

**CHESTERFIELD & NORTH DERBYSHIRE
TINNITUS SUPPORT GROUP**

Registered Charity Number: 1188354



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“Quirky Corner” by Audrey



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Tinnitus_support

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Difficult Times Don't Last Forever

By Geri Danks.

Sometimes, the problems you must face
Are more than you wish to cope with,
And tomorrow doesn't seem to offer any solutions.

You may ask yourself “why me?”
But the answer is sometimes unclear.
You may even tend to feel that life hasn't been just or fair
To burden you with such obstacles.

The roads any of us choose to follow
Are never free of bumps or curves,
But eventually the turns lead to a smoother path ahead.

Believe in yourself and your dreams
You will soon realise that the future holds many promises for you.

Remember.....difficult times don't last forever



Despite the fact that modern technology has overtaken the postcards, their ability to capture a moment in time and convey sentiment and messages in such a brief space, makes postcards so special and a great keepsake. They are also a reflection of history.

When Sarah Walters wrote her story in the May/June issue, she said how some of her stories are inspired by memorabilia, including postcards.

Yet another of my postcards, the postage stamp on this postcard was George V and was a

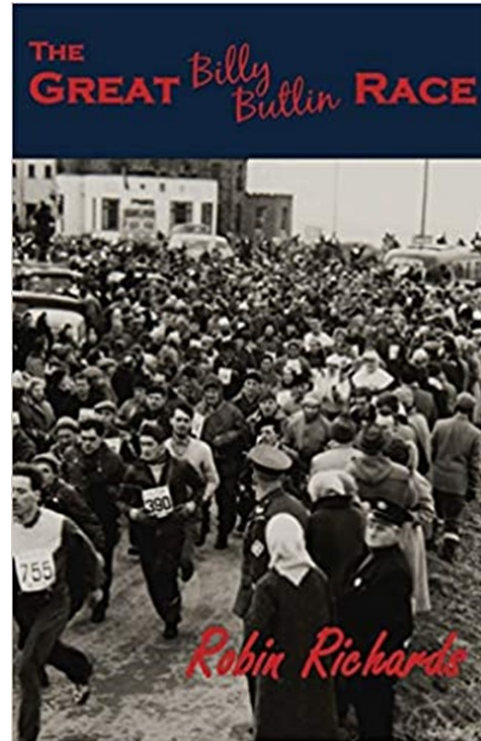
one penny stamp. George V reigned from 6th May 1910 to 20th January 1936.

This was sent by Aunty to Jeannie who lived in South Norman-
ton. Dated 18 June 1925.



FEEL FREE The Great Billy Butlin Race by Robin Richards

At 5pm, on 26th February 1960, on a bright clear evening, twelve red and green rockets arched up into the night sky above John O'Groats heralding the start of the Great Billy Butlin Race. As the Wick Girl pipers played "Scotland the Brave," 715 competitors surged down the narrow road, the leaders running like greyhounds, everyone intent on being the first to reach Land's End almost 900 miles away.



For the last few years I've been a man on a mission. A mission to remind the world about those long-forgotten heroic footsloggers who competed in Sir Billy Butlin's one and only footrace from John O'Groats to Land's End; a race which held the nation in thrall through the drab winter months of

1960.

I first learnt about the Butlin race when I was walking End to End myself. I discovered how, in late 1959 and early 1960, marathon walking became a craze in Britain. It was started by two paratroopers, Maloney and Evans, who yomped the length of Britain in June 1959. Walking John O'Groats to Land's End was something of a rarity in those days and their exploits triggered a small following of long distance trekkers but when Dr Barbara Moore became involved the nation at large began to take notice.

Russian born Dr Babs, at 56 was twice the age of most walkers, plus she was a lady with a past. Ex Russian motorcycle champion, declared 'Heroine of the Soviet Union,' a woman who faked her own death on one occasion and on another found herself confined on Death Row in a Leningrad prison. After extracting herself from jail in Leningrad and moving to England she set out to prove how a minimalist vegetarian diet would enable her to make increasingly lengthy treks and, she believed, to live to 150 and have a baby at 100. Soon the roads were choked with walkers setting out to emulate Dr Barbara. When she walked from John O'Groats to Land's End the newspapers and the crowds followed her every step and on reaching the end she managed, singlehandedly to bring Cornwall to a standstill.

Riding this wave of popularity holiday camp magnate Sir Billy Butlin organised a footrace 'walk, run, skip or jump ... as long as you're on your own two feet,' from John O'Groats to Land's End with a prize of £1,000 for the first man and the first woman home. Entries flooded in.

If the race was a hit with the public the authorities were less than impressed at the prospect of hundreds of inexperienced walkers wandering around the Highlands in the depths of winter. 'Outrageous!' thundered Sir Myer Gailpern, Lord Provost of Glasgow. 'Ill-timed,' said Sutherland County Council, '50 to 100 might die ... Some might not last half an hour.' Billy Butlin was unmoved. 'Let the people march!' he said.

In a sense there were two races. The competition between the trained, fit, athletes who came accompanied by a team of helpers and pacemakers; the ones who had a realistic chance of winning. And the race amongst the everyday heroes and heroines; the 'have-a-go-types,' ordinary people trying their best and out to test themselves. These were the ones Sir Billy truly had in mind when he planned the race. People like Duncan Gillies. Duncan was a farm labourer from Keith in Banffshire and rated as a good runner locally. Entering the race meant four weeks away from work, four weeks with no wages, very tough for a man with a young family.

postcards were sent. Before this, only pre-stamped Post Office postcards could be used. It wasn't until 1902 that postcards carried their well-known design – an image on one side and a divided back for the message and address and it quickly proved popular. From 1902 to 1910, six billion postcards were sent out in Britain.

