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DIFFERENT ADVENTURES ON PLANET EARTH...



BY MARY WEBB

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Toilets in my Time

Travelling around the world, more than a few of my most embarrassing times seem to be caused by the necessity of going to the loo. Being born in an era when they were situated at the bottom of the garden meant braving the elements, holidays also meant longdrops with the worry of disappearing down the hole.

Most times its been the old adage of (locked in the loo) nevertheless I've emerged from the loo red faced after being broken out, always a crowd staring at me.

Then there is the cleanliness element, one sheet only or paying for the privilege of more, or putting perfumed handkerchiefs under your nose to get past the stench.

One toilet in Europe revolved the seat to clean after flushing, it was fascinating so I had to do it again, thought I was seeing things. Then there was the elderly mum that pressed the OPEN button on a London autoloo exposing herself, her son hastily closed the door whereupon the toilet and mum were nicely cleaned. I always make my husband go in with me if I use them now.

The latest time was a Tesco store when after going, I opened up to urinals, and a man hastily hiding his manhood. He was not amused (as Queen Victoria would have said) I said this must be the gents, sorry as I made a hasty exit.

The most embarrassing ever though, was at the Swazi South Africa border, the door just would not open and I had to climb over to the next cubicle but this showed me to a queue of people at passport control, who laughed and cheered at me on top of the roof.

Dialect Kills People

Quite some years back I had round my Sunday lunch table, a young lady just out from South Africa an older man with a very pronounced local accent with other guests. The conversation was very lively and we were all having a great time.

The man, who worked in the countryside started talking about his day. He said, while driving that morning he had accidently killed a pheasant that had run out in front of his bus."

To make matters worse I think he said he should have stopped and picked it up as it would have made a nice, tasty meal.

The room suddenly went very silent and the young girl became quite shocked and white faced at his words. The silence seemed to go on forever but she could not contain herself any more and blurted out " How can you be so casual about it? you do know that is a person you are speaking about even though he is a peasant." We realised what she was thinking and all howled with laughter which made her even more angry. As you can imagine it took us quite some time to calm her down but we eventually managed to reassure her that we really weren't that cruel. I don't think pheasants exist in South Africa, she certainly hadn't heard of one. Perhaps she also thought England was still like the medieval days of the story book.

This became our story, always reminisced at future get togethers, much to her annoyance.

In Letchworth Garden City, United Kingdom

A Tear Jerker

So very exciting, no more dark, dreary, drizzle days, just bright sunshine day after day. This is how I looked at emigrating to South Africa 1970.

The day arrived eventually. While saying all the sad farewells, I had thought, "Maybe this wasn't such a good idea after all". But that was all behind me now. Just a train journey to Southampton, to meet the mail ship. (Yes we were going by post) Mum & Dad with us as far as the ship.

At last we were at the ship; it was much bigger than I thought. In all the hustle and bustle of paperwork and getting us all onboard, saying the last farewell didn't seem too bad. We were shown to a viewing deck where we and could see the small, sad figures of Mum & Dad waving madly.

Now the time really had come to say goodbye England as the ship left. Suddenly I was aware of this loud music of a brass band below bellowing out "There'll always be an England." My teachings of keeping emotions to myself were now all lost as the tears came streaming down, the people and the sounds lost forever. WHAT HAD WE DONE!

Who ever had thought of the bright idea of playing such sentimental music? Perhaps our punishment for leaving our home land

Six weeks later I received my first letter from Mum & Dad (communication was not so good in those days.) Enclosed was a photo of 4 small figures on the deck of the ship and I realised at that moment it was much worse for them as we had all our new life in front of us and they went home to nothing.

In Southampton, United Kingdom

The School Run

At last all the kids in the car, school clothes found, yesterdays homework done, breakfast eaten and the usual last minutes have "to do" gone, now ready to go just about in time I hope. All's well until the car decides to stall on the brow of a hill by the Stop street.

Try as much as I like it just was not responding. Getting more and more up tight, especially as by this time there was a long line of cars behind and then there was that perpetual "beep beep" coming from the car behind, a rather large man with his hand stuck to the horn.

I don't know how long it took, but I have to admit I lost it, well and truly. The next thing I knew I was by this man's car shouting for all to hear "I tell you what mister, you start my car and I will sit and beep your horn" Well not another word was said, he strode to the car and of course it started for him. I got in and drove away very embarrassed. At least I didn't let myself down completely by sitting in his car and doing the "beeping."

This all happened in South Africa many moons ago and not something I'm proud of. I certainly wouldn't recommend such behaviour on the roads today. But I often wonder if the big fella is cured of beeping to damsals in distress. I think this was road rage before the words were invented. What do you think ?

In Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa

About Author

Mary Webb

I am an old wrinkley who is blessed with 7 children 11 grandchildren. Always liked to tell stories about my past, and rarely write them down, hoping to give enjoyment.

Why is the website called bytestories.com?

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