

**CHESTERFIELD & NORTH DERBYSHIRE  
TINNITUS SUPPORT GROUP**

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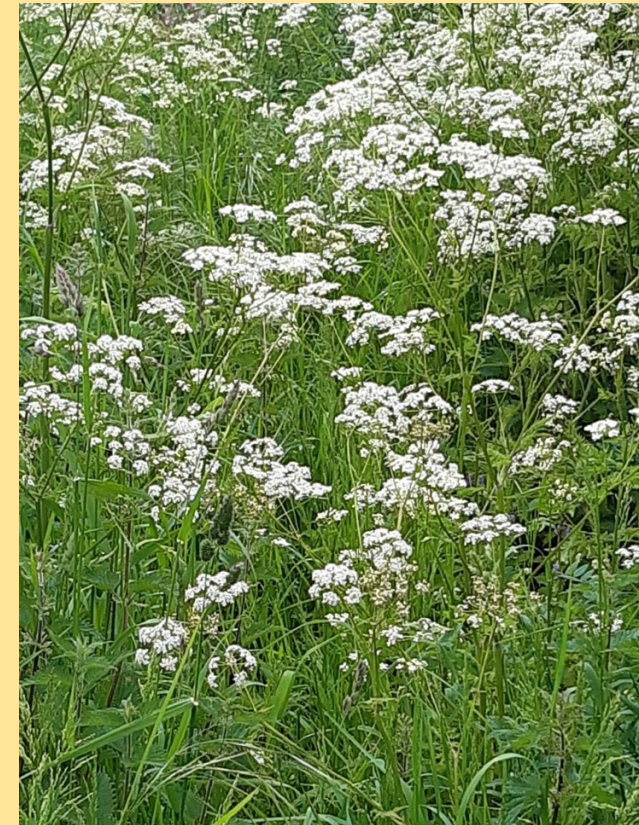


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**Newsletter: Edited by Audrey Carlin**

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**The meadow from my kitchen window (cow parsley)**

**by Audrey**



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The Butterfly Conservation had previously explained on their website that the webs of its caterpillars had not been recorded for 60 years. "The Large Tortoiseshell was once widespread across Britain and most common in the woodlands of central and southern England but while its numbers were always known to fluctuate, it declined to extinction by the 1960s."

I compared my butterfly with that of the Butterfly Conservation and it is the Small Tortoiseshell butterfly that I saw. It seems



that they prefer yellow flowers.

This is the Large Tortoiseshell so I will be looking out this summer to see if our garden will attract the larger ones.



You can't always change the way things are,  
But you can change the way you wish to see them,  
Never stop looking  
For the bright side and beyond.

## EFFECT OF OUR ENVIRONMENT ON THE BUTTERFLIES



by Audrey

It is quite clear that our environment has changed dramatically over the years, with the seasons becoming more and more confused. Evidence of this was on the 7<sup>th</sup> March this year when I was walking in the garden

and found a butterfly inside a yellow crocus. That seemed incredibly early to be seeing a butterfly in the garden. It was still relatively cold at the time and the only flowers in bloom were crocus, snowdrops and hellebores.

Then I read an article which said that the large Tortoiseshell butterfly was “thriving once again in the UK”, after new sightings in Portland, Dorset, confirmed that the species is resident. The article continued, “over the past 70 years, sightings of the beautiful butterfly have been incredibly rare, with the species last officially recorded as being resident in the 1950s”.

Despite a disappearing habitat and decline of elm trees (its favoured food source), it appeared that the butterfly is breeding once more.

## LIVE A HAPPIER, HEALTHIER LIFESTYLE by Audrey

Here are some tips to help you to live a more joyful life which will boost your happiness hormones.

Live a happier, healthier life by implementing powerful habits into your daily routine. Whether it's managing your daily life or accepting what you can't change, being intentional can help to get your mood on track - and boost those happiness hormones.

Whilst daily life throughout the pandemic has been challenging, Happiness Expert, Venessa King, Head of Psychology and Workplaces at “Action for Happiness” has revealed what we can do to live a happier and more positive life whatever season you're facing to help you find joy every day.

### 1. Seek joy

If you're struggling to find joy, there's one simple yet powerful thing that can help - take a moment once a day to recognise the things that are good in your life.

Our brains are naturally wired to focus on what's wrong and we often overlook the little good things. Venessa says, “It's not saying to ignore the bad things, but there are also usually some good things too. If we stop to notice those things, it has both a physical and a psychological effect on us. These little moments can help to buffer against stress and anxiety. It's a simple practice to do even on bad days.”

(Holmebrook Valley Park)



## 2. Create something to look forward to

Encourage a sense of normality by planning for the days ahead. Whilst this may not be as easy as it was before the pandemic, there is always the opportunity to phone a friend or relative. Maybe take a walk outside or read a nice book, explore what's growing in your garden. Very often the birds bring along seeds and then beautiful plants pop up unexpectedly. Just planting a few seeds and watching them grow can evoke a feeling of excitement.

This can be something as simple as setting seeds from foods you buy and watching them germinate and grow. My son has grown tomato plants from tomatoes he bought from the supermarket and they grew better than the new seed we had bought. If you have pets, you will know the enjoyment and purpose for each day that they give to us. Most of you will know by now that we have ducks. They are our pets (10 of them), they are beautiful and if you talk to them, they respond. As I sit typing upstairs in my home/office, I open the window and listen, not only to the birds but also to the ducks. Then there is Harry Houdini, the tortoise. He is about 15 years old. He loves to bask in the sun but

you cannot take your eyes off him, otherwise he would escape. However, gazing into the fish pond can be very calming watching them swim gracefully.

[The fish are many years old now]

We are all lucky to have some wildlife in our gardens and especially if you feed the birds, they will visit you every day. So there are many things that can help you to stay calm and focused from the comfort of your own home and garden.



edible seaweed. Of course, we had to sample both.

