

20/20 VISION AND ALL THAT...



Welcome to February! Christmas and the New Year seem a distant memory already don't they? Many of you may not immediately realise the significance of the year 2020 and the fact that it is a VERY exciting year, especially for opticians. Let me enlighten you. 20/20 vision is the standard that is considered to be "normal" vision. It's an Americanism, referring to a particular line of letters on a standard eye test chart. It basically means that a person with 20/20 vision can see an object at a distance of 20 feet that a person with "normal" vision would also be able to see at 20 feet. By comparison, someone who has vision of 20/200 can only see a target at 20 feet that a person with "normal" vision would be able to see at 200 feet. Still with me?

Good! In the UK, oddly, we use the metric system instead of the Imperial system, so for us 20/20 becomes 6/6! This is the line that we hope most people with "normal" vision will be able to achieve.

But for some people this line of letters can take on a whole new meaning. Men, in particular, often view an eye test as a personal challenge, the ultimate test of their masculinity, of their mettle, as though the optician is really testing them to see what they're made of! Men like to rise to the challenge and give it their all. They're going to read that smallest line of letters if it's the last thing they do (not realising of course that I have a few more even smaller lines of letters up my sleeve!) And if the Optometrist congratulates them on having 20/20 vision, what they actually hear (and tell their

friends and wives/partners) is "You have the vision of a fighter pilot."

This allows this particular alpha-male a few minutes to bask in the glow of his achievements with his friends in the pub, casually mentioning that of course they could have been a fighter pilot if they'd really wanted to. Some men are so confident and proud of their visual prowess that they fail to listen to their Optometrist or partner or anyone else who tries to suggest that they might actually benefit from or even need glasses. Normally this type of eye test goes a little like this:

Optometrist: "So, how do you feel about your vision?"

Man: "Oh, yeah, brilliant. I can literally see for miles. I can see the moon! I've always had exceptional vision! I could have



been a fighter pilot you know, if hadn't been for my dodgy knees! I'm only here really to keep the wife happy."

Optometrist: "Ok, that all sounds really good. Can you try reading that line of letters on the chart opposite for me?"

Man (squinting): "What chart?"

As I write this newsletter, the optical journals and periodicals are awash with the hope that the year 2020 will be a watershed moment, that it will convince the good people of the UK and the wider world to invest in an eye test and look after their eye health (which of course is

important). Personally, I fear that the year on the calendar won't be enough to change anyone's behaviour, so just to be on the safe side I'll continue to write this newsletter every month or so to encourage you to think about your eyes, your eye health and your eyewear a bit more frequently.

Just for the record though, I am all for Optometrists promoting the importance of regular eye exams because far too many people neglect their vision and eye health. And when you think that 50% of all vision loss is preventable it's even more of a "no brainer" to have your eyes examined regularly. As

a practice, we promote healthy eyes and vision through these pages, our Eye Health Talks with local award-winning Consultant Ophthalmologist Theo Empeslidis, our fundraising for Vision Aid Overseas, Guide Dogs and VISTA, and we've made significant investment in state-of-the-art hospital standard diagnostic equipment, all with the aim of reducing unnecessary sight-loss.

So, if you're reading this article and recognise the "fighter pilot" in your life, maybe this should be the year we really put them to the test! And no, being able to see the moon isn't really an indicator of how good your vision is!



POOR GLASSES AFFECT ELECTION OUTCOME?

As an Optometrist I have a keen eye for eyewear; it's often the first thing I'll notice about someone I meet for the first time. Occupational habit I guess, but actually noticing someone's choice of eyewear is probably not all that unusual given that your glasses are right there, front and centre, on full view for all to see. And, naturally, I'm a firm believer that your choice of eyewear is an important extension of your personality, helping you to project a particular look or style for the occasion. Your choice of eyewear speaks volumes about you.



Take for example the soon-to-be former leader of the Labour Party Jeremy Corbyn. He had social media platforms in meltdown after his appearances on the head-to-head TV debates in the run-up to the election. Was it because of his party's vague stance on Brexit? His difficulty tackling anti-Semitism within his party-ranks? Or maybe even his pledge to plant 2 billion trees by the year 2040? Nope. It was none of these challenges that had the "Twittersphere" in meltdown, it was his ill-fitting eyewear! Viewers were left mesmerised and distracted by Mr Corbyn's wonky glasses, and the fact that they kept slipping down his nose. It's curious that when the country is facing some of its greatest challenges, both domestically and internationally, it's actually the Labour leader's eyewear that's making headline news. For all the wrong reasons! For the benefit of political balance, Mr Johnson doesn't wear glasses (or at least not in public!) but he has had many of his own "style" gaffes in the past; remember the build-up to the 2012 Olympics and Boris dangling from a high-rope in a harness, resplendent in hard-hat and waving his Union Jack flags? Comedy gold!

