility that the Assembly will flounder and an Active Voice of the Over 55's in Southend would be lost. Our views, needs, concerns aired in such a public arena with dialogue direct with policy makers and service providers is important and it is your OPA that enables this. So I am again asking you all ... COULD

YOU HELP ? If so please consider how you might support us, perhaps by joining the Committee or undertaking some administration, using your IT skills to help with the website, help promote the organisation at various venues and via advertising. As a committee member there is an expectation that you attend our monthly team meeting held on the second Tuesday morning of each month and usually for about an hour and half or so. We are not a stuffy bunch and so meetings are very informal. To find out more contact us — we would love to hear from you. To join the committee please download an application form from our website .www.olderpeoplesassemblysouthend.co.uk

Is Southend Hospital A & E Under Threat of Closure?

At the time of writing there remains much uncertainty and conflicting reports about Accident and Emergency services here in Southend but in view of the media attention and 'announced' future consultation it is important that we all take note.

Currently there are two petitions about proposed changes to A&E services in Mid and South Essex circulating. One petition appears to have been started after the spoof news website Southend News Network claimed Basildon and Southend hospitals' A&E departments would be relocated to Chelmsford; and the other more credible instigated by a local consultant. This asks Government and Parliament to reconsider any proposed move of Southend A&E to Basildon and that petition is rapidly gathering signatures.

It highlights Southend as a major short stay holiday centre, with it's own busy airport and two extremely busy main line stations serving London and the East End and stresses that it would be impractical to expect the residents with an emergency to drive from Southend to Basildon, about eighteen miles, on already overcrowded roads. Journey times could be way in excess of one hour, even an ambulance with blue lights and siren could take upwards of 30/40 minutes for the journey.

Hospital bosses deny claims that Southend's A&E department will be relocated to Basildon but a recent investigation reported in the Yellow Advertiser and by others has discovered that the

NHS is currently planning a public consultation over its 'Mid and South Essex Success Regime', which aims to save cash by urging Southend, Basildon and Broomfield hospitals to 'increasingly collaborate and share services'.

A report published ahead of a series of public consultation meetings suggested there should be 'emergency care in all three hospitals' but the trusts should 'designate one hospital for life-saving treatment'.

In response to these petitions Clare Panniker, Chief Executive of Basildon and Thurrock University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Mid Essex Hospital Services NHS Trust; and Sue Hardy, Chief Executive of Southend University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust said: *"We are not discussing any plans to move Southend A&E to Basildon. Our current thinking is that there should be 24/7 A&E services at all three hospital sites in Mid and South Essex for the majority of people who go to A&E. We are discussing how the three hospitals could work better together to meet increasing demands. National guidance advises that a population of the size we have in Mid and South Essex would be better served by a designated specialist emergency hospital for life-threatening and 'blue light' emergencies, supported by a network of urgent and emergency care services. This is based on clinical evidence about improving patients' chances of survival and a good recovery and could be any one of the present three hospitals.*

'Similar specialist services are already in place for some emergencies in Essex. People with serious injuries are taken by ambulance to London or Cambridge, people with serious burns are taken by ambulance to Broomfield in Chelmsford and people suffering an acute heart attack are taken by ambulance to the cardiothoracic centre in Basildon.

"There are no proposals as yet and we are listening to local service users as well as staff to inform potential options for future public consultation."



It is understood that these consultations will commence early in the new year and your OPA would urge you all to have your say and ensure services continue to meet our local need. YOUR OPA will seek every opportunity to be involved and speak on behalf of and as the voice of the over 55's in Southend.. Please let us have your views and comments AND if you are able, attend one of the consultation meetings and Speak Out!



ACTIVE AGEING 2016

Can it really be six years of hosting the event? What a super day we had with an increase in the numbers attending. The OPA wishes to thank those members and friends who were able to join us and support the event and I am sure they will agree that it was a really interesting and happy day.



We want to share the day with all our readers and so have dedicated these two pages to images of the event which we hope you will enjoy.

Our exhibitors represented many of the organisations of importance to us over 55's with particular focus on support to help us remain healthy, active, involved and as independent as possible. By showcasing such a wide range of services and opportunities in one place visitors - whether they were an older resident, family member, friend, neighbour or carer - all had access to information and support that was of interest and value.

