

BRIDGEND COMMUNITY NEWS

Bridging Social

Isolation

No.71



'Kerridge Cottages', acrylic on canvas by Anna Barker

Welcome to edition 71 of Bridging Social Isolation. What a fortnight it has been with 3 named storms in the space of two weeks! We hope you all manage to stay safe and dry.

It is a certainly a very unsettling time for us all at the moment but the last few days have offered a few moments of sunshine and the days are getting longer which is a promise of the Springtime to come. Don't forget that the Bridgend Centre is always here with the kettle on and a listening ear if you need it.

On the subject of change, the announcement from the Government this week about removal of Covid restrictions. We are not going to change anything in the way we do things in the short-term and we are currently looking at what this means for our visitors to the centre. Rest assured we will always aim to put people's safety first and we will keep you updated as soon as we can on any changes that we do make.

We would once again like to thank all those who have contributed to this edition. If you have any articles or ideas please share them with us by emailing info@bridgendcentre.org.uk.

Update from Bollington Town Council on Road Works

Bollington Town Council would like to inform you that the above road closure will no longer be going ahead from Saturday 19th February. However, it is still planned to take place from 2nd-17th April. We have received confirmation today from the developer that, due to information from Cheshire East Highways after the submission of Planning Application no 21/3893M, they have been forced to change their plans. It has been agreed they will have to install the S-kerb version on the crossing, not tarmac. Another factor is that Electricity North West Ltd (ENWL) have also decided to lay ducts across the road in two places which would necessitate reinstatement of a newly surfaced carriageway and the whole area would need to be surfaced again.

On driving past this morning we notice that the Tesco sign is up. It is amazing how time flies and that the job is close to being done!

Civic Hall Gardens clean up

The town council have started the clean up of the gardens at the Civic Hall above the library. They send their thanks to Ben Moorhouse and his team for all their hard work on this. We cant wait to see how it looks in Spring!



No prior woodworking experience necessary
All welcome!



Bridgend Centre, Bollington
Wednesday am classes
10:30-12:30
23rd March—13th April
(4 weeks)
£20 for 4 week course
Places limited

Introduction to Woodcraft



- Learn basic woodworking skills
- Make your own small set of hanging shelves
- Make friends in a safe space

Contact Rebecca
01625 576311
info@bridgendcentre.org.uk
to book your place



Catherine joins Bridgend as part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award

Hello, my name is Catherine. This year I'm taking part in my Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award (DofE) and I chose to do my volunteer work at The Bridgend Centre. I have been working here for a few weeks now, and I have got to say everyone who works here are so nice, and they have been helping to teach me how to do things properly and I've been learning how to do some great life skills. My volunteer work here will last three months, however I'm very much considering carrying on coming because the work environment here is amazing and I'm being given different jobs each time I come in. I also took part in helping out with the Vintage fair, which was so much fun, and I may or may not have had a few of those cakes myself, I couldn't resist. I hope to see you pop in and I might make you a cup of tea or coffee myself. I'm sure that my volunteer work here will go great and I'll remember it when I'm older, I look forward to the rest of my months here.



Bollington Emergency Response Plan

As a key part of the Bollington community the Bridgend Centre this week received an updated copy of the Town Councils Emergency Response Plan. This sets out both how the plan would be triggered and what the response would be to emergencies that would impact upon local residents, businesses and visitors. Detailing how the Town Council can use enhanced local knowledge for faster responses to emergency situations it states how information would be shared, what roles individuals would take and how volunteers and local networks could be involved in ensuring that support is in place for the vulnerable members of our community well as informing everyone how they can keep themselves and their property safe.

Bollington has already weathered its fair share of natural emergencies – flooding in recent memory but also snow, blizzards and intense cold weather, foot and mouth, avian flu and of course the Covid 19 pandemic. But the BERP also considers those emergencies that we hope will never happen – a major transport or industrial accident or a malicious attack. If you want to read further the plan can be seen in full on the Bollington Town Council website at:

<https://www.bollington-tc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/100/2022/02/Bollington-Emergency-Response-Plan-Website-Copy.pdf>



Road damage on Ingersley Road after the floods in August 2019.

