



Reg. Charity No. 1104944

# Marple Bridge & Mellor U3A NEWSLETTER July 2020 (Again Nothing is Normal)

## Chairman's Chatter

It is now approximately 100 days since the Lockdown started - can't quite believe that we have all coped with it for so long! The big question at the moment is how long will it last and how will our lives need to change over the next few months or even years?

I wrote the following poem based on my own experience and the thoughts I was having, and I realise that for everyone of us the experience will have been different. I have been able to walk with the dog each day and enjoy the countryside near my home, and I know not everyone can do that. For those of you who have been shielding the experience has been a much more isolating and confining one. We are at the point where it would be very easy to give up and lose all the benefits that we have achieved from our selflessness so I do hope that you will be able to sustain your commitments to our community wellbeing for a while longer, if necessary.

It does not look as though we will be able to hold our general meeting for a while yet, but some of the groups may be able to restart within certain guidelines. We will have to see what advice comes through from Head Office. In the meantime remember to 'Keep alert!'

Clare Gwilym

### Covid Times My Thoughts

We stay in the house  
With no meetings allowed:  
We are told we must all  
Stay away from the crowds!

We walk with the dog ,  
Down the same winding paths,  
In a state of suspension,  
We hope will soon pass.

We fear for the future  
And what could be in store,  
We wait for some signal,  
To know something more.

We wait for the briefing,  
And for what they will say?  
And we hope that the news,  
Will be better each day!

The Lockdown is easing,  
As I write this piece;  
There may be, at last  
Some kind of release!

# Crossword Compiled by Marple Bridge and Mellor U3A Crossword Group

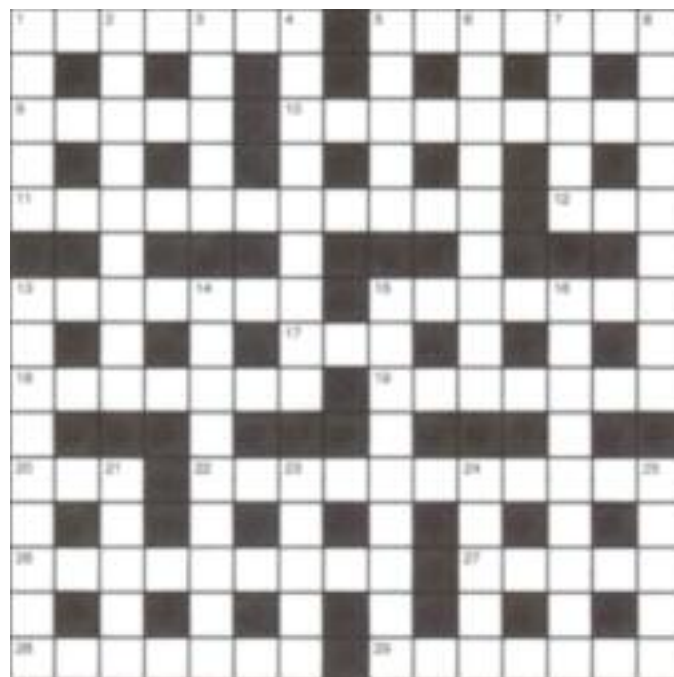
compiled jointly by U3A Crossword Group

## Clues across

1. Padded assembly leader left quiet lad confused. (7)
5. Spot of water let fall after returning married. (7)
9. In doubt, isolate asymptomatic leaders in country. (5)
10. Information time before high point of power production. (9)
11. Mistakenly think dear Ed is generous. (11)
12. Low flying bird. (3)
13. Badly treated young girl embraces university and education. (7)
15. Customers want limestone blocks delivered around early evening. (7)
17. Meadow begins to look environmentally attractive. (3)
18. Audibly encounter bird for snack from chippy possibly. (4,3)
19. Mother's smashed drinks container. (7)
20. Tear for one departed. (3)
22. Use brake pedal with music composed on land later. (11)
26. Not joined yet but he's 'armless. (3-6)
27. Silenced the whole gamut – editor included. (5)
28. Body structure may not move after a kick off. (7)
29. Lock-downed leader day after dreadful day from March 25th. (4,3)

## Clues down

1. Sudden tender spot. (5)
2. Travel inside on a group of islands. (9)
3. Refuse prime television spots. (5)
4. Swimming stroke, it's very easy with drifting gap introduced. (3,6)
5. Get angry about cake. (5)
6. Web spread out all over the place. (9)