During World War One, Field Post Offices were set up and through these free postal services for the armed forces, specially prepared field postcards were used to send messages home. Postcards were sent to loved ones from the front line and for some families, they may have been the last form of communication received.

Of course, postcards were not always used for such serious reasons. We've all seen the cheeky seaside postcard with bright colours and witty slogans. The Donald McGill Museum, also known as the Saucy Seaside Postcard Museum, on the Isle of Wight, is dedicated to Donald McGill's bawdy postcards from the 1930s and 1940s. His double entendre images and cards remain popular with people seeking a nostalgic trip.

While McGill's postcards were synonymous with the British seaside, not everyone agreed with his tastes. In 1954 he was prosecuted for obscenity and many of his postcards were



destroyed but the trend for bawdy humour remained. Donald McGill produced more than 12,000 postcards in his lifetime.

Donald Fraser Gould McGill was born in London on 28 January 1875 (and died on 13 October 1962). He was an English graphic artist whose name became synonymous with the

genre of saucy postcards, particularly associated with the seaside.

Copyright – this was one of the Donald McGill comic postcards and it was sold by a company in London who were the sole publishers of all new Donald McGill postcards. It had been sent by Mary to her friend who lived in Mansfield.

Picture postcards took another 50 years to become common but the casual form of communication found commercial success from the 1860's. John Charlton, who originally designed the cards while living in Philadelphia is noted as the first to produce commercial postcards before he sold the copyright to Hyman L. Lipman who went on to transform our seaside adventures forever. 'Lipman's Postal Cards' bore only a border for decoration with the address written on one side of the card and the message on the other but this marked the beginning of a popular tradition for all ages.



This is another of my postcards called **"The Shady Bank"** – and had a George V half-penny

postage stamp on it dated 25th December 1911 and was sent to Aunt Blanche "wishing you a happy Christmas and a happy New Year from your loving niece, Hilda" to Miss Blanche Girling who lived in Norwich.

However, the postcard as we know it today dates back to 1894, when the Post Office approved their use, and the first official

Duncan had tremendous endurance and put in a sterling performance. He just didn't stop walking. He kept going when he wore away the soles of his baseball boots, neither did he stop when he wore away the soles of his feet. He spent a day in hospital being patched up then he pressed on reaching Land's End in 50th place but sadly no prize money. Not only that but he'd used up all his cash so there was nothing else for it, he turned around and set off walking back. In the end he walked all the way back to London, about 300 miles, where he stayed with his brother who bought him a train ticket home.

At 17 young Alex Dick from just outside Glasgow hoped to win the prize for the youngest finisher. But before he could enter he had to get past his mother who was reluctant to let him go in for such a mad-cap scheme. After a few days wheedling and persuading she set him a challenge, if he could walk from home to Greenock and back (about 30 miles) she'd let him go. He made short work of the first 15 miles from home out to Greenock then just as he arrived in town the bus back to Glasgow pulled in. He thought it a shame to let it go so he hopped on, rode back to Glasgow then hung around for an hour or more at the end of the lane before he went home and told his Mum he'd walked all the way. So she let him go.

Like most competitors Alex took minimal gear. He wore a leather jacket and Dunlop boots. When it rained he just got wet. When it stopped raining the wind would dry him out. He finally came in 61st place but missed out on the £100 prize as the youngest competitor, which went to Robert Seales who came in 32 places behind Alex and three days later.

Ben-the boots-Jones became a popular character with the press. He walked the entire way in a pair of wellies. The reporters started calling him the Duke of Wellingtons. He was the highest placed finisher who had no backup team – or lone ranger – as Billy Butlin liked to call them. He finished fifth winning £200 and without a single blister but almost wearing the heels of his wellies away.

There was a grandstand finish in both the men's and the women's races where a rank outsider beat the race favourite to the post. Marathon runner John Grundy was odds on to win the men's race, so much so that bookmakers in his home town of Wakefield refused to take anymore bets on him yet he was beaten by the unfancied Jim Musgrave, a glass-packer from Doncaster. Musgrave put in an astonishing time of fifteen days, fourteen hours and thirty-one minutes for the 900 miles from John O'Groats, covering the last 103 miles in fourteen hours and thirty-one minutes. He won the £1,000 prize which he said he'd use to buy a push bike, which would save him a lot of walking.

In the women's race there were only ever two women in the running; international athlete 31 year old Beryl Randle who's amateur status was taken away by the Amateur Athletics Association for competing in a race for prize money. Despite leading for most of the race she was beaten by Wendy Lewis from Liverpool who celebrated her nineteenth birthday during the race. Wendy quickly became the poster girl of the race as she jogged along past the crowds all chanting, 'We want Wendy!' Her winning time was seventeen days and seven hours. She claimed the £1,000 prize and was a popular winner. Billy Butlin considered Beryl Randle's performance, only being narrowly beaten, to have also been outstanding so he increased her second place prize from £500 to £1,000.

The Great Billy Butlin Race was a quirky, never to be repeated event which the nation took to its heart. Annie Skilbuits from London summed up the nation's mood in a letter to the *Daily Mail* calling the walkers, 'The fun-makers ... who put some colour into a drab and standardised world.' Though the racers were wet, tired and footsore for most of the time none of the competitors I spoke to ever regretted taking part.

