

Pat Hubbard receives the Chislehurst Common Newsletter and thought we would like to see an article in the December issue about a visit to Chislehurst by Wombwell's (*not Wombles - Ed!*) Menagerie on Christmas Day 1871! Hard copy readers will benefit from use of a magnifying glass to read this! A point of interest was that the Menagerie "was honoured by a visit from the Emperor, the Prince Imperial and several attendants. His Majesty appeared to take great interest in the exhibition, venturing to pat one of the lions. The band played 'God Save the Queen' and Mozart's 'Gloria' during the Emperor's visit. We are sorry to record the death of the celebrated White Camel, a loss to the proprietor not easily replaced." (Ex Emperor Napoleon III was living in exile in Camden Place at the time).

Pat emailed me on 16 December saying, "I will be spending Christmas at home with my Chislehurst family - who have been decorating the house with so many lights, tinsel and baubles, it will be a delight to see when finished. I wish all my friends in the Parish a very holy, healthy and happy Christmas and I hope to meet up with all again some time in 2021. Keep well and safe until then. In the meantime, don't forget to save your postage stamps for me."

Tony & Val Witcombe contacted me saying, "For Val and me it will be a very different Christmas. Normally, Val's brother & sister-in-law (Roy & Pam) come up from Hampshire to join us on Christmas Eve. We then meet on Christmas Day and Boxing Day as a total family of 26 at our daughter, Wendy's, as she has a giant table. This year our son Tim is going to Wendy's and our other daughter, Meryl is staying near Colchester where Wendy lives. Val and I are social outcasts and will have Christmas most likely on our own as Roy and Pam will not visit us if we move to tier 3 (*Let alone tier 4 - Ed!*).

Joan & Les Huxley have been in touch. Joan says, "Les and I are going to be on our own at Christmas. We usually go to our daughter's but none of us feel it is safe, so for the first time in 50 years my daughter will not be with us - sad but sensible. Joan has not been out since February and Les only now and then to shop or go to the chemist. We wish everyone a good Christmas and hope to see you all in 2021, God willing.

By the way, I meant to tell you, I collect used stamps for a charity that rescues horses and donkeys from a terrible life. It is called Bransby Horses. They came once to our ladies group to give a talk and I have supported them ever since (*Another deserving cause for used stamps; please contact Joan - Ed*). Thank you for the lovely news letters I love receiving them (*It's a pleasure and thanks for contacting me*)."

Revd Anne Hoad emailed to tell me about her childhood memories of Christmas in Devon. "My parents were Methodists, so we went to Chapel for a service at Christmas time, The ministers were very strict about what you could or NOT do on a Sunday and riding was definitely not allowed. So my aunt cooked a huge meal for us and planned that the minister would fall asleep afterwards. He did, so my cousin and I could steal out and go for a ride undisturbed!" (*What can I say!- Ed*). Revd Anne hopes that her son Matthew will be able to visit her on Christmas Day.

Imogen Roose keeps in touch and sent me this, "This Christmas will be only our second as a family of five, as we usually have at least one Aussie relative staying. We are planning a quiet day with roast lamb and lots of games, a long walk, and of course the 'Strictly' and 'Sewing Bee' Christmas Specials.

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone in the St Andrew's community for all your kindness towards our family this past year. It has meant the world to us. We wish you all a peaceful Christmas, a happy and safe new year, and can't wait to see you all again."