As our holiday ended, we visited Londonderry before making our way to the ferry. However, little did we know that, just two months later, in October 1968 the Northern Ireland troubles would start, a thirty-year bout of political violence, armed conflict and political deadlock within the six North-Eastern counties of Ireland that formed part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

It was so sad to learn about the conflict and the destruction of such a beautiful part of the country. Had we not fulfilled, in 1968, what was for me, a lifelong dream to visit Ireland, I am certain it would never have happened, so it holds a very special memory in my heart and is still vivid in my mind.



## LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE

By Eric T. Moore

The Language of Positive Thinking

For every negative that consumes your happiness,  
Affirm two positives that sustain you.

For every "should've" you wish you'd done,  
Acknowledge something you're glad you did.

For every loss that has altered your world,  
Count from it something you have gained.

For every limit that has ever beset you,  
Consider your possibilities.



From the age of three, I had always wanted to visit Ireland and so, in August 1968, we spent a memorable holiday in County Antrim, Northern Ireland. Having sailed across the Irish Sea we disembarked in Belfast, and travelled to where we stayed in Ballycastle, a pretty town and resort which is famed for the Auld Lammas Fair.



We visited the Glens of Antrim and marvelled at the Donegal mountains. We visited Carrickfergus Castle and travelled to Portrush and Coleraine. As

we paddled and jumped the waves, I remember the vibrance of the sea, how vividly blue it was in the August sunshine, with dazzling-white foam as the waves crashed onto the shore .

I remember vividly visiting the Auld Lammas Fair, another of our highlights of the holiday where we enjoyed the fun of the occasion. The Auld Lammas Fair is a traditional fair held every year in August. It is associated with the Lammas harvest festival. The fair has been running for nearly 400 years, dating back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, so quite an occasion to join in with.

Various goods are traditionally sold at the fair. These include livestock and traditional foods such as Yellowman, a local variant of honeycomb, made from brown sugar, golden syrup, butter, vinegar and baking soda and Dulse which is a type of

On the lovely summer evenings, creating something special can simply be sitting outside until it is dark, listening to the birds and the sounds of nature. Having your bedtime drink in the garden and just simply relaxing and enjoying the present moment and most importantly, not overthinking. It's nice to do this as different wildlife appear in the evenings such as the bats darting about at great speed, hedgehogs and as soon as the ducks go to bed, the frogs jump in their pond, even though they have their own pond where they laid frogspawn.

### **3. Connect to reconnect**

While connecting with loved ones has been harder - and different to what we're used to - it holds great power. Venessa says "One of the most important things for feeling happier is our connections with other people" and adds. "If we can do something that helps us to stay connected, that amplifies the feel-good effect that we get from other people."

Feeling connected is so important for our wellbeing. With the ongoing uncertainty, and whilst we are not able to plan a face-to-face get-together just now, we hope you will feel connected when you receive our magazines and that you will also find something to make you smile, especially with the stories from our members which we have found particularly engaging.

### **4. Do something kind for others**

In many cases, sadness is a normal human reaction to different life changes and events, but there are some habits that can help with this. "If you find yourself feeling a bit down, a great thing to do is something kind for another person," explains Venessa. She adds, "When we do kind things for others, it actually activates the reward system in our own brain. It releases the reward neurone dopamine. If we're doing something for someone else, then it also takes our mind off our own worries as well." "In fact, a January 2020 study backs this up, discovering that the key to tackling loneliness could lie in a simple act of kindness. Interestingly, the researchers found that those who make time to help others stop feeling lonely themselves."

## 5. Ask for help

Venessa explains, "Don't be afraid to ask for help. While often perceived as a weakness, asking for help is indeed a sign of strength." "You don't have to only ask for help when you're struggling, but you can always ask for help when you want to learn or share,"

As well as this, she tells us that communities who help one another are actually "happier, stronger and more resilient". We hope you feel that the community we have encouraged within our support group will continue to help you too.

## 6. Be a good friend to yourself

Venessa explains: "When was the last time you said something kind to yourself? "Notice how you're talking to yourself. Sometimes we can be really kind to other people but really tough, critical and unkind to ourselves," Especially during times like these, when everyone is trying their best, it's important to show ourselves a little love. "



(Sutton Spring Wood, Sutton Scarsdale )

If you notice yourself getting frustrated or cross with yourself, just say "hang on, this is a really tough time, lots of people are finding it hard". Notice how you talk to yourself. Be a good friend to yourself." Venessa has written this in the context of the pandemic, but we know too that it is so very important in the context of managing tinnitus.

This was one of the highlights of our holiday. It was a great experience walking along Giants Causeway and we marvelled at how it had been formed and this was enhanced by the legend of Finn, the giant.

Finn wanted to do battle with a rival giant in Scotland, known as Benandonner, so he built the enormous stepping stones across the sea so the Scottish giant could cross over to Ireland to face the challenge. However, when Finn saw the enormous Benandonner approaching he fled home and asked his wife Oonagh to hide him. Oonagh is said to have disguised him as a baby and placed him in a huge cradle. When Benandonner saw the size of the 'baby' he assumed the father must be gigantic and fled home in terror ripping up the Causeway behind him in case he was followed. This is the reason, the tale concludes, that the Giant's Causeway exists in North Antrim, with similar columns at Fingal's Cave on the Scottish island of Staff, supposedly the two surviving ends of the Causeway built by Finn McCool.





Located in the Peak District, Dovedale is a stretch of the Dove Valley where the Dove River tumbles through impressive limestone ravines.

The limestone rock of Dovedale and the wider Peak District consists of the fossilised remains of marine life from the Carboniferous period, 350 million years ago when the area was underneath a shallow tropical sea. At the end of the Ice Age, vast quantities of meltwater cut through the layers of limestone leaving behind the limestone rock formations like those found in Dovedale.