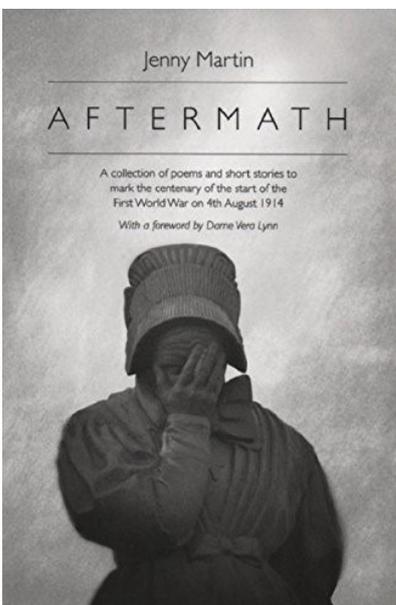
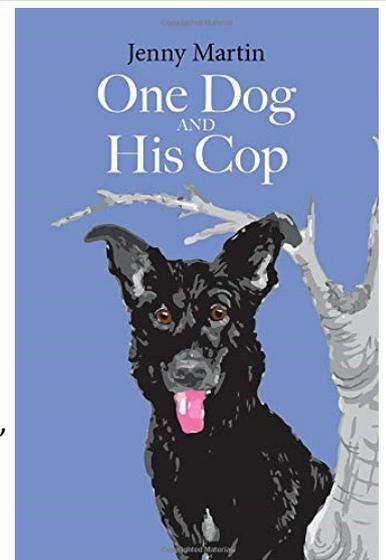
A prolific Bollington Author—Jenny Martin

Bridgend erratic visitor and Bollington resident for forty-six years, Jenny Martin, is a prolific self-published author, much like Helen Birchall who we featured in our last edition (dated 11th February 2022). She recently visited the Centre and very kindly donated copies of two of her books to us. Her fifth book, *Aftermath*, with a foreword by Dame Vera Lynn, marks the centenary of the start of World War I, and her latest, *One Man and His Cop*, has a brace Macclesfield police dog in a bit part.

Jenny, 84 next birthday, is a retired medic raised in Cumbria, who joined Bollington Library Writing Group in 2008. This group is a cohesive group of member-friends who put their own attributes at each other's disposal, despite Covid restrictions preventing regular meetings in recent months. Leader Nik Perring and members have self or traditionally published about twenty books (and counting), raising significant funds for several charities, with many short stories and poems being published in quality collections.

Jenny's first book, *Mining Memories*, a poetry collection, was a runner up in the Arts and Literature section of the Hunter Davies' Lakeland Book of the Year Awards 2011. Her historical short story was short-listed in *Scrabble* magazine's 2021 annual competition and is due to appear in their next issue.

All Jenny's books are available to purchase on Amazon and on Kindle at 99p or £1.99.



Snowdrops

We had snowdrops on our last newsletter cover but did you know that common snowdrops are threatened in the wild due to habitat destruction caused by land-use changes and over-collecting for the horticultural trade? Their trade is closely monitored and regulated to ensure it does not threaten their survival in the wild.

Researchers at Kew Gardens have been monitoring and recording the first flowering dates of plants in the gardens for over 50 years to provide valuable information about our changing climate and an early warning of the effect this may have on our plants. While in the 1950s common snowdrop flowers often appeared around the end of February, since the 1990s the first signs of their delicate, white flowers are seen in January.



But as we near the end of February and despite the wet weather since then there is still plenty of opportunity to see them before they disappear for another year. Rode Hall and Gardens, just under 20 miles south of Bollington, have their annual mile long snowdrop walk open until 6th March. If you fancy heading west rather than south Arley Hall and gardens are open every day and have a show of snowdrops in their woodland grove along with plenty of other plant interest within their 8 acres of formal gardens.

