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Just a few ladies from Suffolk West Branch

## DEAR ALL

### Halloween

Well hello again. I hope you like the pumpkins on the left. We have grown three in the garden this year for the grandkids. Personally, I am not too bothered about Halloween, but I thought it would be nice anyway to have a jolly story about it and it appears on page 2.

In celebration of Black History Month, I am pleased to include another book recommendation by Sheila Sheppard – Wonderful Adventures of Mrs. Seacole in Many Lands.

I expect like me you watch some of the news but not all. I guess it is important to keep positive and to keep engaging with others as much as we can. Our thoughts are with those in the parts of the UK where restrictions are the highest. We must all do our best to keep safe.

I am still trying to use my time wisely and not to waste it on things that really don't need to be done or worried about.

Do try to keep well everyone and keep focused. These are difficult times but together we will get through. Yes, we will!

### Update on Live Talks

We had a record number, 519, at the live talk last week and many agreed it was one of the best so far. The speaker, David Clark, will be with us again next month with a different topic. Live chat starts just after 10.45am with the talk starting at 11am. This together with the Q&A session makes an enjoyable experience.

**Replays now available on demand.** Do remember that once you have registered and received a confirmation email with a link to join the talk live, once the talk has finished this same link can be used for 7 days to watch a replay of the talk on demand. If you cannot make the live talk when it is first shown you can watch it on your own for up to 7 days.

Registration is pretty easy - please just visit [www.mirthy.co.uk/NHSRF](http://www.mirthy.co.uk/NHSRF) and you will get an email with a link to click at the start of the talk. Details of the next talk are shown on page 6 of this newsletter. The next 4 talks planned are:

- 3 Nov. – 10.45am Goose Grease and Brown Paper – Kath Reynolds
- 17 Nov. – 10.45am We Can't Let You Broadcast That – David Clark
- 1 Dec. – 10.45am A Christmas Entertainment – Sun Jester
- 15 Dec. – 10.45am Tis the Season to be Jolly – Kath Reynolds

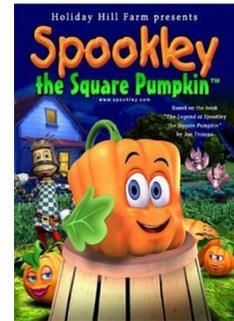
## Spookly the Square Pumpkin by Joe Troiano

Two bats who live at Holiday Hill Farm, bug-eating Boris and bug-loving vegetarian Bella, discover an unusual sight in the pumpkin patch and rush to inform the farm's scarecrow, Jack, of their find: a young, innocent and square pumpkin, who identifies himself as Spookley. Jack takes a liking to Spookley, but Little Tom, a small pumpkin attached by a vine to the much larger Big Tom, immediately begins bullying Spookley and says only round pumpkins are real pumpkins. Jack quickly puts a stop to Little Tom's teasing.

Jack organizes the pumpkins in the patch to compete in the 'Jack-a-Lympics' contest, an athletic competition ("not affiliated in any way, shape or form with... those other games") designed to determine the "Pick of the Patch." Three spiders, who show sympathy for Spookley, decide to help him in the Jack-a-Lympics just so they can help themselves to the prize, a crown made of candy corn. Throughout the competition, Big Tom and Little Tom are repeatedly disqualified for using their vine to give them an unfair advantage, leaving third-place finisher Bobo, a vain female pumpkin, to win most of the events. Spookley turns out to be a total failure at all the events, leaving him discouraged.

As Bobo is crowned the winner and the spiders abandon Spookley to help themselves to her crown, a severe windstorm hits the pumpkin patch, pushing the pumpkins all over and pinning Jack under a flaming tree branch. Spookley, because he is square, does not roll away when the wind hits him (unlike the other pumpkins) and, through some moments of ingenuity, rescues Jack from being burned alive and his fellow pumpkins from being washed away in the river. The other pumpkins show gratitude for saving them.

After the storm, the farmer goes into the patch to assess the damage and discovers Spookley. The farmer is charmed by Spookley's square shape and decides to make the square pumpkin his own personal jack-o'-lantern.



**Ed** Yes, I know it is a kid's story but nice to have a little bit of fun at Halloween!



### Answers in next issue

1. "The beauty of me is that I'm very rich."  
*Richard Branson, Bill Gates or Donald Trump*
2. "How did you find America? We turned left at Greenland."  
*Billy Connolly, Ringo Starr or John Lennon*
3. "Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding."  
*Albert Einstein, Winston Churchill or Nelson Mandela*
4. "I used to be indecisive but now I'm not so sure."  
*Tommy Cooper, Tony Hancock or Spike Milligan*
5. "Outside of a dog, a man's best friend is a book. Inside of a dog it is too dark to read."  
*Groucho Marx, Ronnie Barker or Tommy Cooper*
6. "I am extraordinarily patient, provided I get my own way in the end."  
*Sir Winston Churchill, John F. Kennedy or Margaret Thatcher*



The Mathematical Bridge originally across the River Cam in 1762 and originally known as the wooden bridge.