Marathon walking in 1960 and the Great Billy Butlin Race was a short-lived craze, quickly forgotten and soon eclipsed by Beatlemania, Carnaby Street, the 1966 World Cup and all that went to make up the magical decade known as the Swinging Sixties.

It is widely believed that the world's oldest postcard was sent by playwright and novelist, Theodore Hook, from his home in Fulham in London. The card depicted a caricature of postal workers and many thought it was sent as a joke by Theodore to himself. Theodore Hook's postcard is the world's oldest postcard and sold at auction in 2002 for £31,750.



Decorated postcards were invented in Britain as opposed to the United States and Theodore's postcard dates back to 1840. It was posted with a Penny Black stamp. The very first postage stamp used in a public postal system featured a profile of Queen Victoria against a black background. It is the only one on record to be found on a postcard.

This is one of my postcards, posted in 1948 with a 2d (twopenny) King George VI stamp whose reign was from 11th December 1936 to 6th February 1952. This is printed on the reverse of the card:

"Keep saving for a rainy day"

We saved to win the war

Our efforts must not cease

By saving more and more,

We'll surely win the peace!

A phone box has also been used as a “Seed Swap” in a village. It looked like a great idea. [With extracts from Barnard Bulletin 20]

“HAVING A WONDERFUL TIME – WISH YOU WERE HERE” by Audrey

Whilst watching Dickinson’s Real Deal recently, a man had brought along 200 old postcards which had been collected by his father. They dated back to the 1940s/1950’s, some of which were quite risqué.

The dealer on Dickinson’s Real Deal was particularly interested in postcards by Donald McGill but there were only a few out of the 200 cards taken along by the son of the collector, although he bought all of them and gave him not far short of £200.

This inspired me to search for my collection of old postcards which I had accumulated over years when I was an avid collector of – well, whatever took my fancy. That was mainly back in the 1960s/70s.

I found them and there were just a few of the typical cheeky seaside postcards from the 1940s and 1950s.

Whilst searching for these, I also unearthed a meticulously typed -up diary of holidays spent in our very first Caravette which we bought in the late 1960s and I had recorded holidays from May 1970 to August 1973, together with what we did every day, how many miles travelled and how much the holiday had cost. I was so pleased when I found it but it was safely stored away - just waiting for me to find it again!

Buying a postcard was once an important part of any British holiday. Do you remember those days? Can you remember the last time you sent a postcard? I remember the time when postcards were our main source of communication back home to let everyone know you had safely arrived and “having a wonderful time”. I remember sending postcards, especially back in the 1960’s.

I became fascinated by the Butlin Race after my own End to End walk. Like an itch I couldn’t scratch it became a story I just couldn’t leave alone, or rather it wouldn’t leave me alone. I became determined that those 715 footsloggers and their heroic efforts shouldn’t be forgotten. Trying to track down any of the competitors seemed something of a forlorn hope at first. I opted for a mass mailshot, 137 letters with reply cards to the race finishers and I nearly drove the Post Office in Chesterfield to distraction. Most were returned ‘unknown’ but eventually I was able to track down a handful of racers like Alex Dick and the families of Duncan Gillies and Ben-the boots-Jones. Thanks to their stories, plus hours haunting the Butlin archives and the Reading Room of the British Library, I was able to bring it all together in a book: ***The Great Billy Butlin Race***, published by Stairwell Books of York, which I’ve dedicated, ‘To all weary footsloggers who doggedly trek between John O’Groats and Land’s End.’

Thank you very much Robin for introducing us to your book – which I have read and thoroughly enjoyed. A great story with insight into the lives and sheer determination of people after the austerity years of the Second World War and a great motivational start to the Swinging Sixties.

Your book vividly describes how Billy Butlin, in 1960, brought together so many people from diverse backgrounds that made the Great Billy Butlin Race something of a historical event.

I would love a story about Robin’s own experience of his “End to End” journey which inspired him to write this book as he will know only too well, how difficult this must have been back in 1960 and I am sure he will have a story of endurance to tell also. (Audrey)

Joanne, who has also read Robin’s book adds: The book is full of colourful characters from all walks of life and it is credit to Robin for the intense amount of research and work he has put in to write this truly engaging story of an event that demonstrates the stamina of these incredible people.

*I bought a copy of Robin's book from Amazon and Joanne bought hers from Blackwells. It is also available in Waterstones and on the following websites. Searching for **The Great Billy Butlin Race** will find it on both.*

Here are also two links

<https://blackwells.co.uk/bookshop/product/The-Great-Billy-Butlin-Race-by-Robin-Richards-author/9781913432089>

<http://www.stairwellbooks.co.uk/product/the-great-billy-butlin-race/>

It's quite coincidental that Joanne, at the beginning of this year, signed up to do a Virtual Run from Land's End to John O'Groats during the course of 2021, which she explains below.

JOANNE'S END TO END VIRTUAL RUN - SPONSORSHIP



I was especially interested to read Robin's book about the 'Great Billy Butlin Race' because in January this year when the Lockdown position was still uncertain and running events

were still not going ahead, I decided to undertake a virtual run. I had undertaken a virtual run in 2020 – 'Miles for Mind in May'. It was a good way to keep motivated and to get out running. Working from home it is so easy for the only walk to be from the bedroom to the living room, my new office.