But perhaps you'd prefer to just look out of the window and see some snowdrops in your own garden? Now is the perfect time to plan and plant, see these top tips from Countryfile Magazine below!



How to grow snowdrops

Snowdrops should be planted in spring, when the plants have finished flowering and are still green. Don't be tempted to trim the leaves off – leaving them to die down naturally will allow the goodness to be absorbed back into the bulb, feeding next year's buds.

Dig holes 10-15cm deep and plant 6-8 bulbs in each hole. Refill the hole and ensure some leaf remains above the surface.

Snowdrops are happiest in well-drained soil with light shade. If your soil is heavy use sand or grit to improve drainage. Add leafmould or compost when planting out to help retain moisture during the dry summer months.

How to divide snowdrops

When large clumps of snowdrops have become well-established they can become reluctant to flower – digging up and dividing the bulbs every few years will ensure prolific and annual flowers.

Dig deeply all around the snowdrop clump with a small garden fork, before levering it up and out. Gently tear the bulbs apart and pick off any remaining flowerheads to concentrate energy in the bulbs.

February – are you the last month of winter or the first month of spring?

Mornings and afternoons are getting longer, if only by a few minutes every day, but our bird life is certainly stirring. Robins are singing, declaring their territories for the breeding season to come. I might have to mow the small square lawn and on the nearby canal, Canada geese are beginning their spring belligerence.

But far away, deep in the southern hemisphere, in the Congo's rainforests where cuckoos spend for approximately six months in every year, some individual birds are getting fidgety too, just like our robins. For them it is now summer and autumn is fast approaching. It's time to make their annual migration; a long, arduous and dangerous journey to northern Europe.

Over the last ten years, 80 UK cuckoos have been fitted with satellite tags. We can track individual birds and we can see that they are now beginning their northern journey and making for West Africa. As you read these words they are heading north to breed.

Why do they do this? Why not stay there to breed?

Ornithologists believe that the answer is in two parts. Evolution has led to birds and other animals occupying niches in the food chain. Certain birds like cuckoos have successfully evolved to feed off invertebrates to be found in their bushes and trees. They are not suited to eating berries or nuts or carrion but boy are they good at scoffing hairy caterpillars.

As autumn approaches in the southern hemisphere, their source of food is beginning to dry up. However, in the northern hemisphere spring is fast approaching and a new food source is getting ready. If they get their timing



right when they migrate, they should arrive here in late April or early May when *our* bushes and trees are in full foliage, hosting all those invertebrates which make up the cuckoo's diet. So, it is time to make that journey so that they can breed successfully – where there is a good food supply – in the northern hemisphere.

However, there is the small matter of an 8000km journey and the crossing of the vastness, which is the inhospitable Sahara Desert. The data from these satellite tags are also revealing incredible facts. For instance, most northern bound cuckoos follow a route across the western Sahara, while most southern bound returning birds cross the eastern Sahara. The record time for a crossing took place in July 2016. 'Between 2am on 9th July and

10.30am on 10 July a particular bird flew 1,774km at an average speed of around 50kph, and all into a light south-westerly headwind.' He beat the record by six days.

Another analysis from this data, records the movement of one bird over his five-year life – a typical life expectancy for a cuckoo. It showed that he spent 47% of his year in Africa, 38% of his time on migration and only 15% of his time in the UK. He arrives here by the end April/early May and is gone by the end of June. This data proves that a common cuckoo is really an African bird who makes the dangerous the trip to the UK just to breed.

So, if you are a cuckoo, February is a sign that summer, not winter, is coming to an end. I'm a naturally optimistic individual, so February, for me, is the harbinger of spring.

Bruce Kendrick

Author of 'An Eye for Birds', available through high street bookshops.

Keeping warm with carrots!

