

LIRC News

27th July 2023

WELCOME to this third issue of LIRC News, the quarterly publication from your
London IBM Retirees Club.

The next publication of LIRC News will be published on the last Thursday of October (26th October) and future editions will continue to be published every three months. Our monthly Events Bulletin mailshot advertises events that the Club will be running with links to our website for online booking - <https://www.retireelondonclub.org>

WHAT'S INSIDE

We have been sharing interesting articles with you from the 1970's editions of IBM UK News. IBM staff in Newman Street had an unforgettable experience in 1972 - find out more on page 6.

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FROM YOUR CHAIRMAN

Dear Member,

I hope you are enjoying Summer; or has it been and gone, I wonder? As I write this, we are being blown around in winds that seem extra strong and unseasonal. I hear that a hot spell will return soon but having been in a heavy downpour on St Swithin's Day, I don't hold out too much hope for the next 40 days!

Your committee continues to work hard to try to find attractive events for the coming months and I'm pleased that those we offered in our Events Bulletin this month have been snapped up quickly. As mentioned previously though, one of the challenges we are facing is the continued lack of staffing at many places we want to visit. It seems that, since lockdown, many venues are struggling to get going again and that means it is difficult to organise appealing visits, with us already having to cancel one we were trying to arrange. One or two of you have offered ideas for places we might visit, though, and we thank you for those and are investigating. Please keep your suggestions coming in.

I have been exploring opportunities for a UK coach holiday but this Autumn anywhere worth visiting with a group that meets our needs is booked up, so I have organised a Short Break for Spring 2024 to Wells, Bristol & Bath. Theatre and shows are clearly still popular and Pete Wells has found some that might appeal and not too highly priced. You will see those and the Short Break advertised in the August Events Bulletin but don't miss out on booking, as places will be limited.

I know Christmas still seems a long way off but we still have places available for the Brick Lane Music Hall (see our website for details) and it's worth booking soon so that we know we can get our places for what is always a sell-out event. Simon & Joan Russell will welcome your booking.

New members continue to join us and, if you are one of those, we welcome you. If you know of other IBMers still in employment or retired (whether at IBM or elsewhere, including AT&T, Lexmark, Kyndryl, etc.), please make them aware of our existence. As a further thought, do you have close friends who you think might like to join too?

Several of us have just enjoyed a visit to Waddesdon Manor and you will see feedback on that and other events within this issue. Our London Walk is upcoming in August, so I hope to be able to chat to a good number of you on that too.

As I have said in earlier issues, our Club is built upon a strong feeling of camaraderie and friendship and this will take us forward through 2023 and beyond, so make sure you join us wherever and whenever you can and "share the love" with others.

David Sparrow

EVENTS UPDATE

Royal Hospital Chelsea - Monday 17th April

Sue and Keith, thank you so much for organising the trip to Chelsea yesterday - such an interesting visit in a tranquil and unique part of London. And beautiful weather too - perfect planning!

Dyllis Wretham

Just a quick note to thank you for arranging the visit to the RH Chelsea. It all went well, and our group had a good guide with many anecdotes, though he did rather overrun on time!! Geoff Cole



Canal Experience (Museum & Canal Trip) – Thursday 18th May

A very big thank you for organising the trip on the 18th. We found the museum very interesting and really enjoyed our boat trip (especially the cream tea!).

Our canal boat trip took us along Regent's Canal, with the "Long Tom" very capably steered by our very own Nigel Bartlett.



Waddesdon Manor – Wednesday 12th July

David Sparrow's granddaughter came with him on this visit – she was not sure if she would enjoy it so her comments to her mother are especially interesting: *"I've had a good day, not as boring as I expected, and Granny & Gramps' oldie gang were really nice and friendly and most were not as old as I expected. One of the organisers was really nice, as was a lad called Ash and Pete's wife, Sue. I really enjoyed the garden tour as the guide was really interesting and the aviary was wonderful."*



EVENTS UPDATE CONTINUED

All club events are now advertised via our monthly Events Bulletin. In the **July Events Bulletin** we advertised a special Christmas show at the **Brick Lane Music Hall** at 2pm on Thursday 16th November. Sadly, there will be no IBM Christmas Lunch again this year, but please join us for **Afternoon Tea at the Brick Lane Music Hall Theatre** where you can share all the fun of the festive season and meet up with fellow IBM retirees. If you would like to know more, please click [HERE](#). Our next **Events Bulletin** will be on **Monday 7th August**.

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PUNOGRAPHY

My favourite teacher at school was Mrs Turtle - strange name but she tortoise well.

Why did the chicken go to the gym? To work on his pecks.

A local company offered me a job selling mirrors. I'm looking into it.

People who like trance music are very persistent. They don't techno for an answer.

I tried to steal spaghetti from the shop, but the female guard saw me and I couldn't get pasta.