## Clues down (cont)

7. Scoundrel I ring concerning relationship. (5)
8. Very restricted movement in Paris – a sly manoeuvre. (8)
13. New Normal almost got between me and DA's business communications. (9)
14. Our sphere turned out to have magical powers. (9)
15. Lifting fat cat he went first into city church. (9)
16. Maiden not upset, but put forward. (9)
21. Bear at risk and Pa in a strange way. (5)
23. Exert influence in the hall. (5)
24. Dimwit – no point in returning shy. (5)
25. Even Lords delay bizarrely. (5)

The crossword compiling group were not able to meet this month and discuss our clues due to the current situation, however, members sent me their homework and I have put together the usual joint effort,

Sheila Stafford Group Co-ordinator

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## Information and Stories from Our Groups

### IPAD Group

We are a small, friendly self help group of iPad users who meet monthly, usually on a Tuesday afternoon, in members' homes.

We discuss problems we may be experiencing which usually we're able to sort out between us.

We share information about current scams and talk about apps that we are finding useful.

We are very happy to welcome beginners to our group to help get them started.

Pam Taylor. Group leader

## Outings group

When I was given the task of organising the outings group from the beginning of 2019, it was and still is well supported by the members of MB&M U3A. This is no doubt due to the varied choice of destinations chosen by the previous leader. I noted that the yearly programme usually included one or two theatre visits, a choice of National Trust Property and some local beauty spot or attraction. I have followed a similar pattern in my choice of destinations.

This year in January the group attended the Royal Exchange Theatre and enjoyed a lively show "Gypsy". In February we had an interesting tour of the Bridgewater Hall followed by an excellent lunchtime concert starring a local talent ( Jess Gilliam on Saxophone).

Unfortunately we have had to cancel the programme from March onwards until further notice. This means those of us who paid the deposit for the outings to the Isle of Wight in July should have been refunded. Similarly the planned outing to Southport Flower show will not be taking place.

I hope we are able to restart the programme in the near future. In the meantime please stay safe and keep well.

All outings are planned well in advance after a group discussion to which everyone is invited.

The group outings leader then finalises the list, quite often for the year ahead

**No outings should be booked without prior consultation with the group outings leader to avoid any conflicting bookings**

*Hazel Bhatt, Group Leader*

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## Tales of Experiences in Lock-down

### *Let there be light*

We have had a very exciting lockdown which we are happy to share with you and any other poor soul who may be interested. At about the beginning of May a letter from Stockport Council popped through our letterbox advising us that we were to get a new street light outside our house, to replace the old decrepit concrete one. Lo and behold about a week later two men in a truck with a crane turned up and installed the new post, minus light fitting. Having completed the job very tidily off they went. About a week later a different truck, with a cherry picker attached, and two men turned up and we thought, this is it completion of the job. We were wrong. These two very carefully attached the light fitting to the end of the post, and then left.

We fully expected that shortly the light would be connected, job finished. So when another two men, in a truck with a cherry picker, turned up we thought this is it. But no, out came a tin of paint and a paintbrush, and they painted the post grey.

By now the saga of the new street light had become the major topic of conversation among the neighbours, especially after the Thursday evening clap. After all this was better than any TV box set, we are permanently on the edge of our seats. We do not know how many episodes there will be, or when the next episode will happen, we think we know what the finale will be, but we don't know when. We do all however plan to have a great street party to celebrate because we reckon that the current social distancing regulations will be long gone by the time the job is finished!

Regards (with our tongues firmly in our cheeks)

*Colin and Carol Burkitt*

## Unprecedented Times

'Unprecedented times' - the new buzz words to herald in the weirdest living situation one could possibly imagine.

At first I admit I was frightened, afraid of the slightest tickly cough, rushing to have a gargle at the hint of a sore throat, a headache - where ARE the paracetamol - watching, listening to the sound of my husband's breathing in the night and of course watching the daily live Coronavirus news conferences. And so the days passed into weeks then months. When would it end?

Thankfully there have been unexpected moments in the lockdown scenario; in the beginning the weather, unseasonably sunny for days on end, going at 7 a.m. for the daily morning newspaper and a chat with the brave assistant in the little corner shop, one could feel the warmth of the sun, and enjoy deserted roads with only the sound of birds, actual birds singing on the main road, who would have thought that? People respectful of age I suppose stepping aside, smiling and saying hello in passing. The supermarket shelves denuded of every possible item, (who needs 36 toilet rolls and 4 kilos of pasta for goodness sake?), fresh fruit and vegetables missing, bread and milk scarce. Little by little the corner shop had small surprises, fresh bread one day, a milk delivery another, and joy of joy, a bag of fresh carrots another. Who would have dreamt a carrot could bring such happiness? The day my new very best friend, the assistant, whispered that a delivery of flour had arrived, I felt such pleasure in carrying home a 3lb bag of self raising. No matter that I already had a bag in the cupboard - every woman for herself I thought and anyway I was planning a batch bake.

