

## BRIDGEND COMMUNITY NEWS

**Bridging Social  
Isolation  
Edition 43**



Photo taken by Andy Langdon on the canal towpath between Adelphi Mill and Hurst Lane

**This week has been an important week as Boris Johnson announced the ‘roadmap out of lockdown’ for the UK last Monday. If all goes to plan, this roadmap will result in all coronavirus restrictions ending by the end of June. This is really positive news and gives us something to look forward to. Although not much has changed yet in our day-to-day lives, we can definitely see light on the horizon.**

**This newsletter will still be here for you every week as we continue our journey through lockdown and beyond. This time may be just as challenging for many of us as previous months have been, maybe even a bit more so, as we wait for change to happen. Bridgend hopes to be here for you as much as ever before.**

**We plan to open the Centre on Monday 12th April when non-essential retail can re-open and we will inform you of how this will work over the coming weeks as we get more information together and formulate our plans. If you volunteer with us, you will no doubt hear from us very soon.**

## What 3 Words - By Kerry Langstaff

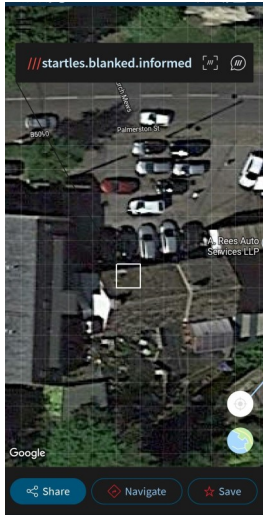


WHAT3WORDS

During a recent online lesson with my daughters, I was introduced to a fabulous free App for your phone or tablet called What 3 Words.

The basic premise of the App is that every **3** metre square of the world has been given a unique combination of **three words**. Used for e-commerce and delivery, navigation, emergencies and more. In other words, imagine you are walking somewhere in the beautiful countryside and unfortunately take a tumble, you need

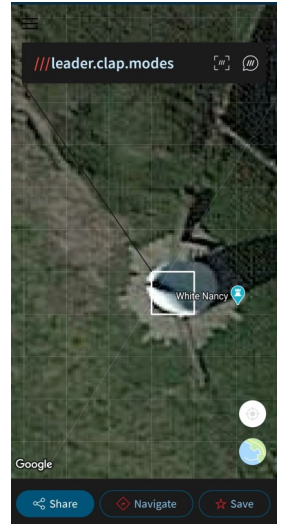
to phone the emergency services for help but can't precisely describe where you are, with the What 3 Words application you can open the app, find out the 3 word identifier for the 3m square you are in and give it to the call handler, they enter the 3 words into the app and will know exactly where you are.



Your teenager rings you up and says they are stuck and need a lift home. "Where are you?" you enquire, "You know, that place in Macc" comes the non-committal response! With the App you can ask them for their What 3 Words identifier and know exactly where they are without the cryptic guesswork!

The emergency services already use the App and its use is becoming much more widespread. It is available on the Google Play Store and also the Apple I-Store.

Can't wait to see you all again soon at "Startles.Blank.Informed"

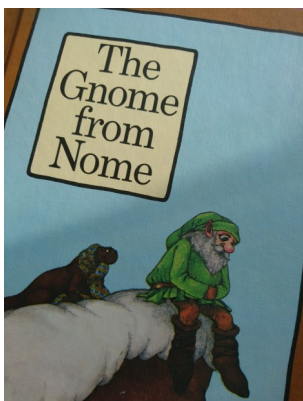
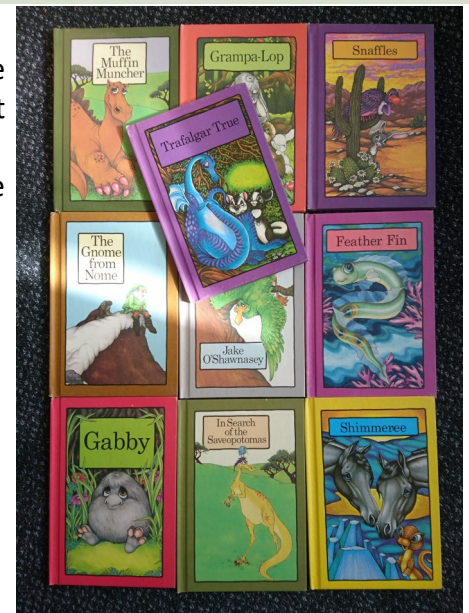