So, in January, I decided to undertake a year-long run – End to End – Land's End to John O'Groats – **874 miles in total**. Unlike the Billy Butlin race, I'm pleased I have a year in which to do this run. It works out at least 17 miles per week. I am on target, though a little bit of me would like to finish early.

Coming a full circle, the phone box was once again subject to a competition, this time by a Girl Guide unit in 2011. To find a use for their local disused telephone kiosk in Glendaruel Argyll the box was fitted with a Defibrillator. Similar installations have taken place since across the UK.

Community Box

The Boxes have also become central to community spirit and many have been turned into free Book Swaps, giving use to the pre-loved phone box and books. The one I know is at Old Brampton near the Church and one in the village of Cutthorpe. There are also several in the Dronfield area

- Falcon Road where it joins with Oakhill Road
- Eckington Road – near Coal Aston Chapel
- Holmesdale Road, Dronfield
- Unstone



If you take books the etiquette is not to leave books on the floor (if possible). Also remember if you take or leave books at this time, please ensure that you sanitise your hands after touching the door.

Photo of Phone Box turned into a book swap at Old Brampton

I love the phone boxes and I think this use engenders the community spirit and a great way to share books for free with your community.

The difference can be seen in this image on St John's Wood High Street. The K6 on the left and K2 on the right.

Controversial Colours

Although a striking symbol today and I'm sure many people love to see them still, it wasn't always the case. At first the bright red colour caused some local controversies and some communities wanted them to be less visible. The Post Office was forced into allowing a less strident grey with red glazing bars scheme for areas of natural and architectural beauty. Although, many of these still standing have been re-painted the "currant red".

In 1980 in preparation for privatisation, Post Office Telephone boxes were re-branded as British Telecom. In February 1981, British Telecom announced the boxes would be painted yellow to fit with BT's corporate colour scheme. There was public outcry. BT announced that 90 of the 77,000 had been painted as an experiment but no further boxes would be painted. Our iconic red phone box would remain.

Decline of the phone box

In January 1985, Nick Kane, the Director of Marketing for BT Local Communications Services announced that the old red telephone boxes would be replaced because they "...no longer meet the needs of our customers". Some people didn't like them because they were difficult to clean and maintain and were often vandalised. They were also not suitable for some people with disabilities. Another public campaign followed but BT did not change the policy this time.

The Future of the phone box

Medical Box

Many local authorities used legislation designed to protect buildings of architectural or historical importance to protect the phone box and around 2,000 were given listed status.



So, I would welcome your support and sponsorship to keep me motivated and to raise funds for the Tinnitus Group.

I record my mileage on the virtual website so can keep you updated as to how I'm doing. Please see enclosed Sponsorship form, thank you.

GOLDFISH, DUCKS, TORTOISES AND MEMORIES

By Denise Healy

Thinking about when I was a child, in my grandparent's house, situated near to our house in East London, a strange melody was heard coming from the front room. All the people in the house were accounted for, so, who was tinkering on the piano?

Very gingerly the door to the front room was opened.....to reveal the large goldfish had jumped out of his tank and had landed on the piano keys. The goldfish thrashing about caused the tinkering! The goldfish was scooped up and replaced into the tank seemingly unaffected by his exploring escapades. It seemed to suggest that it is not only salmon that can leap!

When I was 6 years old, in that same room, I can remember my aunt being dressed into her wedding dress. The dress was gorgeous, overlaid with lace and the back had to be done up with a long line of silk covered buttons running from the neckline to the lower back.



The Wedding Dress (I am on the left in the back garden of our house). Bridesmaid dresses were pink.

In the same room, my mother, being the eldest, had been born years before. In that same room, my mother was nursed, having developed diphtheria and scarlet fever together; before she could even start school. She was too ill to be moved to hospital and that illness was followed by pneumo-

nia. In all, the first three years of school were missed. She loved mathematics but always felt deficient in spelling, having missed the building blocks of the early school years.

My grandparents kept ducks in the garden of their house and one particular duck used to like to come inside the house, into the room next to the front room, and sit by the open coal fire! One of my relations was a coal merchant and used to deliver the coal, contained in coal sacks, from a large lorry.

After I started attending the infant school, Downsell Road Primary School, I began to experience debilitating migraine episodes. The Head Girl at school used to walk me round to my grandparent's house, as I could not see where I was walking. Grandmother would sit me in the armchair by the fire, with a bucket. She must have thought, "what sort of grandchild have we here?"

In the kitchen of our house, we had a copper, a mangle and a dimpled-glass wooden framed scrubbing board to wash the clothes clean. The copper was free-standing, it had an enamelled metal exterior that supported the inner can or copper and had a lid. The copper would be filled with soapy water; the clothes added and put on to boil to clean the clothes.

RED PHONE BOXES by Joanne

The Iconic Red phone box is instantly recognisable as a symbol of Britain. The red phone box as we know it was the second design. The first K1 (Kiosk 1) was produced in concrete in 1921.

Kiosk 2

The phone box we know K2 was a design by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott (1880 – 1960) as a result of a Post Office Sponsored competition in 1924. The Post Office chose to build Scott's design in Cast Iron (Scott had suggested mild steel) and to paint it red. (Scott had suggested silver, with a blue-green interior). K3, 4 and 5 followed, but it is the K6 which is also worthy of note.

Kiosk 6

In 1935 the K6 (Kiosk 6) was designed to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of King George V. It was consequently sometimes known as the "Jubilee" kiosk. It went into production in 1936. The K6 was the first red telephone box to be erected ex-

tensively outside of London. Any existing kiosks in towns and cities were replaced by the K6.