As the weeks pass we settle into a routine, albeit a laidback one, a stroll still mindful of other walkers, or masked and gloved going into a shop as stocks gradually appear on the shelves, keeping the obligatory 2 metres apart and supermarkets having more delivery slots, but I now use my local shop more in thanks for their support during the dark days.

Now in our thirteenth week of lockdown, we have been thankful for Zoom and Facetime, daily conferences with our family and friends, unexpected letters from distant friends, a time to read, and paint and watch the flowers grow and of course, an immense sense of pride in our NHS and care workers, bus and taxi drivers, and the Covid 19 volunteers without whom how would we have got our repeat prescriptions. So many people, so much generosity of spirit around, but I am acutely conscious of and immensely sad for those who have lost loved ones to this dreadful disease and those unable to see their nearest and dearest in hospital for weeks on end no matter how serious their illness.

We are grateful to have survived so far and of course we shall keep on washing hands, keeping our distance from others, and simply waiting for the day when these 'unprecedented times' are at an end.

Keep safe everyone

Jenny Summers

## Struggles after lockdown

### First visit to friends.

The excitement was too much. We were actually going out to visit friends! He checked he'd got his wallet, his phone, his handkerchief, his car keys, his..... etc. It was only when we'd driven half way there and it was too late to return home, when he realised that he was still wearing..... his bedroom slippers! It gave us all a laugh.





## Two ladders are better than one!

In February we bought a new pair of step ladders but as usual we never got round to throwing out the old set, which were rather wonky. During lockdown we have been trying to clear out lots of items that have passed their "sell by date". One of these was the old set of ladders. But, where do we put them? All the tips were shut!

David had a brilliant idea. We could use them to display some planters in the garden. They were rather tall, so we sawed them in half. Cutting through both the steps at the front and the support at the back. The top half was fine as it was hinged together and we found a way to hinge the bottom 2 pieces together so they would open and close as a normal stepladder.



We then realised that the individual steps were too narrow to balance a planter. An old bookcase provided the perfect answer. The shelves were cut to size and then screwed on each step. Just right to balance a variety of planters and garden ornaments. They now look delightful adding height and colour to our garden display.

Now David had the bug! We'd bought a new polythene greenhouse. What do we do with the old frame. It can't just be thrown out! His trusty saw came back into use along with his Heath Robinson mind. We now have a beautiful 3 tier display stand for some more planters.

He's certainly got the up-cycling bug.

Shirley

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## A little Covid 19 story

I have been going a couple of different walks on alternate days and usually meet the same dog walkers at a similar point in the walk each day. One morning last week I met one of the dog walkers who said " I am glad to see you, I haven't seen you for a few days and wondered if you were ok " . What a lovely comment from a complete stranger, especially someone in a very much younger age group than me. It put a spring in my step !

Olwyn

## Just a little portrait

Been busy knitting and crocheting in the current lockdown, lot's of baby hats, blankets etc for charity.

Reading, writing, gardening and canal walks.

Eunice Young



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## Joke Corner



Did you hear they're  
filming a documentary  
about people camping  
in their backyard  
during the lockdown?  
It's being directed by  
Tentin' Quarantino.

THEY SAID A MASK  
AND GLOVES WERE  
ENOUGH TO GO TO  
THE GROCERY STORE.  
THEY LIED,  
EVERYBODY ELSE  
HAD CLOTHES ON!

Crossword Solution  
Across 1. Quitted 5. Dewdrop 9. India 10. Generator  
11. Kindhearted 12. Owl 13. Misused 15. Clients 17. Lea  
18. Meat Pie 19. Thermos 20. Rip 22. Rallentando  
26. Non-member 27. Muted 28. Anatomy 29. Lady Day  
Down 1. Quick 2. Indonesia 3. Trash 4. Dog-paddle  
5. Donut 6. Worldwide 7. Ratio 8. Paralysis  
13. Memoranda 14. Superhero 15. Cathedral 16. Nominated  
21. Panda 23. Lobby 24. Timid 25. Oddly

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Please send items for publication by email

to Malcolm Moss, 24 Beechwood Drive, Marple, SK67DG  
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Any stories, articles or photographs of interest to members are welcomed.

You can read all issues of the newsletter on our website [www.mbmu3a.org.uk](http://www.mbmu3a.org.uk)

**All contributions for the next edition of the Newsletter  
should be received no later than Fri 28th Aug 2020**