

# The Bond



NEWSLETTER OF THE FEDERATION OF CUSTOMS & EXCISE RETIRED STAFF ASSOCIATIONS

OCTOBER 2000

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## VARIED INTERESTS

### BARGING ABOUT...



The East Midlands CERSA had a splendid day on the canals in two boats. Our Commodore and Vice Commodore **Roger & Carole McMurray** laid on an all day trip from Sibleby in Leicestershire to Loughborough and return.. Negotiating locks, waving to passers-by, consuming pub lunches, and stopping for "other" refreshments all featured. Speciality items such as bank crashing and tree demolition was ably demonstrated by **Mike Patten**. Overall an enjoyable and relaxing

activity to be recommended, particularly if you can pick the weather in this Summer of 2000. We managed it!

Photo 1 Shows (L to R) Vice Commodore **Carole**, **Mike Patten**, and **Vera King**.

Photo 2 shows the two boats in one of the locks.

*Paul Houghton*

**E**uropean Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) courses are now being run in many parts of the country. As the title suggests it is an EC initiative designed to help people learn to use computers.

In Reading it is being run by the Reading College using the top floor of a bookshop in central Reading. At present (in Reading anyway) it is free and offers between 75 and 130 hours computer based training at times suitable to the candidate. It is in 7 modules covering : Basic Concepts of IT / Using a computer and Managing Files / Word Processing / Spreadsheets / Databases and Filing Systems / Presentation & Drawing / Information and Network Services. In order to achieve the ECDL one has to take an assessment on each module (and they are quite demanding I find!).

In most areas of the country the courses are being mounted under the auspices of the Further Training sections of the Local Education Authorities. My wife and I have both enrolled and are finding the course extremely useful but quite challenging. We are presently doing one sess-

ion (2 hours) a week but you can do as much, or as little as you wish. We just happen to find once a week about all we can fit in with all our other interests and responsibilities.

*Gordon Hodson*

**Re: JERQUER (last issue)**

**T**wo authorities on Customs history, **C. McCoy** and **E. Carson**, agree that the office ('grade') of Jerquer was abolished in 1862. However, as **James McCabe** and **Bernard Shilling** pointed out quite correctly ('Bond', August 2000), the practice of checking ships' files, called jerquing, continued for another hundred years. It was performed by a variety of grades, notably by U/Ss at the Surveyors Branch.

I have been given some information:- **Ian Wright**, the Department's archivist, mentioned that the office of Jerquer probably goes back to Chaucer's time and that Board's Minutes (CUST/28) at the Public Record Office, Kew might give the background as to what happened in 1862. **Geoff Berry**, one-time unattached Surveyor, mentioned that he saw a 1906 book of instructions for 'The Jerquer Port of London, and, where applicable, Jerquers at Out Ports'. I think it likely that there is a computer audit program today that checks duty against actual imports. It would be historically satisfying if such a program were called **JERQUE!**

*John Pink*

## LETTERS

**I** compiled many cryptic Crosswords way back in the late eighties and early nineties, 67 of which were published in *Portcullis*: the first in February 1988 and the last in November 1993.

From 1975 until I retired in October 1988, I was the Departmental Safety Officer, and at the time of my retirement occupied the office in New King's Beam House next to Ron Saunders, who I suspect will remember me.

I have always been a keen cricketer, and since my retirement have become a fully qualified umpire and umpire instructor. I find myself umpiring all sorts of amateur matches including regular Saturday matches for my club, under 17 and under 19 matches for the Metropolitan District of the Association of Kent Cricketer Clubs, Inter-League matches for the Oxbridge North Kent Metropolitan Cricket League, Under 11 and under 13 matches for boys and girls in the county of Kent, plus Indoor Six-a-side matches during the winter. I am President of the Metropolitan Kent Association of Cricket Umpires and Scorers; Vice Chairman of the AKCC Metropolitan District; a member of the Kent Cricket Board Umpires and Scorers Committee; a member of the Kent Cricket Board League and Club Cricket Committee, in addition to being a committee member of my own club (Metrogas CC), a member of Kent Cricket Club, the Kent Supporters Club, and the Cricket Society. You will appreciate from all this that cricket has taken up a lot of my time since I retired, and especially since my good wife died in 1994.

In the last year or so I have also joined our local church, The Biggin Hill Christian Fellowship Church, and have become in-

involved in a lot of their activities, having made many new good friends in the process. My two sons and their families live quite a distance from here. One lives in the Isle of Man; the other in Dorset, so I do not see much of them, though they all keep in regular touch by telephone. As you can imagine I live a pretty full life, and often wonder how I ever found time to go to work.

*Bob Easton*

*Bob - Thanks for finding the time to provide us with some mental exercise. I think there will be a few "strained brains" from now on! DT.*

**T**he first few months of this year have been the busiest period so far in the five year existence of CERSA London Area branch. Eight events have taken place so far and more are planned before the year is over. February's Eurostar trip to Paris was a first outside this country, but not the only excursion to last for longer than a day. Another was to the CERSA re-union in Bournemouth in May, which eight members and spouses at-

tended. The branch's own AGM was held in the Board Room at New Kings Beam House in April and was followed by a pub lunch. Walks have included Little Venice (in May) and Blackheath to Greenwich (July). A rare chance to see inside Lambeth Palace occurred in June and in the same month a party of 24 went for a flight on the London Eye and in August a walk from Putney to Hammersmith. Our only museum visit was to RAF Hendon in March. Looking ahead, As autumn approaches we hope to visit not one, but two palaces - first Buckingham Palace (September) and then Eltham Palace (in October).