## eBay at the Bridgend

The eBay Bridgend Centre shop continues to function busily in the background online and behind the closed front door on Palmerston Street. The sales not only reflect the diversity of fabulous donations we have received but also perhaps an indication of the times we are living in! So in the last few weeks we have sold the old—a Queen Anne dressing table and a 1970's snake charmer laundry basket, and the new—a portable dvd player and sleek Dartington crystal wine tumblers. And then there are all those things in between that give a nod to lockdown - a digital camera for a new hobby, rolls of wallpaper to transform an inside space, cosy slippers to keep us warm at home and puffy winter coats for those daily walks outside!

You can visit our online eBay charity shop by going to the Bridgend Centre website and selecting the 'charity shop' tab which will give you an eBay option to click. Currently in the shop we have some lovely children's books written by Stephen Cosgove and beautifully illustrated by Robin James. Each has a personal dedication at the front and seem to tell a tale of a particular character having some sort of adventure or overcoming some sort of adversity. They end with a little rhyme to take with you as a lesson in life and I'll finish here with one from 'The Gnome from Nome' which seemed particularly apt.

*So when you're cold  
From the inside out  
And don't know what to do,  
Remember love and friendship,  
And warmth will come to you.*



**Avril Corbett**

## Mr Brightside—Is your destiny calling you?

### *Our very own Anna H talks to top darts player Nathan Aspinall*

Nathan Aspinall, 29 nicknamed 'the Asp' is an English professional darts player, ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in the world. Nathan, from Stockport has been incredibly successful in his darts career, it was an absolute bullseye for the Bridgend Centre when Nathan kindly agreed to talk to us. At the time we spoke to Nathan he was gearing up for his appearance at The Masters quarter finals, the fixture brings the top 16 darts players in the world together.



Nathan supports the importance of inclusivity and equal opportunities. He is a proud ambassador for Stockport Junior Darts and Stockport Disability Darts. The Disability Darts League aims to bring people with disabilities together and encourages all to enjoy the sport and to share time with people experiencing similar challenges. The League champions darts as a way to help rehabilitation, to give focus by using the competitive edge the sport creates not just for the players but also spectators. You can find out more about the league by visiting [stockportdisabilitydarts.com](http://stockportdisabilitydarts.com).

Nathan's story is truly inspirational and shows how his determination helped him to become successful. He is incredibly down to earth and honest about how hard he worked to achieve his dream. Most importantly he understands the importance of talking about your worries and concerns, helping to protect mental wellbeing.

Darts really is a family affair, both his Dad and Grandad love to play. Like so many football, took preference for Nathan but one day he decided to have a game with his Dad and the rest is history!

"Darts is really popular in Stockport, there is a huge community of darts players and spectators. My Dad and Grandad played at the Finger Post and Emigration pubs in Stockport and the Star and Garter on Hillgate. I loved it, I really enjoy the numbers and I believe that helped me to progress quickly. It has also come in quite useful during Home Schooling! So next time your struggling with multiplication why not try treble 9 instead of 9 x 3, it just makes it more fun and has definitely helped my daughter."

