



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

LEIGH BELFAIRS

NEWSLETTER

October 21st 2020

Dear Members, hello and welcome to our periodical Newsletter

There has been a definite change in the air over the last few weeks. The children are now back at school, the nights are drawing in and our summer clothes are stored away until next year. The winter is probably going to seem very long and drawn out.

Covid-19 is still out there, so you do need to be vigilant whilst going about your normal business. Our AGM is imminent and will be held via the Internet for the first time which is very exciting!

I am not sure if Halloween will be allowed this year, but I will have the dish of goodies ready just in case.

Keep safe all, and I hope you enjoy the Newsletter.

N.B. I clearly spoke too soon! Since writing this, Essex C. C. has announced they are in Level 2 Lockdown. This does not affect Southend or Thurrock councils, so the majority of our members are still in the same position. We do need, however, to be aware of this, and comply with the new rules.

Gill

A few good things that have happened over the past months –

- A 103-year-old grandma has beaten COVID-19 and subsequently celebrated by having a 'Bud Light'.
- People around the country brushed up on their sewing skills, making masks for people who need them most. They also made scrubs for nurses.
- Ford, GM, Tesla and other automakers, along with plastic injection companies, were able to make ventilators and other medical devices to help with the pandemic.
- White stork chicks have hatched in Britain for the first time in 600 years

Some successful conservation stories from the U.K.

RED KITE



Going back a century or two, Kites were one of our most frequently encountered raptors. As a direct result of persecution and the accumulation of dangerous chemicals in the food chain, the Red Kite became endangered and by the early 1900's was extinct across most of the UK, including in both Scotland and England. The only remaining population of this iconic raptor was clinging on in Wales, where the birds were eventually granted special protection. In 1989 steps were taken to restore this species to the wider countryside, with a reintroduction scheme being launched by the RSPB and the Nature Conservancy Council, with a view to establish populations in four additional areas. These are The Chilterns, East Midlands, Yorkshire and North-East England,

Further reintroductions are taking place at various sites across Scotland. Such measures, combined, help to once again establish the species as a widespread breeding bird in the UK. Today some 1600 pairs of this enigmatic raptor now breed in the UK, with numbers set to increase further in the future.

LARGE BLUE BUTTERFLY



The Large Blue is the largest and rarest of our blue butterflies. In 1979, despite 50 years of conservation efforts it became extinct. It is thought that loss of habitat and the onset of Myxomatosis, which obliterated Britain's rabbit population, was the cause. Rabbits are excellent at maintaining the short-cropped grassland that Large Blues, and their food plant, Wild Thyme, depend on. Measures to reinstate the Large Blue were first undertaken in 1984, when the

species was reintroduced to a number of suitable sites in Southern England. Since then, our population of this bedazzling butterfly has increased year on year, and now the UK holds the largest population of this species found anywhere in the world.

The Large Blue is unique among British butterflies in the sense that its larvae depend solely on a single species of ant. The larvae feed on these ants during their ten month stay underground, having been carried into the ants' nest by workers fooled by the caterpillar's scent.

WITH HALLOWEEN ALMOST UPON US HERE ARE SOME SCARY READING SUGGESTIONS

Naomi's Room by Jonathan Aitken

I Remember You by Yrsa Sigurdardottir

In Cold Blood by Truman Capote



Don't forget to have your treats ready for that knock at the door!

SHOPPING MADE EASIER

Do you have an Amazon Prime account? If so, have you heard of the Amazon Prime/Morrison's joint shopping venture called **Amazon Now**

Simply key in https://primenow.amazon.co.uk/cart?ref=pn_sr_nav_cart (you can copy it from here) and then click on the Amazon or Prime logo at the top of the page

Sign in and you can then order your shopping. Delivery slots, at the time of writing, are usually next day and are delivered to your door. Orders over £40 are delivered free of charge. Saves you having to go out and mingle with other shoppers.

The Second World War and its Link to Southend

In 1939, when the war had just begun, the pier became a Royal Navy shore base and was renamed HMS Leigh. The first convoys of the war came and went and the waters off Southend Pier saw ships carrying coal, oil, wood, food, goods and uniforms needed to keep the Allied forces fighting for our freedom.

