



Odds and Ends from Keepers Cottage

Autumn 2024



Welcome to odds and ends from Keepers Cottage, a collection of useful tips on living well, interesting collections of poems and prose from various sources and of course little clips of gamekeeping life, past and present.



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Introduction

It is not long until the clocks move forward, and our nights will be darker whilst morning temporarily lighter. It is always a surprise how transient these dark times are, and the lighter mornings and nights are just around the corner.

Partridge and Pheasant shoots are well on their way whilst drives and days difficult to predict with such variable temperatures, fog, rain and sunshine – who knows from hour to hour almost. Unpredictability can cause anxiety and stress but also can be a pleasant surprise and as they say variety is the spice of life. Grouse days are fewer but still ongoing and a precious tradition especially for this season. In our part of the world, we are so fortunate to witness the seasons which at this time of year are quite beautiful. Chestnut, and Beech being the first to turn a golden rust, whilst the Birch and larch a little later further North. The hills and moorlands are also turning with bracken and grasses going back and on drier days the smoke rises as muir burn and heather burning where possible is underway.

This is a time of year when we visit colleges and meet the future custodians of our countryside – the keepers, the stalkers, the rangers and other land-based professions. It is always an uplifting and enjoyable experience with young people who are keen to learn, and passionate about their future. Courses are changing as technology adds a new dimension to daily tasks and forward planning.

For the retired, those with health concerns or in later life stopping the heating allowance has caused anxiety and worry in keeping warm and managing financial budgets during the winter. The Gamekeepers' Welfare Trust is committed to helping where possible so please do call us for a benefits check and application information.

November round the corner is the time when we honour those we have lost so do take a look at our memory tree and posts during the month and let us know if you would like your loved one (keeper, stalker, ghillie) to be remembered.

Never forget we are here anytime for anything in confidence and don't forget to check in with a mate!



From the mouth's of babes

Gerphase Finn

I explained to my grandson aged five who had asked where my dog was, that Rusty was very old and tired and had had a long and happy life and that the vet had “put him to sleep.”

“When will you be going to the vet then Grandma!”
He asked.

John, aged three, born and bred on a Dales farm went to see his mother in hospital to view his new baby brother. He was less interested in the new addition to his family but was fascinated by a black lady in the next bed with her little baby.

“Don't stare” John's Mum said “its very rude”.

The black lady smiled and waved then got out of bed and put on a white dressing gown and white socks. As she was heading for the door little John pointing at her announced “Swaledale”!

“And when Chicken Licken arrived at the palace, children” the infant teacher informed her little charges “and told the king that the sky was falling down, what do you think the king said”.

“Bloody hell, a talking chicken”, replied the infant!



Winter Fuel Guide

Gillian Housing
and Benefits
Officer



Autumn is now upon us and the dark nights are creeping in. Many of us, especially those in rural locations are now turning to our home heating sources, whether that is lighting the fire or putting on the central heating.

Earlier this month we did see the rise in energy costs, however there is still good deals available to those who are currently on a variable rate and by fixing your tariff for 12 months, it may give you control of your monthly or Quarterly outgoings depending on how you pay. Contact your provider who can investigate what you are currently paying and see what the best deals that they can offer you are.

The cut of date for the qualifying week has now passed, for those who are trying to claim for the Winter Fuel Payment, however we would still urge for those who are receiving State Pension to look into whether they are eligible to claim Pension Credits. Even if you are only eligible to claim the minimum amount, this will mean you will be eligible to receive the Winter Fuel Payment next year.

We can carry out the Pension Credits eligibility calculations or if you would rather to do this yourself, you can access the calculator via the .gov website.

If you find you are struggling this winter with the cost of heating your home, please get in touch with us to see if we are able to assist further - do not suffer in silence.

Origins of sayings

Hair of the Dog:

Originally, the expression referred to a method of treating a rabid dog bite; hair from the dog was placed in the wound. So in that sense, having another drink (any drink) is like taking hair from the dog that bit you.

Paint the town red:

The origin of "painting the town red" comes from the drunken activities of huntmen's in Melton Mowbray. This phrase was said to have originated in 1837, when the Marquis of Waterford and a group of friends painted several buildings red in a spate of merry-making. After the traditional Belvoir fox hunt the drinking and celebrations ended with a few of the huntmen's taking red paint to the houses surrounding the town square.

Baker's dozen:

In medieval England there were laws that related the price of bread to the price of the wheat used to make it. Bakers who were found to be "cheating" their customers by overpricing undersized loaves were subject to strict punishment, including fines or flogging. Even with careful planning it is difficult to ensure that all of your baked goods come out the same size; there may be fluctuations in rising and baking and air content, and many of these bakers didn't even have scales to weigh their dough. For fear of accidentally coming up short, they would throw in a bit extra to ensure that they wouldn't end up with a surprise flogging later.



In Britain, drovers were the predecessors of the American West's cowboys, joining forces to move large herds of cattle over long distances to market.