In 1935 there had been 19,000 public telephones in the UK, by 1940, due to the production of the K6, there were 35,000. The K6 design was different to the K2 in that it was smaller and more streamlined.



I was contacted by the hospital some 15/16 months after my discharge, to go along for an appointment to see Margot, who was a Hearing Therapist at Chesterfield Royal Hospital. I thought there must be a miracle cure as I had been discharged back in 1984 with the words from the ENT specialist “you’ll have to learn to live with it!” after having tests and X-rays, which were before the MRI scan and had to be done a centimetre at a time, which today seems a bit archaic!

However, my meeting with Margot was yet another breakthrough for me, because Margot was so interested in helping patients with tinnitus and at that first appointment, we got on so well.

I had already put in place my own simple strategies for helping myself throughout each day and Margot was interested in what I was doing. It was through Margot that our group was started as she asked me and five other people if we would be willing to help her in starting a support group and each of the others agreed.

The years have rolled by. Margot was young and went on to have a family before returning a few years later and for many years I have been the only one left to carry on because most were older than me and one founder-member (who is still a member of our group, Rita), moved from the area to be closer to her family, but from 2007 Joanne has been a constant support and our Co-ordinator.

Margot and I have been great friends ever since that first meeting and she has imparted a lot of her knowledge, understanding and experience to me, for which I am very grateful and this has in turn helped other people too. Margot receives a copy of our “magazine” and I know she will be surprised to read this but Margot too, deserves a really big **“thank you”** from me.



The clothes were removed using a wooden stemmed large tweezers. Once the clothes had boiled and were clean, the tweezers were used to extract the clothes into the sink to be rinsed. Once the clothes had been rinsed free of the soapy water, they were fed through the mangle to squeeze out the water.

[Mangle internet image]

One day, my mother had filled the copper with soapy water and had added the clothes when she caught sight of the fish tank and decided to quickly change the water in the tank and clean it. As she scooped the fish in her hands to transfer it into waiting clean water, the fish jumped out of her hands into the copper full of clothes, before it had been switched on!

Mum had to take out and inspect each piece of clothing for the fish until eventually she found it. Once in the clear water it started releasing bubbles through its gills and passing a lot of excrement! The fish recovered well and lived a long time after its adventure.

My tonsils had to be removed when I was 5 years old. The ward was a long room with the head of the beds pushed against the walls, by the windows. The Matron sat at her desk in the centre of the ward positioned at one end of the ward. Every morning the beds would be pushed forward and the vacated floor swept and mopped before the beds were pushed back against the wall. In the 1950's, parents were not allowed to stay with their child in the hospital. I can remember watching them walk home crossing over a glass covered bridge between different parts of the hospital.

My poor mother had to suffer a policeman knocking on her front door in the night time because she had to go to a telephone box to telephone the hospital to give permission for a second operation as the bleeding from the wound could not be stopped.

I can remember having to suck ice cubes which seemed like all night, but I must have gone to sleep. When I awoke there were lots of doctors and nurses gathered around my bed. I sat up and promptly vomited over a nurse's pure white starched apron and then everyone walked away. (This experience made it very scary when both of my boys needed to have their tonsils removed).

My brother and I had 3 tortoises between us. Mine was the largest, Henry. George, the middle sized one and Little Ernie, the baby sized one belonged to my brother, Trevor. Henry used



to be able to run. I would come home from school, open the back door with some freshly milled peas from the pod in my hand and Henry would charge

down the garden to meet me and eat the peas from my hand. I am sure that I saw him smile!

Trevor complained that someone was eating the pea plants he had planted in his part of the garden. George was the culprit! I saw him walk deliberately towards the wire fence erected around the pea plants, tuck his head into his shell and the wire just slid over his shell and he was in! George just calmly walked along the rows eating the plants. Little Ernie was funny; he used to haul his front legs up and walk along using only his back legs. Sadly, we lost all three tortoises in the Big Freeze of 1963. We took them to the PDSA (People's Dispensary for Sick Animals) but the tortoises had hibernated for too long a time due to the exceptional weather and could not be saved.

Muriel went away and thought about it, then a few days later she contacted me with the good news that, by getting in touch with a retired doctor she knew through her church in Dronfield, she had been able to get me some good news. Muriel had contacted Dr Bethel who knew both Dr Brewer and his wife and Dr Bethel in turn had kindly contacted them to tell them I was wanting to get in touch with them.

Their response was amazing as they told Dr Bethel that they would be "delighted". And so, a few days later, I rang them. Dr Brewer answered the phone and I was able to speak to him and give him my heartfelt thanks for what he had done all those years ago, which in turn had helped so many other people over the last 35 years. His wife then asked him to pass over the phone as she wanted to speak to me and she actually thanked me for ringing and said that Dr Brewer had been very ill and in hospital and she said the conversation and my thanking him would boost his morale. I hope it did because I felt happy for having spoken to him and his wife.

I then contacted Dr Bethel and told her of my conversation and thanked her for paving the way for me to say "thank you". She was only too pleased.

However, I would also like to say "thank you" to Muriel who made this possible because without the thought she put in to tracing Dr Brewer, I may never have been able to thank him.

I also have another "thank you" to Margot Boss, whom I met for the first time towards the end of 1985.



Photo of Margot

“The brain is a wonderful piece of machinery, a noise that is there constantly, your brain will learn to accept it as another bodily function and so learn to ignore it.”

