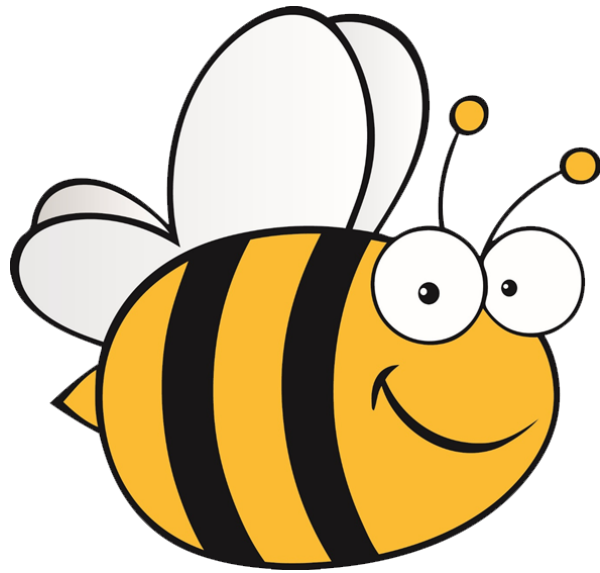


**CHESTERFIELD & NORTH DERBYSHIRE
TINNITUS SUPPORT GROUP**

Charity Number 1188354



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Newsletter: Edited by Audrey Carlin

August/September 2020



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Tinnitus_support

Audrey's Tear Drop Rose

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NEWS FROM THE BTA RESEARCH

Do you have a sensitivity to everyday sounds (hyperacusis)? Dr Kathryn Fackrell and a team from the University of Nottingham is conducting an important new research study in hyperacusis. They want to learn more about the experiences, issues and challenges of living with hyperacusis to help them to develop an online resource with information and support for people experiencing hyperacusis.

Find out more about the study and how to sign up at <https://www.tinnitus.org.uk/what-are-the-experiences-needs-...>

Houseplants to help keep insects out of your home



Lavender

Not only does the herb smell amazing but also repels flies, beetles and even fleas. This is due to the lavender oil. And if that wasn't enough, the plant looks great as a table decoration



Basil

Basil has been used for pest control since ancient times, due to its strong aroma and oil. As a bonus, it also makes for a tasty garnish.

WE NOW HAVE CHARITABLE STATUS

OUR CHARITY NUMBER IS 1188354

As a charity, it will help us to gain better access to grants and to claim gift aid on membership and donations which will be very helpful in supporting our group.

RAISING FUNDS FOR THE TINNITUS GROUP

From SARAH

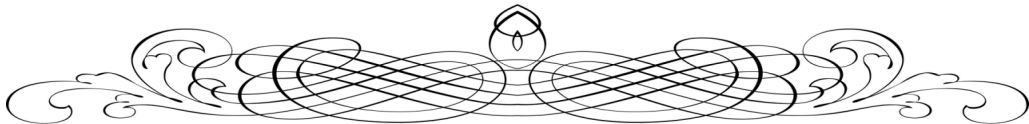
You can now make an online donation to Chesterfield & North Derbyshire Tinnitus Support Group, using Local Giving. This service is being given to us free of charge for the next year, thanks to the Magic Little Grants scheme from People's Postcode Lottery.

<https://localgiving.org/charity/chesterfield-and-north-derbyshire-tinnitus-support-group/>

PLEASE CONTINUE TO SAVE UNWANTED GIFTS FOR US

Our stocks of raffle prizes are very low so we would be very grateful if you could please continue to save your unwanted gifts or any item that would be nice for our raffles for when we can resume our meetings again.

[In the meantime, if you could please put them to one side and when we can meet up again, we will let you know.](#)



FEEL FREE

Bernard Silk, who lives in Manchester, has been a member of our group for many years. I knew Bernard was a journalist who had close links with Chesterfield, so I was very happy when he agreed to write a story for our “Feel Free”.



(Bernard at typewriter): Chesterfield office, late 1970s, surveying the latest Good Beer guide

Journalist Bernard Silk remembers...

“I arrived in Chesterfield as a district reporter for the Morning Telegraph in August 1977 – just months after the Pottery Cottage murders, an event so grisly that even in 2020 it is still being written about today.

Escaped convict, Billy Hughes, had brutally murdered four members of the same family at the house in Eastmoor. He was

eventually shot dead by Derbyshire police and the aftermath was still reverberating.

However, one of my first jobs for the Sheffield-based Telegraph was less dramatic, though still sad for some. My story dealt with the closure of Belle Vue Zoo in Manchester where I had been Press Officer. Each year, many people from Derbyshire were among the thousands who visited Belle Vue, one of the world's great showgrounds, first opened in 1837.

Belle Vue was world-famous with amusement park, circus, exhibition suites, concert hall, ballroom and banqueting facilities, and speedway and stock car stadium.

Kings Hall there had featured artists from Louis Armstrong to the Rolling Stones, taking in Andy Williams, Led Zeppelin, Beach Boys, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis and countless others including Sheffield superstar Joe Cocker. Belle Vue speedway team, the Aces, seemed unbeatable for years in the early 1970s.

However, it had been decided that the place was no longer viable and within a few years it had been demolished and almost disappeared, to be replaced by housing.

I wrote a report – one of several which appeared in subsequent years - chronicling the demise of Belle Vue and I expect people from North East Derbyshire were among those who missed visiting this unique attraction which had been comparatively close at hand.

And, at that time, I hadn't suffered from tinnitus which later came

SUMMER DINING

What do you think of when you think of summer dining, perhaps a BBQ or strawberries and cream, although sadly no Wimbledon this year. To me nothing speaks more of summer dining than a Summer Fruit Pudding. Delicious mixed fruit and juice-soaked bread.



I used frozen fruit, which worked well. Bread never lasts long in our house to be one day out of date, so I left a few slices out overnight covered with a tea cloth. We ate our summer fruit pudding with ice-cream but I also like it with 5% Greek yogurt for a slightly healthier alternative.

CLOUD WATCHING

One beautiful morning, David and I were sitting enjoying the garden and the ducks splashing about in the pond and we looked up at the cloud formation. What did we see? We both saw the same thing. The answer will be revealed in our next newsletter.



½ tsp ground ginger
½ tsp ground cinnamon
½ tsp fine sea salt
75g flaked almonds
100g sultanas, raisins or dried cranberries (or any dried fruit of your choice) I also include coconut slices

Heat the oven to 180°C, fan 160°C, gas 4. Mix the oil, syrup or honey and vanilla together in a large bowl.

Add the oats, seeds, spices and salt to the bowl. Mix well so everything is coated, tip onto 2 large baking trays and spread out evenly.

Bake for 25-30 minutes, stirring halfway through, until golden, crisp and smelling toasted. Leave to cool.

If I am using untoasted coconut slices, I add them about 5 minutes before the end of the cooking process so they are toasted. No need to do this if you buy already toasted ones. Add the flaked almonds and dried fruit to the granola, and mix well. Store in an airtight container for 2-3 weeks. Serve with milk, sprinkle over yogurt with fruit.

Alternatives you could add cocoa powder.

I know Joanne makes Granola a lot. I have only recently started to buy Granola and I love it but it's quite expensive so I will give it a try myself!



to plague me for a few years. After various treatments, a sound masker helped tune it out. Strangely enough, I usually found that a sauna would get rid of it for a while, though I realise it's not necessarily a terribly accessible remedy for everyone. But even though I now no longer live locally, I continue to receive valuable information from the Chesterfield Tinnitus Support Group.