From Dunkirk and The Blitz to D-Day and the fall of Berlin, HMS Leigh took charge of all shipping in and out of The Thames and The Medway into London. On October 15th 1945, the Royal Navy handed HMS Leigh back to the people of Southend, where it once again became Southend Pier.

On 15th October, this year, to commemorate the event, a memorial plaque honouring the men and women who served 'aboard' HMS Leigh, was unveiled. There was a small ceremony which was presided over by the Southend Mayor and Mayoress. Any visitor to the pier will be able to pay their respects at the plaque, which will stand proud in the first shelter on the pier.

A remembrance gallery will also be set up. This will show relevant photographs, letters etc. and, once set up, the general public will be able to view these.

A BIT OF LIGHTHEARTEDNESS

The Bathtub Test

During a visit to my doctor, I asked him, "How do you determine whether or not an older person should be put in an old age home?"

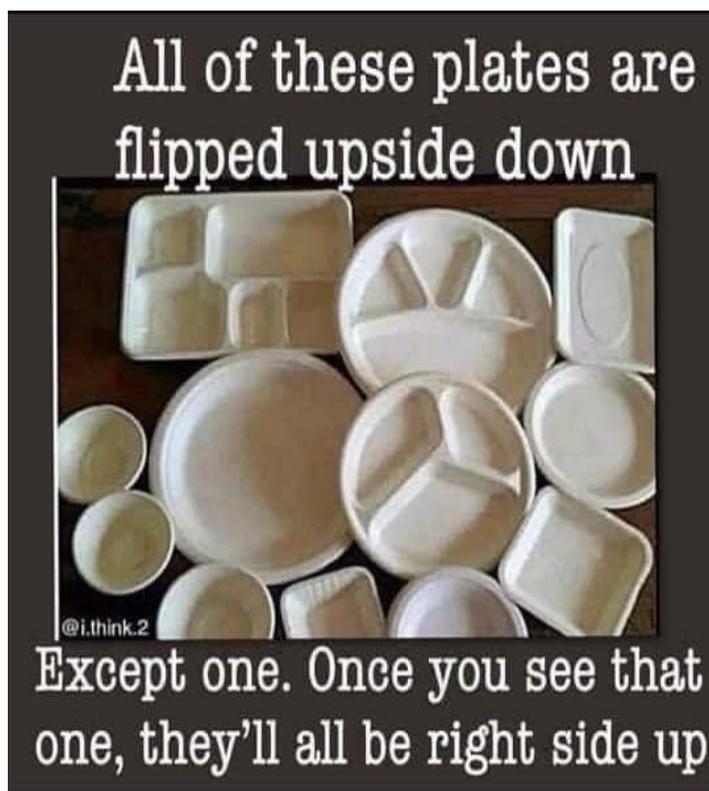
"Well," he said, "we fill up a bathtub, then we offer a teaspoon, a teacup and a bucket to the person and ask them to empty the bathtub."

...

"Oh, I understand," I said. "A normal person would use the bucket because it is bigger than the spoon or the teacup."

"No" he said "A normal person would pull the plug. Do you want a bed near the window?"

ARE YOU GOING TO PASS THIS ON ... OR DO YOU WANT THE BED NEXT TO MINE?



The Story of the Remembrance Day Poppy

The remembrance poppy is an artificial flower that has been used since 1921 to commemorate military personnel who have died in wars and represent a common or field poppy. Inspired by the World War I poem, 'In Flanders Field', they were first adapted by the American Legion to commemorate America soldiers killed in that war (1914-1918).

They were then adopted by Military veterans' groups in parts of the British Empire: the U.K., Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Today, they are most common in the UK and Canada and are used to commemorate their servicemen and women killed in all conflicts since 1914.

Celebrated throughout the commonwealth on November 11th since the end of WWI, Remembrance Day, actually marks Armistice Day – the day on which hostilities between the Allies and Germany ceased on the Western Front.

A POPPY KNITTING PATTERN



This poppy **knitting pattern** is quick and easy to make using small amounts of any double-knit yarn.