But it's not just political leaders wearing poor eyewear. I watched the entire Season 3 of The Crown on Netflix over Christmas. In episode 2

(yes, I made a mental note of it specifically for this piece!) we meet US President L B Johnson; he's seen presiding over some meeting or other, reading through important papers, but all I can take in is the fact that his glasses are a terrible fit! The sides are too short for his head (the actor who plays LBJ, Clancy Brown, is HUGE

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(he plays the prison guard Captain Hadley in the Shawshank Redemption who takes Andy Dufresne (Tim Robbins) under his wing)) so consequently the sides (or arms as you might call them) don't even reach his ears causing the frame to be tilted forwards at a jaunty angle! For me and any self-respecting Dispensing Optician these things are really frustrating and annoying!*

GLASSES AMNESTY SUCCESS!

A massive Thank You to everyone who responded to our Lord Kitchener "Glasses Amnesty" promotion in January, and brought in unwanted glasses for Vision Aid Overseas. By the middle of the second week we'd already packed-up three boxes full of unwanted specs, so by the end of the month I'm sure we'll have donated a whole lot more. Vision Aid Overseas has been helping some of the world's poorest people see clearly for over 30 years. Up until 2010, your unwanted glasses were shipped to some of the poorest countries around the globe and donated to people in desperate need of vision correction. The World Health Organisation (WHO) decided that this was perhaps not the best way to establish sustainable eyecare services in these areas of the world, and so it was decided



that recycling unwanted glasses for the metal and plastic components could generate sufficient revenue to establish sustainable eyecare services in the countries that need these essential services most. So thank you again for your generosity; your unwanted glasses will be making a life-changing difference to someone somewhere in the world right now. For more information about VAO click on the link from our website at www.clarkeandroskrow.co.uk.



Casual observation of most spectacle wearers on any High Street, and the fact that Jeremy Corbyn's glasses make headline news, shows that ill-fitting glasses and poor frame choice is sadly becoming the norm. Clarke & Roskrow clients though are often easy to spot in the town, because they're the ones with big smiles and who radiate confidence and happiness with their eyewear!

My message to you is this: like it or not, how you look is important; your choice of eyewear is important. It could affect everything from that all important job interview, winning over the person of your dreams, or even your chances of becoming the next Prime Minister!

*The Crown does showcase some amazing eyewear; John Lithgoe (Churchill) in particular has some fabulous vintage frames, whilst Helena Bonham Carter (Princess Margaret) is often seen sporting some amazing sunglasses!



The Church Street Chronicle is a monthly(ish) conversation about life as it looks from the helm of Clarke & Roskrow Opticians. I believe in relationships and am working hard to build our practice based on lasting and loyal long-term relationships with our clients. Your feedback is invaluable.

I'm extremely interested in what our clients have to say and I enjoy responding to the comments. Please send your thoughts and comments on what we're talking about to hello@clarkeandroskrow.co.uk.

I try to rise to the mammoth challenge of making every newsletter a riveting read. If I've failed in your eyes to do that and you would rather not receive our newsletters please email hello@clarkeandroskrow.co.uk or telephone us on 01858 462996. Thank you.

high quality musicianship with an acoustic guitar feel, original songs and cover versions of songs you'll know.

Tickets £10.
Info and tickets:
Phil Riley 07715 535219

CHARITY FUNDRAISING EVENT!



In January 2018 we were pleased to sponsor 'Borderline Crossing' who played a sell-out charity concert at The Harborough Theatre. Four members of the band are putting on another show for the same charities, **Cransley Hospice** in Kettering and **New Futures**, a charity supporting disadvantaged children and adults in Nepal. The gig will be held at **The Little Bowden Bowls Club** on **Thursday, 12th March** at **7.30pm**. *"We are delighted to help support C&R clients*

Deborah Seabrook and Phil Riley with hosting this event again, and to promote it through these pages! I went to the last gig a couple of years ago and enjoyed it enormously!" They now call themselves 'Kites Collective' and feature Phil Riley on guitar and vocals, Neil Mercer on guitar, vocals and mandolin, Tim Smith on bass and vocals and Ian Spratley on guitar and vocals. Heidi Carascon – ('a veritable nightingale' says Phil!) will be guesting with them on the evening. Expect a great evening,