



*'No, not a disco. This is a  
24-hour vaccination site  
for the elderly'*

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Dear All

## What's New

For many of us at some point in the last couple of weeks we have found ourselves having our first vaccination. We had ours on Saturday afternoon and it all seemed very organized and we were in and out pretty quickly. Like many we feel that 12 weeks is too long to wait for our second jab but only time will tell if it will be shorter. Some people I understand were given a second date to attend. We were just told we would be contacted by our GP. Anyway, I beat John R to the post by just a couple of days!

Quite a few of you have entered the Middle for Diddle competition. There is still time before the draw takes place on 10<sup>th</sup> February if you would like to enter.

This newsletter is dated 3<sup>rd</sup> February and I have included a few 'what happened on this day' memorabilia. Importantly for me it was my mum's birthday. She would have been 110. Still she reached 94 so did pretty well.

Cases of Covid-19 continue to fall but slowly. We are looking forward to the Spring. We have a couple of crocuses out and the daffs are almost there. Keep cheerful everyone and help each other.

As always do take care and keep safe one and all.

## Update on Live Talks

Remember folks. Registration is pretty easy - please just visit [www.mirthy.co.uk/NHSRF](http://www.mirthy.co.uk/NHSRF) and you will just need to enter your first name and your email address for the talk you wish to register for and then you will receive an email from Alex with a link to click at the start of the talk. Live chat starts just after 10.45am with the talk starting at 11am. This together with the Q&A session makes an enjoyable experience.

Remember replays are available on demand. Assuming a member registers for a talk they will receive a confirmation email with a link to join the talk live. This same link can be used for 7 days to watch a replay of the talk on demand.

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

- 9 Feb. – 10.45am My Mysterious Grandmas – David Clark  
23 Feb. – 10.45am Morecambe and Wise – Steve Short  
9 March – 10.45am Wandering in Flanders Fields – Melanie Gibson-Barton



The NHS Retirement Fellowship is a national charity, set up in 1978 as a social, leisure, educational and welfare organisation for NHS staff. Today the Fellowship comprises a very much wider membership from the health and social care sector and their partners and includes staff that have been outsourced to the private sector, hospice staff, League of Friends helpers and volunteers generally. Membership can be postal or in branch. All members have the opportunity to be involved in a wide range of interesting and fun activities within branches and nationally. There are ? Local Branches: -----  
-----for further details of the charity please visit [www.nhsrf.org.uk](http://www.nhsrf.org.uk) or Branch contact: ---Name --- at *email address* or telephone -----  
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## Local Recruitment Initiative

It is always good to welcome new members to our Fellowship whether they be postal members or branch members.

**Vic Griffiths, Vice President, and Michael Bennett, Regional Rep. for North East Thames** have put forward this sensible suggestion, which they have already piloted with some success in their local areas, as a way to invite new folk to join us.

In essence, the proposal is that branches consider, if they have not already done so, advertising their branch in local publications such as Residents Association Newsletters, local papers, local websites and similar. A proposed template is suggested to the left of this note. We would love **Branch Secretaries** to consider this proposal. If advice or help is needed please do not hesitate to contact either Vic Griffiths on [victorgriffiths@btinternet.com](mailto:victorgriffiths@btinternet.com) or myself on [london.eastanglia@nhsrf.org.uk](mailto:london.eastanglia@nhsrf.org.uk)

Finally, if you do manage to place an article do please email us a copy for monitoring purposes.

Thank you. Ed

### *The Enduring Gardener*

**Website:** <https://blog.theenduringgardener.com/>

For any green-fingered gardeners out there, then you should read The Enduring Gardener, which features the gardening blog of Stephanie Donaldson.

Stephanie is not only a hands-on gardener but was the Gardens Editor of Country Living magazine and now writes freelance for many publications as well as being the author of many gardening books.

Posts cover a range of gardening topics such as how to grow a garden on your windowsill.

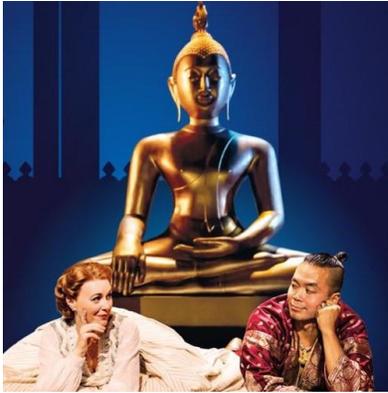
### 23<sup>rd</sup> February – On this day in

1783 - Spain recognized the independence of the United States.

1815 - The world's first commercial cheese factory was established in Switzerland.

1959 - Buddy Holly (22), Ritchie Valens (17), the Big Bopper (28) and pilot Roger Peterson died in a plane crash in Iowa.

1966 - The first rocket-assisted controlled landing on the Moon was made by the Soviet space vehicle *Luna IX*.



## The King and I

Steve Greaves, Cambridge Branch

45 members of the Cambridge branch not only transcended three weather systems in the space of 90 minutes (snow, rain and then sunshine), but also managed to fit in a quick day return to the Royal court of Siam in 1862!

