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DEAR ALL

Summer wildflowers

Last year we had to dig up the lavender in our front garden because it had grown too large. My husband, Frank, replaced it with some beautiful wildflowers which before the heavy rain we had recently were simply magnificent. We missed seeing all the bees that normally visit the lavender, but we still saw quite a few visiting the wildflowers. Last issue I wrote about the sad loss of our Ethel. This year has been more difficult than most and branch members may well have lost loved ones and/or fellow members. Let's remember them all in love and respect. We soldier on supporting each other.....

Looking after ourselves

This is just 'a gentle reminder'. I often begin emails with that phrase I hasten to add. I just thought though that this issue I would be a little motherly and remind everyone to make sure that they take good care of themselves and their loved ones of course, as we are not out of the woods yet so to speak. Let's all make sure we all eat properly and not too much. I am as guilty as anyone of sneakily eating an extra biscuit now and then. Let's make sure also that we get some exercise if we possibly can. Walking is excellent and I recommend everyday if at all possible. Later in this newsletter I recommend listening to music or even singing if you enjoy singing. Let's also keep in touch with each other, keep busy and engaged in life as much as we can. Anyway, lecture over. Just please take care.....

Update on Live Talks

Over 500 members took part in the event this week and listened to the talk about Edith Cavell. One comment recorded was 'Thank you for a truly wonderful interesting talk.' **If you need help registering my details are at the end of this newsletter.** Live chat starts just after 10.45am with the talk starting at 11am. This together with the Q&A session makes an enjoyable experience.

Registration is pretty 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. Details of the next talk are shown on page 6 of this newsletter. The next 3 talks planned are:

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

22 Sep. – 10.45am The London No-one Tells you About – Geoff Harris

6 Oct. – 10.45am The History of Witches – Sandy Leong



Crawley and District Branch

wished the NHS a Happy 72nd Birthday in beautiful Tilgate Park. In appreciation of our National Health Service we said a big THANK YOU also.

We enjoyed a 'socially distancing' picnic, all bringing our own food and sitting one metre apart. It was a lovely sunny day, very well attended by 14 members. So lovely to be out in the fresh air and to meet up after so long."

Cecelia Turpin

Fairly Easy Bird Photo Quiz

Answers in the next issue



One



Two



Three



Four



Five



Six

Interesting fact: The largest living bird in the world is...

...the **Ostrich**, which can reach a height of up to 2.7 metres with a wingspan of up to 2 metres (fairly impressive for a bird that can't fly). It will come as no surprise that the Ostrich also lays the largest bird eggs, weighing in at up to 1.5 kilograms.



Steve Greaves, Cambridge Branch

The words said everything: *'We'll meet again, don't know where, don't know when, but we'll meet again some sunny day'*.

These, of course, were the words from the song made famous by the late, great Dame Vera Lynn, whose silky tones entertained and encouraged thousands of troops throughout the Second World War.

As we skipped enthusiastically into the beginning of 2020 little did any of us realise that those same words would be just as apt today as they were then. And how very appropriate they are too as millions of people have found themselves locked away and out of physical contact with friends and family, courtesy of the Covid-19 pandemic, unsure as to where and when they would meet up again with friends and loved ones.

Cambridge pride ourselves on being a large, active group and each year the members can look forward to five or six outings and 11 monthly branch meetings with speakers. This year promised more of the same and in late February, 55 of our members attended a happily rewarding and brilliant performance of *The King and I* at Milton Keynes theatre. But then our well-oiled and efficient entertainments machine came to a shuddering halt. Branch meetings were stopped; speakers were put on standby; outings were cancelled; plans were dropped; future proposals put on the back burner.

Yikes!!! What to do? Nothing. Where to go? Nowhere because we were all incarcerated by Government decree, locked down in our own homes until further notice.

At the beginning of January our events calendar was full and our members were looking forward to two theatre trips; a visit to a castle and Westminster Abbey; an annual and highly successful quiz night, an annual branch holiday and an eagerly awaited Christmas Lunch in the exquisite surroundings of Madingley Hall, usually supported by up to 100 of our members. Suddenly there was nothing. Nothing to do and nowhere to go. A great empty void beckoned.

On a whim as branch secretary yours truly decided to send out a simple word search puzzle to all members who had email contact. This was attached to a general message urging members to make use of branch committee members if they needed help in any way.

This ploy to keep in touch with members quickly accelerated to other brain teasers and within a week, members were receiving challenges on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Two weeks in and this had become a daily event and before we knew it the Cambridge puzzles marathon was in full swing.

From early March to the beginning of August Cambridge members using email have received more than 140 challenges from a variety of puzzles ranging from Wordsearch, Sudoku, word ladders, quizzes, observation tests and many other different things in a bid to maintain interest and keep boredom at bay.

The members responded extremely well to this and a great feeling of camaraderie was generated as more and more people responded with email replies to the questions asked. It became fun and more than that members themselves added to the mix by submitting their own quizzes, puzzles and wombat challenges.

When I sent out a puzzle asking which of five images was the odd one out I received a reply from a lady who said the odd one was item five, because it was the only one pointing down and it was the end of the line. It was the odd one out, but for different reasons.