To return to the 1970s. For many years, the Telegraph and Evening Star had a town centre office we shared with the Star news team, overlooking the market. It was handy for lunch of sausage, egg and chips in the Market Hall Cafe – one of the fine dishes cooked at this splendid establishment, now, sadly, long gone.

A rival culinary treat was the pie floater – a pasty sailing in a bowl of soup, the distinctive speciality offered at Payne's Snack Bar off New Square.

For music it was nearby Hudson's record shop and stall in the Market Hall. I've still got many jazz, blues, and country LPs bought from the flea market, too. Friendly pubs included the Grouse on Chatsworth Road.

My colleague at the Telegraph was the now late but then legendary journalist, Keith Smith – 'Mr Chesterfield' – who knew everything and everybody and was hugely helpful. It was our task to provide all news and features across the patch – which could range from human interest stories, to the annual Chatsworth Show, to strikes, court cases and councils – we reported on the County Council in Matlock and North East

Derbyshire and Chesterfield Borough Councils.

There was a lighter side. Among visitors I interviewed were Princess Anne at Bolsover Riding for the Disabled and comedian, Sandy Powell (Can you 'ear me mother?) who played the Aquarius Club in Chesterfield.

South Yorkshire was equally well covered from the paper's Sheffield HQ. The Morning Telegraph – which finally ceased publication in 1986 after 111 years – had a strong readership in Derbyshire and a lucrative property supplement on Saturdays. It eventually fell victim to the steadily diminishing sales of regional papers, a process which continues.

It carried an impressive national news coverage plus regional stories that the nationals couldn't match...there was lots of Derbyshire news. Many of the Telegraph staff went on to top jobs in Fleet Street and radio and television.

As for memorable news stories from my four years on the paper, one such was the night in August 1981 when a glider pilot and his 14 year old passenger died after a mid-air collision with another glider over the Derbyshire hills.

I drove out to where the accident happened. The plane had lost a wing and plunged into a field close to the HQ of the club at Great Hucklow, near Hathersage after colliding with an unpowered glider which landed safely. Emergency services raced to the scene but could do nothing for the victims who were cut from the wreckage.

Method:

- Add the rice to a pan of boiling salted water and cook for 10 minutes
- Add the asparagus and cook for 3 to 4 minutes until the rice is completely cooked and the asparagus is slightly crunchy
- Drain into a sieve and hold under cold, running water until cool
- When the rice is cold, stir in the rest of the ingredients
- Finish with a pinch of salt and black pepper, then serve

This is a refreshing, colourful and tasty summer salad especially with the combination of lemon zest and mint. The asparagus cooked al dente gives it a nice crunch. I was able to use my home-grown mint leaves which for me made it special.

GRANOLA

Granola is a delicious cereal for breakfast but buying it in the shops you have to be careful because it can be high in calories and sugars. However, if you make your own – it is not only delicious but less calories. Here is one recipe. However, you can make up your own from this basic recipe.

Ingredients:

50ml vegetable oil – I use coconut oil. The jury may be out on coconut oil but I like to use coconut oil – fits nicely

75ml agave syrup, maple syrup or clear honey - use agave or maple syrup if vegan – I tend to use honey.

2 tsp vanilla extract

400g porridge oats - use gluten-free oats if required

100g mixed seeds (we used a mixed pack of pumpkin, sesame, sunflower and golden linseed). I also include chia seeds

- Spread the jam on the pastry base
- Then sprinkle over the coconut
- Blend the custard powder, the sugar and 3 tablespoons of milk
- Bring the remaining milk to the boil
- Pour onto the paste stirring all the time
- Bring back to the boil
- Stirring and cook for ½ minute
- Pour it into the pastry case
- Sprinkle some sugar and coconut onto the top
- Leave until completely cold

I looked up more about the Manchester Tart and found that it was a staple on school dinner menus until the mid-1980s. The original Manchester Tart is a variation on an earlier recipe, the Manchester Pudding, which was first recorded by the Victorian cooking writer, Mrs Beeton.

JOANNE'S TRIED AND TESTED RECIPES

MINTY SUMMER RICE SALAD

Ingredients:

Long grain rice (250g)

Asparagus (250g) chopped into bite-size pieces

1 Red Pepper (de-seeded and chopped)

Olive Oil (3 tablespoons)

Grated zest and juice of 1 Lemon

Mozzarella (250g) cut into small pieces

Large bunch of Mint (chopped)

Salt and Black Pepper



WHEN CHESTERFIELD STORIES WENT ROUND THE WORLD

In 1978 local workmen on Chesterfield Canal featured in a story which went round the world. They spotted some unsightly chunks of chain littering the bottom of the waterway at Retford.

They hauled the gigantic chain out – unfortunately it was attached to a huge plug installed when the canal had been built 200 years before. Millions of gallons rushed out, leaving boats – and fishes – high and dry till the leak was plugged. These days dredging teams keep a sharp lookout for similar situations.

[For clarity, I have typed Bernard's actual news article out because it would be difficult to read it from the newspaper cutting, although I have also included the article as it appeared in the newspaper]

DAY IT ALL WENT DOWN THE DRAIN

By Bernard Silk

It is just two years since the great canal gurgle which resounded round the world. On August 11, 1978, the foreman of a gang of dredgers spotted some hefty links of chain littering the bottom of the Chesterfield Canal at Retford.

Foreman Jack Rothwell told his men: "Pull that chain out. We don't want things like that lying about."

That was that for the rest of the day. But early in the evening police called Mr Stuart Robinson, the British Waterways section inspector.

The chain had been attached to a huge plug - and millions of

gallons of water were roaring out of the canal into the River Idle a mile away.

Pleasure craft were marooned, holiday boaters stranded, and thousands of fish left high and dry.

Eventually, the British Waterways team tracked down the leak and plugged it with sandbags.

No-one knew that 200 years ago, the man who designed the canal, self-taught engineer James Brindley, had attached a chain to a door near the bed of the pound between Retford town and Whitsunday Pie Locks.

“The door had probably not been opened for 200 years. But Brindley was a genius who did nothing without a reason, and after thinking about it, we figured it out”, said Mr Robinson.

“The Whitsunday Pie Lock is a lot higher than the centre of the pound, so when it is drained, there would be water left in the middle – so he built this door and chambered culvert to empty it completely.”

So the stories went on.....

I still recall the sad tale of the local man who ran over a robin while mowing his lawn. There is a superstition that killing a robin brings bad luck- and not just to the bird. Certainly the unfortunate gardener was swiftly hit by a series of calamities which made headlines.

This variety meant that I came to love Chesterfield, gateway to the peak, the Crooked Spire, the industrial areas near unmatched countryside yet close to major cities like Sheffield and Derby and further flung towns and villages..... Alfreton, Ashbourne, Ashover, Baslow, Bolsover, Buxton, Clay Cross,

COOKERY CORNER

Sylvia also rang to give us a recipe she had been given by a friend whose early years had been spent in Manchester and she had told Sylvia that she remembered how her mother used to bake the Manchester Tart. Here is the recipe. It sounds delicious! Thank you Sylvia.

