



Welcome to **Issue 7** which this week continues with readers' feedback on 'Life in Lockdown'. Please do keep your stories coming. If you haven't yet responded don't be shy - keep in touch with the community! This issue also features VE Day memories, following the 75th anniversary celebration on 8 May 2020. A number of older community members were old enough in 1945 to recollect wartime memories, but not VE Day itself! Nonetheless, their accounts are interesting, as you will see!

Christian Aid fund raising received a significant boost on Friday 15 May when over 60 participants took part in the virtual quiz organised and run by Mick Wood for CTIM Christian Aid organiser, Diane Hudson from St Andrew's. **The event was both enjoyable and a great success, raising almost £1900 (inc. gift aid) so far!** A report of the event is on our website - <https://www.standrewandstalban.org.uk/news/christian-aid-week-2020-zoom-quiz>.

The sponsored Read-in/Sing-in organised by Revd Ian will take place from *noon to 6pm on Saturday 23 May*. Details are on the website - <https://www.standrewandstalban.org.uk/christian-aid> and information on how to join the Zoom meeting will appear on the website this coming week. In the meantime please contact Revd Ian - E: standrewsmottingham@tiscali.co.uk; T: 020 8851 1909 for more information. Hopefully, sponsorship at this event will take the current total well over the £2000 mark. **Don't forget, visit <https://www.justgiving.com/team/st-andrews-mottingham> to donate!**



Laura Baugh says, "We were very lucky to be given a huge delivery of rhubarb from David and Thelma who this week reached out to Garf and I. Garf was very touched by their kind gesture and decided to make a rhubarb crumble with the children. We don't get much time with Garfield at the moment as he is doing us proud at work so this was definitely a moment to treasure. It tasted amazing!!!"

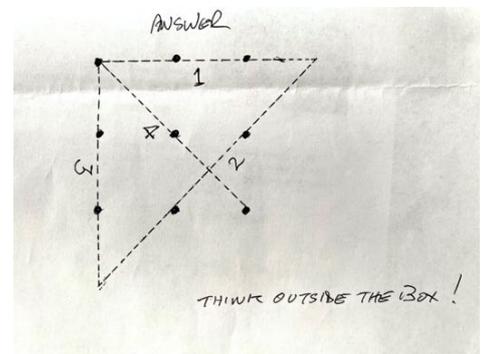


Quiz: the resurrection story in numbers...

1. How many women, in Mark's gospel, went to anoint Jesus' body and found the stone rolled away from the tomb (Mark 16:1-4)
2. How many men ran to look inside the empty tomb? (John 20:3-8)
3. How many women did the risen Jesus meet in the garden by the tomb? (John 20:14-16)
4. How many disciples did the risen Jesus meet on the road to Emmaus? (Luke 24:13-15)
5. How many fish did the disciples catch when they met the risen Jesus on the seashore? (John 21:4-12)
6. How many people (nearest 100) were in the largest group that the risen Jesus appeared to? (1 Corinthians 15:3-8)
7. For how many days did Jesus appear to the disciples, convincing them that he was actually alive? (Acts 1:3)

... Your answers should add up to > 701 (David Mouqué reliably informs me! - Ed).

The answer to last week's quiz, set by Norman -see adjacent diagram —>



Pat Hubbard receives daily updates from 'Greenwich Info' and forwards them to Revd Ian, Revd Tim and me, so it was surprising not to receive any for a few days. The absence of communication was caused by Pat's computer being out of action for a week. A visit from a local 'IT doctor' (overseen by John) managed to fix the PC and normal service is now resumed, as is her wry humour, saying to Revd Ian in her email, "Serving coffee at your 'Virtual Coffee Morning (14/05/20) is going to be a bit difficult, isn't it?" Well done Pat, good to have you back online and in good form!

Kay ash writes, "I suffer from the lockdown more than John. In my former life I met friends at the Church coffee mornings, Good Companions, book clubs, women's guild, flower arranging, lunches etc. Now I have to make do with just my husband! However, after 50 years of marriage, isolation has given John and I a chance to talk to each other more, discuss important matters and generally get to know one another better - it turns out he's quite nice really!

The most important thing to us is that so far, the virus hasn't touched any of our friends or family and I earnestly pray that this continues. The situation we all find ourselves in, certainly concentrates the mind on the fact that life is so, so precious.

Our current main outlets are Zoom meetings, putting in our weekly online shopping order and the garden. John and I feel privileged to have a house with a garden.

The garden has been a great boon for us. We have tried to grow various different plants from seed this year. Scabious plants mostly germinated and we have about 10 ready to plant out. We tried Echinacea but they are being difficult. Five plants germinated, but after all these weeks of lockdown, they refuse to grow on. They sit on the windowsill in loads of light, being pampered but refuse to get any bigger!