This is termed “habituation” now. He didn’t reach to fill in a prescription; his wise words alone had helped me and continued to do so and his patience and desire to answer my questions so that I felt more informed about the condition or, more importantly, about the brain, helped me to move on. He said that if I had further questions, he would be willing to answer them and was very supportive.

Although I thanked him at the time, I felt I needed to let him know how, through his support and understanding, I had moved on and was able to support other people as a result over the last 35 years, so I wanted to say a big “thank you” to him again. Joanne and I had tried a few years ago to find him when we saw an article that he had done a talk at a local organisation in 2013, but our efforts to find him failed. Dr Jeremy Brewer had retired some years ago but still lived in the local area.

Earlier in the year I watched a series on television where people were reunited with someone who had helped them in the past and to whom they wanted to say “thank you” and this reignited my desire to say thank you to Dr Brewer, who had been a GP at a Clay

Cross surgery called “Blue Dykes” (now called Royal Primary Care).

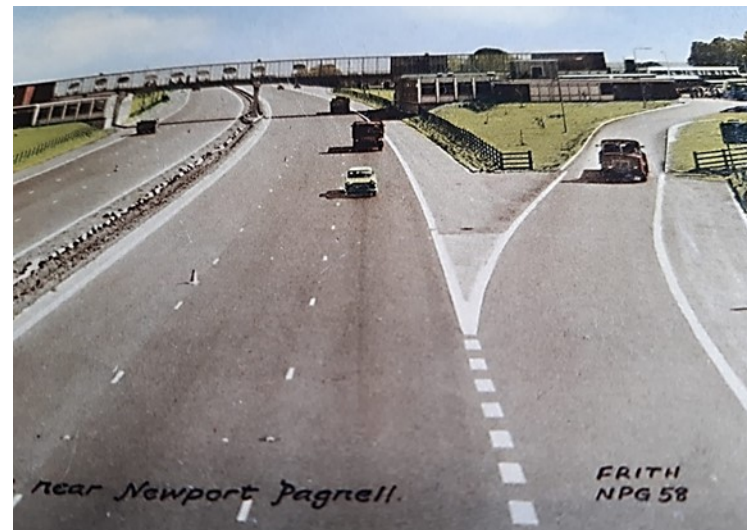
Photo of Muriel

And so, on the 3rd May this year, I spoke to Muriel (one of our members whom many of you will know) and said I really wanted to try to get in touch with Dr Brewer whilst I still had the opportunity to do so.



My Grandmother gave me a kitten; she visited our house wearing her red overcoat and sat down in the kitchen. Whilst she was talking the tiny kitten poked his head out of the fold in the coat. I loved him from that moment and named him Timothy. At some point in my childhood, I also had a hamster named Mitzie.

We had Trolley Buses travelling along the road outside our house. The power to the buses was obtained by each bus being connected to overhead cables. One man used to push a barrow around the streets selling cockles and mussels and he used to measure out the cockles by filling a dimpled glass pint beer tankard.



I can remember the M1 road being opened. It seemed so remote as we did not have a car at that time. We have used that road a great deal since then which seems to prove how

important a road it was to build.

I expect everyone can place where they were in 1963 when they heard the news that President John F Kennedy had been assassinated. I returned home from school to the news. I remember the television had cancelled all the programmes and was just playing solemn music. The incident seemed so shocking to me.

Only to be followed five years later by the President's brother, Robert, being shot. Robert clung to life giving everyone hope but it was not to last. The newspaper headline: The words the world did not want to read but knew in its heart that it would – He's dead.

By contrast, the sixties also seemed so optimistic; flower power, great music, The Beatles, The Rolling Stones. I recall attending free concerts in Hyde Park; to me everything felt so carefree and happy.

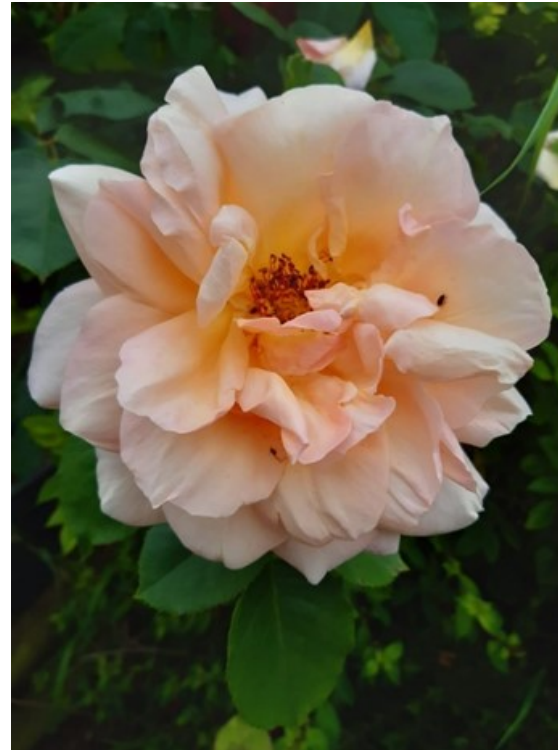
Thank you, Denise for sharing memories of your childhood. I am sure your story will have brought back memories for our readers. It did for me – like your mother, my mother contracted scarlet fever in her early teens and at the time we had an isolation hospital in our village which is where my mother was brought to. The hospital is now a nursing home.