MANCHESTER TART

For the pastry:

4 oz Plain Flour

2 oz Margarine

Water

For the filling use:

3 tbs Raspberry Jam

3tbs Coconut

3tbs Custard Powder

2tbs Sugar

1 pint Milk

And a little extra sugar



internet image

- Sieve the flour and the sugar into a bowl
- Rub in the margarine until it is like breadcrumbs
- Stir in enough water to give a soft dough
- Roll out the pastry

- Line an ovenproof dish and fill
- Set the oven to fan 180
- And bake the pastry blind

- Leave to cool

usually have.

For every 70cl bottle of brandy you'll need about 320g of blackberries and 160g of sugar.

You don't need to use expensive brandy – someone may have bought you a bottle at Christmas that's at the back of the cupboard.

Put all ingredients into clean, sterilised jars with tight fitting lids and shake. Continue to agitate every day or two for a few weeks before reducing the shake frequency to weekly until you're ready to strain and bottle. Ideally this would be after three months but it will taste perfectly acceptable a few weeks earlier. As with all fruit liqueurs, the bottled drink will continue to improve with age.

[Recipe from twothirstygardeners.co.uk]

HOW ARE YOUR HERB SEEDS?

Did you plant the herb seeds we sent to you?



One of our readers, Sylvia White from Macclesfield, sent a photograph to show us how her seeds had germinated in less than two weeks. Sylvia was delighted as she didn't consider herself to be "green fingered".

Please let us know how yours are coming along?

Below is Bernard's article from the Morning Telegraph, August 1980



Stranded cabin cruisers at Retford Marina after someone pulled out the plug.

Day it all went down the drain

By BERNARD SILK

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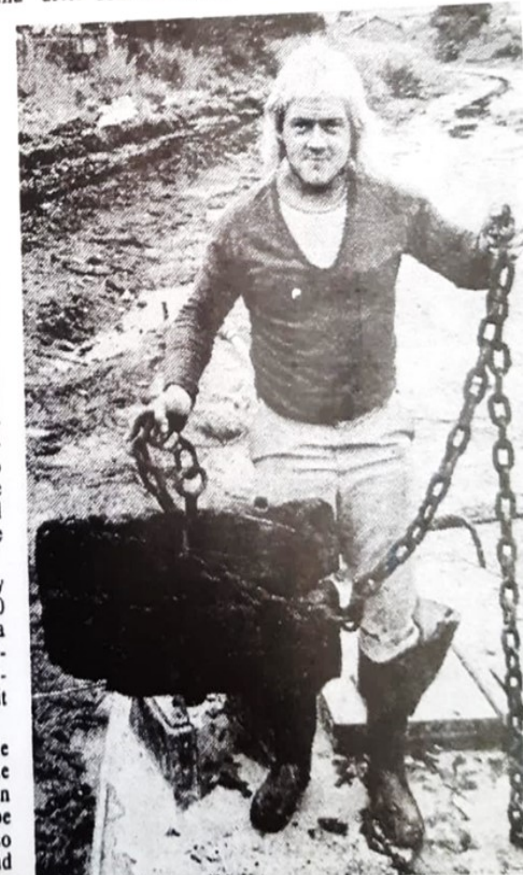
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"The Whitsunday Pie Lock is a lot higher than the centre of this pound, so when it is drained, there would be water left in the middle — so he built this door and chambered culvert to empty it completely."



The plug they pulled from the Chesterfield Canal.

Darley Dale, Derby, Dronfield, Matlock (and Matlock Bath), Morton, Wingerworth – all were newsworthy at times.

However, in 1981 I left the Telegraph to work as a freelance reporter on BBC Radios Derby, Sheffield and Manchester. And I continued to keep an eye on North Derbyshire while freelancing as an editor at Yorkshire Television which covered the region.

Eventually I moved from the area but still have friends there so keep in touch and visit occasionally.

I retired from journalism a few years ago having spent later life mainly as a feature writer for newspapers and magazines.

Looking back fondly on those times spent roaming round this beautiful county in golden summers and snowdrift winters, they were some of the happiest of my life.

And the tinnitus did eventually go away... so there is always hope!

Thank you so much Bernard for sharing your very interesting story with us of your life as a journalist in our area and for your continued support of our group.



- water to help our birds during the midday heat.
- If you are able to get away this summer, remember to think about your garden. If you are going away, you should liquid-feed your container plants.
- Check the packets but you may still be in time to plant hardy winter vegetables.



It is a great time to enjoy just pottering in your garden as well as sitting and being mindful.

[Reference: Good Housekeeping]

Foraging

August is also an exciting month, as the blackberries start to ripen and you can go foraging. Remember to be careful where you pick the blackberries, particularly near busy main roads polluting the fruit. Also, be careful, the spikes are prickly. However, there are endless things you can do with the fruit and it seems to freeze well.

Pour your blackberries into a colander, and rinse in cool water. Remove any stems, leaves or damaged berries.

Spread the blackberries out on a cookie sheet in a single layer. Once the berries are frozen, transfer them to a freezer bag or another freezer-safe container of your choosing. <https://www.thespruceeats.com/how-to-freeze-blackberries-1388420>

You can make delicious crumbles, pies, summer fruit puddings, jam (I may try jam making this year – I bought a thermometer in lockdown!) and, of course, you can make blackberry booze. I've tried both gin and brandy and prefer brandy, albeit not a tippie I

on my way into the office next day to see if he was there, or worse, squashed! There was no sign of him so I am hoping he recovered enough to find safety.”

FRUITS OF OUR LABOUR

By JOANNE

Simon and I spent much of early Lockdown in our garden, as I am sure did many, and I think our garden is looking beautiful. Although the weather hasn't been great, we are still trying to spend evenings in the garden, taking pleasure from our hard work. The garden is full of colour and perfume. We hung hanging baskets with night-scented stock just outside the patio doors, so we can step out and breathe in this beautiful aroma. In the day-time the roses are full of scent, as well as geraniums (the scent of which some people love, others loathe), but they are a very colourful flower.

Still plenty to do

However, it must be remembered that, as lockdown is easing and we are travelling out more into the Peak District for our exercise, we do not neglect the garden.

So here are some jobs for August

- Keep the garden looking nice by deadheading flowers regularly – I find this job relaxing and rewarding as it promotes new growth
- Watering – we may have had a lot of rain but be mindful that some containers may not get enough water. Collect valuable rain water.
- Collect seeds from garden plants

Look after wildlife - bird baths will quickly evaporate or become full of algae growth which can stagnate the water. Remember to clean them out regularly and top them up with fresh, cold

MY LOCKDOWN STORY

BY AUDREY

THE TEAR-DROP ROSE

There is a fascinating story to this rose. On the 24th June this year, at around 12 noon, I walked down the garden and inspected the cuttings which David was nurturing in the cold frame. There



peering up at me was this beautiful bright golden/yellow rose. I smelled its fragrant perfume and brought it up to my plant table outside the back door where I could enjoy it every time I walked by. At around 6 pm I walked past the rose and it had turned into a beautiful shade of peach. The following morning, I went to look at it, only to find it was now red with fine yellow stripes. On

inspecting it carefully, I could see the tiny tear-drops falling from the pistil (the centre) of the rose. It was so delicate.

What is so exciting is that we have grown this rose. Last year,



my daughter-in-law was throwing away a bunch of pale lemon roses (like the one in the picture) which were wilting. I asked her for them and with a surprised expression she handed them to me (after all, who would want a bunch of dead roses?). I brought them home and cut off the heads which I dried for my potpourri (lemon, unfortunately, don't keep their colour long when dried, unlike the red roses) and David took the stalks. He cut them down and planted them in compost around the edges of the pot. A year later one cutting produced this beautiful unusual rose.



