

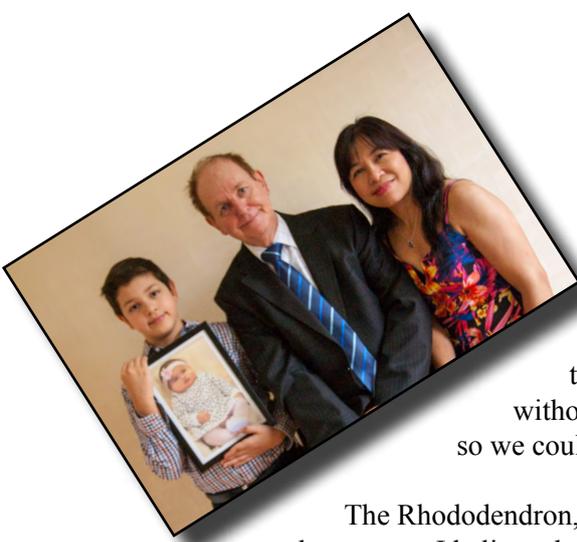
Northern *news*

BRINGING YOU THE LATEST NEWS
FROM OUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS
AROUND THE WORLD

May 2017



Editorial Ramblings



On the 14 May 2016, just last year, our dear little Annelise went to Heaven. We still talk to her every day, even though we can't see her. When we left our last home, the place where Annelise passed away, both Grace and I, independantly of each other, felt that we'd left her behind. We still feel that way. If there was any way we could buy that property we'd move back in there like a shot. Sadly, it is way beyond our means. We all feel terribly lonely without our precious little Princess. How we'd love to move back into her last home so we could be with her in some way.....

The Rhododendron, picured below, was one I bought shortly before Annelise left us. We took her to the nursery. I believe that was her last trip out before she became to delicate to travel. A few days ago, I bought two more Rhododendrons in her memory as well as the Azalea that is pictured on the cover. Sadly, the Rhododenron (below) hasn't been at its best this year, probably because of the appalling weather. It looks very bedraggled and nowhere near as beautiful is was at this time last year (taken on 7 May 2017).

On a lighter note, it was JP's 12th birthday on 10 May and we took him to a 'eat all you can eat' international cuisine buffet restaurant in Blackpool that evening. During the celebration some of the staff presented him with a slice of fancy cake with '12' in candles and sang 'Happy Birthday' to him - see photograph next page. He was so delighted.

Please do remember that to view the videos in our newsletters you should read them in Adobe Acrobat Reader and have the correct codec installed (such as the one provided in Quick Time Player - which is a free download - as I've previously mentioned many times). If you didn't get the video working for last month's edition, you can view JP crashing on his bicycle at URL: <http://www.cooksonline.info/john/JPCrash.html>.

or *CLICK HERE!*

Alan



Cover Photograph: An Azalea bought in memory of Annelise. Taken on 7 May 2017

Photograph next page: JP's birthday celebration. Taken on 10 May 2017.

Happy Birthday JP



JP at his birthday celebration -
taken on 10 May 2017





Keith Berry MBE JP MA presented with The Rachael Heyhoe Flint Award

Many of you will have met Keith and Liz Berry in our home (and/or in the Royal Manchester Children's Hospital) on various occasions as they are great friends of our family. We are delighted to be able to inform you that Keith has become the first recipient of the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Award for services to the community. The full story can be seen in the video on this page or at URL: http://www.gelliwig.org.uk/news_and_events/heyhoeFlintAward.php

or [CLICK HERE!](#)



Wolverhampton Wanderers Football Club have inaugurated a Rachael Heyhoe Flint Award to commemorate the huge contribution that the late Baroness Heyhoe Flint made both to the Football Club in particular but also the City of Wolverhampton.

At the showpiece End of Season Awards Dinner held at the Telford International Centre on Tuesday 9th May 2017 the Club announced the first recipient and the Award was presented to Keith Berry by Club Vice Presidents Robert Plant CBE and Steve Bull MBE both great friends of Rachael. The citation reads "For outstanding contribution to the Community".

Keith is a founder member of two Wolverhampton Charities of which Rachael was a Patron and ardent active supporter. The Birch Thompson Memorial Fund was established in 1981 after the untimely death of two Wolverhampton teachers in the same school, Graham Birch and John Thompson. Rachael worked with John in the early part of her career as a teacher.

She was instrumental in providing two minibuses and the replacement of bunk beds at Gelliwig, the Residential Centre officially opened by the Charity in 1989.

After 30 years of usage and with the help of feedback from user groups the Charity has plans drawn up to improve the property and include a mini-sports hall to honour Rachael's contribution.