### **FOND MEMORIES by Audrey**

### **GIANTS CAUSEWAY – NORTHERN IRELAND**

Prior to being voted One of the Seven Wonders of the UK, Giants Causeway had been voted one of the top five road trips in the world and with its breathtaking scenery, local legends and historic buildings it's easy to see why.



Giant's Causeway is a Site of Specific Scientific Interest. The magnificent Giant's Causeway is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and it's easy to see why it's held in such high esteem. Made up of six-sided basalt columns formed by volcanic activity 60 million years ago, legend has it that Irish giant Finn McCool built the Causeway.

Don't be hard on yourself and don't be afraid to seek our support.

### **7. Move your body for your mind**

"Although we don't always act like it, our body and mind are connected. Our bodies are designed to move, which keeps our brain in shape," explains Venessa.

"A brisk walk can be as effective as taking prescribed medicine, especially for those with mild depression. Make sure you're getting enough movement in your day. Think of ways you can introduce movement in your day to help boost your mood."

If you are unable to join us for our walk in July, do take a walk near where you live and embrace the scenery, no matter what is on your doorstep. Embrace the sights, sounds and if you are walking in a country park or woodland, add an extra dimension by touching the leaves or the bark on a tree. If you are unable to get out or have difficulty walking far, do try Joanne's "Move it or Lose it" chair-based exercises. If you haven't got a copy, please do contact us and we will forward a copy to you. They also help to boost your mood and wellbeing.

Nature is a natural healer and can work wonders for your mind and body. Venessa says: "A recent study instructed people to go out for one walk for 15 minutes a day and look for 'awe' – things that are literally awesome.

It's one of those emotions where you look at something, like an old cedar tree for example, and just say 'wow'. Not only did this boost people's mood, but it took them away from all of their worries and their to-do lists. It helped to put things into perspective."

So, why not step outside on a walk and soak up what's around you? Who knows what you might find.



[Pony & Trap ride, Whitworth Centre, Darley Dale]

## 8. Accept what you can't control



Do you find yourself trying to change things you have no control over? Accepting that many things are out of our control isn't giving up or giving in; it's simply learning to understand what's in our power and working with it. This is so true of tinnitus and can be quite liberating when you accept what you cannot change and learn to love and enjoy your life, because it is special. Venessa tells us: "Accept how things are now, but also think about how you can make a slightly different today or a slightly better tomorrow. There's a lot of things that are out of control at the moment, but try to not spend too much energy on those. What can you do to make a

better tomorrow?"

Not only is this crucial at this moment in time, but also in connection with tinnitus. One of my pet sayings is to "enjoy today and don't worry about tomorrow because by doing so, it spoils both days and so the negative cycle goes on", but you can change this. Make peace with your tinnitus; by doing so, it can change your life. Tinnitus is part of who you are and if you make peace with your tinnitus, you will release yourself from the battle to get rid of it and the fight/flight and fear.

For many (including myself) this has a positive result in that it will diminish into the background as you are no longer fighting it. And, if you do hear it (which can happen when you are anxious or stressed) your brain will have accepted what it is and so dismiss it. So, change your negative outlook and embrace a positive perspective – see how it feels – it really is worth a try.

## Childhood Memories

I have some fond memories of Dovedale. As a child we holidayed in Dovedale and it was one of my favourite holidays. Although still part of Derbyshire, to me then, it felt like miles away, our campsite was surrounded by such beautiful scenery and there seemed to be a limitless freedom. Even more exciting, someone I knew from school was also holidaying there on one occasion so I had a friend to walk, play and relax with.

### Honeymoon

Simon and I were married in May 2011 and our theme for guest tables were beautiful places we had visited in Derbyshire. Our honeymoon in France wasn't until later in the year but we took a few days annual leave straight after the wedding and headed out to Dovedale. It was a beautiful sunny May day and I remember sitting in Milldale watching the ducks and eating wedding cupcakes.

### Tragedy strikes

My memories of Dovedale are not all fond, however, some of the terrain can be rough, and you have to watch your footing. A little too rough for running, I discovered. In May 2019 running through Dovedale, I caught my foot and fell, landing on a stone, which was worn to a sharp point by many walkers and this cut open my knee (not for the first time). Once again, the trip from Dovedale back to Chesterfield to A&E felt like miles and miles.

I have not been put off though and have since been running in the area but through Wolfscote Dale and Beresford Dale, which I can highly recommend. The run was beautiful.

### A beautiful day out

I think Dovedale has it all, the River Dove, Stepping Stones, Thorpe Cloud as well as refreshment stops. The stop in Milldale is a kiosk from someone's home 'Polly's Cottage' offering drinks, snacks and ice-creams perfect for a hot summer's day. It is worth noting that Dovedale is popular so out of school term time maybe best for a visit, although Wolfscote Dale and Beresford Dale may be quieter options.

For more information <https://www.visitpeakdistrict.com/things-to-do/dovedale-p681171>



## THE SEVEN NATURAL WONDERS OF THE UK by Audrey

I guess we all have a place in the UK which is special to us; that may be from a holiday or actually where we live. However, as you will know, recently the Seven Natural Wonders of the UK have been announced. The list includes Dovedale and Joanne has written about her “Childhood Memories” about Dovedale and one which I have written about – Giant’s Causeway in Northern Ireland which brings back nostalgic holiday memories.

Recently on “Morning Live” they reported that a research study at Southampton University revealed that nostalgia helps with anxiety and depression. They said that looking back into the past increases feelings of wellbeing. In our next two stories, both Joanne and I immediately related to two of the seven natural wonders of the UK that brought back special memories.