On the day our exhibitors were on hand to talk about health issues, road safety, local transport, leisure, care and volunteering to name just a few.

The event was opened at 10.00 by our local MP Sir David Amess and Southend 's Mayor Judith McMahon; accompanied by the OPA Honorary President Dave Monk DL of BBC Essex. We are very appreciative of the fact that not only did they give opening speeches, but also took the time to tour the stalls and speak to each exhibitor in turn. As well as the wide variety of stalls there was also a programme of entertainment led by our Master of Ceremonies Steven Heath. The Yardarm Folk Orchestra entertained us with a selection of toe tapping melodies. This was followed by a Taoist Tai Chi group demonstration who had us all mesmerised by their skill, precision of movement and the sense of peace and calm it generated. Sadly our anticipated ladies choir were unable to attend but we thank Alvin King who stepped in at the last moment to entertain us with his guitar and singing and it was so good to see how the singing of 'old favourites' gave pleasure to our visitors.....



ACTIVE AGEING 2016

Finally, I want to express the OPA's sincere thanks to the sponsors of our event. Without their enthusiasm and support Active Ageing 2016 would not have been possible:

The Victoria Centre, who for the sixth year running has provided a superb venue free of charge. Our particular thanks go to **Gina Evans** and her excellent team on the day, for which nothing was too much trouble; **Leigh Lions** for once again sponsoring our publicity costs, **Arriva Buses** for displaying our posters; **Adam & Greenwood** for sponsoring our MC and the generosity of their printers **VIP Print Design** and all the members of the **Event Planning Group**. We would also like to extend our thanks to **Mike Tranded** of Southend Photographic Society for undertaking the task of "official photographer" for the day and providing us with such a comprehensive visual memory of the event.

Lynda McLernon - OPA Treasurer.



Be Prepared

Get ready for winter

Make sure you're prepared for when the weather changes and the temperature drops.



November has already ushered in a chillier feel to the weather and according to the Met Office's recent three-month forecast, there could be much colder weather on the way. In fact, the Met are predicting a 30 per cent chance of a colder than normal early winter with freezing temperatures likely to hit Britain this winter as the polar vortex above the Arctic moves south bringing bone-chilling weather in the run up to Christmas. So dear members we urge you all to take note and *'be prepared'*

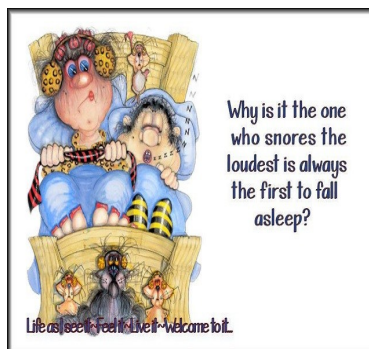
The Met Office and Health Officials say it is vital that the most vulnerable people (*that's many of us older folks*) take preventative steps to keep healthy and stay well. The Met Office began its 'Get Ready for Winter' campaign on 7th November and this aims to help raise awareness of the dangers posed by winter weather and provide tips and advice on how to minimise its impact. Full details can be found at : www.metoffice.gov.uk/news/releases/2016/get-ready-for-winter. It contains lots of good advice and here are just some of the headlines:

- Draw your curtains at dusk and keep your doors closed to block out draughts.
- Have regular hot drinks and eat at least one hot meal a day if possible. Eating regularly helps keep energy levels up during winter.
- Wear several light layers of warm clothes (rather than one chunky layer).
- Have a Flu Jab.
- Stock up if you can on basic food essentials and 'warming' foods.
- Keep as active in your home as possible.
- Wrap up warm and wear shoes with a good grip if you need to go outside on cold days.
- If you have reduced mobility or have a health condition such as heart or lung disease, you should if possible heat your home to at least 18C. It's a good idea to keep your bedroom at this temperature all night if you can and make sure you wear enough clothes to stay warm. During the day, you may prefer your living room to be slightly warmer.
- If you're under 65 and healthy and active, you can safely have your house cooler than 18C if you feel comfortable at that lower temperature.
- Seek help promptly if you start to feel unwell.
- Let family, friends or neighbours know if you need supplies or help.
- Make sure you are receiving any benefits you are entitled to, such as the Winter Fuel Payment and Cold Weather Payment.
- Travel carefully in icy weather .Icy pavements and roads can be extremely slippery. The Met Office advises putting grit or cat litter on paths & driveways to lessen the risk of slipping. It adds, you should wait until the roads have been gritted if you're travelling by car. Bear in mind that black ice on pavements or roads might not be clearly visible and compacted snow may turn to ice and become slippery.
- Keep in touch with vulnerable neighbours and relatives. Even if you aren't able to go out you can still check on friends, relatives and neighbours who may be more vulnerable than you in the cold weather.
- The Met Office provides the weather forecasts for broadcasts on radio and TV, so listen in to these bulletins regularly to keep up-to-date with the weather. Severe weather warnings are also issued on their **website**, or you can ring the Weather Desk on 0870 900 0100.
- Severe Weather – stay indoors!!!

See also www.england.nhs.uk/severeweather

Taxi on Time

A member shares a recent **GOOD** taxi trip... "Taking my friend who is in a wheelchair by taxi has on occasions been fraught but I was recommended to try a different Southend company - **01702 333444**. Excellent rear loading access for the wheelchair, on time, vehicle tracking, considerate driver and one who ensured that our return trip was available as well. Try them"



Passport Renewal

Need to renew your Passport?
Born before 2nd September 1929?
Then renewal is **FREE!**

And if you meet the age criteria and had previously renewed after 19th May 2004 you can claim a refund of the fee paid.



For more info: www.gov.uk/free-passport

KEEP SAFE - BE SCAM SMART



This time we focus on the growing issue of Pension Pot Fraud and the Cold Call Scammers...

Concern is such that even the government backed Pensions Advisory Service is wading in and putting pressure on government to act now and stop any more older people losing their pension fund to these unscrupulous con merchants. Please, please read on and think before you take a cold call on this or any other similar subject.

A Pension cold calling ban would protect the 'vulnerable' from losing life savings, the official helpline of the Pension Advisory Service says. A ban on pension cold callers would give vulnerable people "protection" against increasingly sophisticated fraudsters, the head of the Pensions Advisory Service has warned.

Michelle Cracknell, the head of the official government-funded helpline, said that her organisation has taken to warning people that their chances of getting their money back after being scammed are "next to zero".



It comes after an alliance of ministers, the industry and campaigners warned that cold callers are preying on the elderly and because the Government is refusing to take action fraud abounds. Lord Young, a Conservative peer and Treasury spokesman in the Lords, said that there **will be** an "announcement" within weeks amid speculation that the ban could be unveiled in the Autumn Statement.

He said that he expects that the announcement "will meet the expectations that have been aroused". It comes amid concerns that more than 10 million pensioners are being targeted annually by cold callers in the wake of the pension freedoms.

The freedoms enable us to use our pension pots like bank accounts and withdraw thousands of pounds to save, invest or spend as we wish.

However there is mounting evidence that fraudsters are using the freedoms to trick people into parting with their life savings by cold calling them with offers of "once in a lifetime" investment opportunities. In many cases the investment turns out to be "non-existent" and people lose all or a significant proportion of their retirement savings.

Police have disclosed that reported fraud has risen from £10 million in the year before freedoms were introduced to £18 million in the year after.

Michelle Cracknell says *'The Minister's comments are the clearest sign yet the Government is starting to listen on this important issue'*. She said that *'the scams often begin with cold calls offering a "free pensions review" before luring people into making investments in fictitious businesses such as hotels, fine wine companies and even a truffle farm in France! The scammers are taking advantage of public knowledge about the Government's pension freedoms to trick them into handing over their retirement pots'* she warned.