A bronze bust of Charles Darwin in the Darwin garden at Christ's College.



The Bridge of Sighs in Cambridge named after the Bridge of Sighs in Venice. They have little architecturally in common apart from both being covered.



The giant ancient Plane tree in Emmanuel College garden, Cambridge, thought to have been planted in 1836.

## Bridge the Gap

### by Steve Greaves, Cambridge Branch

An annual treat which is extremely popular in Cambridge is a fund-raising college walk for local charities.

The traditional day-long event, known as Bridge the Gap, is organised by Cambridge-based Arthur Rank Hospice and usually attracts more than 3,000 walkers (including a detachment from the Cambridge Branch). Sadly, the event did not take place in its traditional form in 2020 due to the Covid pandemic, but instead a prepared route was made available allowing supporters to roam Cambridge streets at their own convenience during one week in September.

The event is supported and sponsored by local businesses and is held in collaboration with the City's Colleges and University, which opens five different colleges each year for the walkers to visit.

The Arthur Rank Hospice is one of the charities supported by members of the Cambridge branch who have raised more than £3,000 from donations and table-top sales.

Each year the charity walk aims to raise funds for the Arthur Rank Hospice and other local groups, including the Romsey Mill charity which supports innovative projects for teenagers; helping children struggling at school to acquire better qualifications; autism-friendly groups for children and teenagers plus Children's Centre services for young families and parents and pre-school sessions for the under 5's.

Along the way walkers are treated to some interesting facts outlined by a team of blue badge guides from the Society of Cambridge Tour Guides. Some of the highlights have included the Bridge of Sighs while walking through St. John's College, a visit to the Darwin garden while walking through Christ's College and hearing about the history of the famous Mathematical Bridge built over the River Cam in 1769 and later re-built for a second time in 1905.

Another highlight was the chance to explore the incredible giant Plane tree in the Fellows Garden of Emmanuel College. The exact date of the planting is unknown, but estimates taken from the girth of the tree in 1986 suggest it was planted in 1836.

Since the event began 16 years ago it has raised £440,000.



Celebrating our 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary

## Pat Willis Barking, Havering and Brentwood



### A Personal Reflection on Lockdown

Our world has changed beyond recognition and has forced many people to take a fresh look at their lives.

And for me more so as my Darling Husband of 51 years died suddenly a few days before Christmas. I was suddenly dropped into a well of loneliness and sadness. So, my reflections on life have taken on a personal note as well as concerns for the world.

I found myself looking back on happier funnier times – some of which I would like to share with you.

Ray and I met when we were at senior school. I went to what was considered at that time “A Good School” in Islington North London and Ray went to a rather rough school for boys nearby – in fact Ray would always say “If there ever was to be a school Reunion it would take place in Pentonville Prison” which was opposite his School – such was the nature of some of his classmates!

So worried was our School Head about her “Gels” that we were taken to the bus stop two by two in our long dark green gymslips with red sash and little bowler hats with red tassels – so that the nasty boys could not interfere with us!! Secretly of course many of us were at an age that wanted to be interfered with!!

In the summer we wore Panama hats and long green check dresses. To be caught without a hat meant a trip to the Head's study. Miss, her ex-military 6ft 2 inches, – us girls always thought her gender a trifle troubling!

Someone stole my Panama on the bus, but Ray found out the culprit and the Panama was returned to me, and so our lifelong adventure began. We married in 1968 and honeymooned in Montreux Nr Geneva at the cost of 31 guineas per person, a shocking cost according to our parents. Our hotel overlooked lakes and mountains. It was glorious. I returned to the bathroom anxious to wear my new trousseau, as I emerged from the bathroom I expected Ray to say “Darling you look gorgeous” but instead I burst into uncontrollable laughter as Ray who had not encountered a DUVET before had undone all the buttons of the cover and got inside!! “Funny sheets Pat” he said and for the next 51 years we laughed our way throughout our amazing time together.

**Ed** I spoke on the phone with Pat earlier this month. All things considered she is doing remarkably well. She has a positive approach on life and is fortunately well supported by friends and family. She is gaining confidence with her IT skills and is looking forward to taking part in the Live Talks.

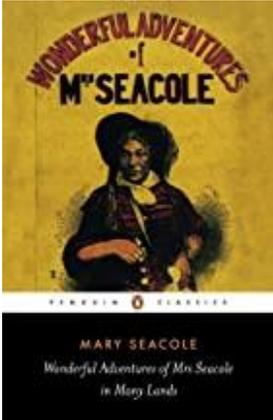
This article of Pat's in fact won First Prize in her branch's Tales of the Unexpected Competition. So well done Pat!