## FOND MEMORIES by Joanne



## DOVEDALE

I was so pleased to hear that part of the Peak District has featured as one of the seven natural wonders of the UK - Dovedale. Dovedale is a picturesque limestone ravine, with iconic stepping stones. Fun for adults and children alike. It also has the beautifully named *Thorpe Cloud*. The highest point of Thorpe Cloud has an elevation of 287 metres, with quite a quick and steep ascent and can be quite tricky coming down.

## 9. Don't expect too much of yourself

Finally, Venessa says, "Don't expect yourself to be perfect. If you mess up, it's OK to be open and honest." It's about accepting that there are some things we are just not good at and learning how to work with it. Venessa continues, "don't compare your insides to someone else's outsides". Accept how you are feeling." I will add to that, we are all unique and add to the rich tapestry of life!

## AN UPLIFTING STORY TO BRIGHTEN YOUR DAY



During a phone call to my friend Pat who lives in Clay Cross she told me about her “Sunflower” story which had appeared in the Derbyshire Times on the 12<sup>th</sup> August 2020.

Pat and I have been friends since the early 1960s when we worked at the National Coal Board in the Regional Offices at Wingerworth,

Chesterfield. We have some great memories of our days working there, along with other friends and colleagues, some of whom we are still in contact with. We worked hard but we also had lots of fun and laughter and made some happy memories and lasting friendships. This is Pat's story as it appeared in the Derbyshire Times which I thought was really uplifting and wanted to share with you. Pat and I share another passion – that of our ancestry and we hope to meet up one day soon to share what we have learned about our ancestors.

## “Derbyshire woman’s joy as giant sunflowers rise from late husband’s vegetable patch

A Derbyshire woman has told of her joy after giant, beautiful sunflowers grew from her late husband's vegetable patch.



"Twenty-six sunflowers – the tallest reaching 9ft – have brightened up Pat Gore's garden in Linden Avenue, Clay Cross. Pat, 76, told the Derbyshire Times:

"Back in April I bought a couple of packets of seeds, planted them in little pots and put them in my greenhouse. "When they were strong enough to go in the garden, I planted them in my late husband's vegetable patch.

John passed away last year and his vegetable patch was his pride and joy so I thought it was the perfect place to put them." "I've been watering them every night and taking good care of them –

and they've grown and they've grown and they've grown." "I'm chuffed to bits with them – and I'm sure John would be too."

She added: "When we had gusts recently, I was really worried



about them – but they coped.

"They're very strong – and they're multiplying!

"I've noticed lots of little sunflowers are now starting to grow from the taller ones. The bees love them."

#### 4. Replant in soil

When the new roots are about an inch long, you can plant the celery in good quality compost. Make a hole deep and wide enough to hold the plant from the root end up to the cut end. Set the celery into the soil, making sure there's no air pocket below the root end. Gently fill in the surrounding soil so a bit of the cut end and all of the emerging leaves and stalks are above the soil. Keep the soil moist but not wet. Celery thrives in cool weather and rich soil, so give it shade in the hottest part of the day and feed it to replenish nutrients.

There are other vegetables you can grow from scraps including lettuce and leeks or from seeds such as peppers.

**Thank you for your great ideas Joanne.** I too have been experimenting with, up to now, successful results. The proof will be when we are picking this really delicious vegetable. We bought a Butternut Squash recently and I decided to dry some of the seeds and plant them, not really expecting anything to happen. But, within days, there were little shoots and after three weeks they were so big, we had to quickly construct another veg box to plant them in. All 25 of the seeds had survived. Now we will look forward to see what happens and



whether we will end up with 25 Butternut Squashes. I have given several away so we will see if they develop into healthy plants.

Apparently, they store well after harvesting if kept in a cool dry place and many varieties will keep for up to three months, so it's a really useful winter vegetable.





Here is my progress so far.

## Celery

### 1. Cut off the end

Slice about 2 inches off the root end of a bunch of celery. *Optional: Insert 4 toothpicks equally spaced around the celery, about 1½ inches from the bottom as shown.* This is what I have done.

### 2. Place in water

Set the celery in a shallow glass bowl or jar. Fill with enough water to submerge an inch of the root end. Place the bowl or jar where it can get good natural light for several hours a day. I placed my bowl near a kitchen window.



Change the water every couple of days, making sure the celery root end is always submerged. *(The optional toothpicks around the sides keep the celery from touching the bottom of the bowl).* I think this is worth doing.

### 3. Watch it grow

After a few days, you should start to see small leaves emerging from the very centre of the top. In about a week, you may see small stalks and leaves, and tiny roots emerging around the base. The cut stalks around the outer base may start deteriorating and turning brown. Don't panic — this is normal. But if you leave the celery in water for too long, the outer stalks will get serious rot, so it's best to plant the celery in a pot before that happens. (On my first attempt, little roots aren't beginning to grow, so I've searched the supermarket for a celery with a few roots, so going to try again. However, the leaves are coming out of the top).

Pat said neighbours had remarked on the stunning sunflowers. "They've raised some smiles during what has been a difficult time," she added. According to the Guinness World Records, the planet's tallest sunflower measured 30ft 1in and was grown by Hans-Peter Schiffer in the German town of Karst, Germany in 2014.

[Report by Michael Broomhead, The Derbyshire Times, 12<sup>th</sup> August 2020.]

***Thank you Pat for your heart-warming and uplifting story which I am sure everyone will enjoy and also for bringing back happy memories of the 1960s.***

## OUR SENSES

Whilst supporting people with tinnitus, we often talk about becoming more aware of their "senses" to help with focusing their attention on what is around them, not 'internalising' their thoughts or listening to their tinnitus. Over time, by doing so and becoming more mindful of their environment, no matter whether they live in the country, (or as demonstrated by Tony in his short story called "**Senses**"), or in the towns with the Metro close by, you can live "outside" your thoughts and embrace whatever sights and sounds are around you.

Even though the past year has been so very difficult, we have all had to try to find something positive in our lives in order to manage, not only tinnitus, but life itself. This is where nature has played a key role in helping us to get through what has been, and still is, a very difficult and uncertain time.