(You can see and hear Imogen, husband Jack and three other members of the choir singing 'There is No Rose' at the 17 December Carol Service at St Andrew's. There is a video link on the parish website home page or use this link - <https://youtu.be/G9br7JdclqQ>. Do watch if you can, enjoy two minutes of beautiful singing and if you feel so moved, donate to the parish via its JustGiving page in aid of Crisis and the Kisumu Orphanage. Thank-you - Ed)

Norman & Beryl keep in touch regularly. Norman is now out of hospital and feeling better. He says, "Beryl & Norman would like to thank everyone for their prayers, concern and good wishes for Norman. We wish you all a joyful and peaceful Christmas and a healthy and happy new year. We look forward to being able to get together again when possible." Norman sent me a poem about the Porcupine. It was written by Keith Pellett who was a member of the 16th Royal Eltham Scout Group. Keith lived in Highcombe Close, near the Porcupine, and wrote 'The Porky', lamenting its loss, soon after it was closed. There isn't room here for the nine verse poem, so please let me know if you would like copy and I'll send it to you. Here's a flavour - "It ain't a pub no more! No more ale. If it could speak, could tell a tale, Of wartime bombs, just across the road, School and garage both took a load. Oh! What have they done to the Porky?"

Kay Ash tells me that the recent entertaining Zoom quiz organised by the Friends of the Princess Royal Hospital and run by quizmaster extraordinaire, Mick Wood, successfully raised £1080! Well done to all involved.

Ray & Tessa Andrew - live opposite us so we're in regular contact. Ray subscribes to Silver Voices and sends me copy of members' briefings. The 15 December issue said under the heading 'Goodbye 2020' - *Most of us will be pleased to see the back of a miserable 2020 when so many people's lives have been impacted in tragic ways. And we can look forward with optimism to 2021, when hopefully the virus will be brought under control. Amen to that!*



Ray has helped me by editing and producing compilations of our videos of recent events so that I can upload them to YouTube and the parish

website. His experience and knowhow is invaluable, so we work well together. Who knows where our expertise and joint ventures (LARR Productions) may take us? Certainly not into the police force! No, Ray isn't a real commander in the Met! After a lifetime in the film industry he still plays small parts as an 'extra'. These photos were taken last weekend when he was sent to arrest a suspect in a scene for a future Bollywood movie. Despite his



arresting personality, he is called upon to take on a variety of roles, including being a member of the clergy, including taking the part a bishop on one occasion, I'm told!

Ray's sense of humour is well-known and he often sends me cartoons, jokes and snippets via email. Here's one to amuse you for now (there are other readers' offerings on page 8).

On a more serious note, please be aware that a car was stolen from the drive of a house in Court Road recently. Thieves used a relay scanning device to gain access to the vehicle that had keyless entry and then drove it away. Owners of cars with keyless entry should ensure that their keys are kept away from doors and windows and in a metal or wire mesh container, which screens detection. There's plenty of information on Google about this. The wireless signal on some key fobs can be switched off. Stay alert!



K Keep On Going!

An Editors Perspective of Keep Connected! in words and photos.

If i had been told at the beginning of 2020 that I would produce 25 community newsletters from the end of March until now, I wouldn't have believed it. But, that is the reality!

When the idea emerged in conversations with David, Thelma and Alison I was cautiously enthusiastic. Yes, my previous work-life experience in running membership operations in a UK industry-wide organisation meant that I had the ability to do this. I also had the necessary equipment to support production of a regular newsletter, not to mention my role in website creation, editing and also photography. The question was, did I have the desire and the energy? The answer was clearly, yes, although I'm not sure I realised that at the time.

What really drove me to do this was the local community and specifically the parish community, which I only discovered when I joined St Andrew's at the end of 2015. I found a longstanding and loyal community; loyal and supportive of both churches; loyal and supportive of one another. The onset of the pandemic and the consequent inability of members to attend either church as usual, made the need for meaningful, ongoing communication and outreach evident. So I took the plunge and here we are, 25 issues on!

Has it been a success and is it still needed? Many of you tell me you would like it to continue. Some of the feedback to questions I've posed in Keep Connected! confirm this, but I have no specific objective measurement, although the recent St Andrew's Day survey indicates a strong desire for communication and outreach. So It is my intention to continue while this wretched pandemic continues to blight our lives. Will there be any changes?

Almost certainly, and especially if you tell me you want them. You readers are the community members; I'm here to serve and support you as best as I can through Keep Connected! and its host, the parish website. Just let me know if you think change is needed and I'll listen and act accordingly!

