

OUR TAPE AIDS FAMILY MEMORY BOOK - 2018 CELEBRATING 60 YEARS

Our Family Memory Book also charts the migration from our namesake 'tapes' to our entry into the Digital era. Where our members now receive their books in the universal standard mp3 format, on CD or USB-Memory stick as well as being able to download online.

There is an amusing story which one of the Blind members of our Library shared which captures the trials and tribulations of our transition from the larger reel-to-reel tape format to the more compact cassette tapes that he experienced in East London more than 40 years ago.

Once Upon a Time ... in the late 1970's a retired blind seaman was told by Tape Aids that they'd be sending him a new tape cassette recorder to replace his bulky old reel-to-reel tape machine. This way, he could listen to his books in this new compact tape format.

At about the same time he got news that a seafaring member of the family, had passed away. He was required to await delivery of the ashes, arrange a wake on a boat with the Port Captain and escort a bevy of seamen out to sea, to scatter their friend's ashes in the ocean.

A delivery man arrived and handed over a small urn sized parcel which he duly took out to sea the following day. The wind was blustering when this merry crew reached open waters, their rowdy singing liberally dowsed down by the drinking of much rum.

Inebriated, they figured that their friend would certainly not want his ashes plastered over their faces by the gale force winds. So they threw the unopened parcel into the depths below and returned to party on dry land.

A week later, the blind member contacted Tape Aids inquiring when he could expect his 'new-fangled' tape machine. Only to discover that since he'd signed for it a week earlier, it was now resting at the bottom of the ocean - somewhere off the coast of East London.

Happily, his replacement 'shoebox sized' cassette tape player arrived the next week. Delighted with the new compact, battery operated machine, he took it out to sea on the second, take-2, ash-scattering journey.

And so, on a windless day, his seafaring family member was eventually laid to rest as the now sober crew listened to Ernest Hemingway's "Old Man and The Sea" accompanied by the live sound effects of waves lapping and gulls squawking.