In mentioning the Appeal at the Awards Dinner Keith now announces that £500,000 is needed to be added to the £130,000 already realised and ring-fenced for this purpose. He said: *Thousands of disadvantaged young people from the Wolverhampton area had stayed at Gelliwig in Porthmadog and this was close to Rachael's heart as she was one of the first patrons. This Award will mean so much more if in 12 months time I can report back and say work has started on Heyhoe Hall. So please help us to create a living memorial to arguably the second Lady Wulfruna!"*

Donations can be made at goldengiving.com.

The other charity of which Rachael was a Patron is POWER PLEAS and in 1995 she started an Annual Collection for. Wolves Wheelchair after wheelchair user Darren Langston had asked her if the Wolves could buy him one. Both Rachael and Darren passed away in January but Rachael's Day at the Molineux has been promised as an annual event.

Sports presenter Jacqui Oatley and Richard Skirrow have succeeded Rachael as Patrons of POWER PLEAS.

Keith thanks the Club for the latest support given and in particular Richard Skirrow and Will Clowes and his team in the Wolves Community Trust, supported by Managing Director Laurie Dalrymple.

Keith with the Rachael Heyhoe Flint award - photograph by Elizabeth Berry





I bought this beautiful Fuchsia for Grace this month - taken on 26 May 2017

The photograph below, also taken on 26 May 2017, shows some more flowers in our little garden. Not being a gardener, I have no idea what they are!



Flashback!

Last evening (26 May 2017) we did something very unusual. We all sat in the lounge and watched a television programme together. This rare event is in itself almost worth recording for posterity. The programme was a fascinating documentary about the great Cunard liner, the *Queen Mary*. At the time, it was the biggest and fastest liner afloat. It made me recall the photograph (below), taken by my mother, of my father and I when we were on holiday on the Isle of Wight with The Solent in the background on which the *Queen Mary* can be seen as she steams into Southampton after yet another crossing of the Atlantic Ocean. As you can see I was only a little lad, so this photograph must have been taken not far short of 60 years ago.

Now a floating hotel and museum in Longbeach, California, JP was astounded, and highly indignant, that such a fine example of British ship building, part of our history, should be berthed in the USA instead of being located in pride of place in the UK. Grace and I totally agreed with him. He was even more disgusted when I told him that if the American's hadn't bought this ship it would have been sold for scrap! What a sad reflection on the respect we have for our history - a ship so highly regarded around the world that another nation should have bought it instead of the country that built it!



Lyme Park

With my car being repaired throughout the weeknd, we headed south to Cheshire in Grace's car on 27 May to the magnificent stately home of Lym Park, the largest in Cheshire. On touring the house and gardens one was made acutely aware of the huge wealth that would have been necessary to build and furnish such a home. In today's money we would be talking about billions of pounds. And it would have cost a fortune to run and maintain. The colossal wealth of the Legh family, who owned it for so many years, must have been staggering. The house is surrounded by formal gardens of 6 hectares (15 acres) in a deer park of about 550 hectares (1,359 acres). In addition to the main house there are various other buildings and structures in the gardens and deer park.

