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DEAR ALL

Well...who is this nice young man?

Well around a good 500 members of our Fellowship will know this face. It is, of course Alex, our host for our live talks. If you haven't joined us as yet, why not make a note in the diary and take part in our next event. Alex and his team who initially offered to provide free fortnightly talks for the duration of lockdown last week confirmed that the talks will continue at least for the rest of this year. Many positive comments. Mary Macer, Suffolk West Branch today (28th July) wrote on Facebook. "It was my first time at a Mirthy talk, and it was very good indeed. Thank you, Alan Jones. I have an old laptop and wondered whether it would be up to the job but had no problems at all. I've already signed-up to another talk!"

What's new this Issue

Well I expect like me you are getting a little tired (or a lot tired) being told what we can and can't do. The following website is updated regularly and does give us all the relevant information, but I recommend a coffee when reading! www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-outbreak-faqs-what-you-can-and-cant-do I hope you like the photo at the bottom of this page. A group of members from Cheltenham Branch met recently for a walk on Leckhampton Hill. It was the first time they had met for quite a while. They are looking forward to another walk together before too long. Well done also to branches who are using zoom. Newham Branch held their first zoom committee meeting recently and found it worked pretty well. I guess it's true, we are never too old to learn!

Update on Live Talks

This week again we had over 400 joining the session. Registration is easy - please just visit www.mirthy.co.uk/NHSRF and you will get an email with a link to click at the start of the talk. The live chat starts just after 10.45am with the talk starting at 11am. This together with the Q&A session after the talk makes an enjoyable experience. The next 3 talks will be:

11 Aug. – 10.45am A Tibetan Journey – Alan Clements

25 Aug. – 10.45am Life and Times of Edith Cavell – Melanie Gibson-Barton

8 Sep. – 10.45am Stories from the Clink – Neil Sadler



Cheltenham Branch enjoying a recent walk together

Premium Bonds ?



If you have lost track of Premium Bonds, with more than 3 million prizes monthly, there is every chance that you may have an unclaimed present from ERNIE waiting to be unwrapped. The likelihood is that it will be only one of the smaller prizes (which start from just £25), but checking is free and there is no time limit for claiming.

If you can locate any paperwork and find your 'bondholder's number', you can check whether you have any outstanding prizes on the NS&I website: www.nsandi.com/prize-checker If you don't have the physical bonds, don't know any of the bond numbers or your bondholder's number, you can write to NS&I, Sunderland SR43 2SB or download a form from their website to trace not only lost Premium Bonds but also any other NS&I investments you may have forgotten about.

Tee Hee! An elderly man was driving down the M11 when his car phone rang. Answering, he heard his wife's voice urgently warning him to be careful. "Darling! I just heard on the news that there's a car going the wrong way on the M11. Please be careful." "Hell!" said the husband. "It's not just one, there's hundreds of them!"

Ed: Thanks to Redbridge and Waltham Forest Branch.

Tee Hee! I was attacked by a mime artist this morning – he did unspeakable things to me!

What do you call a wolf who knows what's going on? Aware wolf.

Fairly Easy Flower Photo Quiz

Answers in the next issue



One



Two



Three



Four

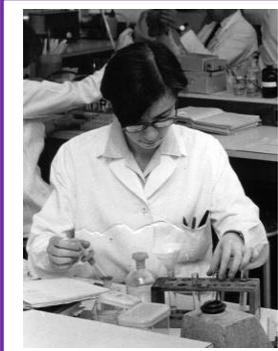


Five



Six

Interesting fact: The sap of the **Daffodil** contains sharp crystals that protect the flower from grazing animals. Prince Charles is paid one daffodil a year as rent for his lands on the Isles of Scilly, off the coast of Cornwall.



My “**bloody**” life – the beginning - Jane Dubery, Eastbourne Branch

I always think it's interesting to hear about how someone's career in the NHS came about. Sometimes it seems as though it was just by chance and other times it is planned from an early age. Back in the 50s & 60s what little girl didn't want to be a nurse when she grew up. Apologies to male NHSRF members but back then it was a job mostly associated with women!

