The Tree Master Talks

Last Sunday our excellent editor summoned me into his presence .I promptly complied and as I stood quaking before his pedagogical awesomeness, kneading my cap with sweaty hands. He said, “Look here young Griffiths I need something for the magazine on the Christmas Tree Festival, 48 hours OK “. As he dismissed me I mumbled a reply and retreated.

So set to write my piece for the magazine. First with stub of pencil on tear stained paper, then with lone digit on keyboard. Thank God for spellcheck. I once again reflected on my rash decision to volunteer to be this year’s Christmas tree master. Why had I flouted the wisdom of my grandfather, Sergeant Percy Burge of the 17/21 Lancers. “Don’t never volunteer boy, that’s the first lesson I learned in the army don’t never volunteer for nothing “.At this point I must abjectly apologise to the editor for the outrageous use of double negatives. But Percy was just a rough old cockney boy who gave me much good advice which I offer to pass on to the reader in a totally unused condition. Sorry Grandpa.

I see that I have wandered off the subject a bit. What has been happening about the Christmas tree festival? Well whilst some of our team have been planning the refreshments and others arranging bands and choirs. I or rather Brenda, because she always does most of the work, have been contacting former tree sponsors. For the most part they have been most gratifyingly pleased to be asked and are enthusiastic about the event. Some are unable to take part by reason of ill health and one of our contacts has sadly died. Others are as slow at responding to Emails as am I. But fortunately we have secured several new sponsors including Vasculitis UK which exists to support suffers and their families and the professionals concerned .Until 2013 I had never heard of this condition until Brenda’s daughter Victoria began to suffer from it .Vasculitis seems to be some sort of defect of the immune system, blood vessels become inflamed and damaged. This can take place in any part of the body .In Victoria’s case her nasal membranes were principally affected .Treatment centres on drugs to turn off the immune system and steroids. Both types of drugs bring their own problems. Just thinking about it makes me feel queasy so I shall move on .We will also be having a tree for a favourite charity of mine the Barnabas Fund. This aims to support the many persecuted Christians around the world and especially those in Moslem majority countries .It seems especially appropriate at Christmas time to remember our suffering brothers and sisters in Christ.

The hard part of the festival is of course yet to come and rotas will be going up at the back of church for the catering, stalls and stewarding and announcements will be made for donations for cake making stuff, things for the secret Santa stall and for the raffle. Thanks for reading this, I look forward to seeing you amongst the baubles and the tinsel and at the wine and cheese evening.

Gareth, your humble tree master.

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