



Dear Reader - Welcome to this second issue of 2021, as the third lockdown continues. Although the effects of the pandemic continue to grow and worsen, the rollout of the vaccination process is underway and there is hope for a brighter outlook in the coming months. A number of our older readers have now had their first job and others will be receiving theirs soon. At the same time we should not forget our younger readers who have found themselves, through no fault of their own, without work and without a job. This is the time, more than ever, for us to help them and to help each other. If you know people who need help then let Keep Connected know and we will do what we can.



Community Matters

Diane Hudson sent me this on the subject of *friendship during lockdown* -

“As a teenager I was a Beatles fan and I became closer to my school friends as a result. ‘I get by with a little help from my friends’ is a quote that has been very relevant to me since lockdown began on 24 March 2020.

I have enjoyed long phone calls with friends during lock down and it is amazing that, with no real news to tell, how much there is to talk about! Highlights during the past year have been sitting with friends in Nottingham gardens or mine (when we were allowed) and spending time with them. I really enjoyed the day when several church friends came together in Beverley and Geoff’s garden for morning coffee. The few times we have had a service in church were special too as we were together again despite the circumstances being different and the masks were on. I believe we have all become closer to one another despite not seeing one another. There have been very difficult times too. A school friend’s husband died of coronavirus and how hard it was to watch the funeral service online; a friend died and I had to arrange her funeral; a friend whose daughter nearly died after a minor operation. I have shared in the pain of my friends lives too as they have shared in mine. Friends are the glue that holds life and faith together - powerful stuff!
Diane also sent me ‘Bits of Good News’ below:

Twenty Six things that are completely under your control

Your beliefs; Your attitude; Your thoughts; Your perspective; How honest you are; Who your friends are; What books you read; How often you exercise; The type of food you eat; How many risks you take; How you interpret the situation; How kind you are to others; How kind you are to yourself; How often you say “I love you”; How often you say “thank you”; How you express your feelings; Whether or not you ask for help; How often you practice gratitude; How many times you smile today; The amount of effort you put forth; How you spend/invest your money; How much time you spend worrying; How often you think about your past; Whether or not you judge other people; Whether or not you try again after a setback; How much you appreciate the things you have. - Caleb LP Gunner

Julia Robinson writes - “On Tuesday of last week, we were up as normal, getting ready for work and homeschooling, when suddenly the radio went off. The usual annoying mission to fight through the jumble sale, that is the cupboard-under-the-stairs, to the fuse box ensued. Nothing doing. We then spent the next hour running round the house desperately trying to find what appliance or device could have caused the circuit to blow. Again, nothing could be found and we

were going mad wondering what on earth we'd forgotten. As all the sockets were out, the fridge freezer was now on its countdown to defrosting, and we had no wifi and no way of plugging in laptops or phones meaning we couldn't work either, so by this stage we knew we'd have to get an emergency electrician out to fix the problem.

And then Digby went outside and down the garden to the workshop, which is in reality a converted garage full of theatrical equipment. What he found looked like a crime scene! There were things everywhere - items pulled off shelves, packets of wood shavings for the guinea pigs ripped open and piles everywhere - and, tellingly, cables which had evidently been chewed through. Here, finally, was the answer to the problem!

After much investigating and waiting in the garden, the guilty culprit finally slunk out of the workshop about half an hour later. A large silvery fox* who had obviously got trapped in there overnight, and gone mad trying to find a way out. In doing so, she had chewed an extension lead and that is what had caused everything to go down.

So over two hours later we were back on the grid, and able to work again (and crucially, to save our food supplies!). I expect the fox had no idea how much trouble she'd caused!"

(* *Not this one* - Ed).