The purpose of our globe-trotting exploits was to see for ourselves the widely acclaimed and lavishly produced Rodgers and Hammerstein musical *The King and I*, which is 70-years-old and was on show for our benefit at Milton Keynes in February 2020.

The musical first appeared on the Broadway stage in 1951, followed in 1956 by the film version made famous by Yul Brynner as the King and Deborah Kerr as bossy and determined school mistress Anna Leonowens. This film propelled the show to international fame and became known as one of the best, if not THE best, musical productions to emerge from the Golden Age of Hollywood musicals in the 1950s.

The show we saw was previously a sell-out at the London Palladium for six months before going on the road in 2018.

It boasted a cast with a rich vein of talent including Annelene Beechey who was the main Anna understudy in the London production and Jose Llana who played the role of the King in many of the productions on Broadway.

This version gave us many memorable moments, including the famous songs, *Whistle a Happy Tune*, *Getting to Know You* and *Shall We Dance* alongside lesser known songs as *Westerners are Funny* and *It's a Puzzlement*.

The story is well known: the King of Siam employs a widowed English school mistress who arrived with her young son Louis to educate his many wives and, as we found out early on, his 67 children – but Jose the King said :”I was a late starter.”

In addition to the sharp dialogue and the ever present gentle humour there were several outstanding dance routines, none more so than when Anna showed the King how to dance in the charming and energetic polka sequence performed to the strains of *Shall We Dance*.



Incidentally, the dress Annelene wore for this scene was itself a work of art costing £15,000 to create and weighing 40lbs with a circumference of 14 feet. No wonder the show won Tony and Olivier awards for Costume and Choreography.

As our members made their way back to the coach happily talking about the two hours of fabulous entertainment, we had just witnessed none of us realized, that it would be our last outing as a group for more than a year. Thank you Covid-19 – for nothing!



## Frank & Lin Learner, Cardiff Branch

### Dyffryn Gardens (National Trust) just outside Cardiff

Part of our coping strategy throughout Covid 19 has been photography and painting in watercolours. Luckily Frank is a member of the local photography club - invaluable for Lin as a great source of locally 'commissioned/requested' photographs. Lin persuaded Frank to ask Barry Camera Club to provide two photos a month for Lin's local art group to paint. Shown is one of these source photos - by Frank of Dyffryn Gardens and matched by Lin's watercolour interpretation.

Dyffryn Gardens is one of the best Edwardian gardens in Wales and now cared for by the National Trust. The garden was created by Thomas Mawson (a well-known landscape architect) and the Corey family whose wealth was largely based on Welsh steam coal. The old walled gardens for growing fruit and vegetables were retained from the previous sixteenth century mansion. The rest of the garden was Mawson's design. He was inspired by the Arts and Crafts Movement. Near the house are formal balustraded terraces, lawns, flower beds and statuary east and south of the house. The Great Lawn draws the eye to the southern edge of the garden, bisected by the water lily canal and the recently restored fountain in the lower basin/pond. Reginald Corey had an exceptional collection of waterlilies – modern replacements are spectacular in the warmer months.

In the colder months, the long range of greenhouses in the kitchen gardens are a sheltered warm haven for sketching or photographing cacti, succulents and a myriad of sub-tropical plants – we've never visited when some of the orchids are in flower.

Leading south from the kitchen garden is a gated archway into the south-west facing Herbaceous Border running the entire length of the kitchen garden wall. Beyond the Herbaceous Garden are the 'garden rooms'; each of these has its own character and pre-date the famous examples at Hidcote and Sissinghurst. My favourite varies as to the time of year; in spring it is the Pompeian Garden when the wisteria is flowering; later in the year I have spotted a grass snake basking in the sun.

We live four miles away from Dyffryn Gardens, St Nicholas. Lin volunteered there as a gardener when she retired from Health Visiting. For her it was a



much-loved place from childhood visits to the gardens and open-air theatre. She really loved gardening there for a few years but unfortunately developed tennis elbow after an especially grueling session - trying to shift 'sleeping beauty's briar' from a thicket in the out-of-sight and overgrown southernmost part of the garden beyond the great lawn. This area is a natural depression in the ground; Reginald Cory planned a lake there and built the red brick observation tower and arcading, south of the Lavender Garden (also called the Pool Garden, these small pools have crested newts in them). This project was scotched when filling the lake led to flooding of Dyffryn house's cellars.

The photo is of the Italian Terrace, now called the Herbaceous Garden, at its best in Summer 2019. This view is the same as that famously painted by Edith H. Adie in 1923. The original painting is now in the RHS Lindley Library. Most of Mawson's plans for Dyffryn Gardens and all of Reginald Corby's papers were destroyed at Corby's death - it is by contemporary photos and Edith H. Adie's paintings that we know now what this garden looked like at that time.