I have named it "The Tear-drop Rose". For me there is a symbolic meaning of hope in this rose emerging from one that bears no resemblance to the new and vibrant flowers of this "chameleon" rose.

The teardrops on this special rose represent the tears that have been shed by many this year but also the life of this rose proves how a new life can emerge with beauty and elegance to brighten our world after the loss and sadness.

Our lives are mirrored by this pretty delicate rose. So too, we will rise like the phoenix even though for many, life will not be the same – but we will embrace life, a life that will take on new meaning. This rose may never flower again but, for me, it marks a time in history that will never be forgotten.

Had it not been for 'lockdown' I may never have noticed this rose and how it changed so dramatically over the hours as I would

Hedgehogs are such cute creatures that we are all looking out for them. The following is a story from one of our colleagues at the office, Jo Reeve. Jo writes:

"We were walking through the village of Whaley, when we encountered Master Prickles, he was on the road and seemed quite weak. He was only a young hedgehog and froze when I walked up to him, strange that he didn't curl up into a ball. I knew that hedgehogs shouldn't usually be out during the day, it was a hot, early evening so we decided to give him a drink. I had a bottle of water with me so put some in the bottle lid and left it by Master Prickles.



We stepped back to the other side of the lane so as not to scare him. At that point a chap in a pick-up truck came down the lane and Master Prickles was standing right in the path of the oncoming tyre! We did a bit of frantic waving and shouting at the truck which came to a stop at the side of me. We pointed out the hedgehog and the chap seemed quite

concerned. He said he lived in the village and they have many hedgehogs come into his garden most evenings. I said I was going to gently put the poor thing deeper into the hedge bottom, as was worried about him being run over. The chap said he would check on him later in the evening. So I gently picked him up, and he immediately curled into a tight ball, and put him down in a safer place. And that was the last we saw of Master Prickles. I hope he survived! I must confess to taking a diversion

down last night.”



have been in the office at Glumangate and so, although it has been tough over the months, as it has been for many, I am happy to have been part of this little rose's journey of hope.

The two main, and most important parts of a rose plant are the stamen (the male part) and the pistil (the female part). Then you have the petals, the sepals (which are the green leaves surrounding the petals), and, of course, the stem and leaves!

The pistil is part of the female reproductive structure of a flower. It is typically found in the centre and consists of the ovary, style (or stalk) and stigma, all of which are referred to as the carpel. The term pistil is often used in reference to a single carpel or several carpels that are joined together.

POEM OF HOPE

I wanted to send words of hope to a friend but struggled to find the right words until I found the following poem:

Poem by Helen Steiner Rice

*After the clouds, the sunshine;
After the winter, the spring;
After the shower, the rainbow;
For life is a changeable thing.
After the night, the morning,
Bidding all darkness cease,
After life's cares and sorrows,
The comfort and sweetness of peace.*

When I found this poem, I wanted to know more about the person who had written such simple but beautiful and comforting

words.

The words were those of Helen Steiner Rice who was a prolific writer of inspirational poems. Helen, an American, was born in May 1900 and lived until she was 81 years old. Her father, a railroad worker, died in the influenza epidemic of 1918. She married in 1929 to Franklin Dryden Rice, a bank vice-president in Dayton, Ohio.



INSPIRATIONAL STORY

Last year Joanne and I were asked to give a talk to the British Acoustic Neuroma Association (BANA), the headquarters of which are in Chesterfield. It was the second talk we had given to the association, one in Nottingham and one for the East Midlands Group which meet in South Normanton.

It is as a result of this connection that Joanne picked up the following story which is so inspirational that there are not enough words to describe how you feel when reading it. Whilst following BANA on Twitter, Joanne picked up details of Sara Crosland and started to follow her. However, whilst reading 'Runner's World' a magazine that Joanne and her husband, as runners, subscribe

So, on Friday night after Gardener's World had finished at 10pm I crept down the garden to see if the food was still there and if anything was about. It was practically dark...and so I almost unwittingly booted poor Mrs Tiggywinkle into the pond! She had eaten the food and was having a drink. Luckily, I have a pebbled area at that end of the pond especially to help wildlife get in and out for a drink or a bath and it is beloved by the blackbirds.

So last night, I decided to have a stake out. I settled myself on a chair near to the pond with my youngest daughter, Kirsty, and we tried to keep still and silent. What a beautiful night. I have never just sat like that in the garden as darkness falls and I can recommend it. The half moon peered at us through the trees and the Ox-Eye Daisies were absolutely luminous. Eventually, at 10.10pm we heard a rustling in the undergrowth. It was a bit nerve-wracking because I was aware that it wasn't necessarily a hedgehog we could hear. I think I gripped Kirsty's arm a bit too tightly! But there she emerged, Mrs Tiggywinkle, unfazed by our torch beams held above her so as not to startle her. She ate all the food silently and with obvious enjoyment, then scuttled off.

If it hadn't been for Lockdown I would probably have not realised she was there, so that is truly something to be thankful for. I feel privileged to have such a lovely visitor to my garden and happy that my efforts to make my garden wildlife friendly have come off.

A few days later, Sarah updated on her hedgehog story when the hedgehog visited her garden again bringing along its baby. They came really early, 7.15 pm so it was still really light. Sarah's daughter, Kirsty, took the photos. Sarah added "they are eating me out of house and home! Two portions of food got wolfed

MY HEDGEHOG ADVENTURE

BY SARAH WALTERS

Last week, I was doing my usual dinnertime patrol of the garden when I spotted a hedgehog snuffling about near my little pond. I was a little worried as I knew that hedgehogs shouldn't be out in the daytime and that this can mean it is ill. I went inside to do a quick Google to confirm this and it said that seeing a hedgehog out in the day at this time of year could also mean it is a female getting her nest sorted, or having a break from demanding babies! Hedgehogs tend to give birth in June. I thought that this must surely be the case here as the hedgehog didn't look ill - far from it. She had bright eyes and was shuffling about the wildlife area with abandon. When I went back and she had scooted off this put my mind at rest.



Sarah's photo of that first dinnertime encounter.

Now I was all excited at the prospect of a hedgehog nest nearby. Luckily, I had some wildlife food suitable for hedgehogs in the garage and I started putting a little out every night next to the pond. Each morning it had gone but in the back of my mind I knew it could be cats, mice or even rats that were eating it.

to, she saw Sara's story. As a result, Joanne emailed Sara and asked if she would share her inspirational story with us.

I would like to mention that Sara's story is quite graphic in places as she describes her journey but her story has a happy and uplifting ending for this incredible young lady who embraces life to the full.

INSPIRATIONAL STORY BY SARA CROSLAND FROM SICKBED TO SUMMIT MY BRAIN TUMOUR STORY



Towards the end of 2017, life was ticking along quite nicely, well apart from those few minor irritations. I was married, and a busy mum to 3 teenagers. I had got as far as I could in my career but was beginning to find my role as a high level teaching assistant, working with children with special educational needs, increasingly tiring. I reduced my hours at school and set up a small photography business as I felt I needed to be doing something more creative and less stressful.

However, after suffering from a couple of bouts of vertigo, which I put down to a trapped nerve in my neck, my health continued to decline. Fatigue increased, but it was Christmas time and school was incredibly busy. I began to get a little short with children in my class as I couldn't hear them clearly to do the dinner lists each day, blaming them for fidgeting with paper and pens and scraping chairs. I would forget what I had left the room to do, and even forgot what car I drove and where I had parked

when I came to go home at the end of the day. There was little empathy from the staff I was working with at the time. Then our family dog Max became unwell and a few days before Christmas we made the heart-breaking decision to, well you know...