We have grown Cosmos and Nicotiana from seed, geraniums and Penstemon from cuttings and they are going OK. We have also started some vegetables - courgettes, lettuce, cabbage, Charlotte potatoes and Suncherry tomatoes. We're keeping our fingers crossed. The highlight of the garden at the moment is our Rhododendrons which are in flower and the best they have ever been - the fact that they grow without any help from us, may have something to do with it.

Another thing I noticed was that for the first time that I can remember, there are thousands of tadpoles swimming around the pond as if they owned it. The fish seem to ignore them, so we may have a very large family of frogs to look forward to.

Just seeing the faces of friends and family in Zoom meetings has proved to be so beneficial in lifting our spirits. Once you've worked out how to download the system, find the right meeting, join the meeting, unmute yourself and turn the video on, Zoom is so easy to use. At first it seemed too complicated but once you've done it a few times you're an expert!

I believe that the Church services on Zoom have been brilliant. It is not only good to see everyone but I feel that a church service brings us together like a family. Thanks to Ian for co-ordinating and everyone else who helps to make them happen.

I look forward with optimism to the day we can all meet in person and hug one another without fear."

Tessa & Ray have been busy raising funds for **Christian Aid**. Tessa says, "One of the presents I had at Christmas was a small bean bag, made to support an iPad, phone, tablet or book. During this lockdown it has proved invaluable for face to face book club and Zoom meetings. Ray came up with the idea that we should make some and I thought we could use them to help raise money for Christian Aid. We are selling them for a £5 donation for Christian Aid. If anyone has some spare cotton material for this project we would be grateful as we have used all of ours! Please let us know if you would like one of these excellent beanbags. T: 020 8857 1351.



Jane Cornish says, Lockdown has given me the opportunity to savour and appreciate the green spaces that are right on our doorstep. Bob and I like to go for a short walk most days. Fairy Hill Park is where I usually walk through to deliver a birthday card in Broad Lawn, but during lockdown we discovered the woodland near the entrance, new to us but not to dog owners! A short hop away it was wonderful to see the greylag geese and goslings in the beautiful setting of the Tarn. Nearby is the wide open space of Foxes Field. Walking round the perimeter we came across entrances which beckon us into Marvels Wood and beyond. Venturing a little further afield to Chinbrook Meadows sees us walking along the river Quaggy, meandering through swathes of scented cow parsley, then chancing upon a mini orchard, complete with a “DO NOT EAT THE APPLES” sign!



To be able to get out and visit these wonderful green spaces makes us realise that we are more fortunate than some.

V E DAY SUPPLEMENT!

Following the report in issue 6 I asked the ‘older’ members of our community for their recollections of VE Day - 8 May 1945. I’m pleased to say I had quite a few responses, many of which said “I can’t actually remember VE Day itself!” However, the near 80-somethings (or thereabouts) experiences of life in WW2 are poignant, especially in relation to the current coronavirus pandemic. What follows is a roundup of those responses, all of which are noteworthy. I start with someone who remembers VE Day clearly.

Goeffrey Howard recollects: For the last year of the war, my older brother and I slept with our parents in the Morrison shelter in our front room. The “Morrison” was a heavy steel cage designed to protect occupants from collapsing masonry, but it also made a very good ping-pong table during the day! During those nights in East London, we would listen to the throb of V1 ‘doodlebugs’ overhead, praying that their engines would not cut out over us. Later, we experienced the sudden explosions of V2 rockets, followed by the delayed scream of their supersonic travel through the sky. Thankfully, we survived these last desperate throws by the enemy, At last the war was ended and the five-year blackout gave way to lighted windows everywhere. On VE Day I went with my parents, aunt, uncle and younger cousin up to Westminster to join the vast crowds celebrating, and I recall climbing on the Victoria Monument to get a good view of the King and Queen, and Winston Churchill, as they appeared on the balcony of Buckingham Palace. Later, there was a wonderful fireworks display from barges on the Thames - altogether an unforgettable experience for a 12 year-old lad. The celebrations continued locally everywhere. Along with many other neighbourhoods, we had a street party outside our house - long tables in the middle of the road (there were no cars then!), covered with home-made cakes and buns, lemonade and rationed sweets. Amid all of this celebration and relief, little did we know of the years of hardship to come, and even less of the appalling levels of death and destruction in the German concentration camps, and throughout the continent. Let us give thanks for 75 years of peace in Europe.