Likewise, we had ducks as pets when I was young and my love of ducks has continued as we have had ducks for over 30 years. Although I had goldfish, they were never as adventurous as yours. However, as you hadn't a photo of your three tortoises, you said it was ok to use our tortoise (Harry Houdini) who is being watched over by the ducks who are looking a bit perplexed. He couldn't escape whilst they were watching him as they followed him everywhere!

Would you believe, I also found a photo of the M1 in 1958 – Newport Pagnell (in my big box of postcards) – I think I must have bought a "job lot" to have one of the M1 – but it fitted in nicely with your story; it certainly looked "desolate" compared to nowadays!

Please send us your stories to add to our magazine. It's great to share people's Memories about their lives and it's something that I know our readers are enjoying.

MY SPECIAL THANK YOU by Audrey



Thirty-seven years ago, when my tinnitus started, in 1984, I didn't know anything about it at all; in fact, I hadn't even heard the word "tinnitus".

It started spontaneously during one evening after a busy (normal) day. My children, Joanne and Glenn were at the Infants School and I had been to their school sports day, following which I took them to a friend's house who had children of the same age.

In the evening, after they were in bed, I went to another friend's house to price up goods for a fundraising stall we were holding for a Girls' Craft Group which I ran at the village school. It was when she went to make a drink that I heard the noise and thought it was in her house, so I covered my ears, which is when I found out it was inside my head/ears (not sure where).

I made an appointment at the doctors but when I got there, my usual doctor was on holiday. The one I saw knew nothing about tinnitus and just offered me antidepressants and sleeping tablets – both of which I refused.

I returned a week later when my "own" doctor whom I had known for years, was back from holiday. By this time, I had a list of questions. He patiently went through my questions and then said to me:

anything in return. Truly appreciate those around you, and you'll soon find many others around you. Truly appreciate life, and you'll find that you have more of it." –
Ralph Marston

[Since 1995, Ralph Marston has been composing and sending positive messages about living a good life over the internet, Facebook and Twitter. His messages are brief but meaningful for example "Success in any endeavour depends on the degree to which it is an expression of your true self."]



INTERNATIONAL THANK-YOU DAY

History of International Thank- You Day

The history, origin, and the founder of International Thank-You Day are unknown. There is no mention regarding the year since this day has been celebrated. There is a mention that this Day has been created by some greeting card companies to promote the sale of greeting cards. However, this seems to be less appealing. Whatever the reason, **saying a thank you needs to be celebrated.**

The International Day encourages you to acknowledge and give thanks to whoever you wish, to "make their day" not forgetting all those people in your life who deserve thanks throughout the year.



If you are unable to type up your story, I am more than happy to chat to you over the phone and together we will build up your story.

WATER IN THE GARDEN by Sarah Walters

One of the most pleasant ways to spend your time in the spring and summer is garden wildlife watching. It is mindful and relaxing - a great way to reduce stress levels without leaving the comfort of your own chair. Over the lockdown period, I have noticed just how important water is in attracting wildlife and providing scenes worth staring at. Many of us have been feeding birds for years, and planting flowers to attract pollinators - but how much thought has been given to providing plenty of drinking and bathing water?

I currently have six sources of water on my small back garden and each seems to be favoured by different creatures. Firstly, there is the pond. This is home to the frogs, whose spawn provides entertainment every spring and summer as it develops into tadpoles and froglets. To me, the arrival of frogspawn is a joyous occasion as then I know that winter really is on its way out. But the pond also has a shallow end which is filled with pebbles and this is where the hedgehogs drink and the robins bathe. I love to watch a robin taking a bath and they seem to do this every evening - they are clean and thorough little creatures!

In the little plot where I grow fruit and vegetables I have sunk a big bucket and filled it 3/4 full with stones. Occasionally we have had frogs in there too, but it is mainly a drinking point for wood pigeons and cats - and a bath for the blackbirds. Over on my shady north-facing border I have sunk an old ceramic mixing jug - the handle broke off making it no good for kitchen use - but the bowl was sound and it seemed a shame to waste it. Again, a few stones and pebbles ensure minimal risk of drowning and this has now become the regular squirrel and great tit drinking point.

The squirrels also like to stand on their back paws and reach up to an old tin bath and Belfast sink that I have turned into water features for the patio. The wood pigeons also drink from the old bath and I have seen some of the more unusual



visitors stop there for refreshment as they are passing through. Last summer I had yellow wagtails and a sparrowhawk (not at the same time!). The wood pigeons' preferred bathing point is a traditional bird bath, which is raised on a two-foot pedestal. They tend to plonk their entire selves in it and simply sit there and have a soak.

Occasionally, other airborne creatures are attracted to the water. Bees need a drink as well as birds, and just a couple of times I have been treated to the sight of a dragonfly passing over the pond. All of this wildlife pauses in my garden because the water is there for them, and easily accessible to them. Put it out there and they will come. I have no idea where the first frog came from as there are no other ponds in the gardens around mine - but now there is a healthy colony.

Over the past year, I have become so tired of cooking and washing up all of the time - but the chore has been made so much easier by the view from the kitchen window. All it takes to make me smile again is the sight of a robin jumping, diving and shaking off the dust of the day.

SUNSHINE IN THE GARDEN by Sarah Walters

Calendula flowers are also known as the Pot or English Marigold. They are annual plants and each year they produce vivid orange daisy flowers that look like tiny sunshines.

THANK-YOU DAY by Audrey



The internet is a mine of information and there appears to be some sort of “celebration” almost every week/month of the year. I had read that Sunday 4th July was to be “Thank you day” organised by a “Together Coalition” which is a small non-profit organisation dedicated to bringing people together – and which would lead a National Day of Thanks in

recognition to our communities who have helped us through this challenging year.