"During the first year of playing, I played for Stockport in the Lancashire league and went on to enter darts tournaments. The Professional Darts Corporation (PDC) have a development tour to help you enter the main league, I made the World Youth Final in 2015, that was my big break, I debuted on television and went on to try for the Men's Tour. To qualify you play a four-day tournament, it's very intensive and brings together the best players from all over the world. The aim is to win your tour card, to retain your card you must remain in the top 64, if you lose your ranking you have to go back to the qualifying school. Unfortunately, I was unsuccessful, I then had a tough decision to make, should I try again? Or go back to my profession as an accountant? I knew to be successful I had to dedicate all my time to the sport. I was lucky to have the support of my family, I also professional support from my manager. They were new to the darts but recognised my potential and secured sponsorship for me, so I could completely focus on playing. Darts became my full-time job. With this support I won my tour card. Despite my success my sponsorship money was running out, I probably had £20 left in my bank account, I thought it was over, but my manager believed in me, he told me to keep going, helping me to really believe in myself, he secured more finance for me and I went on to win the tournament and a prize of £10,000."



"In my first year I had been successful, playing against the best players in the world. I made my debut at the World Championships and reached the semi-final winning £100,000. I had gone from the point of no return to one moment completely changing my life. Training and competing is really intensive, I could be away from home for long periods of time, when you are away from your family and not being successful its hard to keep going and when there is no financial security, the relief when I did win was huge."

***Continued on Page 5.....***

## Recipe— Sausage meat Lasagne

### Ingredients

butter, for greasing  
6 large dried lasagne sheets  
75g/2½oz mature Cheddar cheese, grated

### For the pork and spinach sauce

1 tbsp oil  
450g/1lb pork sausage meat  
1 tbsp plain flour  
1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped  
2 fat garlic cloves, crushed  
250g/9oz chestnut mushrooms, sliced  
200ml/7fl oz full-fat crème fraîche  
100g/3½oz baby spinach, roughly chopped  
salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Preheat the oven to 200C/180C Fan/Gas 6. Grease the ovenproof dish with butter.
2. Soak the lasagne sheets in recently boiled warm water to soften while you prepare the two sauces.
3. For the pork and spinach sauce, heat the oil in a large, non-stick frying pan. Add the sausage meat and brown over a high heat for 5–10 minutes until golden-brown, breaking up the mince with two wooden spoons. Sprinkle in the flour and fry for a minute.
4. Add the chilli, garlic and mushrooms and fry for about 5 minutes. Stir in the crème fraîche and spinach. Bring to the boil and allow to bubble for a couple of minutes. Season well with salt and pepper and set aside.
5. For the tomato sauce, mix all the ingredients together in a jug or bowl and season well with salt and pepper.
6. Drain the lasagne sheets.
7. Spoon one-third of the spinach sauce into the base of the ovenproof dish. Spoon one-third of the tomato sauce on top and arrange half the lasagne sheets over the tomato sauce. Repeat using two more layers of spinach and tomato sauce and one of lasagne sheets. Sprinkle over the grated cheese.

Bake for 30–35 minutes, or until the pasta is tender and the top of the dish is golden-brown and bubbling .



### For the tomato sauce

500g/1lb 2oz passata  
2 tbsp sun-dried tomato paste  
1 tsp light muscovado sugar  
1 tbsp chopped fresh thyme leaves  
1 tbsp chopped fresh sage

## Mr Brightside continued

Over the Christmas period darts gave football a run for popularity, coming in second as the most watched sport on television. Darts as an elite sport has a huge following and fantastic promoters, the atmosphere at big competitions is so vibrant and entertaining. The potential prize funds also give the sport appeal. The players 'walk on' songs are a real hit with fans. Nathan chose Mr Brightside as his song, as it is such a feel good anthem and is so memorable to so many, it just makes you want to dance.

Darts is a sport accessible for all, you can play and practice in the comfort of your own home, you don't have to join a club, it doesn't matter who you are, how old you are, how much money you have, its just good fun. If you are feeling fed up, feeling isolated being at home you can pick up your darts and play, you can challenge yourself to hit 180! Nothing changes, the board stays in the same position, your darts stay the same, but your skill improves. Its achievable for young people, for people of any age and Nathans inspirational story proves it can happen.