You will need:

Pair of 4mm (8) size needles

Any red DK yarns

A small black button

(S2kpo= slip2tog knitwise, K1, pass slipped sts over)

Cast on 60 sts

Rows 1 – 9 (K2,P2) to end

Row 10 (K2tog) to end (30 sts)

Row 11 (S2kpo) to end (10 sts)

Break off yarn, leaving a long tail. Thread tail through remaining 10sts and pull tight.

Fasten off yarn.

Join the edges of the poppy together and sew the black button in the centre.

A small safety pin can be attached to the back and it can be worn as a brooch.



This poppy is **crocheted**. The flower can be worked with any weight of yarn. Finer weights will create a smaller flower, and bulkier weights will create a larger flower. Use the hook size appropriate for the yarn you choose.

You will need:

Red yarn
Crochet hook
Small black button

Abbreviations:

ch - chain
slst - slip stitch
sc - single crochet
tr - treble

Rnd 1 - with Red, ch2, 4sc in 2nd

ch from hook, join with slst to beginning sc. 4sc

Rnd 2 - ch1, 2sc in each sc around, join with slst to beginning sc. 8sc

Rnd 3 - ch1, sc in first sc, ch3, skip next sc, *sc in next sc, ch3, skip next sc*, repeat from *to* twice, join with slst to beginning sc. 4 ch-3 sps

Rnd 4 - *Sl st in next ch-3 sp, ch4 (counts as first tr), 13tr in same sp, ch 4, sl st in same ch-3 sp*, repeat from *to* in each ch-3sp. 60 tr

Rnd 5 - Ch, sc in skipped sc from rnd 2, ch3, *sc in next skipped sc, ch3*, repeat from *to* around, join with slst to beginning sc. 4 ch-3 sps

Rnd 6 - *sl st in next ch-3 sp, ch5 (counts as first dtr), 13dtr in same sp, ch 5, sl st in same ch-3 sp*, repeat from *to* in each ch-3sp, weave in ends. 60 dtr

Sew the black button in the centre.

A small safety pin can be attached to the back and it can be worn as a brooch.

Note: for smaller flowers, omit Rounds. 5-6.



November 5th is almost upon us, so if you have any plans to celebrate, do keep safe. And remember, our pets are not always as enthusiastic as we are!

Loud bangs can scare and worry them, so make sure they are safe and indoors and can snuggle up to you for reassurance.

Ladies of interest linked to Leigh on Sea –

The Tiller Girls posing on a ship – it is not known whether Dorothy is pictured here



Dorothy Lussignea, the tragic Tiller Girl

Dorothy lived with her parents in Southsea Avenue, Leigh on Sea and at the age of 22 was a Tiller Girl. Back in the 1960's no Sunday evening would be complete without Sunday Night at The London Palladium. The most constant performers were The Tiller Girls, with their high kicks and precision timings. But they weren't just a 50s/60's phenomenon.

The Tiller Girls were formed by John Tiller back in 1890. He had noticed that the overall effect of the dancers was often spoiled by lack of discipline and he found that by linking arms the dancers could dance as one. He is credited with inventing precision dance.

On 1st October 1932, the Tiller Girls were booked to perform in a Tom Arnold review

entitled 'Walk this Way' at the Nottingham Empire, and indeed the show did go on, but under the strain of the Troupe knowing that a tragic accident had claimed the life of one of their number.

The very afternoon of the Nottingham performance, Dorothy and her friend, Betty Rowe, also a Tiller Girl, and two young gentlemen, were returning from an afternoon out to Newstead Abbey. They were on their way back for the evening performance when the car suddenly skidded on the greasy road. The vehicle overturned, Dorothy was pinned beneath it and sadly died. No one else was hurt but the newspaper report called on the pluck of Miss Rowe. She was able to crawl out of the upturned car and bravely went on to perform at The Nottingham Empire.

Dorothy's body remained in Nottingham, where she was buried. Why she was not returned to Leigh, where her parents lived, is not known.

