

The Paper Shop, St.Mary's

Last week (Nov 20-26) we had just ONE DAY when papers were received on the day at a reasonable time (9.30ish) while on another we got the “contemporary” papers at 5.30pm. We stayed open until 8 pm to serve the paper - reading public.

The rest of the week- every day – we were getting, via the freighter, the previous day's papers which is a perfect way to persuade hitherto print readers to embrace the Internet.

This week four days' papers (Saturday's , Sunday's Monday's and Tuesday's Nov 24-28) languished in the hold of stormbound Gri alongside Pz quay awaiting a decision whether to sail or not. Passengers, in the meantime, were bussed to Newquay for Twin Otter flights to Scilly: the papers stayed put.

She eventually sailed late Tuesday afternoon and on the Wednesday morning we got four days papers in one hit from the ship while, 10 minutes later via a Skybus flight (THE FIRST IN DAYS), we got the day's papers. (We were up at 7.15 am to receive the papers off the ship –but we could have stayed in bed for another hour. They didn't get to the shop until near 9 am (first in ship's hold, last out). So we had FIVE days papers on sale and not many people, however avid a reader they are, want a five - day - old paper – or 4 or 3 – even 2.

Even in pre -aviation days before war this business never had these problems. The ship sailed daily – even in winter.

At a time-(recessionary time to boot) when erstwhile readers are being seduced by the Internet one doesn't want to hasten the defection by not having any newspapers in the first place!

If ever there was a guaranteed recipe for the bankruptcy court ,surely that is IT

We have, as a family, been newsagents here for 108 continuous years- my grandmother, father, now me. Never, ever has there been such a run.

Newsprint receipt has become a lottery, more erratic than the days the papers struggled up from the quay by David Rowe's horse and cart .

I won't go into detail but it is obviously costing me an arm and leg. If rates were commensurately reduced to recognise my lack of anything to trade, fair enough. But that doesn't happen.

A few more weeks like this and, well, who knows, particularly at a time when computer squeezing newsprint and in recession as well?

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To an extent I feel for steamship co.:

*They did not ask for this responsibility to be suddenly foisted on them. It is the two-edged sword cost of BIH withdrawal.

*Opening weeks have been hit by unkind and savage weather.

*There are bound to be teething snags and it is possible they might have underestimated the task they are shouldering.

*A potentially dangerous scenario presents itself with pressure to fly in marginal conditions building all the time. (Remainder of paragraph deleted by blog editor to avoid provoking the litigious minded).

But **three vital things**

*If they are to be lone carrier to tourism - dependent islands and the lone airport to solely serve Scilly then they will **HAVE TO PRESS FOR A HARD RUNWAY**. I know local opposition would be vocal (as in past) but material consideration could surely be justified and be invoked to this time swing it ?

*There will be pressure to consider **bringing back a passenger ship service in winter** , even if just limited sailings a week

*There will have to be a **Skybus freight service from Newquay to Scilly**. From my newsprint viewpoint , it's maddening to see Newquay flights coming in with my papers marooned and not being carried .

ENDS

*When papers arrive erratically I have to get onto Radio Scilly (or personally phone) to tell listeners papers in.