



Colin's Bog

Courting Controversy

Having recently watched the two part drama on BBC2 television, about the sad plight of gay men in the years up to 1967, with the second part concentrating on more recent times, I thought it is fitting for me to add my thoughts about the injustice shown to them and, additionally, to lesbian and transgender individuals and groups in the past.

Born in 1947, I led a seemingly sheltered life, with little, or dare I say, no understanding, of the issue of homosexuality, or similar topics, and, although, I was 20 when apparently the law was changed, I still had little understanding, of the trials and tribulations, that those who society classed, at the time as 'being different,' had to face. Infact, I can remember as a child, the word 'gay,' meant something totally different to me, as illustrated in a poem that I once wrote as an eight year old child:-

A Toby Jug is bright and gay,
I made some myself today,
I painted them in colours bright,
And now they look a pretty sight.

(published in 'Look and Learn magazine 1955)

Throughout my life, I have met, and indeed worked with, some wonderful human beings, who's care for others, has been beyond reproach, and indeed, an example to us all, the fact that they may have had, a different outlook or sexuality to those of us who are stereotyped as 'being straight.' So, fifty years on from the change in the law, society has now, in the main, come to accept that people are not the same as each other, there are many who have a different sexual persuasion, whether they be gay, lesbian or transexual, it is the way that they are, and we are all human beings and should be treated with the same mutual respect as each other.

Although neither my father or mother, were particularly religious, I was brought up with good Christian values, and to respect others, regardless, of their colour, creed or gender. The issues that I have covered today, were obviously taboo and never spoken about in my presence.

Although these days, as someone who believes strongly in the theory of evolution, backed up by scientific evidence, I still keep an open mind about, many of the teachings, or events, that one finds in the Bible and Holy scriptures. Some of which were, in my personal view, designed to control and indoctrinate the masses, others, which may well have changed through time (like Chinese whispers), and I stick to those basic values, and principles, which I was taught in my early childhood.

As someone who has been happily married for fortyfour years, with two wonderful grown up children and four lovely grandchildren, I appreciate the value of marriage, and also celebrate seventy years of an interesting, sometimes diverse life, embracing several career paths, and evolving into a wealth of life skills and experiences.

Like many of my peers, I have had much time to ponder the meaning of life, its values, and the need for each and everyone of us, to accept the world in which we live, and to be tolerant and understanding of others. To embrace them, as fellow human beings, and to respect them, and, where possible their beliefs.

I often wonder, that if the prophets and pilgrims of biblical times were alive today, would they have to keep abreast with our every changing multicultural and diverse society, where attitudes have changed dramatically. Would they resort to technology and keep issuing automatic updates like Microsoft?

Apparently it is no longer considered PC to use the word 'mankind,' well, I've said it anyway. Mankind, now changed to Humankind (to appease the PC brigade), is often slow to learn by its mistakes, and in a perfect world, there would be no conflict, no prejudice, and everybody would be treated the same, wishful thinking, wonderful ideology. Meanwhile we can all play our part in making a difference, through fostering tolerance and understanding in our communities.

During my time as a Police Officer, and indeed, throughout my life, I have made it my duty, to treat everyone the same, regardless of their status in life, their beliefs, colour, creed, gender or sexuality.



The comments, observations, thoughts and opinions, expressed above, come together to form my honest appraisal, of past and present attitudes over the passing of time, which have led to a better understanding and wider acceptance of the issues discussed.

Colin I. Freeman

Member of the Institute of Training & Occupational Learning

“Acceptance does not mean accepting those who disregard humans on the basis of race, religion and sexual orientation.” **Abhijit Naskar**



SMILE 4 ESSEX

Bank Holiday Weekend Challenge

Whilst out walking with my wife, in Lee Valley Park last weekend, I was somewhat saddened by the lack of response that we got, when smiling and wishing passers-by

'Good Morning, Good Afternoon, or even Hello.' So I think it's time to put the smile back in Essex. So let's start with a campaign during the forthcoming Bank Holiday weekend.

