



What do you do with your Used Printer Cartridges?

By John Dearing

The Internet revolution has led to a proliferation of PCs into homes throughout the land, and with them come printers, which use ink cartridges.

What do you do when your printer cartridge runs out? Do you buy a new one made by the printer's original manufacturer? If you do, you will often find that they encourage you to send the old one back to them for recycling, which you do, being environmentally conscientious. Sadly, your good intentions are, more often than not, to no avail. Most of them are packed into containers bound for dumping in the Third World. One frequent destination is a small town in China called Guiyu, where the locals scratch a living by extracting the last dregs of ink from used cartridges and collecting it for resale, and then they burn the plastic casings in vast, evil smelling, smoky pyres. Not surprisingly, the town is like

a battlefield from some chemical warfare nightmare, and the health of the inhabitants is desperately bad.

A local solution

It would seem that the cost of ecologically sound disposal is high, and it is not in the commercial interests of the major printer manufacturers to promote reuse of cartridges, as they make considerable profits from the sale of new cartridges. Indeed, they go out of their way to make it difficult to refill ink cartridges, with constant new designs and new types of ink.

Recycling in general requires a lot of effort and expense; for low value items such as glass, paper, or tin the usual solution is to gather large amounts together centrally and reprocess them.

For high value items, a better solution is local reuse. Cartridge refill kits have been available for some time now, but they suffer from the need to use 'universal inks' which are prone to block the print head, and it is often a difficult and messy job. A better alternative is to go to one of the shops that specialise in doing this, like Cartridge World. They use inks to OEM standards, specific to the cartridge, with processes that ensure proper refilling. They are able to refill laser cartridges, as well as inkjets. This not only contributes to protecting the environment, but is also significantly cheaper than buying a new cartridge.

This article was written with the help of Kapil Yagnik of Cartridge World, East End Road.



David Howarth outside his new barber shop. Photo by John Dearing

A Fine Tradition of Gentlemen's Hairdressing

By John Dearing

David Howarth has recently opened *Esquires Traditional Gentlemen's Hairdressing* shop at the High Road end of Church Lane, at number 5. Before the Second World War, Jephthah N Ivory ran a Barbershop in this parade, so he is reviving a tradition.

David, who has been barbering for 31 years in all, lived in Hampstead for some years, so he is pleased to continue his association with the area. He comes from Manchester originally, and ran a shop there for 19 years called Sweeney Todd's. He recalls reading about the barber surgeons of the 17th and 18th century, who would perform all manner of procedures from haircutting to dressing wounds, teeth pulling and even amputations! Subsequently in the 19th century the barbers and the surgeons split into two separate unions.

The traditional sign for a barber shop, the red-striped pole, recalls the re-use of bandages which would be washed and hung out to dry

over a pole; when the wind blew the bandages would wrap themselves around the pole giving the striped effect. In the USA, there is an additional blue stripe, which represents the vein!

Sweeney Todd was born in 1755 and eventually executed in 1802 for a string of barbaric murders – David can relate his story in much detail. However, he decided that running a barbershop called Sweeney Todd's next door to a funeral parlour was not in the best of taste. He settled for calling it Esquires, and prefers to think of himself as the reincarnation of Jephthah N Ivory who, he feels, like him would have welcomed customers all of ages into his barber shop.



William & Yi Xuan Man, in the grounds of Barnet Registry Office.

Mandarin Wedding

By Daphne Chamberlain

It's double celebration time in the Mandarin. Coinciding with the 25th anniversary of his father opening the award-winning restaurant, William Man held his wedding reception there.

You could say the wedding was the icing on the cake – which was traditional (British), standing alongside lotus paste dumplings and other traditional (Chinese) delicacies.

The bride, Yi Xuan – pronounced "Yee Shwan" – started off in a white dress, changing to one in the Chinese lucky colour of gold during the reception. "White used to be our colour of mourning," William told us, "but that no longer applies. Still, the most popular colour for a wedding dress is actually red. It symbolises prosperity."

Sweet tea and red pockets

William and Yi Xuan hope to have a traditional wedding in China next year, but meanwhile guests at the reception witnessed the custom of exchanging sweet tea and red pockets. This is a welcome to family newcomers and a showing of respect to elders.

Bride and groom, kneeling in turn before family members older than themselves, offered them tea sweetened by dates. In return, they were given little red

envelopes. These "pockets" can contain anything from a sweet to a sum of money to a gift like Yi Xuan's gold necklace. A family junior, William's eight year-old nephew, David, had a whale of a time as chief wine waiter, unknowingly bearing out what a young member of staff had just told me. This was a student, who "really enjoyed working here. It's a nice family restaurant."

Some of the Mandarin's regular customers, now good friends, were guests at the wedding. William, who is completing a daytime environmental science course, said, "I am very fortunate in the people working with me, and in the love and support of my parents

and my two lovely kids. It is 25 years since my father started the restaurant, and we have had a wonderful time in East Finchley."

The Mandarin is at 152, High Road. Tel. 020 8444 0012.

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