She said: *'If a ban was put into place it would be a further protection to customers. Not everybody is aware. Most people tend to have a positive outlook that it's OK [when someone cold calls]. Our advice is that you should be suspicious. The good financial advice companies don't need to cold call.*

Government services don't cold call. We all know how many calls we have received on PPI and about a car accident. Those are coming to an end and pensioners can be incredibly vulnerable. People don't necessarily understand what they've got. We would like every customer to refuse to take cold calls on their pension funds'. She said that *'the criminals are often "very hard to find. It's incredibly difficult because they move from company to company to company, so it takes a long time in following the trail'*. She added: *'Our responses [to people who have lost money] are now quite blunt. We need to make customers aware that whilst they should report it, the reality is that even if the pensions ombudsman rules in your favour the chances of you getting your money are next to zero!!'*

Be Scam Smart - Put the Phone Down on Cold Callers - Seek Reputable Pension Advice



OH WHAT A LOVELY TIME WE HAD

Derek began this story with 'Up, Up and Away' then followed 'Down with A Bump' and 'Tropical Paradise' and now he concludes this trip down memory lane

Hope you enjoyed the previous episode of my journey to becoming a fully fledged member of the Black Watch Band and this, the final part, continues with my time in British Guyana (as it was known in 1955) which to me was almost a paradise. I had now settled into the daily routine of life in the Military Band..... when the sun shone we took instruments and music stands down a path alongside a drainage channel and set up under the trees outside the NAAFI (Navy, Army, Air Force Institutes), a haven of civilisation where you could buy ice cold drinks including beer and food of a more palatable standard than that supplied in the army cook house! If it rained we moved inside the building and believe me when it rained it did so with a vengeance.



Wild life was around in abundance in the trees from small colourful birds the size of sparrows to large blue and yellow macaws. The real delight was the small humming birds that could be seen darting among the flowers along the drainage ditch.



Band rehearsals were to practice for the regular weekly concerts which took place either in the Officers Mess or at the Bandstand on the seawall and also for the Saturday Parade. This was held on the Georgetown cricket ground just across the road from the barracks. The first two were the Regimental Sergeant Majors, the third the Adjutants and the fourth the all important Commanding Officers parade.

Discipline in the band was a rather laid back subject, often we would finish up in the wrong spot on the parade ground, resulting in the Sgt Major or Adjutant shouting to the Bandmaster *"the band should be over there!"* followed by a casual order from the Bandmaster: *"ok move over there"* and we would amble across to the duly appointed place, much to the amusement of the troops and the desperation of the Adjutant or Sgt Major, BUT we always got it right for the CO's parade!!!

As the temperature and humidity became extreme all activity in the camp came to a halt at 13.00 and resumed again at 16.00 until 18.00. If the band was not required for further duties time was ours to enjoy.

Over the weeks that we were stationed in Georgetown quite a number of friends were made so there was a fairly busy social life. There was also a large cinema showing all the latest films but this was not as enjoyable as it might have been. I was told not to put my feet on the floor during the film. Wise words indeed as I soon discovered as sizeable rodents would rummage around the peanut shells and anything else they could find to eat on the floor. There was much laughter when bats flew in through the open windows at the side of the building casting very large silhouettes on the screen as they passed through the projectors beam during the films.

Once a month the band was required to travel back along the road, previously mentioned, to the camp at Atkinson Field, now the International Airport, where C and D company of the Regiment were billeted. If transport was not available we went in a converted ships' lifeboat up the Demerara River to a jetty. All of us hoped that the trip would be on the incoming tide as this cut the journey time quite considerably; alas if the tide was ebbing it took what seemed like forever and when we arrived the water level of the river had dropped some fifteen feet, resulting in us having to manhandle the band equipment up an almost vertical ladder onto the jetty and then into a 3 tonne truck for our journey to the camp.

On arrival at the camp we went to the company store and were each given a collapsible bed, blanket, mosquito net plus a pick axe handle, the latter of which we were advised to take to the shower when we went?? Boa Constrictors like warm and

***The story continues
page 11***

DEREK CONCLUDES HIS TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE....

damp places and it was not unusual to find you had one for company in the shower!!!

The reason for the monthly trek was to entertain the troops stationed there and also play in the Officers Mess in the evening. There was however a bonus to be had in the shape of a swimming pool of crystal clear water in which we spent most of our off duty moments.