Geoff Howard sent me this poem forwarded to him by Peter Fall at St Mary's in Bromley

What Yeats might have written

I won't arise and go now, and go to Innisfree, I'll sanitise the doorknob and make a cup of tea.
 I won't go down to the sea again; I won't go out at all, I'll wander lonely as a cloud from the kitchen to the hall.
 There's a green-eyed yellow monster to the north of Katmandu but I shan't be seeing him yet and nor, I think, will you.
 While dawn comes up like thunder on the road to Mandalay I'll make my bit of supper and eat it off a tray.
 I shall not speed my bonnie boat across the sea to Skye, or take the rolling English road from Birmingham to Rye.
 About the woodland, just right now, I am not free to go, to see the 'Keep Out' posters or the cherry hung with snow,
 And no, I won't be travelling much, within the realms of gold, or get me to Milford Haven. All that's been put on hold.
 Give me your hands, I shan't request, albeit we are friends, nor come within a mile of you, until this trial ends.

Jane Cornish sent the poster below and **Ray Andrew** sent a photo of a 'TV tray for seniors' (*not the one in the poem above!* - Ed) and several other items, including



jokes and 'Silver Voices' updates e.g. "God: I've invented wind. Adam: I don't like it. God: Well, it's only a first draught..."

Silver Voices are still continuing to campaign for older people and report that more than one million over-75s have not paid the TV

licence fee. The amnesty continues and enforcement letters are *not* being issued. Ray's latest job was delayed until 27 January. He is playing Clerk of Court in the Netflix production of 'Anatomy of a Scandal' (*Is there no end to your talent, Ray?* - Ed).



Pat Hubbard keeps in touch and sent me this poem - 'Memories'

My forgetter's getting better but my rememberer is broke, To you that may seem funny but to me that is no joke
 For when I'm here I'm wondering if I really should be there, And when I try to think it through, I haven't got a prayer
 Often times I walk into a room, say "What am I here for?", I wrack my brain but all in vain, a zero is my score
 At times I put something away, where it is safe but gee! The person it is safest from is generally me!
 When shopping I may see someone, say "Hi" and have a chat, then, when the person walks away, I ask myself "Who was that?"
 Yes, my forgetter's getting better while my rememberer is broke, And it's driving me plumb crazy and that isn't any joke.

News Flash - Pat had her first Covid vaccination on Saturday 23 January 2021!

Iris Osborne, like many of our senior members, has been unable to attend the church she loves and misses greatly. A long time supporter of the 'Good Companions' Iris writes; "Hello, Good Companions. This time last year we were still meeting and having a 'sales table' and a raffle. Now, we can't see each other and not all of us have access to the internet. However, we can still keep in contact by telephone.

This month I am giving you some information about the month of January (which you may already know)! The Romans named the month after the god Janus (two-headed), one to look back at the old year and the other to look forward to the new year.

Some notable events in past Januaries are: discovery of X-Rays (1896); first operational underground railway in London (1863 - don't know where!); Howard Carter found Tutankhamun's tomb (1924); Mary Shelley published 'Frankenstein' (1818); the Tamla record label was founded (1959), later becoming Tamla Motown; 'Top of the Pops' was launched (1964).

People born in winter months are less irritable, better problem solvers and often left-handed.

Memory declines less when feeling enthusiastic and cheerful; smiling keeps you sharp (*I assume this is at any time of the year and not just January? - Ed*)



Joan & Les Huxley - Congratulations on your diamond wedding anniversary and 60 years together on Thursday 28 January!



Mottingham Matters

Cllr Will Rowlands writes: Democracy is a wonderful thing. I or anyone, can write a contribution for Keep Connected and you, the reader, are free to read and either agree or disregard whatever is said. As we have witnessed over the course of the past few weeks the resolve of the biggest democracy in the world has been tested like never before. These are my thoughts on what has unfolded across the 'pond'.

In this country, and in any democracy, it is standard procedure, when a council or constituency election result is close, for one, or many parties to request a recount. It is also standard procedure that once it is clear you have lost, to accept the result graciously and congratulate the victor.

Donald Trump isn't the first person to 'claim victory' in the aftermath of defeat. Here in the UK for example, in recent years both Gordon Brown (2010) and Jeremy Corbyn (2017) claimed they could form a government (with other party support), despite never having the numbers to make this possible. Where disputes like this are normally resolved in an amicable manner, the storming of the US Congress, was an attempt by a minority to block the democratic will of the American people from being implemented and to halt a democratically elected president from taking office. This is something none of us thought was possible. The events we have seen in recent months could become the overriding symbol with which history will define the Trump presidency.