So how did it come about that I worked in the NHS for 40 years give or take a day?

I started out wanting to be a teacher but I realised (thankfully for me and my potential pupils) that at that time I wasn't patient enough to cope with those who might take longer than others to learn. Fortunately I was quite good at science, particularly the practical side, and as I had always wondered how the various blood and other tests I'd had over the years were analysed I decided, after a bit of investigation, that a career as a Medical Laboratory Technician, as it was called in the 60s, was for me.

It was quite difficult finding out how to get into that profession as no one I knew was aware of that job. Even now the range of work of this “backroom” group isn't widely known about. So, I wrote lots of letters and one was to Great Ormond Street Hospital to which I had been referred to when I was 3½. I don't remember much about that episode, but my mother used to tell me that our appointment was in the original Victorian building and we saw a consultant who wore morning dress – those were the days!

I had a reply which provided a lot of information about the job, the training and where to get more details but telling me that there wasn't a vacancy at that time. However, they said that they would keep my name on file. They were as good as their word and in July 1966 I was invited for an interview for a job in the Chemical Pathology Department.

I arrived with some trepidation, this was my first “proper” job interview, and met the Chief Technician and the Chemical Pathologist, Dr Barbara Clayton. Little did I know that I was in extremely expert company as Dr Clayton went on to become a Professor, the President of the Royal College of Pathology and later a Dame. However on that day she was so friendly and motherly that I was soon put at ease and once she found out which school I went to we seemed to spend most of the interview talking about the rivalry between her old school and mine when they played hockey and netball against one another!

Despite the fact they seemed to have asked very little about my qualifications, the next day (yes, the Royal Mail was that quick back then) I received a letter offering me the job at a salary of £508 p.a. including London Weighting. I immediately accepted and started at G.O.S. on the 5th September. I still have all the letters related to that interview (I am a bit of a hoarder), the job offer and even my first pay slip which was for £30 13s 10d after tax!

The story of my memorable first day at work, the incredible children I met and the lifelong friends that I made in the 8 years I worked at G.O.S will have to wait for another time. As will interesting bits of gossip like working with Richard Burton's sister, riding in a lift with a member of the royal family, taking blood from various “personalities” and analysing the blood of a lion!!

PS the photo is of very young “me” taken over 50 years ago – test tubes and pipettes are rarely seen in today's laboratories.



Bob Eden (East Surrey Branch) 25.10.42-25.5.20

Keith Clarke, Bob's nephew, writes:

Bob was my uncle but also a mate – to me and to everyone he met. He often reminded me of Pooh Bear, being big and friendly; grounded, leading a simple life, going with the flow and taking the rough with the smooth. He didn't impose himself on others but when needed was always helpful, practical - nothing was too much trouble. He was there for his companions, not just family, and was also a naturally funny and fun-loving man, witty, mischievous and up for a wind-up.

Bob was the youngest of four and had three older sisters, my Mum being the eldest. He left school at 14 and had various jobs in and around Purley. Still in his teens, he joined Vic Radio – a Coulsdon-based radio and TV shop and repair workshop owned by Joan's [our branch chairperson's] uncle - small world! Here he worked alongside my Dad, Brian, installing TVs, radiograms and aerials around the district. Outside work, Bob would spend time with local friends and also enjoyed sailing - hence the Breton cap. I remember watching him and my Dad racing an Enterprise dinghy owned by Pete Rayner, the local fishmonger in Coulsdon who was the basis for Bob's record 25-year wind-up with his 'Pete' nickname.

My niece, Linda, who grew up in the same road where Bob still lived with his parents, reminded me of the back alley at the top of the gardens where the local kids played safely and treated 'Onk' (uncle) Bob's garage as quartermaster's store, repair shop, fort and armoury. 'Onk' was always up for a game, a fun and fact-filled chat or project. For example, he helped the kids to make bows and arrows, which along with pellet guns would then be used in the 'shooting range' he'd help set up in a yard area at the end of a neighbour's garden. That yard was also the venue for neighbourhood fireworks nights and bonfires. One I remember being lit by an AirFix plane powered by a firework that 'flew' along a hidden wire from his garage.