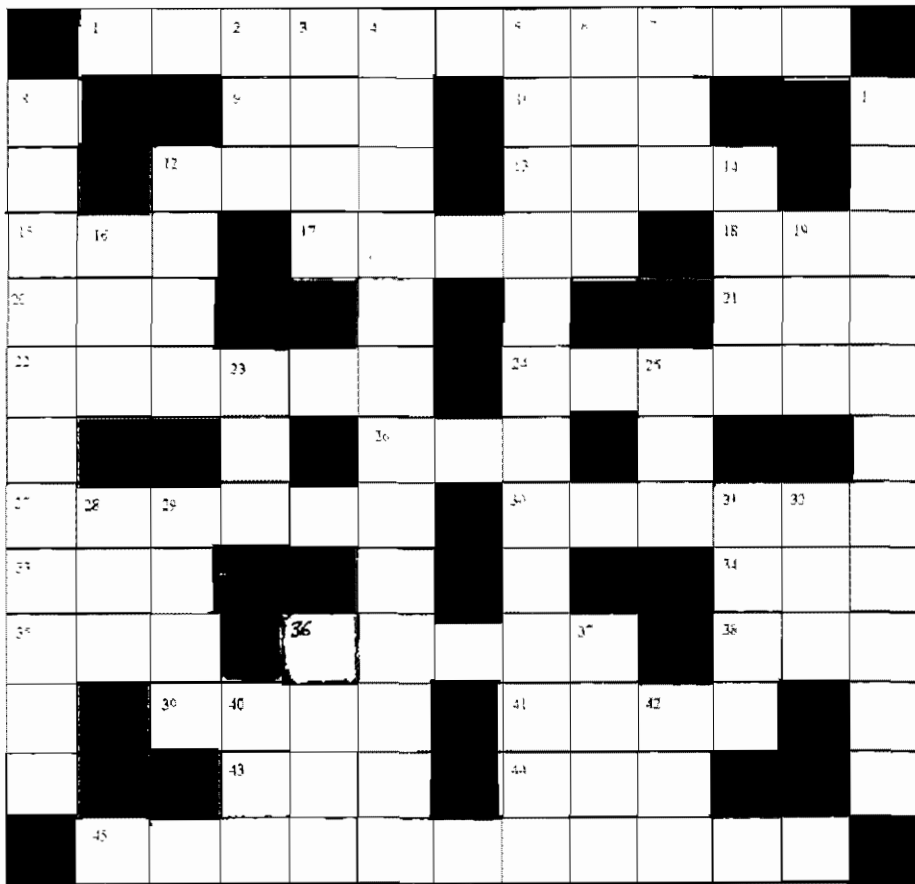
*John Wright*



**PLEASE NOTE:  
DEADLINE FOR  
DECEMBER ISSUE  
WILL BE  
5TH NOVEMBER**

*Would correspondents please indicate whether or not they wish their address details to be published.*

<b>FOCERSA OFFICERS, 2000</b>		
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**ACROSS**

- 1. Those who have reached 5 may have given this (4,7).
- 9. Metal used in getting Eros back (3)
- 10. Organ found in some arenas (3)
- 12. The best winery may have one of a pair (4).
- 13. Every family has one. In the garden ? (4).
- 15. Before the start of every royal engagement (3).
- 17. One of the little people who appear one by one in the exercise ?
- 18. Article has other alternative missing (3).
- 20. Score one when you turn out and lose the lead (3).
- 21. Agree to drop off (3).
- 22. Would this balance with both sides around the border ?(6)
- 24. Property that may be seen in the untidiest atelier(6).
- 26. Eccentric start to university (3).
- 27. Regulation about settlement for fish ? (6).
- 30. Join in French joke to start entertainment (6)
- 33. Start to apply roller on the pitch ? (3).
- 34. Why 'e let us, they say ' (3).
- 35. A Revenue Assistant is a member of a terrorist organisation (3).

- 36. There is a view that victory is needed before saying "Thank you" (5).
- 38. Holds cash, but is about to go broke (3).
- 39. Biblical character creates the very Dickens about an article (4).
- 41. Can become something of an arab legend....(4)
- 43. ... when a follower goes for a drink (3).
- 44. Expression of surprise at hearing the letter read out(3)
- 45. Civil Service feels need to become vulnerable (ii).