The current pandemic impacted the darts world just like everything else. The usual party atmosphere is missing, it is so different competing without a crowd, its so quiet. All players are tested and have to comply with isolation rules, to protect each other and to allow the fixtures calendar to continue, games are played back to back which, means you are away from home for longer periods of time, its hard being away from your family. It is important to create your own support network and talk to each other, although that can be hard when you are competing against each other professionally.

We would like to thank Nathan for making time to share his story with us and we hope it might just tempt you to give darts a try, it is not just a sport to play at your local pub, create your own venue at home and exercise not just your hand coordination but also your mind, you could even choose your own 'walk on' song! We wish Nathan every success.

**Anna Hatley**

## Exploring Isolation

### Week 4 “Douglas Mawson, The Aurora Expedition, Antarctica 1911-1914 ” (Part 2)

*Ian Walker continues his epic tale of explorers who experienced isolation in the pursuit of adventure and discovery. This essay on Douglas Mawson started last week.*

Mawson allocated to himself the Far Eastern Expedition, with two companions, Ninnis the dog handler and Xavier Mertz, a swiss lawyer who was also an experienced mountaineer and skier. Theirs was the party that would use dog sledges as they had the longest route out to the east towards the Ross Sea. They set off on 17 November 1912, crossing first the Mertz and then the Ninnis glaciers. The going was tough, they fell into numerous crevasses and as the dogs tired, they were shot to feed the remainder. By mid-December, they were beginning to consider their return journey. They would need to get back in time to catch the ship before the polar winter iced everything in again for months.



14 December was perfect for travelling. They made good progress, stopping at noon for the regular check on latitude. Then, in the early afternoon, they hit an area of crevasses. Mertz was leading, followed by Mawson and then Ninnis. Mertz called out to the others, “crevasse” and went over it at an angle. Mawson, on his sledge completing the noon sight calculations, followed. After a quarter of a mile, Mawson looked up to see Mertz looking back anxiously. There was no sign of Ninnis. Retracing their steps, they came to a gaping hole eleven feet wide. Two tracks ran into it on the far side – only one set, Mawson’s, continued. The crevasse had clean-cut, perpendicular walls of ice, changing from brilliant cobalt to deep navy blue and then black. They could hear a dog moaning and saw traces of the sledge load on a ledge 150 feet down – way beyond the longest ropes they had. Of Ninnis there was neither sight nor sound. They spent several hours, returning to the crevasse and calling. Eventually, they had to give him up as dead.

They tried to understand how the accident had occurred. Eventually, they reached the conclusion that the snow bridge had broken because Ninnis was walking beside his sledge. Mertz was on skis and Mawson on his sledge – spreading the load. The tragedy was totally avoidable. Now it was time to take stock. They had lost not just their companion, but most of their food, their main tent and six of their best dogs. And they were still over 300 miles from base.

They decided on a route across the tops of the two glaciers they had crossed on the outward journey – the fastest way back to base, even though it reduced their chances of meeting up with any of the other parties who might have helped them. The weather was atrocious. It was nearly mid-summer and the surface of the ice was too wet during the day to make good progress, so they travelled at night. The constant blizzards made headway and direction finding next to impossible.

The loss of Ninnis’ sledge began to take a toll. Mertz’s waterproof Burberry trousers were lost, so he was constantly wet from the melting snow. And the food supplies had to be eked out by the only other source of nourishment – the dogs. One by one, they faltered and were shot. The best cuts, such as they were, were reserved for Mawson and Mertz. The rest were fed to the other dogs.

They made good progress until 23 December, when they found themselves in the middle of a crevasse field in the middle of the Ninnis glacier. They couldn’t see well enough to work out whether to go back, losing time and further stretching their meagre food supplies, or forward. So they sat it out, waiting for a break in the weather. “No miles, no food” was the awful mantra. They reduced rations to a minimum. Mertz began to complain of pains in his abdomen.