Electronics technology evolved away from valves and after Vic Radio, Bob's and my Dad's work took differing paths and we lost contact. Bob worked as a builder for a while and our paths next crossed when he took a job with BT at Downland Telephone Exchange. My Dad had been at BT a few years and was installing new exchange systems around Surrey. I'd just left school and joined BT as an apprentice. We met in passing but I missed out on the fabled Downland Exchange Christmas parties and so can't corroborate any stories regarding the quality – or indeed existence - of beer from the battery room brewery.

Technology changes resulted in us all leaving BT and Bob returned to the building trade. An unfortunate sequence of events led to the loss of his home and he moved in with my parents in Redhill in 2002. He quickly established himself in the neighbourhood, working as a porter at East Surrey Hospital and later volunteering at the Woodhatch Centre, as well as supporting my parents through health issues.

Following his retirement from the NHS he spent much of his time out and about riding local bus routes visiting towns of interest to him and researching potential outings for the NHS Retirement Fellowship branch committee. We'll remember Bob as a big-hearted, big kid at heart, an everyday guy, full of fun. If you get a chance to light a candle for him don't. Instead, light 'four candles' – and remember that impish grin!

Editorial Note:

This is a lovely story in remembrance of a lovely man. The Fellowship meant a great deal to Bob such that his family requested that anyone wishing to donate in his memory should do so to his branch because that is what Bob would have wanted (Bob's Fund). My thanks to East Surrey Branch for sharing Bob's story with us.

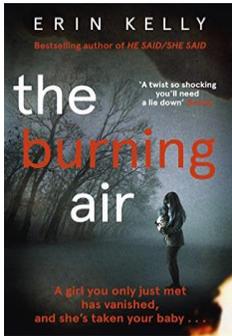


Editor's Book Choice

I guess this read is more for ladies than men but if you haven't read any of Erin Kelly's books then I can only say 'I thoroughly recommend.' Ed

Gripping and chilling, with a killer twist, **THE BURNING AIR** proves that Erin Kelly is one of Britain's best suspense writers.

Of course it was love for my children, love for my son, that caused me to act as I did. It was a lapse of judgement. If I could have foreseen the rippling aftershocks that followed, I would have acted differently, but by the time I realised the extent of the consequences, it was too late.



The MacBrides have always gone to Far Barn in Devon for Bonfire Night, but this year everything is different. Lydia, the matriarch, is dead; Sophie, the eldest daughter, is desperately trying to repair a crumbling marriage; and Felix, the youngest of the family, has brought a girlfriend with him for the first time.

The girl, Kerry, seems odd in a way nobody can quite put their finger on - but when they leave her looking after Sophie's baby daughter, and return to find both Kerry and the baby gone, they are forced to ask themselves if they have allowed a cuckoo into their nest . . .

If you get to read this book or any other of Erin Kelly's please let me know what you think.

If you have a favourite book you would like featured in SE News please do let me know. Ed

What happens to a frog's car when it breaks down? It gets toad away.

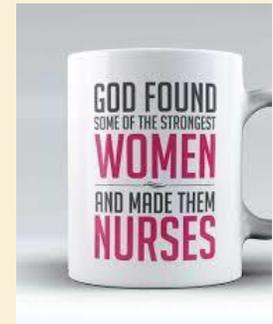
Q: What did the duck say when he bought lipstick? A: "Put it on my bill."

A teacher asked her students to use the word "beans" in a sentence. "My father grows beans," said one girl. "My mother cooks beans," said a boy. A third student spoke up, "We are all human beans."