The most memorable event of my time in Guyana was being invited to lunch, with others, by one of the managers of Guyana Airways; after which we went down to the river and climbed aboard a Grumman sea plane to fly to the Potaro river and view the Kaieteur Waterfall. An image never forgotten and seven times higher than Niagara Falls.

I spent one year and fifty seven days in Guyana after which the Regiment transported back to Port of Spain in Trinidad and we boarded the troop ship Dilwara for a two week voyage back home. We sailed up the River Clyde where we disembarked and after Customs formalities were given travel documents and two weeks leave.

Writing these articles for the magazine have brought back so many memories, far too many to write down and has certainly stimulated my brain cells. I served in the Black Watch regiment for six years, and am now 80 and so many incidents kept flashing through my mind as I wrote. What an amazing organ the brain is but I think it is too late to write a book !!! *Derek Iles*



Kaieteur Waterfall

A WORD FROM THE ENLIGHTENED !!!

Christmas Waste Collection

Many of us have moaned about the loss of the Outlook magazine particularly as it was such a good source of local information for those who do not have or rarely use the internet. Lots of us found it a reliable reminder of key dates including such things as changes to waste collections. Christmas will soon be upon us and this year as Christmas Day falls on a Sunday there will be a public holiday day on the Tuesday 27th Dec. So how will that affect our waste collections??? Well if your collection date is normally a Tuesday read on .. Despite Veolia and Southend Council's new four day collection with, they said, no change in the future collection dates, there WILL be a change for some of us and so as there is no Outlook to remind us we, on your behalf, spoke with Veolia to check and they say: "The Christmas collection that would have been Tuesday 27th December will be on **Wednesday 28th December - one day late**, We will advertise this in local newspapers and the internet. For further information from Veolia please call 0203 567 6955"



*Our Community
Our Voice*

*Together We Can Do So Much
More*

Southend Older People's Assembly - The Active Voice of The Over 55's

ASSEMBLY MEETING DATES 2017

**Come & Join Us at The Civic Centre
Council Chamber Victoria Avenue
SS2 6ER**

1.00 pm Registration for 1.30 p.m. Start

**WEDNESDAY 22nd MARCH 2017
(Annual General Meeting)**

WEDNESDAY 7th JUNE 2017

WEDNESDAY 6th SEPTEMBER 2017

WEDNESDAY 6th DECEMBER 2017

Guest Speakers - Q&A

Details - See Meeting Agenda or

www.olderpeoplesassemblysouthend.co.uk

We Will Speak on Your Behalf

If you have an issue that is relevant to the OPA and the over 55's that you want raised at one of our public meetings but do not wish to speak yourself, please forward the details to us either by email: southendopa@yahoo.co.uk or our website contact and we will be happy to present it on your behalf.

Event Planning

Committee Meeting

Urgent Notice

**To all Members & OPA Supporters ...
Committee members & others to help with range of support tasks urgently needed - could that be you?? Contact us for more information.**

*Back Issues of the Assembly Times are
available to view /download via our
website*

Diary Dates

NIGHT OF THE LIGHTS

Friday 25th November 5pm til 8pm
Leigh Road, Leigh Broadway LoS
Fairground, Procession & Stalls &
Refreshment in St Clements Church



RAF CONCERT

Thursday 1st December 19.30
Cliffs Pavillion Station Road SoS
Contact Cliffs direct for ticket prices &
booking



CHRISTMAS CAROLS

SATURDAY 3rd, 10th & 17th December
11am til 5pm
Victoria and Royals Shopping Centres



CHRISTMAS CHARITY FAYRE

Thursday 8th December
11am til 5pm

Civic Centre Victoria Avenue SoS



CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR

Saturday 10th December
10am til 1.30pm

Leigh Community Centre Elm Road LoS



PARKS NURSERY OPEN DAY

Saturday 10th December
10am til 4pm

Wakering Road SoS



CAROLS ON STRAND WHARF

Saturday 10th December 6 pm til 7pm



PARKS NURSERY PLANT SALE

16th and 22nd December
10am til 2pm Civic Centre SoS



XMAS FARMERS MARKET

Saturday 17th December
8.30 am til 11.30am

Leigh Community Centre



COMMUNITY CAROL CONCERT

Sunday 18th December
2.00pm

Priory Park Bandstand



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