Her response made me smile, especially as she then went on to say exactly why it was the odd one out. Full marks for observation. Why was this noteworthy? It personified the type of feedback I was getting at the time and showed that members were joining in the fun and actually enjoying themselves along the way, which made the whole exercise worthwhile as we all tried to stay sane and safe in what has turned out to be one really weird and troubling year.

We do not appear to be out of the woods yet so let us all stay safe and remain well, while at the same time thinking of others who may be less fortunate.

Ed Note: The photo above is of Steve with the newsletter of the year award won by Cambridge branch in 2019.



AFTER UMBRAGE CARES FOR CARERS

After Umbrage exists to care for carers. We offer FREE four-day breaks in our self-catering cottages in tranquil and comfortable surroundings.

The breaks help to give carers a chance to rest and re-charge before returning to their unpaid caring roles for their loved ones living with life limiting and sometimes terminal conditions. Our beneficiaries tell us how they feel less alone knowing there is a charity who cares for those who care. They also say their wellbeing gets a 100% boost after their cottage break.

This offer is also available during the first year of bereavement which we know is a very difficult time.

Tara Belcher founded After Umbrage in 2013 having cared for both her parents who died of cancer 10 years apart. It is their legacy that Tara is upholding, and the personal touch is evident across every aspect of the charity's service.

After Umbrage helps carers create lasting fond memories with their families giving them the energy to continue their vital role for their loved ones, communities and the UK economy.

**For more information
please visit:**

www.afterumbrage.org.uk

Registered Charity Number:
1153922

Enjoying Music in Lockdown... and after Lockdown

We've all heard the saying, "music is good for the soul," and according to the evidence, it's good for your health as well.



Many studies have found that music therapy has a positive effect on a broad range of physical and psychological conditions including dementia, anxiety, depression, and cancer. Music therapy as we all know can be delivered by psychologists, therapists, or caregivers in hospitals, long-term care facilities, and even outpatient clinics. The goal being to improve people's health through music experiences such as free improvisation, singing, and listening to, discussing, and moving to music.

So, with this info in mind, perhaps we should all take some time out to listen to our favourite music. I am aware that quite a few of us retired folk also belong to choirs and those involved only report real benefits. For my part the other night I watched and listened to some 60s music on the TV and it really took me back – a pleasant experience.

Ed

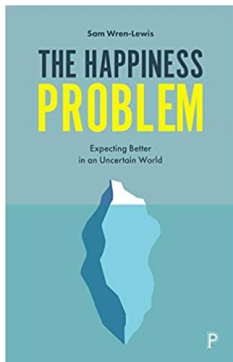


The world's longest place name - 85 letters.



Member's Book Choice Ros Lobo, SW Thames Regional Rep.

The Happiness Problem by Sam Wren-Lewis Expecting Better in an Uncertain World



I spent an interesting 20 minutes or so discussing books with Ros who reads widely and often has two or more books on the go at any one time, something that I have never really managed to achieve.

The Happiness Problem shows that the illusion of control over our lives is too simplistic and can even be harmful. Sam Wren-Lewis offers an alternative: he proposes that we can connect with, and gain a deeper understanding of, the personal and social challenges that define our time.

This book certainly gets the reader thinking – no bad thing!

Ed: Many thanks for sharing this book with us Ros.

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



Fairly Easy Photo Quiz Answers – last SEN issue

1. Sidney Poitier
2. Bette Davis
3. Gregory Peck
4. Marlene Dietrich
5. Jean Harlow
6. Steve McQueen



Interesting Fact

In demographics, the world population is the total number of humans currently living and was estimated to have reached 7.8 billion people as of March 2020. It took over 200,000 years of human history for the world's population to reach 1 billion, and only 200 years more to reach 7 billion. [Wikipedia](#)



NHS RETIREMENT FELLOWSHIP ST GEORGE'S MERTON & WANDSWORTH BRANCH

Dear NHSRF members

It is with great sadness that **Ethel Armstrong** our wonderful NHSRF Patron passed away on 6th August just two days after her 90th birthday.

Ethel Armstrong MBE is seated to the right of Annie: the photo was taken at the AGM & Conference last October in Coventry, Ethel was full of life and the first on the dance floor, the NHSRF will miss her, she did so much for the Fellowship.

Ed Note: My thanks to St. George's, Merton and Wandsworth for sharing this item from their August Newsletter. Really looks as if everyone was enjoying themselves – including dear Ethel!

I didn't know:

Florence Nightingale was named after the city in which she was born in 1820: Florence, Italy.

On average, nurses walk four to five miles every shift 12-hour shift they work. That's a lot of walking. **Ed**

Next On-line Talk – 8 September



Stories from the Clink – Neil Sadler

- Which country has a quarter of all the world's prisoners locked up?
- Why did the prisoner lock his own cell door from outside on the jail landing?
- The real escape from Alcatraz and one that didn't quite make it!
- Did George Best ever play for the prison football team?

All this and more from a former police officer who visited many UK prisons and met many colourful characters. Their stories might well surprise you. Approached with his customary humour, let Neil guide you in (and luckily, out) of a few well-known prisons.

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