We tried to enjoy Christmas as best we could, but I just wasn't feeling festive. I was tired, and having spent Max's last night with him, sleeping on the floor as he was in a lot of discomfort, I had developed incredible pain in all my joints. At first I thought I was just getting too old for sleeping on the floor, but it didn't go away.

My GP called it poly arthralgia, prescribed anti-inflammatories and put it down to Parvo Virus, but when it didn't improve we looked into a number of other conditions, including Lyme Disease. Blood tests all came back as normal, except for one result that showed I had a vitamin D deficiency. Now that could cause joint pain, so I was prescribed a vitamin supplement.

Things didn't improve though. In fact, they got progressively worse. I quit my job in school as pain and fatigue became debilitating. Then I began to experience double vision and a change in the sensation in my face. My GP was concerned and I was sent to hospital for an urgent MRI.

I was called back the same day to be told that they had found a 3.5cm low grade cystic brain tumour, an acoustic neuroma; thought to affect 1-2 in every 100,000, this tumour was far from harmless.

My health deteriorated rapidly, as the usually slow growing tumour rapidly increased in size and began to cause brainstem

attention to the present moment. You can do this at home or outside in a quiet place. Even a few minutes each day can help to reduce feelings of anxiety. The Calm App has specific modules to explore such feelings more deeply, and give strategies towards finding a solution.



"This is how to relax and stay calm" Bailey posing for the camera (Joanne's kitten)

FIND CREATIVE WAYS TO STAY IN CONTACT IN THESE DIFFICULT TIMES

Write a poem or share a poem with a friend or family member. Share artwork, a painting, sketch or caricature.

Share photos - I look forward to Sarah Richards' photos on

Facebook.

Connect through using music. Send a friend or family member a song recommendation or make a playlist for them. You can send songs which remind you of times spent together. I have songs which remind me of my days at University.

Send recipes to family and friends. When I got married my friends wrote recipes for me in a book. They also wrote humorous comments. I love this book, it brings back happy memories.

HOW TO DEAL WITH 'RE-ENTRY ANXIETY'

BY ALICE HALL, LIFESTYLE WRITER

The 'new normal' can be a scary place after weeks inside. Lockdown has been an uncertain time for everyone. But that's not to say that the transition back into normal life won't be hard too.

Socialising with friends after weeks apart, visiting the supermarket and a return to our old work/life balance are all things that could be causing us to feel anxious. Dr Kirsten Macphee, a digital GP Community Lead at Babylon Health has shared some tips for easing back into the new normal...

Talk to people

Sharing your worries with a friend or family member has been shown to reduce the feelings of anxiety - a problem shared really can be a problem halved.

Use a reflective journal to work through your concerns

By writing down your thoughts and feelings you can stop ruminating and begin to understand them more clearly. Write a list of your priorities; what can you change now and what must you do to reach your goals?

Exercise daily

This reduces anxiety due to both its physical and psychological benefits to the body and mind. Whatever you prefer to do, make time to exercise outside and at home.

Practise Mindfulness

This is the psychological process of purposefully bringing one's

compression. I had always looked after myself, running and exercising regularly and enjoying time in the hills and mountains. No matter how strong I thought I was though, there were many times in the run up to surgery when I thought the tumour would get the better of me. My blood pressure increased, my resting pulse, normally 55 was now around 108 beats per minute, I was frequently sick when I moved, I began to struggle to move as the tumour was compressing my hearing and balance nerve. I couldn't even write. Mentally, I was in a very dark place. I felt that I was no longer living, just existing. As soon as I woke each morning, I looked forward to bedtime, knowing I'd survived another day and surgery was a day closer.

A few weeks after the diagnosis, I was also told that chest x-rays had revealed swollen lymph nodes in my lungs. They thought I could potentially have lymphoma. Thankfully, a few months later, biopsies revealed that this was in fact sarcoidosis, which was the cause of the joint pain.

Surgery to remove the intruder was planned for 12th May 2018, but just 3 weeks before, I suffered from the rare and unexpected complication of a haemorrhage. I was treated in 3 different hospitals and given high doses of steroids before being sent home to continue treatment and to try to recuperate a little before surgery.

My surgery day couldn't come soon enough. The operation lasted about 8 hours. The tumour was removed successfully, but my hearing and balance nerve was severed, I could barely see through one eye, and had severe double vision and other terrifying visual disturbances. Half my face and mouth was

completely numb, I had facial palsy and difficulty speaking and swallowing. I couldn't walk. I was left profoundly deaf on my left side, my hearing replaced with a roaring and hissing sound, broken occasionally with the most high pitch screech that was almost physically painful. That first night on high dependency was horrific. I was violently sick, dizzy and unable to sleep because of the noise and visual disturbance I experienced.

It would be a few days before I was taken from HDU to a side room on the neuro ward and helped out of bed by two physios, whose job it was to help me walk again. At that point, stood at the side of my bed being held up as I tried to move my legs that just weren't receiving the messages from my brain, I realised that my battle had only just begun.

The journey to recovery has been long and arduous but if I have learnt one thing over the last couple of years, it's how to be adaptable and accustomed to change. It's not always been something that I wanted to do, but I've discovered that by carefully choosing how I react to certain situations, I can remain a little calmer and in control.

As I approach the second anniversary of my surgery, a date that will forever be remembered, I am grateful to be able to share my story. I look normal, but I still suffer with numbness in my mouth, double vision, a dry eye, a little facial palsy that is probably only noticeable to me, and there are still some balance issues and fatigue. My hearing loss is permanent and something I'm still learning to live with. Tinnitus however, is one of those things that I have found much harder to adapt to. Yes, I can try to avoid those situations that will make it worse but those who know me

The good news is that, with conscious control of your breathing, you can override the response. Sandeman's technique is called the 'If in Doubt Breathe it Out' method, designed to reduce your heart rate, cause your body to relax and your mind to slow.

Here's how to do it:

- Inhale through your nose for a count of four
- Hold breath for count of four
- Exhale through your mouth for a count of eight
- Repeat four times

SOMETHING TO MAKE YOU SMILE FROM 'MOVE IT OR LOSE IT'

Please be careful because people are going crazy from being in lock down! Actually I've just been talking about this with the microwave and toaster while drinking coffee and we all agreed that things are getting bad. I didn't mention anything to the washing machine as she puts a different spin on everything. Certainly not to the fridge as he is acting cold and distant. In the end the iron straightened me out as she said everything will be fine, no situation is too pressing. The vacuum was very unsympathetic...told me to just suck it up, but the fan was more optimistic and hoped it would all soon blow over! The toilet looked a bit flushed when I asked its opinion and didn't say anything but the door knob told me to get a grip. The front door said I was unhinged and so the curtains told me to ...yes, you guessed it...pull myself together I hope it made you smile.

nice relaxing book or maybe journal about the experience you have created and how it makes you feel to encourage you to repeat it again and again.....

When you experience tinnitus, you need to look after yourself, body and mind, self-care is essential. If it's evening time, after a warm drink, get an early night.

EXERCISE AND MENTAL HEALTH

MOVE IT OR LOSE IT!