The past year has been bizarre, but the actions which have followed the US elections are some of the most bizarre yet. (*This article was written before the inauguration of President Biden - Ed*).

Mottingham Librarian, Christine Davis, says she has no concrete news to give except the library is closed for the foreseeable future. She has asked me to let you know that all items will automatically be renewed during lockdown. If you are able please visit Bromley Libraries Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/BromleyLibraries> where there are plenty of things for children of all ages. The library is currently building its 'family' and adult offer, including Chris's own talks on Saturdays at 1pm fortnightly, the next one being 30 January, featuring Tower Bridge and Shad Thames. These are currently only available on FaceBook but they are working on this.

Library members can still access e-books, audio books and information on the Bromley Library website <https://capitadiscovery.co.uk/bromley> - temporary membership is available there.

Porcupine Update, Ted Rowlands, Chair, Porcupine Development Initiative

Lidl's first application for planning permission for a supermarket was thrown out by the Council in June 2013, and Lidl chose to opt for a full appeal (at great cost to themselves and Bromley Council), and their appeal was dismissed by the Government Inspector on 16 December 2014. A Community Interest Company (CIC) was formed (with links to the Mottingham Residents

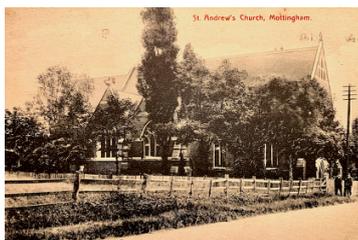
Association), with membership from the local community, and the CIC was charged with securing alternative uses for the site, which was then registered as an “Asset of Community Value” (ACV).

Lidl refused to work with the Porcupine Development Initiative (the CIC), wanting to recover all their outlay (c£1.8m) should they dispose of the site. The site was valued in 2014 at around £800k, so Lidl’s outrageous demands could not be met, as no lender or grant giver would support a project being acquired at such an overvalue. Thus the ACV was allowed to lapse.



Lidl resubmitted their application in May 2019, to address the councillors’ previous objections. The planning department/Lidl then tried again on 18 August 2020 via a Zoom type committee meeting. The planning department, for some unknown reason supported their application. The Councillors again turned the application down on grounds of ingress and egress to the site, access to nearby roads and routes by which Lidl’s lorries would approach the site. Lidl’s agents responded to the objections, and Lidl’s submission for planning permission was yet again submitted to the Council Committee on 20 October via Zoom. This time Lidl’s submission was again clearly rejected. It is understood that Lidl will continue to endeavour to secure planning permission. There were 335 objections to Lidl’s proposals, which seem to have been ignored by the planning department!

Church Matters - Along with most churches, **St Andrew’s and St Alban’s** remain closed for collective worship until further notice. Parish services are relayed from the rectory using Zoom. Absence of broadband/wifi provision in the church buildings means it is not easy to conduct services from the church, but we hope this will be possible soon. Please check the website, St Andrew’s FaceBook page and WhatsApp groups for ongoing information and podcast sermons.



The photos show St Andrew’s in 1919 and today (1919 postcard photo provided by Digby Robinson - Ed) - what a difference a century makes!

St Edward’s church is connected to the internet and all services conducted by the vicar, Revd Dr Catherine Shelley are relayed from there on FaceBook. Please do continue to support the Foodbank in these difficult times.

Keep the stories of faith and freedom alive



It has never been more urgent to support democracy — and religion has an important part to play, says Alan Smith

In Closing; My thanks to all contributors for making this issue possible and apologies to those whose items I’ve omitted - they will be included in the next issue! Please keep them coming and do keep in touch with KC and one another in helping our community to keep on going. Your experiences of life and friendship in lockdown, including vaccination against Covid, are particularly welcome. There was no room to include ‘environment matters’ this time so expect it in the next issue! In the meantime today’s snow has seen the return of the redwings and this will serve as a reminder that the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch takes place next weekend - 30-31 January. So, do take part, enjoy the wildlife and remember to feed the birds as well as count them!



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