Mary Spencer Warren



Nowadays we do not bat an eyelid at women on the Council. Of course, in the 1900's the opposite was true. Currently, Leigh on Sea town Councillors are comprised of one third ladies and two thirds gentlemen. In February 1908, the edition of The Southend and Westcliff Graphic reported the **amazing fact** that a lady was intending to stand for the Town Council. Mary Warren, aged about 31, was a single lady who hailed from Northampton but now lived in Avenue Road, Leigh on Sea. She shared the property with another single lady, Ellen Murrell Hammond, originally from Fulham. Mary Warren was also the founder and secretary of the local branch of The Primrose League*.

She was well known and respected in Leigh and it was felt that should she enter the race for the Town Council she would no doubt add interest to the proceedings.

On being asked if the rumours of her intended candidature were true, Mary was rather coy, but confirmed that the suggestion had been put to her that she should stand. Given the recent reports in the press about the male contingent's behaviour in Council, she felt a woman's opinion would be of value, and a woman's presence would have a calming effect with the men curbing their behaviour in front of a lady!

It is not known whether Mary did stand for election to the Town Council, and if so, whether she was indeed appointed!

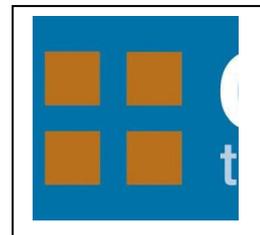
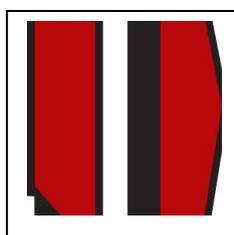
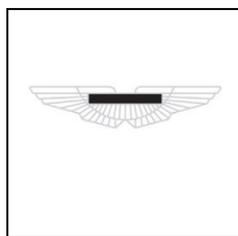
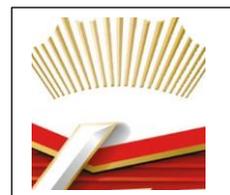
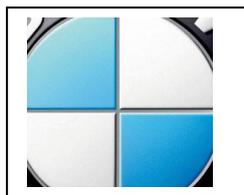
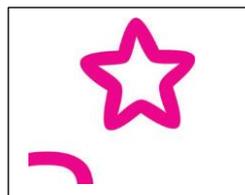
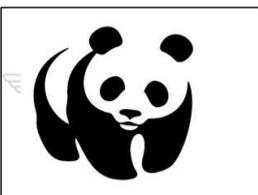
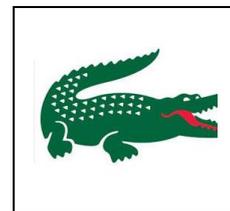
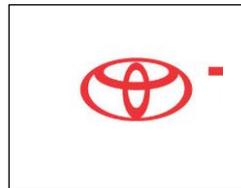
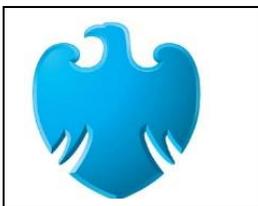
*The Primrose League, founded in 1883, was an organisation for spreading Conservative principles in Great Britain. The primrose was known as the "favourite flower" of Benjamin Disraeli, and so became associated with him.

Dunk the Junk - a tip from one of our members

How to get rid of unwanted supermarket bills, small flyers etc....I put them into a small bowl of water, squidge them down, press them into a ball and then just pop them into the recycling!

Pat

LOGO KNOWLEDGE – CAN YOU WORK OUT THE COMPANY NAMES? ANSWERS ON THE LAST PAGE



POETRY

With Remembrance Sunday fast approaching, these two poems reflect the mood

A Walk Through a War Cemetery

By Paul Stalham

Silently standing these sentinel stones
Shield soldiers sleeping far from their homes
Headstones wet with the war widow's tear
Show names of men now in God's care

The widow recalls from within her grieving
How he looked when for war he was leaving
His smile, last hug and tender kissing
Her fears and tears when told "Believed
Missing"

Battalions of stone, on a parade ground of turf
Show respect for men of battleground worth
Standing upright in row after row
So like the men So long ago

Here stands a stone, without name or date
A grey grim marker of some soldier's fate
No-one knows who lies under this clod
The stone simply reads,- known unto God

The glory men do lives on in their kin
Making worthwhile the battle to win
Their children's cries of laughter and glee
Now in a world that is decent and free

Cenotaph steps with petals stained red
Remind us of our war glorious dead
Not of Ypres* or Passchendaele mud
But our loved ones own dear blood