Aerobic exercise is key for your head, just as it is for your heart. It reduces levels of your body's stress hormones and stimulates the production of endorphins which are your body's natural painkillers and mood elevators.

BREATHING EXERCISES TO HELP WITH STRESS



Stuart Sandeman is the founder of Breathpod. He says, “when stressed or anxious, our autonomic nervous system operates in sympathetic mode, aka fight or flight. This triggers your breath to become short and shallow.”

well know how stubborn I am, so sometimes I refuse to not tiptoe around it, knowing I will at some point have to pay the price. For me this can be coming out of a loud environment, or just completing physical activity that leaves me tired – fatigue being another tinnitus trigger.

Over the last 6 months or so, I have received amazing support from the local Acquired Brain Injury team which has been a great help. I have discovered new ways to manage my symptoms, and it's been good to talk through some of those feelings and emotions, not to forget the physical changes that I was finding it difficult to deal with.

Yes, there are still tears at times, but I have learnt that I can learn to adapt, even just a little. With support from the team, I am learning that it is ok to acknowledge those unhelpful thoughts and feelings, and move on from them.

If you're like me, someone who likes to be in control, try to learn how to be patient. Remember to take a breath and try to be calm and methodical adjusting plans as necessary. There are lots of different strategies out there that can help. This isn't showing a sign of weakness (as I once thought), but learning to live differently.

It has been tough and there have been many days that seemed unbearable. Whatever you do though, don't give up. Recognise that a bad day is just that, a bad day. Always believe that tomorrow will be better.

I still have days when I do nothing but wish this hadn't happened

to me, but I still try to find silver linings in seemingly bad situations. Two years ago I was broken, but that road to recovery has given me strength I didn't think was possible.

For me, getting back to who I was before my diagnosis is just the beginning. I see a world that is full of infinite possibilities; since my surgery I have achieved more than I ever thought possible. I continue to build my photography business. I have spoken at a number of events to raise awareness and I'm in the process of writing my story in the hope that it might help just one person and, whilst they may now be more challenging, I have managed to get back to all the activities I used to enjoy and have many more exciting plans for the future.

<https://youtu.be/uYmqSYI4n1E>

Sara has done so many inspirational things since her operation and the youtube video shows her story in terms of what she has achieved which is so inspirational. Here are a couple of photos off the website showing just a couple of activities that Sara has achieved.



Sara is a violinist, a runner, an intrepid explorer and cyclist. She

Sound

Having calming music on in the background can really help to set the tone of your relaxing experience. I always find spa & massage music provides a calming backdrop. The internet is also a good place to check out music that you find relaxing and when we eventually return to being able to shop around, there are shops where you can test out the music before you buy.

Sight

If it's possible, keep the lighting nice and low. Light several candles (just be careful not to leave them unattended) and let the warm light permeate. As candles can also be scented, choose one with the aroma that you like.

Touch

Why not wrap yourself in tactile fabric such as a soft robe if you have chosen to take a bath, or a super-soft blanket.

Taste



Complete the experience with a herbal drink. Infuse your water with fresh mint, lemon or cucumber. Or you can brew some herbal teas. Chamomile, peppermint and lemon balm teas can all help ease stress, giving you a moment of tranquility.

And relax

For the rest of the day or evening, try to keep things slow and relaxed. Try a short Mindfulness meditation (this can be as simple as focussing on something within the environment you have created – a flickering candle for instance). You could read a

physically cool. However, it may be a good colour for a study as a blue room can help concentration and help you to retain information. It is the least appetising colour for food and studies suggest that if you are on a diet you may wish to try eating from a blue plate to stop overeating.

Blue is also a colour which suggests trust worthiness and very often uniforms are blue, sales staff and politicians may wear navy blue in particular to psychologically project the image that you can trust them!

HELP YOURSELF TO RELAX

BY AUDREY

We have often talked about “opening up” all our senses – sense of smell, sight, touch, taste and sound so we can appreciate everything around us, especially when out walking or when in the garden. However, we can do the same within our home by preparing for a relaxing evening or taking a luxurious relaxing bath.

Sense of smell

Our sense of smell is directly linked to our limbic system in the brain, which is why it can have such a powerful effect on how we feel. If you are taking a relaxing bath or even if you are relaxing in your room, place herbs in a bowl to provide a calming atmosphere. Scents known to relax and soothe include lavender, bergamont and ylang ylang. You could grow your own lavender so that you will always have plenty of fresh lavender in your home. It is also easy to dry and preserve for the winter time.



is a photographer and has done mountain biking as well as sky diving and has climbed Snowdonia summit. Sara says she *“loves life”* and *“never never give up.”*

We thank Sara for sharing her inspirational story with us.

POETRY COMPETITION

Thank you very much to everyone who entered our Poetry Competition. The entrants made it difficult to choose a winner. However, after reading them through several times, Sarah, Joanne and myself made our choices and then we got together via zoom and compared our choices. We were unanimous in choosing the winner and the runners-up (the poems by the two runners-up will be in our next newsletter).

- THE WINNING ENTRY -

SPRING SOUNDS

By Mr Sherman

Dark days of winter now have passed
Spring starts, there's life at last

In its stirring comes Daffodil and Crocus
And sounds more sharply into focus

Lambs plaintiff bleats rend the air
Fields of green provide their fare

Pigeons flap amid the unfolded leaves
Doing their courting, if you please

At dusk, Crows returning to their nest
Have much to say before they rest

Mowers cleaned and ready to go
Make plenty of noise as they mow

Chelsea gardens, and flowers, all that's new
A medley of voices expressing their view

Long tailed Tits so happy and gay
Together in hedgerows, all have their say

The Cuckoo note so clear and loud
Of his long journey he is so proud

Busy Blackbird running and hopping about
Finds time to let his lovely song ring out

And was that Bluebells I could hear
The sound on the breeze was oh, so clear

INSPIRATIONAL POEM

Sonia Dilcock is one of our members, who has also joined our Online Support Group meetings which we hold monthly on a Tuesday afternoon. Sonia wanted to share with us a poem which was sent to her by her Yoga teacher who works in rehabilitation for people losing their sight.

Sonia said in her message "just thought as our group has the poetry buzz it might be worth sharing, especially as we live with

colour is orange because it invokes a feeling of warm, sunny days. It is bright and cheerful and also makes me think of love, in all its manifestations. I think of the Dali Lama, in his bright orange robes, radiating goodness and peace." — Dobidoo

BLUE

Blue is also a relaxing colour. It is not quite so easy on the eye to process as green but it is close. Blue is the colour associated with water. We know that getting outside is good for our mental and physical health, but visiting the seaside or a lake is considered by some, according to Fiona Thompson writing in 'Happiful', to be the "optimum version of nature therapy." A study undertaken in 2016 found the views of 'blue space' to be associated with lower levels of psychological distress. Surprisingly, the results were not true of green space.



For relaxation, you may wish to find a walk by a river or lake. Albeit at present still difficult, unless you know a good place for a wild swim but swimming is a great activity, working muscle groups without putting strain on joints, it releases endorphins, encourages deep breathing and leads to a meditative state. The water in swimming pools always appears blue. However, according to Fiona Thompson anything that creates the sound of water is likely to ease stress. You may wish to try rain or waves on a sound App to help you sleep at night.

We need to be careful when introducing blue into rooms because it can evoke feelings of sadness 'feeling blue' and make you feel



"With them being wet, you see" resumed the lady
"they was beginning to plump up - the peas I
mean, not his ears - and we tried everything, finger
nails, pen knife, even a skewer-"
I must have shuddered.
"Well we had to try" said Mrs Pringle, grumpily.