When you are out and about:-

1. Put on a happy face.
2. Where appropriate greet passers by with a Good Morning, Good Afternoon or even just 'Hello!'
3. Keep Smiling even if they don't respond (You will be the bigger person).
4. Smiling can be infectious, spread the joy to others!



LOVE
ESSEX

Last Saturday, together with my wife and several members of the Rotary Club of Ongar, I spent the day at the Toot Hill Show, setting up and running a Tombola, raising funds for local charities, alongside a Epping Forest District NhW information stall.

Apart from a short spell of nasty rain, there was much to smile about at this annual event, design as a country show, with charity and trade stalls, arena events with produce competitions, as well as, static displays of classic cars, agricultural tractors etc., A brilliant day out for all the family, and one which was an excellent example of community cohesion. Well done to the organisers!

It just goes to show, that despite all the horrible things that affect us as human beings, the conflicts, disasters, personal traumas and tragedies, there are still many opportunities, never too far away, to help us smile and overcome adversity. As individuals we cannot change the world, but together, we can make a difference!

OPPORTUNITIES TO SMILE - OUT AND ABOUT IN ESSEX

If you are looking to find out what's going on in Essex in August, checkout this site: - <http://www.essexdaysout.com/august-events-in-essex/>

When you don't need a reason to smile, a cause to be happy, or a motive to laugh. That's when you've found the meaning of life.



Now, let's move on to some more topical news and views starting with the Mayor of London, referring to the recent spate of evil young criminals on mopeds.

Great joy and jubilation, at last, when we all thought it unlikely, one hears some 'sense and sensibility,' coming from the mouth of a politician, without any political bias!

Sadiq Khan, on hearing that some young thugs or thieves, take off their helmets, to discourage police officers to chasing them from the scene of a crime, in case there

should be an accident during the chase, which then, (in current thinking), could result in police being taken to court as a result.

In the 12 months up to June, Scotland yard, recorded 16,158 such thefts. The mayor insisted that the police must be granted a greater freedom to pursue these thoughtless criminals involved in what are termed as 'snatch crimes,' sometimes involving the use of acid against the victims.

Apparently the Home Office are planning a crisis summit to address this issue. Can someone please remind them that 'Actions, speak louder than words!'

Reported on social media: Anyone who carries acid could face up to four years in prison or risks a life sentence if they use it to attack someone, under tough new rules.

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), against the backdrop of horrifying acid attacks, has issued updated interim guidance, which for the first time explicitly refers to acid or corrosive substances.

Possession of an offensive weapon or threatening a person with an offensive weapon, which each come with a maximum four-year prison term, are among the "most appropriate" charges which can be brought.

A CPS spokesman said the guidance seeks to provide information "on the appropriate handling of cases involving 'acid' attacks".

He added: "This will form part of the wider review of guidance on 'Offensive Weapons, Knives, Bladed and Pointed Articles, and the Offences against the Person Charging Standard' that was already under way."

There has been a string of acid attacks in east London and west Essex in recent months.

In February, 19-year-old Bradley Robinson, from Epping Green, was temporarily blinded when carjackers sprayed a corrosive fluid in his face outside a Loughton petrol station.

Weeks later, partially-disabled boxing legend Michael Watson and his carer, Lennard Ballack, were attacked with a similar substance during an attempted robbery in Chingford.

The following month, a 29-year-old man was found by passers-by writhing in agony in the street after he had acid thrown in his face in Calderon Road, Leyton.

In April, a 43-year-old man from Tunbridge Wells was sprayed in the face with acid during another carjacking, this time in Buckhurst Hill.

In June, healthcare worker Syed Nadeem was attacked with acid and robbed by a masked gang as he walked home from Whipps Cross Hospital in Leytonstone.

Finally, earlier this month, two teenage boys were sprayed in the face with a corrosive substance and beaten in Wanstead High Street after they were confronted by a group of men.

Metropolitan Police Deputy Commissioner Craig Mackey also told the London Assembly Police and Crime Committee in July there were 455

Still on crime, did you know that cyber criminals actually carried out an attack against banks and other lenders, every week last year.



