



John Doyle and the boys

Where are they now?

John Doyle (2nd from right) and the Boys pictured in 1958. Does anyone know what became of them? If so please let THE ARCHER know. Photo submitted by the regulars of the Duke of Cambridge.

Dial-a-Ride Debacle

By Sippy Azizollah.

Every year around Christmas time Dial-A-Ride update their records. A form is sent out to each user to see if their circumstances have altered in any way.

This time I received an envelope from Dial-A-Ride, but, instead of my name I found someone else's name, and my address. I spent half an hour trying to get through to the office and when I finally did, I was told that all the North London Dial-A-Ride users were in the same pre-

dicament.

What a blunder!

The person I spoke to told me to put my name and user number in the correction box on the form, and return it. I have since heard that other users were told to destroy them. I am also aware that some users sent them back with 'unknown

at this address' written on the envelope.

How could this have happened?

It can't be blamed on the computer, can it? I have no idea how much this blunder cost, but I think we'd all like to know how this could have happened.

Cold Comfort for Winter

By Mal Jacobs

Hypothermia, the dictionary states, is "a condition of abnormally low body temperatures". Not a very pleasant thought is it? But certainly one we have to think about and avoid during the cold winter weeks. For the older generation it is a time for being a little extra careful when doing some of the things that we normally do.

For instance, making sure we have some good hot soups plus a mixture of five different types and colours of fruit and vegetables during the day, as recommended to maintain good health. Kiwi fruit is an extremely good and economical source of vitamin C to help boost our defences. It all helps to give us extra nourishment and energy as a defence against winter colds. A flu jab is now becoming quite a popular feature at this time of year, as a preventative measure.

Hot tips

There is now quite a good range of thermal clothing in all shapes and sizes that is quite affordable and even more so at the sales! Most of us may look a little larger with the

extra padding worn in winter but, after all, the most important factor is to keep warm! It is wise to have a good pair of shoes and boots that are warm and fit snugly, with soles that grip the surface rather than ones that act as skis! None

of us look our best lying flat on the ground injured and alone. As most of the body's heat rises through the head it makes sense to cover it with a shawl, hat, baseball cap or anything that keeps the heat in and the cold out.

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The New Pension Service

By Mature Ed

So what's new? The rare occurrence of something new for pensioners is worth checking out at any time! The leaflet I saw by chance stated: "Regular surgeries to be held at the Green Man Community Centre on the first and third Monday of each month from 2-4pm. Further information and advice from 0845 60 60 265 or website www.thepensionservice.gov.uk" It sounded wonderful.

Surely some basic rules for starting any new business venture are: to deliver a service that most people want, to let them know about it and to provide it in the most practical location. This new local business is called The Pension Service. I went to the Green Man Community Centre on Monday 6 January at 2pm. After a fifteen-minute wait, the receptionist and I decided they weren't coming today. Not deterred, of course, I decided to phone them. The recorded voice informed me that "All the operators are busy, please ring later". That cost me 20p. That sort of service sounds familiar doesn't it?

Let's compare the present arrangements with pensioner needs:

Regular surgeries are held at the Green Man.

The surgeries need to be held in a more central position in East Finchley. Or why not go to the people? Hold surgeries at all retirement-type homes (sheltered etc.) first as they usually require help the most.

Surgeries are held twice a month.

These need to be held at least once a week on alternating days. Pensioners very often have appointments or treatments on regular specified days.

Surgeries hours are 2-4pm.

These need to be earlier, preferably 11am-1pm, as people often need to take one or two buses or Dial-a-Ride and 4pm can be dark and busy.

Further information advice from 0845 number.

I got no advice - except a recorded message telling me to try again later and that cost me 20p. Why not inform me how many calls are waiting or have an answering machine that takes a message and ring the person back? Better still, have a free-phone number.

So that all pensioners in the area are informed of events like the introduction of this scheme, why not use the old familiar method that's been around since 1635. It's called the Postage Stamp! So what's new?

Mistresspiece

By Daphne Chamberlain

A mistresspiece is 'a feminine masterpiece'. That's what I read the other day. So is this a dubious attempt at political correctness? If you thought not, you are absolutely right. In 1971 the Oxford English Dictionary listed it as a word in use from the 1640s to the early 1900s.

Anyway, writers of all pieces should submit them with a wish for a happy St. John Bosco's Day. Who he? The patron saint of editors. (His day is 31 January, but don't let that bother you.)

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