Looking back here are some reminders:

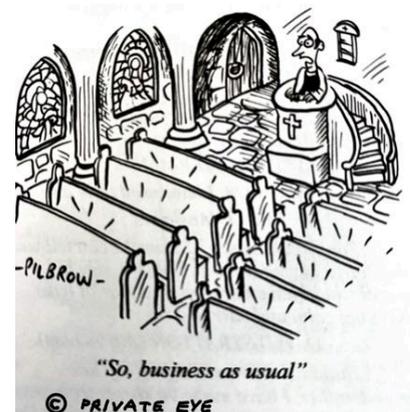
I ssue 1, 6 April

Welcome to this new issue of Keep Connected! - a new News Sheet that aims to work with the St Andrew and St Alban website and allows hard copy to be printed for people who do not have access to the Internet

I ssue 8, 24 May

Welcome to issue 8 which this week takes a lead from the Chelsea Flower Show in showcasing readers' gardens when it's not possible for us to visit them physically - a virtual garden show! My request for photos yielded many photos, a selection of which you can see in this issue. I hope the 'show' raises your spirits and inspires you to 'grow'!

I received photos and contributions from readers - a real thumbs up! Here are just two of the photos: Revd Anne's tree peony and Julia's favourite rose.



I ssue 12, 28 June

Reader Survey!

1. Have you found Keep Connected! helpful, relevant and entertaining? - Y/N
2. Do you want it to continue? - Y/N
3. What, if any, changes would improve it in your view?

And - **Happy 90th Birthday Pat!**



Issue 16, 23 August
Happy 90th Birthday Jim! and the Young Artists

Summer Exhibition - If you're passing by the notice board at the front of St Andrew's do stop to admire the display of children's artwork and see their perspective on the Creation. Clearly, we have some talented young artists in our community. Thank you **Sarah** for enabling all of us to see this lovely Summer Exhibition.



Issue 18, 4 October
 Lockdown Holidays!



LINDISFARNE

David & Thelma went on a virtual pilgrimage to seven holy places around the UK starting in Iona and finishing up at Lindisfarne, a place they would like to visit when lockdown ends and freedom returns.

Mary Sylvester sent a holiday tale from Wales involving a local fisherman's boat, *Lowri*.



Issue 19, 25 October

A new format including Environment and Green Spaces and of course, **The Tarn**, a real haven, a place to exercise and take in nature during the ongoing pandemic; a walk around Mottingham taking in a chat with **Mary Houlston** en route to the confluence of the Quaggy and Little Quaggy.



Issue 20, 8 November

We will remember them! A Remembrance Sunday in conjunction with the MRA special issue remembering the wartime experiences of our parents and grandparents during the last two world wars.



Issue 23, 6 December

Marking St Andrew's Day and the specially recorded Patronal Festival Service on the parish website and YouTube channel. Huge thanks to Beverley and all involved in conceiving the idea and making it happen.

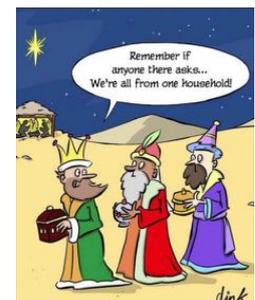
Keep smiling with this small selection of humour;

- What's Dominic Cummings favourite Christmas song? *Driving Home for Christmas*
- Why was production down at Santa's workshop? *Because many of his workers have had to elf isolate*
- Why didn't Mary and Joseph make it to Bethlehem? *All Virgin flights were cancelled*
- Why are Santa's reindeer allowed to travel on Christmas Eve? *They have herd immunity*



Finally, my thanks to all for helping me sustain Keep Connected! over the last nine months and apologies to those I haven't mentioned this time.

I hope you enjoy this issue and that it will help to inform and entertain you over the festive season. Do also have a look at the website (if you can) where there is much more information including videos and podcasts. I hope these offerings help to bring you Comfort and Joy at Christmas and the New Year.



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