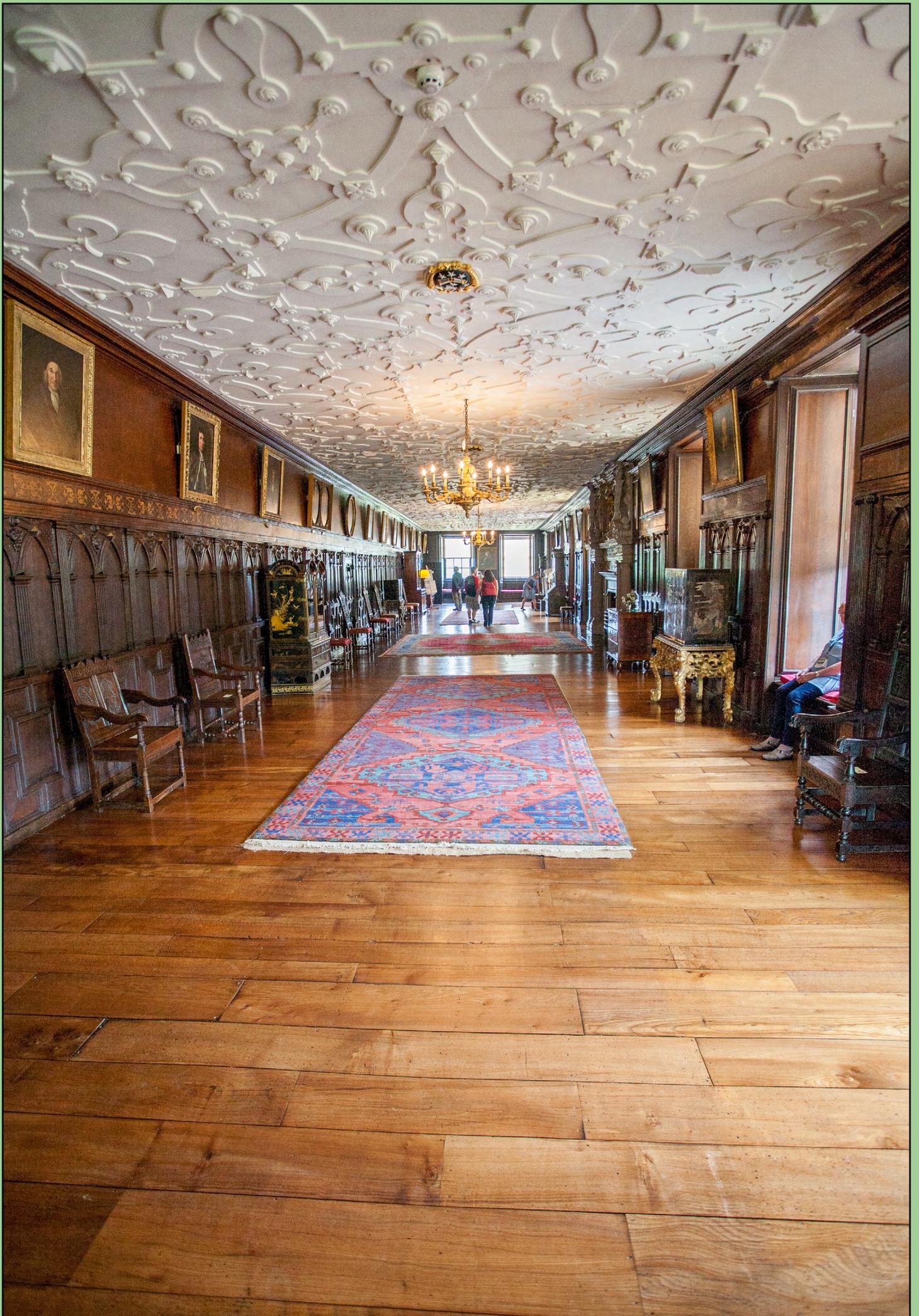


This beautiful depiction of the royal coat of arms is located over one of the fireplaces in the house. You will notice that the Unicorn of Scotland is 'missing' and, in its place is the Welsh Dragon. The Lion, of course, represents England. This coat of arms was first chosen by Elizabeth I indicating that she was Queen of England and Wales. The standard royal motto is shown "Dieu et mon Droi" (God and my right) rather than her personal motto "Semper Eadem" (always the same).













Despite the rain and thunderstorms, our trip to Lyme Park was a great day out. We highly recommend membership of the National Trust who own many magnificent stately homes in England and Wales. Apart from the interior of the house, the Italian Garden (*below and next page*) is stunning as are the rhododendrons and azaleas at the appropriate time of year. We certainly didn't see all there was to see so we may well go back for another look at the gardens and park when (if!) the weather is dryer and sunnier.







Located on the edge of the Bowland Fells below Pendle Hill (*above*), the tiny village of Chipping was the scene of our next day out - the Chipping Steam Fair on 28 May 2017. Apart from the wonderful century old steam engines, there was a splendid display of old commercial vehicles, such as the 1966 Scammell recovery truck (*below*), military vehicles and classic cars - several models of which I'd driven when they were current vehicles about half a century ago.



Chipping Steam Fair





JP's photographs show a Russian tractor unit (artic), and the bonnet of an American Willie's Jeep.





Another of JP's photographs of the Russian tractor unit.

Another of JP's cracking photographs; this being a Fowler steam engine roughly a century old.





How many readers remember the Vauxhall Cresta (*above*) from the late 1950s and early 1960s? I certainly do. This was *the* poser's car to have in those days - a British version of the typical American sedan of that era - complete with bench seats, column change (3-speed - some later models were fitted with overdrive), tail fins and whitewall tyres. The early models had a 2262 cc engine which was increased in size to 2651 cc (82.5 bhp) in later models.



A great favourite of mine was the Mini van. I owned two of these vehicles at various times (and a Mini saloon). My first Mini van was a 1967 model which I bought from the company where I worked for £145 when it was about 3 years old. It had served me well as a company vehicle and continued to do so as my own van for some time afterwards. I even used to go camping in it - sleeping in the back with my Yellow Labrador, Skip.