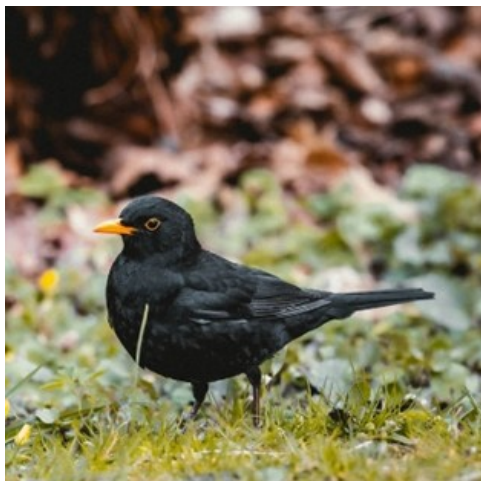
Our five senses help us to explore the world around us. Our senses also protect us by warning of dangers in our surroundings. Information gathered by the sense organs is sent along nerves to the brain. The brain then sends messages to the body telling it how to respond. The five senses of hearing, touch, sight, taste and smell work together to give us a picture of our experiences and to gain information which helps learning to be more meaningful.

## SHORT STORY

The following is a Short Story by Tony Huzzard, who lives in Gosforth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Tony is one of our newer members, who joined our group earlier this year. Tony is in a Writing Group back in his home town and loves to write stories and poems. He also joined our poetry group and enjoys our local 'online' support group meetings. Here is one of Tony's stories about "Senses".

### SENSES by Tony Huzzard

Thank goodness for a garden to sit in during these uncertain times, although after days of persistent rain, today was the first time for a week being able to venture into it.



The sense of touch was at first in evidence as birds that visit at the moment (pigeon, dove, blackbird and jackdaw) were almost out of food so their stocks needed replenishing. All seem to enjoy soft bread, and the blackbird is satisfied with an apple for his breakfast. Also changing the water in the bird bath gives my fingers a cold shock, and cleaning the bird table an unpleasant stickiness feeling.

There is little to record in the way of taste apart from our 3 pm fairly sweet outdoor coffee and buttery toasted teacake on fine days. Had it been the Summer we could have enjoyed the taste of our soft fruits which we love to grow – these being gooseberries, blackberries, strawberries and raspberries.



## About the Author

As with the last book review (May/June magazine – "The Authenticity Project"), I mentioned Clare Pooley had overcome some personal battles that had inspired her book.

Author, Matt Haig, of "The Midnight Library" has also taken inspiration from his own personal battles with anxiety. Matt suffered a mental breakdown at the age of 24 and still suffers from anxiety from time to time.

### GROWING FOOD FROM SCRAPS by Joanne

Did you know you can grow food from your food 'scraps'? Here are two I am trying. We started the idea as my step-grandson has taken an interest in gardening and thought it was a great idea to encourage him. So, a great, easy activity to do with grandchildren.

#### Spring Onions

- Slice off the ends of the bulbs, leaving roots attached.
- Stand the bulbs root-end down in a small jar. (I stood them up in an egg cup.) Add enough water to cover the roots, but leave the top edges above water.
- Set on a windowsill and keep the roots moist. After a few days, green shoots will emerge from the tops of the bulbs.
- Keep the roots submerged and change water at least once a week.
- When the shoots are four or five inches high, you can plant them in a pot filled with good quality potting soil. Repotting is important because if you just keep the root ends in the jar, they will produce green shoots for a while but the plant will weaken eventually and stop producing.
- Snip off what you need, cutting the leaves all the way to the ground; the onions will continue to grow again from the cut end. If you don't cut the leaves down to the ground, the plant could get to be much larger than the green onions you find in shops.



Could these new lives right the wrongs she believed she made in her current existence and thus make her happier?

### A Fable for Modern Times



I was fascinated by this book, in fact the whole premise that a different decision or following up on an opportunity may have set our lives on a completely different course. Author Jodi Picoult commented on the book “A beautiful fable, and *It’s a Wonderful Life for the modern age – impossibly timely.*” I completely agree.

I don’t want to give any of the storyline away, but there are certainly some thought provoking ideas. In Nora’s own words “I mean, it would have made things a lot easier if we understood there was no way of living that

can immunise you against sadness. And that sadness is intrinsically part of the fabric of happiness. You can’t have one without the other. Of course, they come in different degrees and quantities”.

Despite the start of the novel, that brings Nora to the ‘Midnight Library’ the story is not depressing, far from it, it is insightful and uplifting. Nora learns some valuable lessons about herself, her family and how simple acts of kindness can have a huge impact on the lives of others.

I think we may all have had opportunities missed but by taking those alternative paths we may have also missed the good things in our lives right now. The book is an advocate for living in the “Now”.

**When you realise nothing is lacking the whole world belongs to you.**

**Lao Tzu (c694 - c532 BCE)**

What is there to hear at present? Not much really apart from what I call my train set, that being the Metro trams literally at the end of my garden, running between the Wansbeck Road and Fawdon stations with metallic chattering of the wheels on the line, and the whistle as the train approaches each station.

Seeing is next – this at the present time includes the sights of some tulip bulbs which are in the process of poking their heads above the soil. A new visitor to the garden, now often seen, is a grey squirrel climbing on the trees bordering the Metro line and running along the nearby garden fences.

There is little to smell outside at the present time as the flowers have all died off, but a distinct smell annoys me, that being when a neighbour arrives in his garden to smoke on a number of occasions each day. This affects my Asthma so much that I either return indoors or retire to the end of the garden until the problem disappears.



