

Why bother with buying anything new?... An AGM... keeping a diary

Every time I read about something to do with recycling, or with repairing, I get a good feeling inside (a silly thing to say really, feelings are normally inside). I read about the idea – originating in Holland I believe – where people bring in their unworkable electronic and electrical items and they are repaired and offered for sale.

We are living in an increasingly throwaway society. Françoise bought a printer, an Epson printer that works perfectly well but the printer had decided in its wisdom that it wasn't going to print any more copies because we need to replace its filter. It is almost impossible to find anyone to do this and if we could, the cost will be little less than buying a new machine. We eventually did buy one for less than £50 and we took out an extended warranty of three years to cover against any such contingencies.

We recently went to a carpet shop to enquire about – surprise surprise – carpets. We intend to replace the rather ghastly green flower covered 1970s uncool model with a nice brown carpet where you can bounce up and down on it when you walk on it. We also enquired about curtains for the bedroom for the reason that in the summer we are woken up very early by the sun, as the current almost completely transparent material is useless against actual light. The quote was over £500 for the admittedly very nice flowery print material and a light proof backing.

I rebelled against this. Come to think about it, I rebel against most things. Many repairs and renovations can be done

quite easily within the home without paying someone else to do it. I thought to myself, why not just buy some backing and sew it onto the existing window material. I had a look at John Lewis who sell Blackout Curtain Lining Fabric for £8/m with a width of about 140 cm. A few metres of that will do us very nicely thank you and I can spend what I would've saved on a nice weekend away.

And so to church. It is Palm Sunday. We have no vicar and so we ran the service ourselves. Anyone can run matins or Evensong but for communion a registered priest has to be there. There were about 35 people there and we were all in a jolly mood. After tea and coffee, we had the Annual General Meeting in which the church finances were discussed. I know it's an odd time to have a meeting but it is considered that more people will turn up on the back of something they would have come to anyway which is not bad psychology in my view.

One of the ladies in the choir had given birth to a child, a boy called Bertie. He was, she proudly told us, five weeks old and now had a weight of 8 lbs. 8 oz. I have found it interesting to see over the years the behaviour of very young children who were wanted and loved versus the behaviour of children who were the victims of a disturbed relationship. This child lay back in his crib looking around, not making a noise, eyes wide open taking everything in.



I suppose I looked like that at one point.

After lunch, I wrote to all the people on my 5G mailing list inviting them to take the idea of diary writing more seriously. I'm doing this partly to celebrate the fact that I have exceeded half a million words. Samuel Pepys, my inspirator, wrote 1 million words over 10 years. He used a quill pen by candle light so all credit to him. Here are my using speech to text dictation which makes the whole thing much easier. Here am I trying to persuade people to consider writing diaries.

Here is an excerpt from the message:

Why should you bother to keep a diary? There are several reasons for this.

1. You will not only be writing for yourself, but you are writing for others and the pleasure in sharing your experiences is something that you cannot necessarily recreate at a later date

2 It is easy to forget ideas particularly new ideas. They lose their piquancy after a few days. Ideas are not our

possession, they visit us from the universe. How many opportunities have been lost through saying to yourself "I'll do that later"

3. On a more mundane side if you meet somebody who could be useful to you or you to them, do you write down their name and details of where you met them. I'm not suggesting that this should be part of a public diary.

4. It is a lovely way of keeping in touch with your friends. Because of the pressure of life, you can't keep up with all your friends and acquaintances at the same time. Sending them your website invitation will not cause them to feel intruded on. In fact they may even be pleased that you wish to keep them in the loop.

5. sometimes you only know something, or come to realise something when you engage in the process of mentally reaching out for an expression of your experience.

6. Diaries can be therapeutic, a good method of closure for the day, and just plain and simple fun.

7. Information written on social media is fleeting. A diary has a permanence about it (and yes I do backup my material) and I can look back and relive the event with great clarity.

Today is pathetically cold. According to the weather forecast, it will get warmer by the end of the week and go from the present 9° to 18°. I'm already looking forward to my time in Cornwall. It will be in the first week of June and I shall spend plenty of time on the lovely sandy beaches that you can find down there. As regards surfing, I believe the north coast of Cornwall is better than the south coast but since I'm not a surfer it doesn't really matter.

We will have Wi-Fi down there in our rented cottage but I shall try to keep it turned off, no not *try*, I **will** keep it turned off and see how I manage through the week without checking my messages. I expect the Earth will continue to evolve, the stars will continue their courses. People would be born, people will die, things will go on much as they do

anyway.

I should also not be in touch with Facebook. Is that a bad thing or a good thing? How many real flesh and blood friends do we have. How many real friends would we lose if we disregarded all our befriending and friends on social media. My suspicion is that it would make very little difference. A contact or acquaintance can give you good information and use all the right words to indicate friendship but when push comes to shove, in other words if you were actually to meet them, would the friendship feeling live up to its virtual promise? I cannot say that the people I have met who would never go near a computer never mind Facebook seem just as happy than those who do possibly more happy, possibly more relaxed.