Unlike their American counterparts, British drovers typically managed smaller herds, with an experienced drover, a boy, and two dogs often herding between 30 and 50 cattle.

However, drovers occasionally collaborated, enabling the movement of larger herds ranging from 300 to 2,000 cattle.

In this region of Britain, notably Scotland, small cattle were often driven by Highlanders, either on foot or horseback. These cattle were herded from various Scottish locations into Northumberland and Cumbria, then onwards to York, Malton, or to significant cattle markets like those held at Malham Moor near Skipton.

The cattle were either butchered locally, sold for fattening in the region, or transported further south, sometimes by different drovers, towards destinations such as London's Smithfield Market.

It wasn't just cattle that were driven, often long distances; from the Midlands down to the meat markets in London wasn't unusual; other animals and even fowl were taken. Large flocks of geese had their webbed feet dipped in tar, to create a kind of boot, as their feet can't take walking long distances. Their wings were clipped to prevent flying. Flocks of sheep were also driven long distances to meat markets.

A West Country Mole Catcher c1895. The term "mole" is believed to originate from the Middle English word "mouldwarp," which literally translates to "earth-thrower."

During the 18th century, every parish in England employed mole-catchers to manage the mole population. The skill required for this task was so specialized that mole-catchers often earned more than surgeons. They closely guarded their catching techniques, typically passing them down only to their children.



To commemorate her 79th birthday , actress/vocalist, Julie Andrews made a special appearance at Manhattan's Radio City Music Hall for the benefit of the AARP. One of the musical numbers she performed was 'My Favourite Things' from the legendary movie 'Sound Of Music'. Here are the lyrics she used:

(Sing It!) - If you sing it, its especially hysterical!!!)

Botox and nose drops and needles for knitting,
Walkers and handrails and new dental fittings,
Bundles of magazines tied up in string,
These are a few of my favourite things.
Cadillacs and cataracts, hearing aids and glasses,
Polident and Fixodent and false teeth in glasses,
Pacemakers, golf carts and porches with swings,
These are a few of my favourite things.
When the pipes leak, When the bones creak,
When the knees go bad,
I simply remember my favourite things,
And then I don't feel so bad.
Hot tea and crumpets and corn pads for bunions,
No spicy hot food or food cooked with onions,
Bathrobes and heating pads and hot meals they bring,
These are a few of my favourite things.
Back pain, confused brains and no need for sinnin',
Thin bones and fractures and hair that is thinnin',
And we won't mention our short shrunken frames,
When we remember our favourite things.
When the joints ache, When the hips break,
When the eyes grow dim,
Then I remember the great life I've had,
And then I don't feel so bad.



DO YOU REMEMBER?

Do you remember: Plimsols in the gym.
Do you remember: Eating winkles with a pin.
Do you remember: Hopscotch on the path.
Do you remember: When Popeye made you laugh.
Do you remember: Papers brought by hand.
Do you remember: The Salvation Army band.
Do you remember: When the dustmen took away your bin.
Do you remember: When your bath was made of tin.
Do you remember: Alleys dark and smelly.
Do you remember: Crackerjack on the telly.
Do you remember: Wine gums in a pack.
Do you remember: Getting coal carried in a sack.
Do you remember: Duffle coats with pegs.
Do you remember: Shoes with metal segs.
Do you remember: Watching Andy Pandy.
Do you remember: Cigarettes made of candy.
Do you remember: Milk with a silver top.
Do you remember: Vans that delivered pop.
Do you remember: Liquorish in a stick.

Do you remember: Kalie that you licked.
Do you remember: Bon Bons rolled in white.
Do you remember: Gas lamps through the night.
Do you remember: Chips frying in the lard.
Do you remember: The toilet in the yard.
Do you remember: Dynamos on your bike.
Do you remember: Tripe you didn't like.
Do you remember: Assembly in your school.
Do you remember: Getting caned for being a fool.
Do you remember: Christmas and being merry.
Do you remember: Mum knocking back the sherry.
Do you remember: Calling in the sweep.
Do you remember: Snow a meter deep.
Do you remember: Fun with Bill and Ben.
Do you remember: Ink wells for your wooden pen.
Do you remember: Saturday at the flicks.
Do you remember: The drink up on a stick.
Do you remember: Listening to Rock and Roll.
Do you remember: Licking out the bowl.

If you can remember those memories that you hold. Then, just like me, you are really getting old.

“Do not ask your children to strive” By William Martin

Do not ask your children to strive for extraordinary lives.

Such striving may seem admirable, but it is the way of foolishness.

Help them instead to find the wonder and the marvel of an ordinary life.

Show them the joy of tasting tomatoes, apples and pears.

Show them how to cry when pets and people die.

Show them the infinite pleasure in the touch of a hand.

And make the ordinary come alive for them. The extraordinary will take care of itself.

Mick's Diary

Highlights: Salmon caught on the Ure and even better by me!

Lowlights: Unseasonably warm when the birds disappear and an anxious time until the first day is over!