**DOWN**

- 2. Not elsewhere specified when making the news at present (3)
- 3. Hold the Grand Prix outside the Republic of Ireland (4).
- 4. One who is this is probably past 5 (6,7)
- 5. Great men tire out before the end of the exercise when they have reached this (10,3).
- 6. Rave about a wand of authority (4)
- 7. Anger that is outright! (3).
- 8. Eternal V-sign has no end.Strange but true : (11)
- 11. One who died first was Made to cross deeper (11).
- 12. Apt to make a dent (4)
- 14. Fiery mount (4).
- 16. Regret it is not entirely genuine (3)

- 19. Loth to be left out when placed in the oven (3).
- 23. Adversely affected by sticky sweets ? (3).
- 25. Sheepishly retreat (3).
- 28. Vehicle seen in Africa recently (3).
- 29. Horse held in fear above all others (4).
- 31. I've left to achieve longing (4).
- 32. Turn to a part of India....(3).
- 36. ...and say farewell to the world (4).
- 37. Biblical brother reported to have enough strength (4).
- 40. Idiot loudly follows much of 32.
- 42. General shelter (3)

**Solution:**

**Prize Crossword(No1)**

B	R	I	D	G	E	P	R	O	B	L	E	M
A	C	U	E	O	R	O	E	A				
T	R	E	N	T	O	B	U	T	T	S		
T	U	N	E	A	R	E	R	I	O	T		
L	E	I	S	U	R	E	C	E	N	T	R	E
E		S	C	R	U	B		R				
O	P	E	R	A				O	L	E	I	C
F		G	O	R	A	L						L
W	A	S	H	E	D	U	P	A	T	S	E	A
O	T	T	O		A	N	T		E	A	R	S
R	E	R	U	N	S		S	I	L	A	S	
D		U	R	E	I		O	F	T	E		
S	E	M	I	F	I	N	A	L	I	S	T	S

Drawn at random from the many correct entries, the winner is

**Brian Edwards**  
**17 Bracken Road**  
**Darlington**  
**DL3 9LY**

to whom a prize of £10 is on its way. Condolences to those whose entry was not picked out!

**For the time being the crossword will be for entertainment only, until it can be decided whether funds will support a regular prize.**

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## And, finally.....

### EDITORIAL

Putting **The Bond** together is, I find, most interesting, and it is good to see that a greater variety of subjects has been available in the more recent issues. There had been some complaint about the amount of sporting activities reported. We now seem to have arrived at a situation where the reports of the various pursuits such as running, bowling and swimming have dried up. Do we have any cricketers? How might participants in all activities be persuaded to keep the info flowing in?

It was very satisfying to me to receive the amount of completed crosswords which arrived at the mail-box. We seem to have gained a feature of interest to many, thanks to Bob Easton. I am certain that many others enjoyed the puzzle but did not post it on for entry. Perhaps the finance officers will be able, at some time in the near future, to squeeze out a little in order to provide a prize for at least some of the 6 issues per annum.

The next issue will be the last in this millennium year (where has it gone?) so I hope that, without prompting, you will find time to contribute to YOUR newsletter.

I always like to receive suggestions, so long as they are not *too* insulting!

*Dave Taylor*

### EASTERN ENGLAND GOLF

Congratulations to Peter Passmore (h'cap 16ish) on winning the Wilson Cup at the August outing of the Sheffield C & E Golf Society. It represents a "Grand Slam" in that Peter has now won all of the 6 Trophies that the Society plays for. Not in just one year but over his membership of this thriving Society. Only one Trophy eludes him and that is the Match Play K.O. event...but at the time of writing he looks to be one of this year's finalists. His other achievement this year was to qualify for the C&E Championships at Carnoustie, the only retired Sports Club member playing this year (as far as I am aware). However well he played I am sure he will have enjoyed some great golf.

*Paul Houghton*

**Sports Day** was a great day with hot sunshine, excellent arrangements and facilities, wonderful company, meeting old and new members of the Sports Club as well as many ex-colleagues who had come as supporters of their Collection teams, but who were vociferous in their support of the more "elderly" competitors. This year we managed a 33.3% increase in CERSA competitors over last year, there were three of us! **Reg Armstrong, Dick Kneill** and myself all

I came last- it had to be due to increasing age!

All three of us ran in the Vets 3000 metres. **Alan Hollingsworth**, who retires from the department on 27th September and is the secretary elect of the newly formed **Retired Members Branch (RMB** in future!), won the men's 1500 metres walk by a large margin. As he will compete for CERSA next year when the event will be held at Norwich University, we are keeping our fingers crossed that he can compete again next year and so put CERSA further up the points ladder. It would also be exceedingly helpful if other retired colleagues could consider competing for CERSA so that we can put the Retired Members Branch squarely on the list in the future. *More competitors in more events means more points!!* On

the **RMB** front the Executive Committee Elect are now close to finalising a constitution for this new Branch of the Sports Club, and I intend to write to all members by the end of November at the latest, informing them about the developments and seeking their views.

*Gordon Hodson*



### HISTORY NETWORK

If you have an interest in the history of the Department, you may wish to join the **History Network**, and receive the quarterly newsletter. Complete this information slip and send to

**JOHN PINK, 6 ANNS COURT, GROVE ROAD, SURBITON, SURREY, KT6 4BE**

NAME	
ADDRESS (inc. Post Code)	
SUBJECTS OF INTEREST TO ME	
INCLUDE MY NAME AND ADDRESS ON HISTORY NETWORK CIRCULATION LIST	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>