

BRIDGEND COMMUNITY NEWS

**Bridging Social
Isolation
Edition 46**



Crocuses on Hurst Lane by Anna Barker

Welcome to another edition of Bridging Social Isolation! As next Tuesday (23rd March) marks one year on from the start of the first Coronavirus lockdown, it feels strange to think back to a year ago and everything that has happened since that time. In this edition we reflect on the changes we have seen at Bridgend during that time and the work that has carried on, despite being forced to close for much of it.

When we wrote our first edition of this newsletter, we certainly didn't think there would be a number 46 but producing it has been one of the highlights of our year and we have enjoyed it very much. Bridging Social Isolation has proved very popular and a great way to communicate with Bridgend regulars. When Bridgend gets back to 'normal' (whatever that is), we hope to continue it in one guise or other as we have become very attached to it!

Don't forget if you would like to contribute to this newsletter in some way, please do bob us an email at info@bridgendcentre.org.uk.

A personal perspective of setting up a Covid vaccination clinic by Laura Beresford

Towards the end of 2020, the Middlewood PCN was asked to prepare to deliver an unprecedented vaccination campaign to vaccinate our registered population against COVID-19. Excited and daunted was how I felt! I have always been very involved in designing and running our flu clinics and having changed our delivery model for flu vaccinations last year, to enable safe socially distanced clinics, we had had something of a practice run.

Still feeling excited but daunted, I knew, this would be different.

These were brand new vaccines, in some cases requiring dilution and careful storage and preparation. Staff would have to use a data and booking system that they are unfamiliar with. It also meant all staff involved in the clinics would need to complete hours of training and we would need to implement dozens of standard operating procedures and protocols. There would be multiple quality and readiness inspections and phone calls before we could even open our doors. Dr. Rachel Hall was appointed as clinical lead and I was appointed operational lead. We set to work!

Thanks to the kind cooperation of the Poynton Town Council the main hall of the civic hall was transformed into a clinic that has the capacity to receive up to 1500 patients per day. As Clinical Quality & Research Manager my role is usually in the practice working with our team 'behind the scenes' This opportunity allowed me to draw on my experience as a registered pharmacy technician and I have really enjoyed utilising my skills to plan and help deliver clinics, particularly vaccine preparation. I have also helped with data entry, checking patients in at the door, and have even trained as a vaccinator. Due to an amazing response from clinical volunteers, I haven't actually needed to vaccinate so far.

Shortly after we ran our first clinics my son contracted COVID-19 at school and passed it on to myself and my husband. I had received the vaccine 10 days before I tested positive and I think this resulted in my symptoms being less severe. However, my husband was hospitalised with pneumonia. This was a very stressful time for our family. Fortunately, we have all now recovered.

During the time that I was isolating, I was able to continue working remotely to ensure the clinics continued to run smoothly (with the help of the rest of the team). It's really important to remember you can still contract COVID-19 even after you have been vaccinated and pass it on to others. We all need to remember to continue with social distancing measures for now.

By the end of this week, we should have completed cohort 6 vaccinations (age 16-64 with underlying health conditions). At this point, we do not know what vaccine supply we will receive next week and we are still awaiting further details about arrangements for second doses. Working with such tight deadlines and short notice is challenging but with the help of our team and volunteers, we are proud of what we have achieved and will continue to work hard to ensure second doses are delivered in the same efficient manner.



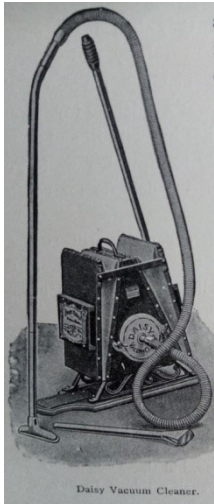
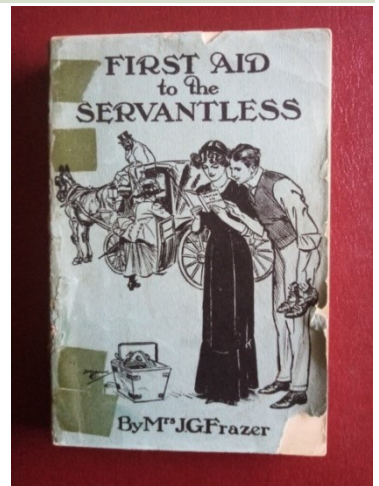
Laura Beresford, Bollington Medical Centre, Middlewood Partnership

Household Management advice

Bridgend volunteer Shirley Kitching tells us about some of the books she has at home

I have a collection of odd old fashioned books of household management, diy, cookery, needlework and so on. Just occasionally they are actually useful, but most of them contain gems of outdated advice. I thought I would review one or two of them for you.