Peggy Mount aka my vision of Mrs Pringle.

THE POWER OF COLOUR

BY JOANNE

In the last newsletter, I looked at two contrasting colours, a warm red and cool green. This time, I will do the same and look at contrasting colours of warm orange and cool blue.



ORANGE

Orange is a combination of yellow and red and is considered a colour of energy. Orange often conjures up feelings of excitement, enthusiasm and

warmth. There is nothing more beautiful than watching the orange of a setting sun. Although not associated with feelings of relaxation, it is associated with being spiritual and a great colour to use in visualisation.

Picture a wonderful day walking on a beach or by a lake and then sit watching the sun set. It is also closely associated with fun, particularly Halloween and of Autumn as the season changes.

Next to the blue these autumn leaves really come alive

The following is a quote found on the internet. "My favourite

the sense of hearing impacted, whilst this relates to sight as a different perspective to have".

Please take time to read the poem below. I work with Raymond and like so many people I meet in my Rehabilitation work, he is a true inspiration. It is his deepest wish for the poem to be shared far and wide; feel free to pass onto anyone who may appreciate his words (tissues at the ready!)

MY LOCKDOWN (by Raymond Horsley)

For me to sit and write these words is hard as hard can be,
Five years ago I lost my sight, so writing's not for me.
But now in isolation, the world's restricted too,
Thinking how to pass the time, finding things to do.
This isn't such a problem, in my world without sight,
For five years I've been learning how to turn the dark to light.
I'm sitting in my garden, with thoughts of days gone by,
With memories of aircraft flying high up in the sky.
With nature's beauty all around, but hidden from my eyes,
How precious was my vision, I've come to realise.
So when you're feeling down and out, can't nip off to the pub,
Or someone is complaining, while queuing up for grub,
Just think how lucky you still are, to see what's going on,
And what you would be missing, if your sight too was gone.
And when lockdown is lifted, when movement is set free,
When reunited families have faces filled with glee,
I'll still be in my lockdown, life won't change much for me,
I'll hear the world start up again but still I will not see.
It soon will be my birthday, when I'll reach ninety-one,
My life may soon be over, with battles lost and won.
But I know there's a heaven, where God will welcome me,
A place of peace and happiness, where everyone can see.

Thank you, Sonia, for sharing this inspirational poem with us.

LOCKDOWN POEM

BY JOANNE

Joanne told me that, one night, she was having difficulty sleeping and during her restlessness, she wrote the following poem. Her poem coincides with the government announcement about having to wear face masks. Was this on her mind which caused her sleepless night I wonder?



DEAR STRANGER

Stranger as we passed we'd smile
Maybe even stop a while
A cheery hello, we'd say
On parting, have a good day.
But due to this horrible disease
Now we only stop and freeze
Do you smile behind the mask
Don't know and I won't ask.
So as colleagues meet on Teams
So dear Stranger it seems
I'll greet you on the internet
But let us not start to fret
Research and medicine I'm sure
Will very soon find a cure
Till then I can only wave
Stranger my smile I will save.

thank you for referring to. It becomes clear that, after working together for so long, Miss Read and Mrs Pringle do develop a vague fondness for each other. Not that either of them would ever admit it. A telling scene takes place when Miss Read visits Mrs Pringle in hospital after an operation, and has taken her a bunch of sweet peas. Mrs Pringle almost smiles a rare smile and graciously thanks her visitor, before concluding aloud that the blooms won't last five minutes in that heat.

Mrs Pringle makes me shake with laughter and takes me away from the strains of modern life into her world of haughty sniffs, harsh judgements and questionable remedies (got whooping cough? you need to swallow a fried mouse - fresh, of course). I'll leave you with my favourite scene from the book dedicated to her. Here, she recounts a situation that occurs when she is left in charge of her flippetygibbet niece's young child, who had upset a bowl of peas that she had put into soak:

"...D'you know what that little varmint had done?"

"Stuffed a pea in his ear." I said. "It often happens. With beads too, if they are small enough. And I had a child push a hazelnut up its nose, from the nature table..."

But my tale was cut short by my fellow story teller. She disliked having her thunder stolen.

"One in each ear!" roared Mrs Pringle. "And I daresay he would have put more in his nose, and elsewhere, if we hadn't caught him. And could we get them out?"

I guessed correctly that this was only a rhetorical question intended to heighten the dramatic effect.

One character that I fervently hope was based on a real person is my favourite, Mrs Pringle. Mrs Pringle is the Fairacre school cleaner and an absolute tartar. If you remember the actress Peggy Mount - well that is how I envisage this character looks and behaves. Miss Read and Mrs Pringle have a long running series of skirmishes throughout the series of books set in



Fairacre. Each winter term is a tense battle of wills between the two women about when the coke fired heaters should be turned on. The cleaner has opinions about everyone and everything that are immovable. In her view, Miss Read might be a la-di-da headmistress, but her abilities in the fine arts of cleanliness are beneath contempt. Meanwhile, Miss Read observes with amusement that Mrs Pringle has a limp, which gets more

pronounced when she is thwarted or affronted. She refers to it as the "combustible leg" because it is always "flaring up".

But yet, none of Miss Read's characters are one-dimensional. Just occasionally, she lets a sign of Mrs Pringle's better side escape onto the page. When I discovered that there had been a whole book dedicated to this queen of tartars ("Mrs Pringle", published in 1989) I was beside myself with happiness. I found a copy last year in my favourite second hand bookshop - Scrivener's in Buxton - and what a happy day that was. The book didn't let me down. Not only were those schoolroom battles depicted with great humour, the book gave us a hitherto unseen look into Mrs Pringle's background, the sadnesses that she has endured and the little acts of kindness that she would never

UNLOCKING THE LOCKDOWN!

By Derbyshire Voluntary Action

The following was sent to us by Derbyshire Voluntary Action. "Life always has its challenges – but now more than ever, the changes going on in the world are affecting our lives and the way we feel. The COVID19 Pandemic has affected everybody! Whether we have been stuck inside all day or facing the stresses of essential work, the Covid-19 crisis has made the world a different place. But, despite the tragedy of lives lost, fear and sadness, there have been many amazing stories of bravery, heroism, innovation, creativity and community spirit.

At a time when so much has been taken out of our control it has been heart-warming to witness how so many of you have responded, adapted and supported others.

None of us have ever known anything like this and we feel that it is important to make a lasting record of our Community/groups' experiences during this pandemic.

Ideas DVA have suggested

Do you have interesting photos of bad haircuts, VE Day celebrations, volunteers delivering food parcels, deserted streets, and queues outside supermarkets?

Have you kept a diary or blog during this time or have you expressed yourself in a short story or poem?

How have you kept fit and healthy?

Have you any stories of great community spirit?

Have you learnt a new skill, embraced technology or returned to an old skill or hobby?

Have you created rainbows for your windows or a scarecrow in your garden?

Maybe you now feel inspired to create something?

Allow your creativity to record your experience and consider the ways you've dealt with the changes, the ups and the downs, the feelings of isolation and loneliness and let's not forget the heart-warming stories, the acts of kindness towards strangers and elements of lockdown we may not want to lose!"



We would also love your 'Lockdown' stories for our Tinnitus Group Newsletters

We have already written stories, poems and how nature and gardens have helped us to cope, along with Sarah Richards' weekly lockdown photographs on our Facebook page and in our newsletters – but we would like more of your stories.