As we stand still on eleventh of November
Lay wreaths of poppies and quietly remember
Sacrifices made without count of cost
The war that was WON! and the lives that were
lost

**Ypres is pronounced in this poem as the
Belgians do - eepra*

The Poppy

By Janet Monk



Poppies are a symbol, of good and of bad
Good because they're beautiful, bad because
they're sad
They can give us joy and make us smile
But that merriment oft lasts but for awhile

Our thoughts go back to years ago
When our men were loved but we let them go
Bright and cheery, heads held high
They did not know they were about to die

For King and Country came the cry
As their lasses watched on and said goodbye
By train and boat they travelled on
Not knowing what they would become

Our goodbyes were final, our men were doomed
For pain and hurt they were being groomed
They gave so much; it was too much to ask
Not ask, DEMAND! - twas their final task

In battlefield with mud and rain
The soldier's cries, the sound of pain
No medics around to come to their aid
So the final price is what they paid

So, think on, of that poppy red
And last thing at night before you go to bed
Pray for their souls, those many men
And remember, we live today, because of them



Now that the cooler days are with us, there's nothing better than a good homemade soup...

Leek and Lentil Soup – Serves 4

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon Coconut oil – or oil of your choice- for frying leeks
- 2 medium leeks – chopped into about 6 mm slices
- 2 garlic cloves – finely chopped
- ½ teaspoon chilli flakes – or more, to taste
- 300g red lentils
- 1 litre hot vegetable stock
- 200ml coconut milk or just plain milk (coconut milk makes it richer)

Method

Make up the stock.

Melt the oil in a large saucepan and when hot add the chopped leeks. Stir the leeks to make sure they are coated well with the oil. Reduce the heat to simmer and cook for about 5 minutes.

Add the finely chopped garlic to the pan and cook for a further 3 minutes on a medium heat, taking care not to burn the garlic.

Add the chilli flakes and lentils and mix together well.

Pour in the hot stock together with the milk. Bring back to the boil and once simmering cook on a low heat for about 15 minutes. Check the soup and if it looks as though it is getting too thick, add a little more liquid and cook for a further 10 minutes.

Remove from the heat and when cooled whiz with a blender.

This can be served with chopped cooked bacon sprinkled on to the hot soup or drizzled with crème fraiche. Add a piece of crusty bread. Delicious!

QUIZ TIME



1. What colour is a giraffe's tongue?
2. What is the name of the Greek dip made of yoghurt and cucumber?
3. Which year did the EU introduce the Euro as currency?
4. What's the world's smallest country by landmass?
5. What three colours are in the German flag?
6. Where's the smallest bone in the human body?
7. What's the nearest airport to Liverpool Street Station?
8. Which bird can fly backwards?
9. What are the South African Rugby team known as?
10. Which of the following is not a Prime number? 199,181 or 147

School nostalgia

My family moved to Southend when I was 7 years old, and whereas at my previous school I had walked about a mile to school on my own, here I was told I was going to a new school about 3 miles away so had to catch two buses. Mum arranged for me to be shown the way by a girl of 9 who lived round the corner and applied for me to have a free bus pass.

On the first day I walked to her house and we walked together to the bus stop. We then got on the bus to Southend, crossed the roads at Victoria Circus and caught another bus along to the Cricketers. Then a short walk to school. After a week or so, the other girl said I could now find my own way.

As soon as I was 8, the free bus pass was taken away! It seems that at 8 years old I was old enough to walk the direct route to school which was only 2.8 miles and therefore below the 3 mile limit for a free bus pass. Mum had to give me the money for the two buses there and back. I didn't catch the second bus as it was a walkable distance and spent the money on sweets instead.....

Judith

Quiz Answers

- .
1. Blue
2. Tzatziki
3. 1999
4. Vatican City
5. Black, Red and Gold
6. The ear
7. London City
8. Hummingbird
9. The Springboks
10. 147

Logo answers From L to R

Barclays
Starbucks
Toyota
Lacoste
World Wildlife Fund
Superdrug
B.M.W.
Budweiser
Barclays Premier League
Aston Martin
Netflix
Greggs