Attacks on both lenders and consumers were estimated to cost £8 billion pounds last year, a rise of 122% on the previous year. This is another reason why I keep putting out messages about protecting your identity, safe-guarding passwords and remaining alert.

Festering in the news for sometime, is the current thing of banks and financial institutions, that, they should not be made to pay for customers mistakes or lack of security over banking and personal details, which lead to a financial loss to the customer, unless, the bank is to blame. This is of course, yet another reason, why People should heed my warnings and advice.

In the news this week, the boss of RBS (which also owns Natwest), has said that it is not the responsibility of banks, when customers give out their bank details to scammers, and that victims of bank fraud should accept the blame, and not expect automatic refunds.

This of course, echo's the thoughts of other banks, and should be taken as a stark warning to us all, to get our house in order and stay alert to scammers and diligent in all our financial transactions, to ensure, as much as possible, that we do not fall victim, especially when we use internet and mobile banking.

With so many High Street, and local branches being closed by banks, many of us have been unwillingly forced into using the internet, via computer, tablet and smartphone, in order to conduct our financial affairs, and the banks have a lot to answer for in this respect, and, if you are lucky enough to have a real branch close by, you will find that the personal touch has all but diminished, with fewer staff, and more machines to cope with. I recently had to get to grips with paying cheques into a machine, and missed the personal contact, the smile, good morning, and 'thank you,' which the machine had not been programmed to deliver.

Bogus traders targeting victims using Grenfell fire tragedy

Posted: 2nd August 2017

Homeowners and housing organisations are reminded to stay alert as reports suggest that bogus traders are using the Grenfell Tower fire to **pose as council officials** or professionals in the fire prevention industry to defraud them for **services or goods that don't exist or aren't necessary**.

The fraudsters are allegedly cold calling or visiting the homes of potential victims to offer services such as a free or subsidised safety inspection of a property, using the tragedy as the reason for their contact.

Fake fire prevention services

Fraudsters have been known to use **incidents or disasters that have been in the news** to make themselves look convincing and prompt victims into paying out.

Intelligence also suggests fraudsters may be trying to contact companies or organisations and claiming to offer contracts to provide services or goods to protect their home or building from a similar incident from happening.

Misleading missed delivery cards posted through letterboxes

Posted: 7th August 2017



Residents are being warned about **'something for you' cards arriving through letterboxes designed to look like they have come from Royal Mail.**

The cards which lack the Royal Mail logo look almost identical to the 'something for you' slips that are posted through homes when a delivery can't be made.

To organise a redelivery the cards urge recipients to call a 0208 number, which is not registered to Royal Mail. After ringing the number the automated message asks for your details and consignment number.

A Royal Mail spokesperson told the Express: "The Royal Mail security team is looking into this incident as a matter of urgency. Customers should check delivery cards very carefully to ensure they are genuine, and remain vigilant. Although this card is similar to one of our Something For You cards, the Royal Mail logo is crucially missing".

"Customers should also consider whether they are expecting a delivery from the company named on the card".

Whilst we have not received any reports at present, missed delivery cards have been around for a while and come in different formats.

If in doubt, do not call the number provided, give your card details or personal information and get in **contact with us**: http://actionfraud.police.uk/report_fraud

Action Fraud

Report Fraud & Internet Crime

0300 123 2040

See what a real Post Office card looks like: -

https://personal.help.royalmail.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/146/~/~what-is-a-something-for-you-red-card%3F

HARLOW ALERT

Local Police have received reports that Purses have been stolen from handbags in HARLOW TOWN CENTRE. Apparently, this is happening by the perpetrators, undoing the zips and pockets of Handbags .

Please keep an eye on your bags know who is standing close to you don't let this happen to you.

ONGAR ALERT

Cheeky rogue traders, alias 'Travellers,' have been targetting homes in the Ongar area, trying to get homeowners to agree to driveway maintenance and, or resurfacing. Then trying to force the issue by starting to cleaning driveways, before any agreement has been made. Stay alert, and don't be fooled!

Take care, Colin colin@neighbourhoodmatters.org.uk



HELPING COMMUNITIES TO HELP THEMSELVES