Fairly Easy Photo Quiz Answers – last SEN issue

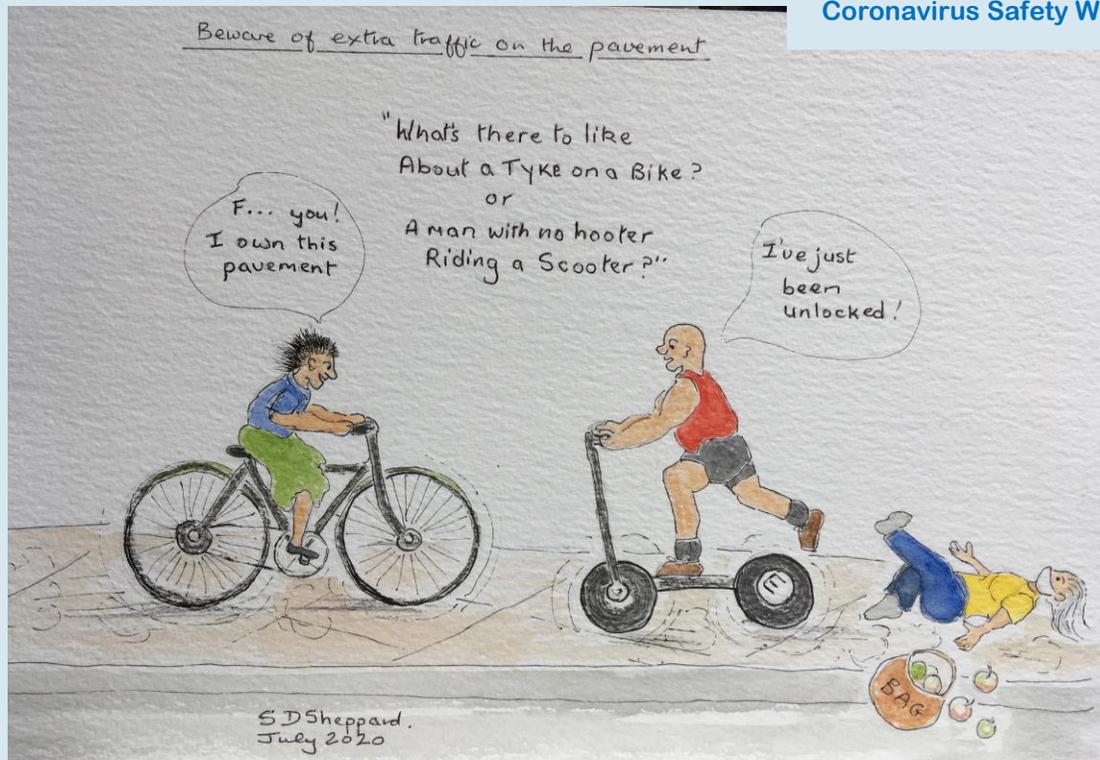
1. The Little Mermaid
2. The Brandenburg Gate
3. The Colosseum
4. The Golden Gate
5. The Washington Monument
6. The Matterhorn



There's two fish in a tank, and one says, "How do you drive this thing?"

I rang up British Telecom. I said "I want to report a nuisance caller. He said. " Not you again".

I went down the local supermarket, I said, "I want to make a complaint, this vinegar's got lumps in it". He said, "Those are pickled onions".



Pedestrians beware! – Thank you Sheila, Brighton Branch, for this lovely sketch. Ed



Changes to the over 75 TV licence come into effect from 1 August 2020

If you are aged 75 or over and covered by a free TV Licence expiring on 31 July 2020, you do not have to do anything to stay properly licensed until TV Licencing write to you. Letters will be going out in August. Some people will be eligible to claim a free licence or an agreed payment plan will be available.

For now, if you are over 75 please ignore any emails or letters you receive asking you to pay your TV licence as they may be a scam.

25 Aug. - 10.45am Life and Times of Edith Cavell Talk by Melanie Gibson-Barton

Exploring the story of the British heroine who died in Brussels in 1915. Presenting the experience of regular visits to Brussels to research the hospitals and homes where Edith would have worked as well as the place of her execution - a humbling experience. The Life and Times of Edith Cavell talk tells her story supported by photographs of existing artifacts of her life.

Remember to register for this live talk at www.mirthy.co.uk/NHSRF

Ed



And finally, keep well everyone. If you would like to contribute to the next issue or you know of anyone who would like to be added to the mailing list or sent a hard copy then please do make contact via phone 07960 425956 or email london.eastanglia@nhsrf.org.uk

Sally Bundock
Development Officer