



Shoot

Bury Rifle Club Newsletter

March 2020 - Issue 5.1

Welcome to the latest edition of Shoot.

In our last issue, which only went out the other day I made a simple plea to you all for some light spirited contributions. It was suggested that these be published on a weekly basis, but as the first one has already arrived, I thought, why not – let's make a start.

There are over 45 members in the club so that could be almost a years worth of stories to publish. Tell us how you are coping with the lockdown and how you are managing to keep spirits high. Hints and tips for staying safe, or maybe you just want to warble on for a bit. Just throw some words together and email them to me and I'll put together the newsletter and publish it. So come on – help spread some happiness in these times of darkness. You can remain anonymous or I'll put your name in a fancy font (like mine below – you must let me know what you prefer).

So – who's next?? don't be shy.

This issue is written by Jim Pollitt, for those who don't attend on a Wednesday, Jim is one of the regular air gunners on a Wednesday night. A very popular member who even manages to attract attention when he's not at the club, everyone asks "where's Jim?" Many of the members may even agree if I were to say that he could be referred to as "the father of bench rest at Bury Rifle Club"

So, let's read Jims story 😊

Best wishes
Wayne

Wayne Taylor
Hon. Secretary

My Lockdown Story

By
Jim Pollitt

Each year my wife Maria and I go to our house in Indonesia, primarily Maria gets to see her family and I catch up watching lots of films and series I have downloaded from the internet. We usually stay around 2 months and in that time we always go to the village for a week or so to rest and relax and Maria catches up on the gossip.

This year it was slightly different as Marias brother had died a few months earlier and according to custom would be buried shortly after we arrived as all family members must attend if at all possible. The customs of the Christian TORAJA peoples are unique and I will not go into them in detail here but suffice to say the bodies are mummified until the burial ceremony can be carried out. (Google if you want to know more)

Anyhow, I had booked and paid for the tickets ages before and we were due to travel just after the corona virus broke out in China. Come the day of departure I was a bit concerned about travelling but it was more about not being able to go. I cannot stress how far away we have to go but the journey was as follows. Get to Manchester airport 3 hours before the flight, board the flight and in the air for 13 hours to Singapore. Wait in Singapore 9 hours waiting for the next flight to our home time of Makassar. 3 Hours flight and then the usual kafuffle of immigration, collecting 74 kilos of baggage (mostly old clothes for the poor in the village) and finally a 1 hour journey to our house. Indonesia is 8 hours time difference to Manchester.

The next 24 hours was spent in a coma as I cannot sleep on planes. I then hired a car to take us on the next leg which is a 10 hour road journey to the nearest sizable town before embarking on transport to the village. That is a 3 hour journey on absolutely terrible roads. Finally arriving at the village to be greeted by the family and no chance of sleep as the catch up began with lots of hugs and kisses. As everyone was talking in the local dialect which I cannot understand

(Indonesian language which I can speak is different). My job was to be the pretend grandfather to all children under the age of 11. This gets bigger every year. This is my favourite part as my 6 children have yet to produce any 😊

After several days of the funeral (I have the videos of all this if anyone wants to see them) it was time to head back to Makassar for lots of film and series watching and some well earned rest. In reverse it was the same journey back and that was the end of 9 days in Indonesia.

Obviously on my return the news was getting worse about the corona virus and my children were due to come to here for a holiday and then they were going to Bali on the way back for 10 days.

As the time passed the situation got worse and they had to cancel their trip. Now I was starting to get paranoid, worrying if I was going to get stuck there with no way of returning. I wrote to the British Embassy in Jakarta but got nothing other than standard platitudes with no offer of help. I asked them to register us as at risk but just more rubbish about looking up GOV websites and only robots answering.

I then looked up flights online to return home but no success as all flights full. Because I wanted to return early (5 weeks) the airline was not responsible. I then wrote to my travel agent who I have used for years and explained the situation. All I got in reply was a standard letter saying how busy they were and could only deal with flights leaving in 7 days. Fortunately I spoke with my daughter on FB Messenger and she managed to get them on the phone and explained the situation. Happy days - they managed to get us on a flight albeit at a 50% cost increase. The flight was to depart in less than 24 hours. Grabbed with both hands and although I was full of trepidation all went well and we got the flight. The only difference was a 12 hour wait in Singapore and a 14 hour flight to Manchester.

Upon my return I put Maria and I into a 14 day self isolation but after a week both of us received a letter telling us we were at risk and to go into 12 week lockdown. This meant that a holiday I had booked in May on the Norfolk Broads also had to be cancelled but I managed to get this changed to October.

Now bored and even more so as I cannot show my vastly improved shooting skills in which I am averaging 99.5 and will probably lose that skill after the time in lockdown to 91 or so. You can feel sorry for me if you wish.

Anyone want to see the video of the trip let me know it's just over an hour long.

That's my story ...

Jim