The last few months have been taken up feeding, feeding, feeding and many evenings especially after the harvest sorting out the foxes! Its rather special that grandsons are keen to contribute, and its evident that there are benefits to their presence especially as failing eyesight and even worse poor technological skills mean their youth is required to assist (though there will be no admission to them!)

There has been a really good run of salmon over the past couple of months heading home to their spawning grounds. A relief to many and encouraging signs after a few years of concern.

Grey Partridge are succeeding, though in small broods so it is important to protect their numbers this season. Its an absolute delight to hear their musical calls as they go to bed on the stubbles in the late evenings.

Food sources are abundant with wild fruit and nuts which augers well for wild birds and game birds alike. It is said it is a sign of a hard winter to follow but the last few years don't support that theory these days. Time will tell.

I was fortunate to join GWT at the Young Gamekeeper (senior) award up on the moors recently. Another fine example of generations following on in fine style and super proud parents, grandparents and Uncle. Aulie is a shining beacon of hope for the future of the profession.



Aulie

Looking After your Feet



What is podiatry - Podiatry is a health care profession that deals with the foot and lower limb. The areas in which podiatry can help people is with general foot care where that can deal with problematic nails, corns, callous verrucae and more.

Further intervention can help with arthritic conditions including OA, RA and Gout, Diabetes and maintaining foot health, biomechanical issues including flat feet or injuries and prescribing orthotics. Podiatrists can also perform small surgeries to remove problematic toenails.

Footwear Tips - Picking correct footwear- shoes should be secure at the heel and not slide up and down. Having lacing shoes can allow more room for swelling or enlarged joints which can help keep feet comfortable. Having shoes with good cushioning allows shock absorption which takes pressure off joints and reduces stress on feet.

Blisters/ skin rubbing - these form with high pressure and friction mostly to do with footwear being ill fitting or feet getting wet. Using colloid dressing such as compeed can help protect these areas at initial stages to reduce further damage to skin. Ensure shoes fit well and are waterproof. Using material such as bamboo socks can reduce friction on feet.

Athletes foot - fungal infection that effects the skin - it can cause small rash, dryness and itching. Treatment for athletes foot is to use anti-fungal creams and ointments after feet have been washed and dried. Making sure feet are kept dry is an important prevention of athlete's foot, breathable socks and having waterproof shoes is an important way to combat this.

Chilblains - Chilblains can be seen as purple like blemishes and are painful or itchy to touch Using soothing creams and ointments such as Witch Hazel or Snowfire can help alleviate the discomfort of the lesions. If lesions do open it up you will be at risk of infection and will need to be dressed with a sterile dressing and to be kept clean until healed.

Painful big toe joint - Orthotics which are a device that insert into a shoe is a great way to accommodate this issue with conservative management.

How to keep feet warm - keep rest of body warm this will allow circulation to flow better and keep feet warm. Insoles can be made to help insulate feet from the cold with materials such as plastazote.

How to keep feet dry - good waterproof footwear is essential. If shoes let water in it is good practice to have a spare change of shoes/ wellies and socks when possible and change when you can. A quick tip 'in a pinch' is to change socks to a dry pair and use a big/bin liner as an extra layer to avoid getting feet more wet when out in the field.

Megan Leckie Podiatrist



Mary Berry's Boiled Fruit Cake

Ingredients

1 cup water

1 cup sugar

375g mixed dried fruit

200g butter

1 tsp mixed spice

1 tsp bicarbonate of soda

2 eggs beaten

2 cups self-raising flour

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 160-180°C (320-356°F).
2. Grease a cake tin.
3. In a large saucepan, combine water, sugar, mixed dried fruit, butter, mixed spice, and bicarbonate of soda.
4. Bring the mixture to a boil and let it simmer for 5 minutes. Stir occasionally.
5. Allow the boiled mixture to cool down.
6. Once cooled, gradually add the beaten eggs and self-raising flour.
7. Mix well until all ingredients are fully combined.
8. Pour the batter into the prepared greased cake tin.
9. Place the tin in the preheated oven.
10. Bake for approximately 1 hour or until a skewer inserted into the center comes out clean.
11. Once baked, remove the cake from the oven and let it cool in the tin for a few minutes.
12. Transfer the cake to a wire rack to cool completely before slicing and serving.

Notes

- **Customize Ingredients.** Adjust dried fruits or spices to taste while keeping the overall quantity consistent.
- **Gently Combine.** Avoid overmixing to preserve the cake's moist texture; fold ingredients gently.
- **Control Boiling.** Ensure the fruit mixture gently boils to prevent excessive evaporation.
- **Personalize Spices.** Modify spice levels to suit individual preferences for flavor intensity.
- **Even Thickness.** Keep batter thickness uniform in the cake tin for consistent baking.



Helpline: 0300 1233 088

Doggie Heaven

All doggies go to heaven (or so I've been told).

They run and play along the streets of gold.

Why is heaven such a doggie-delight?

Why, because there's not a single cat in sight!



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