First Aid to the Servantless, by Mrs J G Frazer, was published in 1913. Mrs Frazer tells us that “the pretensions of servants as to wages and treatment are increasing year by year.....things have come to such a pass that some reform is imperative.”



The elegant Mr and Mrs Smith, when their maid Imogen gives notice, bravely decide to have done with Imogens for ever, and fortunately their house seems to be full of wonderful labour saving devices. There was the Dreadnought Dish Washer, a wedding present which they had thought they would never use, they fortunately happened to find a vacuum cleaner in the attic, and Mrs Smith must scrub her floors with a Ukanasa Drudgee.

But Mrs Frazer specifically advises against buying labour saving devices for a servant to use.

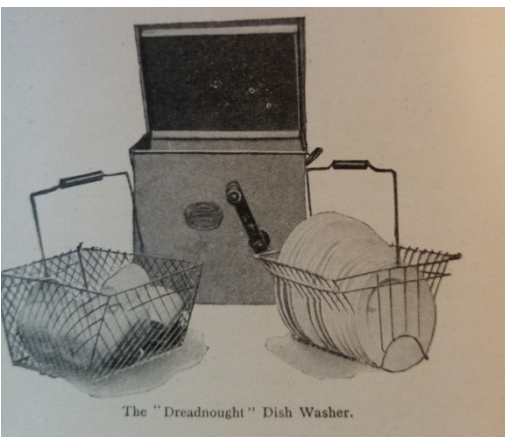
She recommends acquiring what she calls a Duck oven, which runs on either oil or gas and would cook a dinner for ten people with an outlay of fuel of 1½d, in addition to boiling a gallon of water, and with an attachment for heating your iron.



There is a whole chapter devoted to the correct way to answer the front door, and another chapter on how to manage your husband and children under a servantless regime. The husband will assist by “taking an intelligent and sympathetic interest in the details of domestic duties,” and by putting his own clothes away. Mrs Frazer points out that all American men black their own boots, and that brown boots can be cleaned with banana peel.

She ends with eleven pages of verse and some twelve pages of useful tips.

The one that mystified me most was “don’t allow your kettle to get furred. Keep a marble in it, or an Octopus.”



A poem about Crisps

Crisps, I love them
Crisps, they are the best
A crunchy consolation, whenever I am depressed
Crisps are the real thing, they make me feel exalted
Be they cheese and onion, chicken or beef
Or plain old ready salted,
When I eat a bag of crisps, I never want to stop
How I wish the manufacturers would fill them to the top
Crisps are delicious, crisps are sublime
If they were illegal, I'd end up doing time
And if I was robbed and all my things were taken
I pray to God they'd leave behind a bag of smoky bacon

Marvin Cheeseman



Other brands are available

One year on

Next Tuesday (23rd March) marks the one year anniversary of going into Covid lockdown for the first time. A 'national day of reflection' will be held to mark this day and to remember the 125,000 people in the UK who have died during that time from Covid 19. A minute's silence will be held at noon and prominent landmarks will be lit up at 8pm.



This day will certainly bring memories for all of us and we at the Bridgend remember how at that time we were coming to the end of the epic flat roof project at the Centre. We had been closed for over two months as this work was carried out and couldn't wait to re-open. In the middle of March we were hectically working to try and get the Centre ready with cleaning all the dust and dirt away, painting walls and doors and rebuilding shelves to make it fit for the public to use. We were so excited about our new-look Centre, but as news spread about this strange new virus from China and the situation in Italy, it became clearer and clearer that things might not go as we hoped.

It certainly has been a year to remember and the Bridgend hasn't stood still in that time. As well as our lovely new shop re-opening in July and successful operating for many months in 2020 before closing again for lockdown #3, we have had lots of other activities going on. For the next two pages, we reflect on some of them.

And of course, we cannot omit to mention our fabulous eBay shop which has continued throughout Lockdowns two and three, maintaining a level of income for the Centre and continuing to provide people with their Bridgend retail fix!

Bridging Social Isolation Newsletter

As the UK went into lockdown on 23rd March, we at Bridgend wracked our brains on how we could keep in touch with all our regulars and bring a taste of Bridgend life to people, while staying at home.

Therefore the first edition of 'Bridging Social Isolation' was born. Never for one moment did we imagine that we would still be here 45 editions later!

The newsletter includes news from staff, volunteers and regulars from Bridgend, plus Bollington news, information, photos, gossip, recipes, quizzes poems and stories. In fact anything that could be entertaining to people and help them 'keep in touch'.