As a group, we always like to be positive and so we would like "positive" and inspirational stories and with your permission, we would like to put them in our newsletters (and if you are willing, to send to the DVA for their booklet).



If you don't feel like writing your story but would be willing to talk to us over the phone, we would listen to your story, type it out and send it to you so that you can read it through before going to print. I do shorthand and Joanne can

BOOK REVIEW BY SARAH

I had a look at my bookshelf after tea last night and got so enthused by my choice I sat and wrote it straight away. Here it is.

Do you feel the need to escape? Come with me on a journey to the village of Fairacre and meet Mrs Pringle.

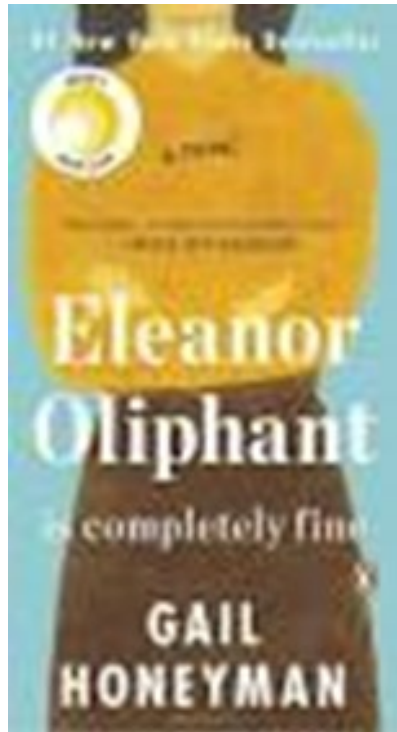
The books that are based in the fictional village of Fairacre and the surrounding area form a series that was written from the 1950s through to the 1980s. The author goes under the name of "Miss Read", which is actually the name of the character who acts as the books' narrator - she is the headmistress of Fairacre Village School. In reality, the writer of the books was called Dora Saint.

You might imagine that stories about a small English village as told by an old fashioned school mistress might be sentimental and staid - I must admit that might have been my first impression before I was persuaded to give one a try. The book covers can also look a little twee. But when you begin to read, you find a thoroughly well observed portrait of human nature in all its forms. All of the characters have their faults and foibles. The downsides of village life are not shied away from either - from pernicious gossip, inescapable poverty and the traumas of the creep of modern life. In real life, Dora Saint was a school teacher and so many of the situations and characters are so realistic you feel that she must have been writing down her personal experiences.

“Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine”

One of those books is Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine by Gail Honeyman. This book was given to me by a friend for my birthday. I love to have recommendations from friends about what to read, it gives me a connection with them and it is something to talk about and share with them when we have the opportunity to meet up or when we are out walking.

Eleanor is such an engaging character she is unusual and endearing but lonely and isolated. She shuts the door at the end of a weekend, to avoid social interaction, eats frozen pizza and drinks vodka. Over 9 million people in the UK, almost a fifth of the population say they are always or often lonely. Yet Eleanor tells herself and the world she is ‘Fine’. A word we often use whether



we are or not. “I’m fine”. Eleanor is also dealing with a past trauma, which is slowly revealed in the book, all the time we want to find out what has happened to Eleanor and to understand more about her. The book is engrossing and we care about her. Despite the difficult subjects of trauma and loneliness, the book is incredibly uplifting and heart-warming, as Eleanor begins to make life-changing human connections. It was a joy to read and there is no wonder that Gail’s debut novel has sold more than 2.5 million copies worldwide.

speed write (learned from her days at university). The main thing to remember is Your Story Matters and we would love to hear from you.

Please call us on 01246 380415

BENEFITS OF WRITING BY JOANNE

Even if you don’t feel that you can share your story, I want to take the opportunity to share some of the benefits of writing. It can be very therapeutic even if you write for yourself and never share with others. This can have a positive impact on your health and wellbeing.

Writing can help you process your thoughts, feelings and emotions

Writing can help improve your wellbeing

Writing allows you to form ideas and get them out of your head

In an article by Gregory Ciotti, he reports on a study which noted subjects who reflected on the good things in their life once a week by writing them down were more positive and motivated about their current situations and their futures.

Ideas for future issues

As well as sharing your stories, if you have read something which has helped you why not send it to us and we can share it in our newsletters.

JOURNALS – we still have some Journals in stock, so if you would like one to put down your thoughts and ideas, please contact us on 01246 380415 and we will post one out to you.



Please send your stories by post to us at:

Chesterfield & North Derbyshire Tinnitus Support Group
34 Glumangate, Chesterfield, S40 1TX.

Or email to: mail@tinnitussupport.org.uk

THE PLEASURE OF READING

BY JOANNE

There are few things in life more enjoyable than curling up on the sofa with a good book. But escaping into a story has some important wellbeing benefits too, particularly as we get older.

A recent survey by the stairlift company Stannah found that 91 per cent of over-60s use their free time to read. "Just like the muscles in your body, your brain needs exercise to stay healthy," says Helen Stirrup, an occupational health advisor at the company. "Cognitive stimulation helps to slow the progress of conditions such as dementia. Reading keeps our brains active and engaged, strengthening short-term memory and reducing cognitive decline."

Alongside improving your cognitive function, reading a novel can also be a huge stress reliever, which is one of the reasons why books are often prescribed as therapy.

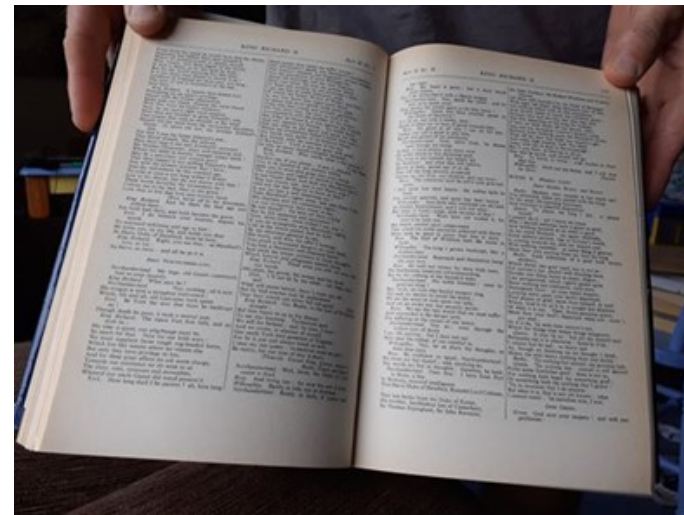
"It can be invaluable if you struggle with anxiety, firstly as a form of escapism, but ultimately because it's proven to keep your heart rate steady and ease muscle tension," says Stirrup.

If you've been struggling to concentrate on reading novels during lockdown, try putting on an audiobook. These are perfect to listen to when you're short of time, or if you're multitasking.

"Audiobooks may also test your memory if you're prone to forgetfulness," says Stirrup. "Retaining the characters, places and plot sharpens the mind. The same goes for books, but an enthusiastic narrator who brings the story to life with different accents and voice inflections can make all the difference."

Have you been reading any good books in Lockdown - why not share your 'reads' with us. [Article Facebook with Joanne's photo]

Reading can also help with empathy, insight, expand the mind and according to "Happiful" a good book can be like a friend in troubled times.



The article in Happiful goes on to give a list of books which can become that friend and a realisation that someone understands.