They struggled on until 4 January 1913. Mertz was finally unable to continue. Despite his best efforts, Mawson couldn’t persuade his friend out of his sleeping bag – he was simply too weak. Mawson doctored and cared for Mertz over the next three days, in the full knowledge that his own chances of survival were decreasing the whole time. Eventually, “... Mertz becomes more and more delirious. Continues to rave ... for hours. I hold him down, then he becomes more peaceful & I put him quietly in the bag. He dies peacefully at about 2 a.m. on morning of 8<sup>th</sup>.”



*Continued from page 4...*

Now Mawson is truly alone. In his diary he wrote, " ... lying in the damp bag for a week on extremely low rations has reduced my condition seriously." His condition makes grim reading. Like Mertz, he was probably suffering from hypervitaminosis A, an excess of vitamin A from eating the livers of the sledge dogs. This affected his whole system, weakening him internally and attacking his skin externally – much of it would fall away, particularly the soles of his feet. And still 100 miles before he would reach base.

Despite all this, he somehow found the will to go on. Two themes seem to run through his writing – his fiancé Paquita, and something that he refers to as Providence: "if Providence can give me 20 days weather ..... and heal my feet quickly surely I can reach succour."

He spent the day of Mertz' death sorting his food and equipment ready for the journey. Then, that evening, despite his waning strength, he buried Mertz.

The following days, January 9 and 10, the wind blew at over 50 mph. Forced to remain put, he continued to prepare, even tearing blank pages from Mertz' diary to save weight. In a lull, he read the Burial Service over Mertz's grave. Finally, on 11 January 1913, he started out, painfully slowly on badly blistered feet. He man-hauled his sledge, making just 5-6 miles a day as he descended into the valley of the Mertz glacier. In the 15<sup>th</sup>, he noted the date that his party was due back at base to meet the ship.

For six days he made some progress, gradually becoming less cautious as time ran on. On 17<sup>th</sup> he made an early start, despite light so poor that he only saw vast crevasses when he had passed them. Then came the crevasse he didn't see. Suddenly, he fell, until brought up 14 feet down, held only by his harness. He expected that the sledge would come crashing down, but when it didn't his first thought was that Providence had given him another chance – a very small one. And this is where we came in. Totally alone, suspended over an abyss by a single rope. Slowly he hauled himself up the harness line to the surface, only to have the snow crust fail beneath him, as he fell again.

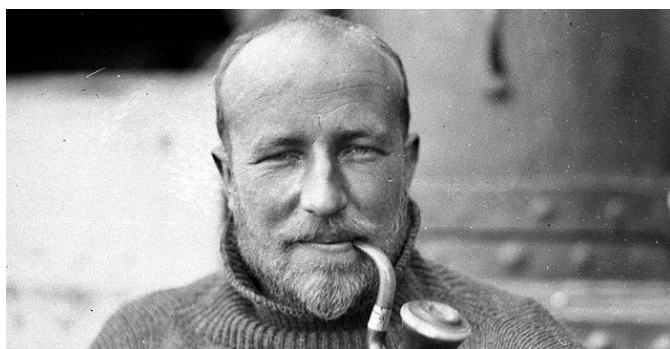
He wrote, "Exhausted, weak and chilled ... I hung with the firm conviction that all was over except the passing. Below was a black chasm; it would be the work of a moment to slip the harness, then all the pain and toil would be over." At this extremity, he thought of how Providence had protected him in the past. "So I summoned all my nerve ... and forced myself upward in a struggle of four and a half hours."