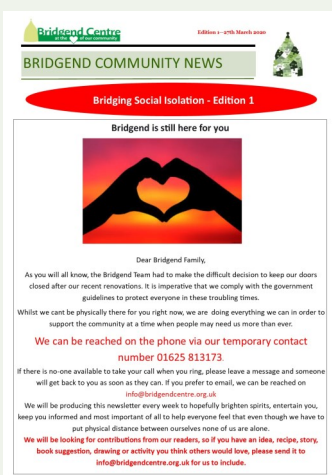
It has proved very popular and as well as hundreds of people downloading from our website, we print eighty copies every week and a volunteer delivers them to the homes of isolated people who cannot get out of the house easily. A few newsletters are also left at the Co-Op, Chadwicks newsagents and Bollington Cross Stores for people to pick up and read at home.

Bridgend Community Choir

During lockdown around 20 members of The Bridgend Choir obviously haven't been able to meet up in person and sing their hearts out like normal.

Therefore we decided to keep the group going over Zoom video in the form of a fortnightly online social gathering. As well as supporting those who've needed contact, emotional support and friendly conversation, the gatherings have brought opportunities to reminisce about wonderful times in the choir's short but most enjoyable history, that have included performances in care homes and a guest appearance as part of a small festival at Manchester's Bridgewater Hall. Recently, two members of the choir have been assisting with the roll-out of vaccinations.

Run by the talented Darren Poyzer, the emphasis as always is on fun and social meet-ups, with a music quiz planned for Friday 19th March. The group will be taking a refreshing look at the choir's musical repertoire to come as we cautiously look forward to coming out of lockdown later in the year. All choir members and anyone who'd like to join us in the future is welcome to join the Zoom social; please do drop us a line at info@bridgendcentre.org.uk if you are interested.



One year on

Buddying Scheme in Bollington working in partnership with Bollington Town Council

When lockdown started in March 2020, the Town Council set up BRAG (Bollington Resilience Action Group) to support the residents of the area during this very frightening and worrying time when older and vulnerable people who were shielding were unable to leave their homes. The council asked for volunteers to help with shopping and other errands for their more isolated neighbours and were inundated with offers of help.

One service that the Council felt would be very helpful was a telephone befriending service in order to provide a friendly listening ear and someone to talk to the people who were unable to leave their homes at that time. Bridgend was the obvious organisation to work on this because of our proven track record with running Bridgend Buddies.

Anna Hatley and Becky worked as volunteers to set this scheme up in partnership with the Town Council. We rang the 97 vulnerable people who had registered with the Town Council that they needed support and asked them if they would like a telephone Buddy to ring them regularly for a chat. We also rang all the volunteers to find out who would be happy to take on the Telephone Buddy role. We then assessed everyone who wanted to take part and paired up people into telephone buddy partners.

In the end we paired up eight lasting partnerships. Also the chats that Anna and I had with people at that time were incredibly valuable as we had the privilege to talk to people in that unique and incredible situation. We will never forget that for the rest of our lives.



Reconnecting—a chat group for those who were shielding

Set up in August by Bridgend volunteer Claire, who was herself originally told to shield by the government a year ago, the aim of this group was to be a safe place where 'shielders' could meet others going through the same thing and talk about their worries, concerns and experiences; and to solve any problems that may have arisen.

Last Summer, social distancing measures were being lifted and at the same time shielding stopped and the support shielders received reduced. For some, this meant a sudden dramatic shift from a degree of security in their own homes to being left to their own devices. The safety barrier had been lifted and it felt strange, scary and rather worrying.



The group started meeting and bonded well and have 'met up' over Zoom regularly ever since. If you were someone who was told to shield last year and would like to be involved now please do drop us a line at info@bridgendcentre.org.uk.

Nostalgia Hill Race and Winter Auction and Prize Draw

During the last year obviously our traditional ways to raise funds for the Bridgend Centre have been closed to us. Therefore we have had to find new and innovative ways to raise money for the Centre.

Therefore, in July, for the first time ever, the Hill Race went 'online' with a virtual event, which was a huge success raising over £2,000.

Following on from that success we held a Winter Online Auction and Raffle in December which raised an astonishing £3,000. We also held an online party to go hand-in-hand with the event which was great fun!

These have been hugely positive experiences and we have learnt lots about online fundraising, utilising social media and working with local businesses which we can carry forward to future events.