As the days get a little longer and we see activity in the garden it can be easy to forget we're still in the throes of winter. Dovetail the making of these recipes together and you will not only get warm doing the prep but you'll save on energy costs by having the oven on once for three different dishes – see how to do it with the **green tips** in the recipes

Roasted carrot salad with goats cheese and pomegranate

Ingredients

750g/ 1lb 10oz carrots
2 tbsp olive oil
2 tsp cumin seed
grated zest and juice 1 small orange
400g can chickpeas , drained and rinsed
100g/ 4oz goat's cheese
small bunch oregano or mint , roughly chopped
75g/2½oz pomegranate seeds
warm flatbreads , to serve



Set your margarine out near the oven to soften while you prep the carrots.

No need to wait until your oven is fully preheated for the vegetables. Get the carrots for the salad and soup prepared, set them in beside each other on the top shelf.



Method

Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 5. Prepare carrots by scrubbing and chopping into even sized batons, toss with 1 tbsp of the oil, sprinkle with the cumin seeds and orange zest, and season with salt. Spread onto a large baking sheet and roast for 50 mins until tender and catching some colour on the edges.

Stir the chickpeas into the roasted carrots, then tip onto a large serving platter. Drizzle with the remaining oil and a little of the orange juice. Crumble over the goat's cheese and scatter with the herbs and pomegranate seeds. Serve warm with toasted flatbreads.

Roasted carrot soup

Ingredients

700g carrot , cut into batons
2 tbsp olive oil
4 garlic cloves , skin on
few thyme sprigs, plus extra to garnish
small knob of butter
2 onions , finely chopped
700ml chicken stock , made up with 1 cube
6 tbsp double cream

Method

Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Put the carrots, half the oil, the garlic and thyme in a roasting tin. Season and toss everything together. Pop in the oven and roast for 45-50 mins, or until tender and beginning to turn golden.

Leave the carrots to cool, pop in the fridge and finish this recipe tomorrow!

Meanwhile, heat the remaining oil and butter in a large saucepan. Tip in the onions and cook over a low heat for 10 mins until soft. When the carrots are done, remove from the oven. Squeeze the soft roasted garlic cloves out of their skins and pop in the saucepan. Tip in the carrots and discard any woody thyme stalks. Pour over the stock, bring to the boil, then simmer for 10 mins.

Blitz the soup with a hand blender, then sieve into a clean saucepan, pressing to get as much liquid through as possible. Add 5 tbsp of the cream, heat through and season. Adjust the thickness with a little water, if you like. Serve drizzled with the remaining cream and garnished with thyme.

When the carrots are finished roasting, switch the oven off but pop in some flatbreads to warm in the residual heat while you finish mixing up the salad.



Mini carrot cakes

Ingredients

125g (4oz) carrots
100g (3½oz) sugar
75g (3oz) margarine
100g plain flour
1 tsp cinnamon
1 tsp baking powder
1 large egg
60g (2oz) sultanas and/or
Walnuts mixture

Method

Preheat the oven to gas mark 6, 200°C or fan 180° C .

Peel and grate the carrots into a bowl.

Add the sugar and margarine and mix all the ingredients together. Sift the flour into the bowl, along with the baking powder. Add the cinnamon.

Crack the egg into a bowl and beat it before adding it to the cake mixture.

Add the sultanas/walnuts and stir again. You could try swapping these for other dried fruits like cranberries or apricots.

Divide the mixture equally between the cupcake cases using two metal spoons.

Bake for 15 to 20 minutes until they're golden and piping hot throughout.

They should bounce back when you press the top with a finger and a skewer inserted into the middle should come out clean with no raw cake mixture on it.

While the carrots are roasting you have 30 minutes to make your mini carrot cakes. Bake them below the carrots for the last 20 minutes. When you open the oven to put them in you can give the roasting carrots a shake!

Bridgend Vintage Fair update

The Vintage Fair ran in our Education room from Saturday 12th—19th of February and it was a fantastic success. The opening day saw customers queueing out of the door to come and shop the vintage bargains. We raised a total of £1328 over the week, which helps us to provide our services to the local community.