My dad suggested I register for a donor card. He's a man after my own heart.

My attempts to combine nitrous oxide and Oxo cubes made me a laughing stock.

I used to live hand to mouth. Do you know what changed my life? Cutlery.

THE TV NEWS PHOTOGRAPHER

With his request approved by the editor, the Fox News photographer quickly used a cell phone to call the local airport to charter a flight. He was told a twin-engine plane would be waiting for him at the airport. Arriving at the airfield, he spotted a plane warming up outside a hangar. He jumped in with his bag, slammed the door shut, and shouted, 'Let's go'. The pilot taxied out, swung the plane into the wind and took off. Once in the air, the photographer instructed the pilot, 'Fly over the valley and make low passes so I can take pictures of the fires on the hillsides.' 'Why?' asked the pilot. 'Because I'm a photographer for Fox Cable News,' he responded. 'And I need to get some close-up shots.' The pilot was strangely silent for a moment, finally he stammered, 'So, what you're telling me, is you're NOT my flight instructor'.

WORD DEFINITIONS

BEAUTY PARLOUR - A place where women curl up and dye.

COMMITTEE - A body that keeps minutes and wastes hours.

DUST - Mud with the juice squeezed out.

EGOTIST - Someone who is usually me-deep in conversation.

INFLATION - Cutting money in half without damaging the paper.

MOSQUITO - An insect that makes you like flies better.

RAISIN - A grape with a sunburn.

SECRET - A story you tell to one person at a time.

TOOTHACHE - The pain that drives you to extraction.

TOMORROW - One of the greatest labour-saving devices of today.

YAWN - An honest opinion openly expressed.

WRINKLES - Something other people have ... similar to my character lines.

Still trying to get my head around the fact that "Take Out" can mean food, dating or murder.

TEAM SPIRIT

During a game of football, the coach called one of his 9-year-old players aside and asked, "Do you understand what cooperation is? What a team is?" "Yes, coach", replied the little boy. "Do you understand that what matters is whether we win or lose together as a team?" The little boy nodded in the affirmative. "So," the coach continued, "I'm sure you know, when a foul is called, you shouldn't argue, curse the umpire, or call him an asshole. Do you understand all that?" Again, the little boy nodded in the affirmative. The coach continued, "And when I take you out of the game so that another boy gets a chance to play, it's not a dumb-ass decision or that the coach is a s***** is it?" "No, coach." "Good", said the coach. "Now go over there and explain all that to your grandmother!"

JUST FOR RETIREES

I thought growing old would take longer.

It's weird being the same age as old people.

I remember being able to get up without making sound effects.

It's the start of a brand new day, and I'm off like a herd of turtles.

Just once I want a username and password prompt to say CLOSE ENOUGH.

If I am ever on life support unplug me and plug me back in and see if that works.

Weight loss goal: To be able to clip my toenails and breathe at the same time.

I'm at that delusional age where I think everyone my age looks way older than I do.

I don't mean to interrupt people but I just randomly remember things and get really excited.

When I say, "The other day," I could be referring to any time between yesterday and 15 years ago.

Do you ever wake up in the morning and look in the mirror and think ... "That can't be accurate"?

I see people out there zip lining and mountain climbing and here I am feeling good about myself because I got my leg through my underwear without losing my balance.

You know you are getting old when friends with benefits means having someone who can drive at night.

Some of my friends exercise every day, meanwhile I am watching a show I don't like because the remote fell on the floor.

The biggest joke on mankind is that computers have begun asking humans to prove they aren't a robot.

I am swift as a gazelle. An old one. With arthritis. Run over by a land rover. Seven days ago.

YOUR LIRC COMMITTEE MEMBERS

If you have questions for your committee, please contact one of those listed below.

PLEASE NOTE: COMMITTEE MEMBERS WILL ACCEPT TELEPHONE CALLS BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 9.30 AND 19.00 MONDAY TO FRIDAY ONLY

David Sparrow	Chairman	LIRCnews@gmail.com	020-8440-5871 07711-627788
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Peter Morley	Membership Secretary	retibmlon@outlook.com	01932-241207
Pete Wells	Event Organiser	petecwells@gmail.com	07540-984074

ALTERNATIVE MEANINGS

Flabbergasted – appalled over how much weight you have gained

Abdicate – to give up all hope of ever having a flat stomach

Esplanade – to attempt an explanation while drunk

Negligent – describes a condition in which you absentmindedly answer the door in your nightgown

Gargoyle – gross olive-flavoured mouthwash

Flatulence – emergency vehicle that picks you up after you are run over by a steamroller