Bridgend Walks and Activities

Between September and December, Bridgend walks were able to restart. With social distancing measures in place, limited numbers and a new booking system, people were able to get and exercise in the lovely Bollington countryside whilst having a chat with others in small groups. This has temporarily stopped now during lockdown, but we hope for them to recommence after 12th April when the Centre re-opens.

For the last six months or so, some of our other traditional Bridgend activities have restarted online with Spanish with Wanda taking place on a Friday morning and Creative Writing with Summer Phillips taking place on a Tuesday. These will continue until they can be done in person. Details on how to get involved are on our website.



Exploring Isolation

Week 7—Ernest Shackleton. The Weddell Sea Party

Ian Walker continues his brilliant account of Ernest Shackleton's Trans-Antarctic expedition

As the journey went on, they considered possible destinations. Hope Bay and Deception Island were possible, as was Elephant Island, each of which I visited in 2008-09. All would depend on the wind and currents. By 13 April it became clear that Elephant Island was the only option. They sailed on, heaving to at night, roped together with sea anchors out, to avoid being separated, and finally made land on 14 April 1916. The relief and jubilation were enormous. This was the first step ashore since they left South Georgia in December 1914.

Despite their refuge, it soon became apparent that they were too exposed. A better site was found to the west and by 18 April, all had been moved to a shingle spit. We saw what is left of it on 22 December 2008, from as close as our ship could take us – hence the photo (right). A bleaker place you could not imagine. Not a blade of grass showing. Just ice cliffs towering over the smallest beach. And the wind howling and the waves crashing.



Camp was pitched and immediately Shackleton, Wild and Worsley began to consider their position. It was now well into April and their second Antarctic winter was approaching fast. If they were to seek help, then the sooner they went the better. There was no chance of anyone thinking to look for them on Elephant Island. In fact, no one knew whether they were still alive. Discussion led to the conclusion that their best and only option was to reach South Georgia, some 800 miles away across the Drake Passage, some of the roughest waters in the world. Nevertheless, they decided to attempt it. The *James Caird* was strengthened and Shackleton chose five men to accompany him: Frank Worsley, captain of *Endurance* and their best navigator, Crean the old Antarctic hand, McNeish the carpenter, McCarthy and Vincent. Frank Wild was left in charge of the other 22 men.

The *James Caird* set off on 24 April 1916. They suffered storms, had to chip ice off the boat to stop her from capsizing, were constantly wet and cold. Navigation was a nightmare, with little chance of sighting the sun. And they endured this for 14 days when, at 12.30 on 8 May and against all the odds, they sighted the black cliffs of South Georgia. Even then, their ordeal was not over. It was clearly too rough to try to land where they were, and for two more days storms kept them from the shore.

At last, with what relief it is difficult to imagine, they came ashore in King Haakon Bay, late on 10 May. Five days they spent recovering some strength, dining off albatross chicks, cleaning and repairing their gear. Even the rudder off the *James Caird*, which had been lost as they landed, was washed up nearby. On 15 May they once again took to the water, to sail the eight miles to the head of the sound. They turned the boat upside down to make a cabin, as Wild had done with the men back on Elephant Island. With an ample supply of meat and fuel in the shape of the many elephant seals nearby, they were at last secure.

All that remained was to reach civilisation in the shape of the whaling stations, more than 17 miles away on the other side of the island. The terrain was mountainous and heavily glaciated and had never been crossed before. They had no maps and precious little suitable clothing or equipment. Three were too weak to attempt the trek, so Shackleton, Worsley and Crean set off early in the morning of 19 May. They travelled light. Food for three days and a stove, but no tent or sleeping bags.

Marching throughout the 24 hours, they would stop to nap. Shackleton would wake the other two after five minutes and tell them they'd been asleep for half an hour. And on they went. They crossed glaciers, descended steep snow slopes, nearly fell through the ice into a snow-covered lake. But eventually, after 32 miles and 36 hours, they reached Stromness, a whaling station on the north-east coast of the island. They were dressed in the rags that were all that remained of their clothes. They were dirty and wore long beards.



Exploring Isolation Continued

Week 7—Ernest Shackleton. The Weddell Sea Party

Their initial welcome was, not unsurprisingly, less than rapturous. In his book 'South' Shackleton writes:

"... we met an old man, who started as if he had seen the Devil himself and gave us no time to ask any questions. He hurried away. This greeting was not friendly. Then we came to the wharf, where the man in charge stuck to his station. I asked him if Mr Sorlle (the manager) was in the house. "Yes," he said as he stared at us. "We would like to see him," I said. "Who are you?" he asked. "We have lost our ship and come over the island," I replied. "You have come over the island?" he said in a tone of entire disbelief.