***Thank you, Tony for sharing your story with us reflecting on your “Senses”. Your story is mindful and embraces what is around you, which is something we should all do on a daily basis. I hope your story will inspire other members to take a walk in their garden, or wherever they may be, to stop, look and listen to whatever is around them – and hopefully, write a short story or a poem for our magazine.***

### OUR ENVIRONMENT by Joanne

In 1990 when I was studying for my ‘A’ levels, I also chose a subject called “Communications” for which I designed a magazine which I called “Inspirations”. It was great fun to do because I went round lots of places including Pearsons Pottery in Chesterfield who allowed me to take photographs of their employees making the pottery; sadly, it closed in 1994 after

184 years of production.

However, one of the subjects I wrote about was the environment (which, 31 years later we are still talking about as it has become more and more serious – yet we knew then, that unless some major changes were made, we would suffer as a result). Here are the articles I wrote in my magazine:

### ***Ozone Layer***

The part of the earth's atmosphere which has the greatest concentration of ozone – a highly reactive form of elemental oxygen. The term generally refers to the stratospheric regions between six and 30 miles above the earth's surface. Ozone strongly absorbs harmful ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun and protects life on earth from the effects of excessive radiation. Destruction or diminution of the ozone layer could lead to increasing amounts of UV radiation on earth.

### ***The 'Greenhouse Effect'***

Carbon dioxide is a gas which exists in very small amounts in the atmosphere. Its amount is, however, increasing because of the burning of fossil fuels and the destruction of the earth's forests. Carbon dioxide allows solar radiation to pass through it and heat the earth. The warm earth radiates in turn but less energetically – and carbon dioxide reflects back this 'secondary radiation', which should otherwise be lost into space. The overall result is an increase in the temperature of the earth's surface and its atmosphere. The glass shell of a greenhouse acts in a similar way.

### ***Global Warming***

This is the expected outcome of the 'greenhouse effect'. It is predicted that the temperature of the earth and its atmosphere will continue to rise. An average rise of less than one degree is likely to reduce the extent of polar ice-caps with potentially disastrous effects.

The path that goes beyond this leads down towards the garden centre at Welbeck, although there is a busy road to cross.

The only downside to the site I would say is the lack of shade or shelter in the main gorge. It is very open to the elements and if it is a sunny day be careful to wear a hat and sunscreen and take a drink. It seems to trap and concentrate the power of the sun. If you want to look into the caves there are also a lot of steps to climb! The caves are all gated off – the only way to actually go inside them is by taking a guided tour.

I still can't get excited about prehistory...but I love to visit Creswell now for the ever-changing scene of wildflowers and birds. The teenage me wouldn't believe it!

***Thank you, Sarah for your story about Creswell Crags. I had recently seen it on TV and thought it looked really nice, so like you say, it has changed so much since your days as a teenager.***

## **BOOK REVIEW by Joanne**

### **The Midnight Library by Matt Haig**

#### **The Book of Regrets**

We all have regrets in life, some of the regrets are small, some feel much bigger. Choices we could have made and didn't. Would our life have been so much happier/more fulfilled if we had followed certain opportunities? Some of these regrets weigh heavily on our mind because we feel our choices have let friends or family down.

#### **The Plot**

Nora Seed gets to try out these different 'lives' in a beautifully crafted book by Matt Haig called "The Midnight Library". As Nora hovers between life and death she gets to visit the "Midnight Library" and reads her "Book of Regrets." With each regret, Nora tries out a life following up on opportunity missed or changing a decision which impacted on her family and friends.





## Creswell Crags .

With a non-existent bus service between Creswell and our home in Bolsover, it fell to me to take her to and fro every day. This was when I discovered that things had changed a lot there - and all for the better. The road has been re-routed and the sewage works have gone, leaving a tranquil gorge that is full of wildlife. The team of

workers and volunteers hope to have it recognised as a World Heritage Site and have been working hard to make it a place that people want to visit.

You can have cave tours to see the interesting marks left behind by many generations, or you can just take a stroll around and enjoy the sights and sounds. The crag faces are home to all kinds of birds and bats, while the river running through the middle is busy with ducks, swans, coots and moorhens.

On my last visit I saw my first clutch of duck eggs in a nest in the reeds, and on a previous visit I even saw a mole briefly erupt from the ground, which was very memorable. I never knew that they were so tiny! Being a city kid my ideas of wildlife can be sketchy - I always thought that badgers, moles and hedgehogs were all the same size! Never mind, I take comfort in the memory of a former work colleague, who once admitted that she used to think that penguins were as tall as humans until somebody finally took her to a zoo.

The rebuilt visitor's centre at Creswell is now very welcoming, with a cafe, toilets, gift shop and a museum (there is a small charge to go in here). There is a large car park and it costs £4 for 3 hours. At the end of the car park there is also a memorial to a Canadian aircrew who crashed nearby in 1944.

**I also wrote about** the following but there have been improvements here:

### ***Acid Rain***

Rainfall made acidic by sulphur dioxide from industrial processes which then mix with the moisture in the atmosphere. Acid rain may fall in places which are great distances away from the original source of pollution. Nitrogen oxides are mainly derived from car exhaust fumes and sulphur dioxide is produced when fossil fuels are burnt. The impact of this especially in Europe and North America is much less than in the 80s because of strong pollution regulations in these areas.

**CFCs** which thankfully were phased out of production in developed countries by 1996, and in developing countries by 2010, under the Montreal Protocol because of the leading role they played in creating the “ozone hole” in the atmosphere.

### **Unleaded petrol**

However, all modern-day petrol cars in the Western world run on unleaded fuel but, of course, this has moved on further now with the introduction of electric cars.

### **Organic**

We see a lot more products which are organically grown nowadays, but not nearly enough. However, many of us, and particularly during the pandemic, have turned to growing our own produce. For some of the older generation, this is returning back to their “roots” as many families grew their own produce, particularly during and after the war. Many had allotments which helped keep the British fed during the two world wars but fell out of favour in the 1960s and 1970s with elderly plot holders cast as villains in the battle to free up land for the housing boom.