We would like to thank the volunteers who worked so hard to set up the room and everyone who helped us throughout the week, it certainly looked brilliant!

We couldn't do it without all your pre-loved vintage items, we are grateful to all those who donated items and of course to those that came to the sale to give things a new home.



Your donations matter to Bridgend

We welcome donations of any kind, large or small, and you may be surprised to learn that the Bridgend Centre and the range of wonderful services we deliver would not survive without public support.

If you would like to help us, one of the most valuable ways you can do this is by giving to us regularly, as this

Here's how your support helps:

- A £10 donation helps us to be there, listen and provide space to talk to someone in their time of need
- A £20 donation contributes to one activity session, for example Creative Writing
- £50 funds the training for one volunteer walk leader which enables people to get active, improve their health, meet people and socialise in the great outdoors

If you would like to make a regular or one-off donation to the Centre, please visit our website at www.bridgendcentre.org.uk/donate or call in to the Centre.

Your money makes a real difference to Bridgend and our local community.

THANK YOU



"Until you experience the uniqueness of Bridgend, you can never fully understand how it helps people. It gives folk a purpose, a place to just be themselves"

Lucy

Double trouble this week!



The cards on either side of the four are black.

The club is to the right of the three but not next to it.

The spade is to the left of the heart.

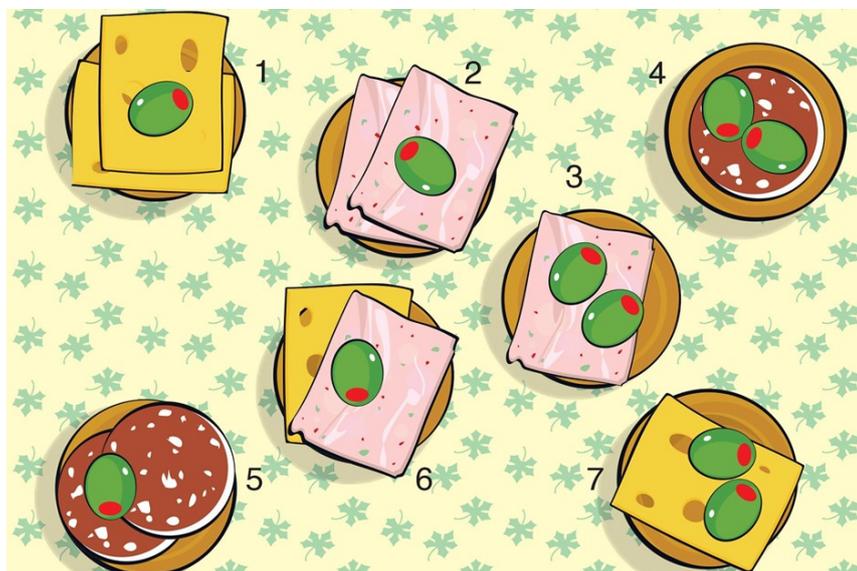
The middle two cards add up to an even number.

Neither of them is a club.

Card mind games

Can you determine the cards' suits and their order?
From the information given?

These tasty treats are topped with olives, ham, cheese, and salami. While they differ from one another, one stands out a little more than the rest. Study the different illustrations for a while to see if you can figure it out.



Answers to last week's quiz

- | | | |
|----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. MONDAY | 7. LOVE HEARTS | 12. LOVING AND GIVING |
| 2. HEART | 8. 4 | 13. TWELFTH NIGHT |
| 3. VENUS | 9. BRITISH HEART FOUNDATION | 14. HEARTACHE |
| 4. RED | 10. THE COMMUNITY | 15. HEARTBEAT |
| 5. 145 MILLION | 11. THE BEATLES | |
| 6. RED ROSE | | |

Thank you to our sponsors and supporters

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at the  of our community