

Day 8 (the Dog Blog) – of the CV crisis

The Guvnor and his elderly mates have set up an Old Codgers' Group in the village so they can keep in touch and the vehicle they have found to talk to each other is called Zoom – 'a video communications enterprise with a so-called reliable cloud platform for video and audio conferencing, collaboration, chat and webinars (and here I have to tell you that the Guvnor didn't even know what a 'webinar' was until this evening). The system is designed to bring teams together in a frictionless environment.'

It is perfect for lock-down scenarios when physical face-to-face meetings are banned but when a meeting is necessary or even just desirable and, in their case, just to see each other's faces and have a good gossip. They set it up, had a practice/rehearsal and the first full blown meeting took place today. No matter that the MOD has decried it as being American-based and therefore a security threat (I thought the USA were our allies, but still) and has refused to use it even though a Cabinet Meeting did so only yesterday. Why such a cavalier attitude here to security? Probably because they did not intend, nor did they, to discuss matters of National importance (whatever they may think.)

I listened in and apart from the usual casual and mocking banter among friends, one or two of the rather better jokes circulating around the internet at present was aired. It is late March and all over-70s and other 'vulnerable' people are strongly advised not to venture outside their homes. The main criteria are that you are allowed to go out, but only for the following reasons:

- To go shopping for essentials such as food and medicines.
- If you have to be out, keep two metres apart from all other people at all times.

- One session of exercise each day, which dog owners are relieved about and whose parameters are not being taken too literally.
- And keep washing your hands and isolating not only yourself but any deliveries coming to your home.

Fizzy's parents (she is a whizzy little terrier of some pretentious make) sent us a picture of a dog sitting on the top of a set of shelves in someone's kitchen and saying to the family trying to coerce him down, "I've been taken for a walk by every member of this large family today already and it's only lunchtime; I'm NOT going again!"

The Guvnor rang an old friend for a chat a bit later on only to be told by his wife that he was unavailable at the time 'as he was in the garage setting mouse-traps'. When his friend eventually came on the line, he explained that they had received a large Ocado delivery and because it had been handled by multiple packers it had to be quarantined for 36 hours. In the photograph he has this pile of shopping surrounded at the mouse equivalent of 2 metre intervals by a ring of baited mouse traps resembling a laager - a defensive encampment encircled by wagons, made famous by South African Boers in the early 1900s and with all weapon facing outwards. In modern times it describes a temporary formation of armoured vehicles awaiting resupply.

The Old Codgers set up another meeting on Zoom for next Thursday and then closed down in good time to go outside at 8 pm to clap the NHS and view the European Space Station at 8.27 in a clear sky. The Guvnor was certain that neither the CIA nor the GRU, the SAS nor the Spetznaz cared less about any of this.