In the First World War, the government requisitioned land for the use of the nation's gardeners. Every inch of land - whether disused gardens, building plots, public parks, private parks, or commons - was given over to food production.



From a pre-war total of around 450,000 plots, by May 1917 there were just under 1.5 million. By the end of 1917 allotments produced two million tonnes of vegetables a year and were fundamental to Britain's ability to wage war.

Food rationing kept the demand for allotments and home-grown foods high until the end of the war and beyond as rationing continued until 1954. Photos of our modern-day gardens (a couple of Mum's raised beds)



### **Environmentally Friendly and Alternative Energy**

Again, over the last 31 years we have (somewhat slowly) moved towards environmentally friendly products and alternative energy. Renewable energy is useful energy that is collected from renewable resources, which are naturally replenished on a human timescale,

including carbon neutral sources like sunlight, wind, rain, tides, waves and geothermal heat.



### **Ways to eat strawberries**

Why do we love strawberries so much? Well, aside from being so amazingly good for you, they're also incredibly versatile. Here are just some of our favourite ways to eat strawberries:



- In a smoothie: there is nothing more delicious than a strawberry smoothie?
- In pancakes: instead of traditional syrup, top your pancakes with strawberries and banana slices for a healthy alternative
- In a fruit salad: chop up some strawberries and add them to your fruit salad for the ultimate refresher

- With cream: enough said
- In lemonade: Make fresh strawberry lemonade by pureeing them in a blender and pouring into a pitcher of lemon juice with water and a touch of sugar. Delicious!

### **CRAGS. CAVES AND COOTS by Sarah Walters**

As a teenager I was very interested in archaeology and wanted to study it at University. Because of this I pestered my parents and grandparents to take me to historic sites over the weekends and school holidays. One day, my parents took me on a trip from my home in Sheffield to Creswell Crag, a place of great archaeological interest near Worksop. I had read a lot about it...but the visit was not quite what I was expecting. The site was marred by the main road from Creswell to Whitwell which ran straight through it, and it had a sewage treatment works at the side of it. I decided that prehistory was distinctly uninspiring and I didn't go back for many years. I ended up studying modern history instead!

But in 2019 my eldest daughter had to do some work experience while studying for her A levels, and she chose a placement at





## The Health Benefits of Strawberries (Produced by Holland & Barrett 2020)

The strawberry (or *Fragaria*) is one of the most recognisable berry fruits in the world. Strawberries have many health benefits, nutritional value and here are some ways to eat them.

### Strawberry nutritional profile

Strawberries are packed full of nutrients, minerals, and vitamins, including but not limited to:

**Vitamin C:** boosts immunity and increases iron absorption. It also contributes to collagen formation to help cartilage, bones and blood vessels to function normally

**Fibre:** helps normalise bowel movements and maintains good digestive health

**Folate:** one of the body's B-vitamins that's needed to make red and white blood cells in the bone marrow and convert carbohydrates into energy

**Iodine:** promotes good thyroid health

**Manganese:** Plays a role in the regulation of blood sugars. Helps support formation of connective tissue and is also an important contributor of bone health

### The health benefits of strawberries

#### They're good for heart health

There have been many largescale studies which link the consumption of berries to a lower risk of heart-related deaths.



However, there are many ways to reduce the environmental pollution that stems from our home simply by choosing eco-friendly products, some of which are:

- Certified Compostable Bin Liners
- Recycled Toilet Tissue. .
- Recycled Plastic Toothbrush
- Recycled Sari Table Linen Collection
- Recycled Plastic Rugs
- Ballpoint Pens Made from Recycled Water Bottles



### HELP REDUCE PLASTICS

I think Lockdown has made many of us think more about the environment. Although we may have been aware, the discussions around less pollution and hearing the birds sing without noise pollution has made us think. We are destroying our planet, although climate change is a big global issue there are things, as ***Denise Healy mentioned in her article about Planet Earth (April/May 2021)***



**The ocean is gradually filling with our waste and this kills marine animals. Around 100,000 marine mammals and 1 million sea birds die each year from ingesting plastic.**

[Internet image of plastics on a reef island]

Plastics in the oceans frequently wash up on reef islands around the world that are in the path of ocean currents.

Plastic in the ocean isn't always visible. Microplastics - pieces of plastic that are less than 5mm in length - are prevalent throughout the ocean. They enter the ocean as a result of larger pieces of plastic breaking down or directly in the form of small plastics (eg microbeads). Plastic microbeads are found in many cosmetics, although their use has recently been banned in the UK. ***(Visual images of fly tipping photographed by Sarah Richards, which cause such devastation, were illustrated in our April/May 2021 issue).***

However, shockingly our Tea Bags also contain plastic. In the UK we are a nation of tea lovers and it is thought that 100 million cups of tea are consumed in the UK every day. Yet we were shocked to learn that some tea bags contain the plastic polypropylene - which is unlikely to degrade for hundreds of years. Next time you are shopping, look out for biodegradable tea bags, which are plant-based tea bags and not sealed with this plastic. We found PG tips – plant-based pyramid bags, in a recyclable box but sadly the film was still plastic and not recyclable. Plus, these are biodegradable but not compostable, so won't completely disappear in the compost. Check out Pukka and Organic Clipper range for plastic free alternative teas.

### **Reduce your consumption – think ahead**

This can involve simple changes to your shopping habits to reduce the amount of plastic you might unintentionally be buying. For example, instead of buying 10 yoghurts that are individually portioned, why not go for one big pot? Consider the amount of packaging per product. Also, buying second hand rather than new plastic products reduces the amount of waste you generate. You can recycle your bottles to make mini-greenhouses for plants which need protection. Also, don't forget your bag for life when you go shopping.