Although I don't remember the Austin 7 (*right*) as a then current model, I believe my late father used to own one at one time. Driving in those days required many skills that we don't now need - just getting the engine started being one of them. Driving from my home town in Sussex to Preston, in Lancashire, was a major expedition in those days.



[Click here to see the videos](#)

J. WILKINSON MACH



Another Scammell recovery truck. This time a vehicle formerly from the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (R.E.M.E.) of the British Army. This particular vehicle is fitted with an 11 litre petrol engine that consumes fuel at a rate of about 3 miles per Imperial gallon (4.54 litres).



Alan's Reflections

Alan's Reflections

I'm sure just about everyone has heard of the cyber attack that knocked out the computers of much of our National Health Service and those of many other organisations on a global scale. Grace was directly affected by this as she had an appointment at her local doctor's practice and they couldn't access her records.

The cyber attack was brought about by a malicious piece of software, a virus named WannaCry, probably sent as an attachment to an e-mail. On opening the e-mail, the files on the computer's hard drive were encrypted and a warning message displayed on the screen saying that unless the user paid a fee within a short time all their data would stay encrypted and thereby inaccessible.

The worrying part of all this is that it has caused so much havoc and yet this situation is entirely preventable in almost all cases - especially easy for small business and home users. Whilst no procedure is guaranteed, this is how you can almost entirely prevent cyber attacks from causing you this distress:

Firstly, as I have always preached, **DO NOT STORE YOUR DATA ON YOUR COMPUTER'S HARD DRIVE**. Keep your data on external drives. Keep at least two copies of all your data on separate drives. Apart from cyber attacks, hard drives do fail. Also, if your computer fails in any way, you just connect your external drives to another computer and you're back to work in seconds. I've had several drives fail over the years and I have never lost any data because I keep all my data stored on at least two separate external hard drives.

Secondly, **BEFORE** you connect and access your external hard drives, **ALWAYS** disconnect your internet service first. If you need to send files via e-mail, copy them onto your computer's hard drive / desktop (from the external drive), then disconnect the external drive before you re-connect your internet service.

Thirdly, always make sure you **NEVER** open e-mails that come from an unknown source - and **NEVER** open attachments unless you are sure that it is safe to do so.

Fourthly, make sure your anti-virus software is up-to-date at all times - every day. And frequently scan your computer for viruses and malware.

This procedure is not difficult to follow and can save you a great deal of distress.

This afternoon, I picked up one of JP's books to read; the BBC's *Top Gear Drives of a Lifetime*. I got as far as the chapter describing a drive through all but one of the United States of America (they didn't go to Hawaii). I didn't get very far into that chapter as the very thought of driving 11 175.5 miles in two weeks made me feel somewhat exhausted. Imagine driving about 800 miles per day for two weeks. I guess most of us have driven 800 miles in a day without too much of a problem - but doing it every day for two weeks is a rather different proposition - even with two drivers. I didn't get through that chapter - much too tiring. Maybe I'm just getting old but the question needs to be asked: *Why?* I really love travelling; indeed that's one of my greatest loves. However, when I travel I want to see more than just the tarmac rushing past. I want to see places of interest and natural beauty, meet the people who live in these interesting places and get something of a taste of what the place is all about; maybe even a sense of its history.

You may remember that JP and I travelled a few hundred miles on our bicycles last summer (see URL: http://www.cooksonline.info/RiverRhineBlog/river_rhine00.html). We had a wonderful trip and met loads of lovely people. The downside of our little trip was the fact that we couldn't go inside many of the historic buildings and other places of interest because of the massive increase in crime in recent years that meant we couldn't leave our belongings unattended. Isn't that sad? In many ways, cycle touring would be the perfect way to travel if it wasn't for this sad aspect of doing so. The message, obviously, is that to travel slowly and cover only a few miles per day is the best way to see a country. Invariably, this means that a tour can take a lot longer than two weeks. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we all had unlimited time in which to travel and explore our world - slowly. Of course most of us can't afford to choose this way of life as travelling costs money - even on a bicycle. As I've said many times, one either has money and no time; or time and no money! How marvellous it would be to have both!

As usual, I spend a great deal of time thinking about where to go during the summer. I then usually end up going somewhere completely different to what I had in mind. I'm more of a *follow my nose* type of traveller than a serious planner. I'm still thinking about completing the River Rhine cycle trip that JP and I started last summer. I wonder where we'll end up going. Any guesses?

Alan

One of the two Rhododendrons I bought
this month - taken on 25 May 2017