The idea of Thank You Day came from a grassroots campaign to hold the country's biggest ever ‘thank you’ party in our local communities as a way of thanking each other and building on the community spirit that so many felt during lockdown.

The campaign has won huge support from hundreds of organisations ranging from the NHS to the Scouts and from high profile individuals including Gary Lineker, Michael Sheen, Dame Judi Dench, Raheem Sterling and many more.

However, International Thank-You Day is an annual celebration observed on **January 11th** of every year. With this celebration Day on the calendar, one can understand how much a thank you means. In the words of Ralph Marston:

Make it a habit to tell people thank you. To express your appreciation, sincerely and without the expectation of

What happens if you touch the plant?

It's a flowering plant in the same family as carrots. Giant Hogweed typically grows to a height of around two to five metres. Serious reactions to the skin are caused by 'furocoumarin derivatives' in its stems, leaves, roots and seeds.



It can lead to skin inflammation and blisters, with a reaction to the plant happening around 15 minutes after first coming into contact with it.

Children should take extra care, especially when playing outside in overgrown areas. It can easily be mistaken as a harmless

plant, so young children can unknowingly pick the flowering heads without realising.

More serious cases include people having long-term sensitivity to sunlight after touching the plant, as well as blindness if it comes into contact with the eyes.

As well as growing wild in the countryside, it is also known to flower in gardens if they are left unkept. Keep an eye open when out on walks to ensure young children and dogs don't come into contact with the plant.

What steps should you take afterwards?

1. Wash the affected area with cold water as soon as possible
2. Keep away from sunlight
3. See a physician or local doctor if you have a serious reaction or any questions

I am very keen on this plant because it is both beautiful and useful. I plant seeds (which look like toenail clippings) every year, starting them off in the greenhouse in March and planting the seedlings out in May. The new seedlings then grow alongside the seeds dropped by last year's crop that have lain dormant over winter. This year I am also trying out a couple of variations on the colour – a 'Neon' and a 'Sunset Buff'.

I don't plant these out in any regimented pattern, but scatter them randomly through my fruit and vegetable plot and my wildlife area. As well as being attractive to pollinators because of their bright colour, they also attract pests such as aphids away from your crops so they are certainly helpful. They are also very amenable flowers and don't need to be mollycoddled. They will grow just about anywhere and don't mind being crowded, and the germination rate of the seeds is very high – it's almost as though they want to help you!



Calendula flowers are edible – you can sprinkle the petals over a salad for extra colour – or dry them to make tea or to decorate cakes.

Calendula oil is well known for soothing irritated skin and I make my own batch in the summer – it is really easy. Pick and dry your flowers out when you are experiencing hot and sunny weather – or if you have an airing cupboard you can put them in there for a couple of days. Then place the flowers in a sterilised, airtight jar and cover with olive oil. Leave to steep on a sunny windowsill for 2-3 weeks then drain off the oil and pour it into a sterilised bottle. It makes a good all round moisturiser and an after sun lotion. Some people add beeswax to the oil to make a solid balm, but I have not tried this – yet! There are many calendula-based recipes out there, I'm sure I will be experimenting for some time yet.

Thank you Sarah, for your great tips and ideas. It seems that Joanne has been like minded and she picks up on your story of Calendula, which as you say, is a really fantastic and useful flower.

JOANNE adds -

At the time of writing the sun is shining, so I hope you have been able to get out into nature. I too have planted calendulas along with nasturtiums to make colourful salads this summer. It seems strange to be including flowers in our food but I like to try something a bit different.



All parts of nasturtiums are edible. Their name literally

means nose twister or nose twaker, because of their peppery kick. The flowers are sweet and the leaves, flowers and seeds all have that spicy flavour.

Accompanying our colourful salad can be a lovely cup of tea. We are famed for our cup of tea. Tea is by far the most popular drink consumed in Britain today, with over 100,000,000 cups being drunk in the UK every single day of the year! It is also good to know that the traditional black tea also contains health benefits.

WARNING OVER BRITAIN'S MOST DANGEROUS PLANT by Audrey

GIANT HOGWEED

Last month, the photograph on the front cover of our magazine was of Cow Parsley. However, Giant Hogweed, which looks very similar, is **dangerous!**

Lisa Walden who writes for "Country Living" reports on the dangers of Giant Hogweed.



[Internet image of Giant Hogweed]

While Giant Hogweed usually grows near waterways, experts have explained they are losing a battle to eradicate its presence, after homeowners have spotted the plant popping up in their parks and gardens. It might look harmless, but this invasive plant harbours toxic sap on its stems — and can

be extremely dangerous when it comes into contact with bare skin.

"Any parts of the body that come into contact with the sap of a Giant Hogweed should be immediately washed with soap and cold water and seek medical advice. Further exposure to sunlight should be avoided for at least 48 hours."

Guy Barter, Chief Horticulturist at the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), previously told 'The Times' that flooding has meant the plant's seeds have spread to previously untouched areas.

He also warned people to take extra care if they have spotted it growing: "It can cause some very nasty injuries which take a long time to heal. The beast has purple blotches and coarse hairs on its stems. In most places where you see it in summer, it is enormous."

Giant Hogweed was first introduced to the UK in the 1980s as an ornamental plant, but quickly spread across the country. It is also very invasive, overpowering other flowers in the same area and reducing wildlife, too.