Jim Thomas wrote a letter saying “Here is my only memory of VE Day. During 1945 I was living with my friend’s family in Lulworth Road as my own house was still uninhabitable as the result of bomb damage. In the evening of VE Day we walked round to Highcombe Close and there was a bonfire there to celebrate the occasion. The garden gates from my house contributed to the bonfire!” Jim added, “Thank you for the very interesting Keep Connected!”

Norman Woodard couldn’t recall VE Day itself and told me that as a child he was evacuated first to Sandy in Bedfordshire and then later moved to Doncaster to be further away from danger. Norman’s mother was an Air Raid Warden in Mottingham while he was away. Here are some photos from the family album. It looks as though Norman might have been training to follow in Mum’s footsteps!



Lilli Taylor told me over the phone that she couldn’t recall any VE Day celebrations, although she did remember VJ Day (Victory over Japan) on 15 August 1945, during her school holidays - more on that later, no doubt!

Pat Hubbard emailed this account. "VE DAY - at 015.00 hours on Tuesday, the 8th May 1945 Winston Churchill announced over the radio that the war in Europe was over.

I was just short of celebrating my 15th birthday and I cannot remember doing anything special on that day. Greenway (off White Horse Hill) was not the sort of road that held street parties at the drop of a hat. My father would have been working in a solicitor's office, my mother carrying out her housewifery duties and caring for her mother, who had been living with us since we moved to Chislehurst in 1937, and I was still at school. If the thought crossed any of our minds it might have been a thanksgiving prayer for bringing our family safely through a second major war without any loss of life. Yes, one cousin had been a prisoner of the Italians but was now repatriated and the hardships he had suffered have only come to light during the past few years.

I had not even been 'officially' evacuated but had spent the previous school summer holiday staying with my other grandmother and aunt in Stamford (Lincs.). There I spent my time reading, knitting my father a pair of socks on two needles (much to my grandmother's disgust – think of walking on a seam!) and riding a bicycle around the Lincolnshire countryside for hours on end (don't have anything to do with those Americans admonished my aunt!)."

Joan Huxley emailed me a photo of husband Les in the front Garden of their house in Court Farm Road on VE Day this year. She said that quite a few neighbours celebrated the day in their front gardens and Betty Walsh was thrilled to see the decorations in the road as they looked so good. Most people had tea, but Les enjoyed his gin & tonic and a glass or two of wine! Joan added, "Thank you for keeping us connected. We both cannot go out as we have health problems so it is lovely to read about all our friends at St Andrew's and St Alban's."



Ray Andrew couldn't remember the occasion as it was four months before his fifth birthday on 8 September 1945. He did, however, remember seeing a doodlebug flying over and planes dog fight above Lee. Ray lived at 2 Lulworth Road and during WW2 his father had a local building company based in Dorset Road opposite the school (where the flats are now). His mother worked as a volunteer making cakes and sandwiches for the local searchlight operators and the Home Guard. As they were so busy Ray was packed off at the age of three and a half on a steam train from London, accompanied by an adult(s) and somehow he found himself living on a farm in Cumbria. He remembers the farmer's wife's face but not the farmer, but from what he can recall, he had a lovely time! Eighteen months later at the age of five, he returned to Mottingham as his parents wanted him to start school at Dorset Road under the guidance of a lovely teacher, Mrs Stevens and the headmistress, Miss Hyder.

Iris Osborne sent Alison a letter thanking her for delivering copy of Keep Connected! (Iris does not have access to the internet). Iris wrote "On the day before VE Day, my Father and I left home to walk from Kingsdown (now West Kingsdown) to Swanley station to meet my sister, Ivy, who was coming home on leave. She was a WAAF (Women's Auxiliary Airforce). On the way down Farningham Hill it was pitch black - no moon and at intervals there were large heaps of tarmac ready to be laid on the road. My Dad and Ivy walking ahead, suddenly realised I wasn't with them. I had walked into one of the heaps and lay sprawling. I wasn't hurt, only covered in dirt and tarmac! However, next day, with the entire family at home, we celebrated with neighbours by having a huge tea party, everyone contributing goodies made from precious rations!"

"As I do not have internet access, on Sunday mornings I watch a short service on BBC. Last Sunday it came from Hereford Cathedral. Hymns were recorded from a previous programme of 'Songs of Praise' When Rosemary (my daughter) and I were sitting in the garden recently, chatting away, the birds started to arrive and were all singing. It was like the dawn chorus at lunchtime. I'm positive they enjoyed our company!"

What else can I say in closing this issue other than thank you all, and especially our VE Day contributors. It has been a privilege to compile this selection. As a war baby myself (just) your experiences strike a chord. We owe you all so much for the resolve you all showed in the face of the greatest adversity. I hope the younger generation can take heart from that in dealing with the current crisis.

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