The man went towards the manager's house and we followed him. I learned afterwards that he had said to Mr Sorlle: "There are three funny-looking men outside, who say they have come over the island and they know you. I have left them outside." A very necessary precaution from his point of view. Mr Sorlle came to the door and said. "Well?" "Don't you know me?" I said. "I know your voice," he replied doubtfully. "You're the mate of the *Daisy*." "My name is Shackleton," I said. Immediately, he put out his hand and said, "Come in. Come in."

Sorlle's hospitality was boundless. They bathed and shaved, and settled to an excellent meal. Meanwhile, a boat was despatched to collect the other three. Worsley went too, to show exactly where they had camped. When the rescue party reached them, the three didn't recognise the newly-shaven Worsley, mistaking him for one of the whalers. The *James Caird* was brought off with the men and is now in the Greenwich Maritime Museum, where the tiny craft stands testament to their astonishing journey. On the way back to Stromness they were to call at Grytviken, from where they'd sailed that long time before, to send the news to the world that they were well.

Shackleton immediately set about the rescue of the Elephant Island party. The whalers from South Georgia mounted the first attempt, which was defeated by the ice that would also thwart the next two attempts. The second was in a trawler loaned by the Uruguay government, the third in a schooner and a small steamer, the *Yelcho*, lent by the Chilean government. All were beaten by the ice. Then, in one last attempt, Shackleton took the *Yelcho* south once more. This time fortune was on their side. The ice had been blown north and they reached the camp on 30 August 1916. Wild was one of the first to see the steamer. Shackleton called, "Are you all well?" "We're all well, boss," came the reply. They had just four days food left, and some were in poor shape, but all survived.

The final chapter was for Shackleton to join the *Aurora* and the rescue of the Ross sea party, finally reached on 10 January 1917.



Two aspects of the return to civilisation stand out. First was the news. Both parties had been without news for over two years. Neither knew of the trials of the other half of the expedition. The world had gone to war before they left, and their immediate thought was that it would have been long over. It took much to come to terms with the facts of the on-going conflict, in which three of the expedition were to die and five would be wounded.

The second aspect is reminiscent of Mawson's accounts of his survival. Reflecting on their trials, Shackleton wrote, in 'South':

"When I look back at those days I have no doubt that Providence guided us, not only across those snow fields, but across the storm-white sea that separated Elephant Island from our landing place on South Georgia. I know that during that long and racking march of thirty-six hours over the unnamed mountains and glaciers of South Georgia it seemed to me often that we were four, not three. I said nothing to my companions on the point, but afterwards Worsley said to me, "Boss, I had a curious feeling on the march that there was another person with us." Crean confessed to the same idea. One feels "the dearth of human words, the roughness of mortal speech" in trying to describe things intangible, but a record of our journeys would be incomplete without a reference to a subject very near to our hearts."

Exploring isolation continues next week with Robert Falcon Scott's Terra Nova expedition.

Mindgame—Song Lyric Quiz

You might have to sing these questions rather than read them into yourself. Can you name the song and singer—have an extra biscuit if you get both!!



1. There will be love and laughter and peace ever after tomorrow just you wait and see
2. I've been cheated by you since I don't know when. So I made up my mind, it must come to an end. Look at me now, will I ever learn?
3. The old home town looks the same, as I step down from the train and there to meet me is my Mama & Papa
4. When the moon hits your eye like a big pizza pie
5. Let's pretend that we're together all alone. I'll tell the man to turn the jukebox way down low
6. At first I was afraid, I was petrified, Kept thinking I could never live without you by my side, But then I spent so many nights thinking how you did me wrong, And I grew strong
7. I gave a letter to the postman it in his sack. Bright and early next morning he brought my letter back
8. I'd like to build a world a home, And furnish it with love, Grow apple trees and honey bees, And snow white turtle doves
9. But don't forget who's taking you home and in whose arms you're going to be
10. Give him two arms to cling to and something warm to come to when nights are cold and lonely



The answers to last week's Mother's Day Quiz can be found on our website @ www.bridgendcentre.org.uk/bridging-social-isolation. If you would like a paper version, please contact us and we will post it to you.

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. An anonymous donor sponsored the printing of this edition.



Thank you so much to both supporters, it means the world.

Could you support the Bridgend Centre with either a one-off donation or a regular direct debit? We rely on the generosity of the public to survive, particularly now when our charity shop is closed. If you would like to make a donation, please go to our website at www.bridgendcentre.org.uk and press 'Donate'.

We couldn't do it without you, thank you.

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