



Local pressure group Warning on Waitrose canvasses public opinion at a stall by Viceroy Parade on 15 November. Photo by John Dearing.

### KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

## Plastic Cutlery

Gazing at the sky as the last ever Concorde swooped into land I realised that it was only 100 years since two blokes in America invented air travel. Just think, 100 years to get from string and sealing wax to the end of an era. Because Concorde was the end of an era, an era of the rich flying in expensive seclusion, eating cordon bleu cuisine and sipping champagne while the rest of us made do with airline food and plastic cutlery.

Once flying had got over the dangerous 'experimental' phase and assorted confections of string and sealing wax had crossed the Channel, the Atlantic and the Pacific, or more often ended up in the Channel, Atlantic or Pacific, flying entered the realm of the rich. Pre-war, just about the only people who flew were seriously loaded. Post war, just about the only people who flew were loaded. They expected bone china and caviar and champagne and they got it. For the rest of us, unless we got dragged into the army and sent to far off places to kill people, overseas was, well foreign. When the first jet airliner appeared in 1952 it was for the rich flying long distances at great expense, while little boys got no closer to aircraft than the viewing platform at Heathrow. I guess it was inevitable that when some bright spark thought about supersonic flight he thought about the rich drinking champagne at 100,000 feet so what they decided we needed was futuristic white elegance. That was about 1958, about the time Boeing launched the 707.

By the early sixties things were starting to change. You started to get package tours to Spain, a unique chance to be crammed into a converted hanger at Luton before being crammed onto a junk heap marvel bound for Barcelona. As the 60s progressed the delays got longer, the holidays cheaper and, seeing as flying is meant to be safer than crossing the road, the London cabbies started getting paid to keep the statistics favourable.

#### Against the trend

Just at the wrong moment, when more people were saving up to fly to more places, like Ibiza and Crete, Concorde, offering elegance for the rich, made its first flight. The optimists said wow and golly and gosh and isn't it beautiful and soon we'll all be flying like that. The realists looked the other way. Why? Because the future of air travel was never going to be high speed, high priced elegance, it was going to be low priced, fairly slow, cramped, but cheap. It was going to be the flying equivalent of the rush hour double-decker; it was going to be the Jumbo. Somehow, somewhere, the great white elegance became the great white elephant and we didn't go from string and sealing wax to breakfast in London and a second breakfast in New York. Instead we got DVT, plastic food, queues, breakfast in London, dinner in New York and luggage in New Mexico. I think it's called progress.

## 12 Things You Didn't Know About...

Each month THE ARCHER profiles an eminent member of the community with 12 quick fire questions.

- **Name:** Lawrie Chivers
- **Date of Birth:** 4/9/1939
- **Star Sign?** Virgo... I am not a virgin – I have two wonderful sons.
- **Occupation?** Purveyor of widgets, gismos, interactive winding pumps for motorcars for half of my life.
- **Highlight?** 6ft 7ins – Love every inch of it.
- **Lowlight?** 1 year in hospital at the age of 9 with a kidney infection. Alexander Fleming saved my life with the discovery of penicillin a few years earlier. In those days they wouldn't allow your family to visit you in hospital so I didn't have any contact with them for that year.
- **What is your brother's [Roger] worst habit?** Can't think of any. I love my bruvva!
- **If you could have chosen another profession what would it be?** Farmer. I love the country. I was evacuated to Derby near the end of the war- one of the best years of my life.
- **Who is the most famous person you have met?** Margaret Thatcher. I didn't agree with some of her ideas but she put her mouth where her skirt was. What you saw was what you got.
- **Favourite song?** Bohemian Rhapsody
- **Christmas: Time to wind down or get wound up?** I like Christmas. I get a lot of pleasure seeing kids enjoy it – so I guess wound up.
- **New Year's resolution?** Give up smoking. It stunts your growth.

## Christmas

By Michael Solomons

Snowflakes fall from high above,  
Bells begin to chime.  
They ring out for peace and love.  
It is Christmas time.

Children playing in the snow,  
Fires are burning bright.  
Holly and the mistletoe  
Make a lovely sight.

As we trim the Christmas tree  
We hear carols sung.  
Happiness for you and me.  
Christmas has begun.

Decorations everywhere,  
Colours all around;  
Joy and laughter fill the air,  
Love is to be found.

I just wish these happy days  
Were to last and last;  
And this good cheer would  
Always stay  
After Christmas has passed.

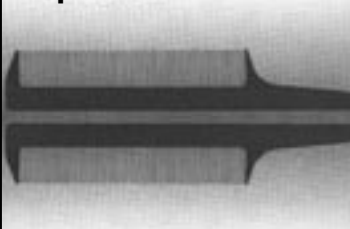
So once more we thank the Lord  
And go on our way.  
It is Him we've all adored  
On this Christmas Day.

Praises we sing all the time.  
Let our troubles end.  
Make this world of ours sublime.  
Let us help a friend.

And when Christmas comes again,  
I pray we shall find  
Love to all our fellow men,  
Peace to all mankind.

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