## Member's Book Choice

### Wonderful Adventures of Mrs. Seacole in Many Lands Mary Seacole

I am very grateful to **Sheila Sheppard of Brighton Branch** for her contributions to this feature in South East News. This book is indeed a worthwhile read by a remarkable woman.



Written in 1857, this is the autobiography of a Jamaican woman whose fame rivalled Florence Nightingale's during the Crimean War. Seacole's offer to volunteer as a nurse in the war met with racism and refusal. Undaunted, Seacole set out independently to the Crimea where she acted as doctor and 'mother' to wounded soldiers while running her business, the 'British Hotel'. A witness to key battles, she gives vivid accounts of how she coped with disease, bombardment and other hardships at the Crimean battlefield.

Mary Seacole is a singular and fascinating figure, overstepping all conventional boundaries." Jan Marsh, Independent

If you know of a book you would like to see featured in SE News please do let me know. Ed

A man walks into a bar with a roll of tarmac under his arm and says: "Pint please, and one for the road."

Two aerials meet on a roof – fall in love – get married. The ceremony was rubbish – but the reception was brilliant.

I said to the gym instructor "Can you teach me to do the splits?" He said, "How flexible are you?" I said "I can't make Tuesdays."

I was having dinner with Garry Kasparov (world chess champion) and there was a check tablecloth. It took him two hours to pass me the salt.

I backed a horse last week at ten to one. It came in at quarter past four.

A lorry-load of tortoises crashed into a trainload of terrapins, What a turtle disaster.

Two Eskimos sitting in a kayak were chilly. But when they lit a fire in the craft, it sank, proving once and for all that you can't have your kayak and heat it.

### Fairly Easy Advertising Slogan Quiz Answers – last SEN issue

1. Mr. Muscle
2. Cravendale Milk
3. Fry's Turkish Delight
4. HSBC
5. Vienetta
6. Bell's Scotch Whiskey



### Nostalgia 25 May 1965



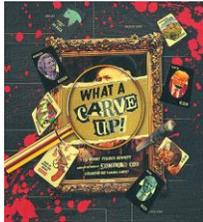
Muhammad Ali, still mostly known at the time as Cassius Clay, on this day landed a blow on the jaw of his opponent, Sonny Liston, that became known as "the phantom punch" – so called because few people at the event saw it. The result was a highly controversial first-round knock-out, but official confirmation of Ali's status as heavyweight boxing champion of the world. The scheduled 15-round bout ended after 2 mins 12 secs.

**Are you missing visits to theatre? If so, this online production could be the answer for you?**

A Wolsey Theatre Production of  
**'What a Carve Up'**

by Henry Filloux-Bennett

With a cast including Stephen Fry,  
Celia Imrie, Griff Rhys Jones and  
Tamzin Outhwaite



*January 1991. Six people are dead. Murdered. One thing in common – they are members of one of the most corrupt, powerful and toxic families in the country. One prime suspect – the celebrated writer in the middle of compiling a history of the family. A simple open and shut case or is it? Anything but.*

For tickets please visit: [www.whatacarveup.com](http://www.whatacarveup.com)

## Research Project – Northern Ireland

Did you, or anyone you know, move from Northern Ireland to Manchester, London or Glasgow in the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s or later? Or were you, or was anyone you know, born in Manchester, London or Glasgow to parents (one or both) from Northern Ireland? If so, a special academic research history project would love to hear from you. The oral history project is being run jointly by the universities of Manchester and Brighton and aims to look at how coming from Northern Ireland or having strong, family links to Northern Ireland shaped your childhood, education and into adulthood and careers. Participants will do a remote interview with researchers which could take up to three hours. It may touch on subject and issues which are hard for you to talk about, but researchers have been briefed on handling sensitive issues with care. If you would like further information please email Lucia Hiden [northeastengland@nhsrf.org.uk](mailto:northeastengland@nhsrf.org.uk)

## Dignity Magazine: Helping the over-50s live life to the full

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2020

Around 320,000 private tenants are at risk of losing their homes. Our feature provides a practical advice to help stave off an eviction.

An estimated 130,000 older women who retired before 6 April 2016 have been underpaid their state pensions. Our feature shows women how to check their state pension entitlement and reclaim any underpayments.

Dignity costs just £18 per year for bi-monthly issues posted to your home.

For more information visit [www.dignitymagazine.co.uk](http://www.dignitymagazine.co.uk)



### Next On-line Talk – 3 November



## Goose Grease and Brown Paper Kath Reynolds

### Can we afford the doctor? Of course not!

A fun trip down memory lane to pre-NHS days and the kitchen cupboard remedies inflicted by our nearest and dearest! Honey, salt, onions, mustard...not to forget the snails, urine, string and cow muck!



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](mailto:london.eastanglia@nhsrf.org.uk)

**Sally Bundock**  
Development Officer