This recipe comes from the cookbook *Deliciously Ella Every Day*. Ella Woodward (now Mills) is the great granddaughter of Lord Sainsbury of the Sainsbury's supermarket, so maybe not a surprise that she co-owns 3 delis with her husband, Matthew Woodward (Tessa Jowell's Son).

However, what is interesting is that in 2011, Ella Woodward was diagnosed with postural tachycardia syndrome at the age of 20. Ella suffered from symptoms like chronic fatigue, stomach problems, headaches,

and uncontrollable blood pressure.

“After spending two years almost completely bedridden, Ella decided to put her life back into her own hands, she cut out processed foods in favour of a plant-based diet, she embarked on a mission to revamp her way of life so that she could manage her symptoms - and get to experiment with yummy food in the kitchen!” (Healthline). According to Wikipedia she was an advocate of ‘clean living’ but turned against it after a media backlash.

However, what I do like about her recipes is that they are delicious, healthy and suitable for vegetarians, vegans and those who want to try more plant-based recipes. Also, most of the ingredients are easily accessible in supermarkets or Health Food stores and cutting out processed foods can only be a benefit to our health and the environment.



## **SUMMER TIME – IS CRUMBLE TIME! by Joanne**

Following on from Sarah's Rhubarb Crumble, I thought I would share one of my favourite crumble recipes, I do vary the fruit but the topping is so delicious, the hint of chocolate makes it feel indulgent whilst being full of goodness.

### **Summer Strawberry – Banana Crumble**

- 8 Ripe bananas – peeled
- 400g punnet of Strawberries
- 8 Tablespoons of maple syrup
- 300g of rolled oats
- 150g ground almonds
- 2 teaspoons raw cacao powder
- 1 teaspoon of vanilla powder (not an ingredient I often have so I use extract)
- 4 tablespoons of coconut oil
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Preheat the oven to 200 degrees C (fan 180 degrees C)

- Slice the bananas into a bowl, then chop the strawberries into bite-sized pieces and mix them in with the banana
- Place them in a baking dish (31cm x 21cm) and drizzle 2 tablespoons of maple syrup over them. Put the tray in the oven to bake for 10 minutes
- Meanwhile make the crumble layer. Add all the remaining ingredients, except the coconut oil and cinnamon, to a mixing bowl, not forgetting the rest of the maple syrup.
- Put the coconut oil in a saucepan with the cinnamon on a low heat until it's melted, then pour into the bowl and mix all the ingredients together.
- Once the fruit has cooked for 10 minutes, take the baking dish out of the oven and spread the crumble layer over the top. Place the dish back in the oven and cook for 20 minutes, until the top turns a golden brown.

## **Make your own Face Scrub**

- Combine brown sugar and oil in a mixing bowl
- Mix thoroughly
- If desired, add one or two drops of your favourite essential oil, and stir it into the mixture
- When you're satisfied with the consistency and fragrance of your scrub, spoon it into a container

The following poem was written 31 years ago, for the magazine I designed at school, by Andrew Mollinson who was then 10 years of age.

## **Be a Friend of the Earth**

Don't ruin the planet,  
Or pollute the air,  
Don't kill all the wildlife,  
If you really care.  
Don't waste all your paper,  
There's not too much to spare.  
If you want to be safe,  
From the ozone layer.

Pick up all your paper,  
And recycle it too.  
Look after the wildlife,  
It really needs you.  
Don't burn too many fossil fuels,  
Preserve whatever you can.  
Otherwise you'll destroy the earth,  
And hurt the race of man.

Help the starving people,  
Save aluminium cans,  
Give small donations,  
Help any way you can.  
They all need us to help them,  
So give a helping hand.

## BORAGE – THE STAR FLOWER by Sarah Walters



Summer is on its way, and those of us who like to mark the season with a glass of Pimms might have come across a small blue flower floating about in there. Borage is the traditional garnish for this drink, although in recent times it has become bur-

ied under a mass of citrus fruits and cucumber. The last time I bought a Pimms and Lemonade in a pub I was hard-pressed to get to the drink!

Borage is also known as the Starflower because of its shape, and as well as being a pretty and bee-friendly addition to the flower border it has long been used in the kitchen and the medicine cabinet. Starflower capsules have been marketed as an alternative to evening primrose oil - a supplement taken by many women to help control PMS symptoms. There may be a connection here with the anti-depressant properties attributed to it in the past. The 16th century herbalist John Gerard wrote:

"Those of our time do use the flowers in salads to exhilarate and make the mind glad."

I have had borage in my garden every summer for several years now. I only bought one packet of seed, but such is ease with which it self-seeds I have never had to buy any more. As I write this, April is giving way to May, and I think I have spotted the first seedlings emerging in random locations throughout the garden. By July, there will be clusters of nodding flowerheads, besieged by drunken bees who adore borage nectar.

Following the lead of our 16th century ancestors, I also add the flowers to salads. They have a faint taste of cucumber and also contain fibre and B vitamins, as well as adding a dash of new colour to offset the greens and reds. I also freeze the flowers in ice cubes to add to my Friday night G&T, so that I can pretend that I'm being healthy. You can eat the young leaves of the plant - although when they get to a certain size they become prickly and a bit of an irritant.

In her book, "A Modern Herbal", Alys Fowler says that she dries the flowers to add to cereals or to use in baking. Pick the flowers in the morning and put them on a clean tea towel somewhere warm but not in direct sunlight. By the end of the day the flowers should feel like paper and they can then be stored in an airtight container.



Borage is related to comfrey and it can also be used to brew a plant food. Using gloves, I pick the whole plant when the flowers have gone over and soak it in a bucket of water. After straining, the remaining liquid can be diluted in your watering can and poured over your plants.

Pretty, tasty, useful and healthy - I urge you to invest in a packet of borage seeds - they will bring you joy every year.

***After reading Sarah's story, I inspected our garden and sure enough I found a Borage plant, with its bright blue star flowers, which must have been deposited by the birds.***