Finally, he reached the surface, safely this time, and "cooked and eat dog meat enough to give me a regular orgy." His trek back to base was still taxing, but, amazingly, his ingenuity was still functioning. The day after his fall, he made a rope ladder so that any further falls would be easier to recover from. He fabricated crampons from wood and screws taken from his equipment. Eventually his luck changed. About 25 miles from base he came across a cairn erected only six hours before by one of the other parties. Most importantly, they'd left a cache of food. What was more, for morale, the food was in a bag sewn months before by Paquita, his fiancé. Providence was surely working overtime.

With food worries gone, his next destination was Aladdin's cave, a forward cache of food and supplies just five miles from base. Even now the weather was against him. It took until 8 February for the storms to pass and he finally reached Winter Quarters. As he came down into the bay, wondering what he would find so long after he was due, "a speck on the north-west horizon caught my eye and my hopes went down. It looked like a distant ship; it might well have been the *Aurora*."

It was as he had feared. *Aurora* had sailed, leaving a group of five to over-winter, hoping for Mawson's safe return. They managed to radio the ship, which turned to pick them up. But then the final irony, yet another storm blew up, preventing the rescue. It was not until 12 December 1913, after another Antarctic winter, that the *Aurora* would be able to finally take them all home.

**Ian Walker**



## People of Bollington—Chronicles of a Community



Recently voted by The Times as one of the best places to live, 2021 marks mine and my husband's tenth year of living here in Bollington. After a magical decade in the most charming location, I wanted to do something to say thank you to this amazing community for making us feel so very welcome and providing us with the place we will forever call home. I have worked as a teacher in Bollington for the past eleven years and have recently started my own photography business, Little Lens Photography. I used my time in-between working during the 2020 lockdown to shoot doorstep portraits of local residents to raise money for Hope Central Foodbank, this venture was a huge success and alongside my

experience with children led me to embark into children's photography, however my most recent project has opened the door to much more.

The inspiration behind my latest work 'People of Bollington, Chronicles of a Community' came from a colleague who suggested I look at a Blog by Brandon Stanton entitled Humans of New York. I was intrigued, namely because, like myself, this chap had little professional photography experience and just wanted to do something creative with his camera. Not sure whether or not the people of Bollington would get behind this idea, I approached a few friendly local faces, who I thought had an interesting story to tell and the project grew from there. The response I have had has been amazing. The community have been so kind and all desperate to get involved and show case what a diverse and friendly community we live in.

Locals and friends further afield have started commenting "We have been following the progress of your project, we love looking forward to your photographs and spotting people we know." The fact that my work is bringing a little joy to people in this dark time spurs me on to do this project and these people the justice they deserve. The community have rallied during the pandemic and I want this book to be testament to how we've gotten each other through.

I want to tell the stories of as many of our residents as I possibly can. I have already spoken to/photographed varying ages of subject from 5 months old to 98 year olds and an array of our amazing local businesses who work so hard to keep Bollington the vibrant place it is. I have been lucky enough to have the support of our wonderful Mayor and Deputy Mayor along with local councillors.

My aim is to turn these amazing stories and portraits into a book, to create a part of social history at this strange moment in time. I am looking for businesses' and sponsors to get behind this worthwhile community project to help make it happen. If you would like to get involved then please contact me at [laurenwalsh88@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:laurenwalsh88@hotmail.co.uk)

All photographs are taken outdoors at a social distance unless your business is still open and permits my entry.

**Lauren Stout, Little Lens Photography**



## Mindgame—Dingbats



### Answers to last week's Codeword



### Thank you to our sponsors and supporters

I am Print printed the paper copies 'at cost', which are delivered to the homes of isolated and vulnerable people in Bollington.

David and Linda West sponsored the printing of this edition. Thank you so much to all three supporters, it means the world.



**Bridgend Centre**, 104 Palmerston Street,  
Bollington, Cheshire. SK10 5PW

Email: [info@bridgendcentre.org.uk](mailto:info@bridgendcentre.org.uk)  
[www.bridgendcentre.org.uk](http://www.bridgendcentre.org.uk)

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