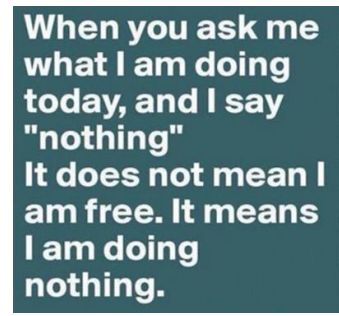
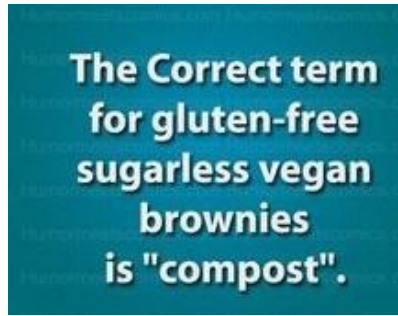
Balderdash – a rapidly receding hairline

Rectitude – the formal, dignified bearing adopted by proctologists

Pokemon – a Rastafarian proctologist

Circumvent – an opening in the front of boxer shorts worn by men

Frisbeetarianism – the belief that when you die, your soul flies up onto the roof and gets stuck there



SOME THOUGHTS YOU MIGHT AGREE WITH

How is it that the government can't control petrol prices... but the weather is something they think they can fix?

Why are we told to lower our air conditioning usage on hot days to prevent overwhelming the electricity grid while simultaneously being told to trade in our petrol cars for electric vehicles?

Why is cancelling student debt a good idea? Does it make sense to reward people who do not honour their financial commitment by taxing the people who do?

We live in a time where intelligent people are silenced so that stupid people won't be offended!

If your electric car runs out of power on the road, do you walk to a charging station to get a bucket of electricity?

The most powerful governments on earth can't stop a virus from spreading... but they say they can change the earth's temperature if you pay more taxes.

Why is it that when archaeologists find human remains, they always determine that they are either male or female and none of all the other 'genders'?

THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP – A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

In the July 2021 Retiree News, we included a link to an article written by one of our Club members, Nigel Reid, where he shared with us his memories of being an IBM Customer Engineer in Scotland from 1969 onwards. Nigel has now written a follow-on article entitled “The Special Relationship – a Different Perspective” where he shares with us his reflections of being an IBM UK assignee in the USA during a 3-year assignment from 1982 to 1984.

To read Nigel’s latest article, please click [HERE](#)

HISTORICAL NEWS

We hope you enjoy reading some of the historical articles that we are reproducing in the LIRC News. The article we are featuring below appeared in the **11th August 1972** edition of **IBM UK News**. It describes a memorable day in 1972 – a day that folks who worked in the IBM offices in Newman Street, central London, will not have forgotten! As you read it, you might spot a name that is familiar to you (and familiar to many other members of our LIRC Club).

Unexploded Bomb Scare at Newman Street

An unexploded wartime bomb threatened the lives of nearly 200 people at Newman Street recently, when it was discovered on a nearby building site. The building was evacuated for nine hours while the bomb was defused. The five-foot bomb, weighing 560 lbs, was uncovered late in the afternoon of July 26 (1972) by workmen laying foundations for an office block. It was almost directly beneath the Newman Street data centre.

Police cordoned off the area and an army bomb disposal expert was called. Meanwhile, evacuation of threatened buildings began, including some parts of the Middlesex Hospital. For a short time after the bomb was discovered, Newman Street worked on, unaware of the drama on its doorstep. Then receptionist Margaret Cole trying to pass between the two buildings which comprise the Newman Street location was stopped by the police and the alarm went up. Admin Manager Noel Davies and others toured each floor, telling people to evacuate the building. Telephonist Betty Mackrill was one of the last to leave. “I was really scared” she confessed. “I didn’t realise it was a wartime bomb and I was expecting it to go up any minute. I had to wait until the switchboard was clear so I could switch over to night-service, then I just grabbed my things and ran. I was so confused that I stood waiting twenty minutes for a bus. Then someone reminded me there was a strike that day!”

Once the buildings had been cleared, Noel Davies and a team of night shift workers began to move all computer tapes to the safety of Wigmore Street. They were assisted by other IBM volunteers. Shortly afterwards the army bomb expert arrived and began the delicate task of defusing the bomb. Finally, in the small hours of the morning, the bomb was defused. The tapes were brought back, the data centre resumed operations and, by morning, all was normal in Newman Street. Location services manager David Sparrow, normally the man in charge during such incidents, missed the whole event. “I left the office on time that day for the first time in six weeks,” he said. “I couldn’t have chosen a better day!”

ANNIVERSARIES, WEDDINGS and FINAL RESTINGS

IBM is no longer informing us of the names of Club members who have passed away. Therefore, in future, we will be relying on surviving relatives or friends to advise us instead so that we can report on such cases in the LIRC News. In the past three months, we have been informed of only three final restings:

- Brian Finn who died on Tuesday 18th April 2023
 - Warren Bagust who died on Sunday 21st May 2023
 - Noel Davies who died on Wednesday 24th May 2023
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