We do enjoy our regular visits to Dyffryn. During the pandemic, the house and main café (outside reception) have been closed with a one-way route round the garden. We love the Gallery café at the back of the house which is usually open; it does real coffee and Frank is occasionally 'allowed' a sausage roll! You can sit inside, but Frank and I sit on the terrace enjoying the garden view if it's dry. Best to check the opening times and you may need to book in advance for weekends.

**Does your branch have a Facebook page?**

**Are you interested in developing a page for your branch and not sure how to take it forward?**

**We are here to help!**



Following the success of our own Facebook page development, we are keen to help you get more out of your own Facebook page. To start things off, our head of comms Lucia will be hosting a special Zoom event on Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> February at 10.30am to go through some basics and hear your thoughts. Aimed mainly at branch committee members but open to all, the event will look at things like "what can a Facebook page do for my branch?", "how can I use social media to attract more branch members?", "can a Facebook page be an effective communications method for branches?" and "how can we work with the Fellowship centrally more closely?"

To register please email Lucia at [comms@nhsrf.org.uk](mailto:comms@nhsrf.org.uk) You can also email Lucia with any questions you have or areas you would like to see covered.

**Observation:**

This virus has done what no woman has been able to do. Cancel sports, shut down all bars and keep men at home!

**A delightful Joke sent to me by South Beds. Branch**

A little silver-haired lady calls her neighbor and says, "Please come over here and help me. I have a killer jigsaw puzzle, and I can't figure out how to get started." Her neighbor asks, "What is it supposed to be when it's finished?" The little silver haired lady says, "According to the picture on the box, it's a rooster." Her neighbor decides to go over and help with the puzzle. She lets him in and shows him where she has the puzzle spread all over the table. He studies the pieces for a moment, then looks at the box, then turns to her and says, "First of all, no matter what we do, we're not going to be able to assemble these pieces into anything resembling a rooster." He takes her hand and says, "Secondly, I want you to relax. Let's have a nice cup of tea, and then," he said with a deep sigh.....

**"Let's put all the Corn Flakes back in the box."**



Another of Monica Sado's funnies

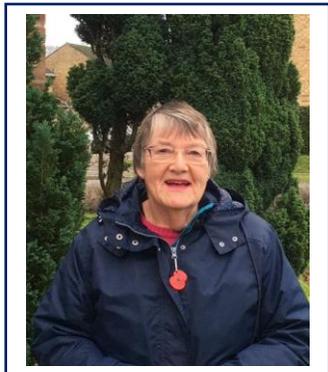
**Wouldn't it have been amazing if John Lennon had invented that device that you put in your front door to secretly see who's on the other side...**

I mean, imagine all the peepholes.

**I've decided to sell all my John Lennon memorabilia on eBay**

Imagine all the PayPal!





## Monica Sado of Brent Branch and Hedgehogs from Tiggywinkles Wildlife Hospital

Following on from the article on Tiggywinkles in the 6 January 2021 issue of South East News, Monica sent me the following. Remember if you would like to support them by buying my book Daniel's Magic Tree you can do so by visiting the Amazon website.

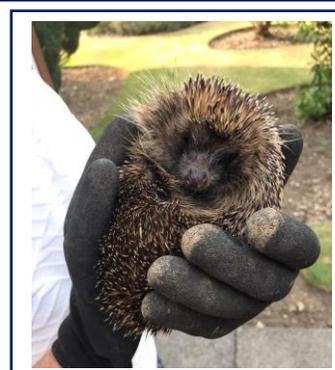
[www.amazon.co.uk/Daniels-Magic-Tree-Sally-Bundock-ebook/dp/B08QDP72ZN](http://www.amazon.co.uk/Daniels-Magic-Tree-Sally-Bundock-ebook/dp/B08QDP72ZN)

Every few months I have hedgehogs from Tiggys to release in my garden - usually I have 5 at a time, but today I received 9. I have attached a photograph of one of them.

Back in the summer on 2 occasions in one afternoon there was a ring at my front door with neighbours telling me that there was a hedgehog outside in the daytime. One of the neighbours had put down food and water for it, he said that it was very thirsty. I put the hedgehogs back in the carrying box, in the garage and then released them again when it was dark.

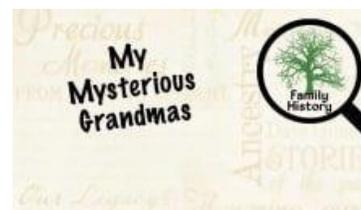
I telephoned a gentleman in the village who is a volunteer for Tiggywinkles - he said that because of the extreme heat they were probably just very thirsty and looking for water.

I have attached a photograph of the first hedgehog which I picked up using a pair of gloves.



Next On-line Talk – 9 February

## My Mysterious Grandmas David Clark



My Mysterious Grandmas is a genealogy talk with a difference. If you are hoping for a lot of serious information on the hows and the whys and the wherefores of tracing your family tree, David isn't your best port of call. What he's done in his usual laid-back style is to weave a fascinating story that reveals the mysteries of his two obscure Victorian grandmothers - both women, in their day, had much to be mysterious about.

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