



UP2DATE



ISOLATION SPECIAL NUMBER 7

Welcome to Edition Number 7.

The photograph of the pelargonium above was one two ivy leaved pelargoniums I purchased when I went with Stockport Horticultural Society to Chorley Flower Show. Unfortunately, both for us and for the show itself, the weather was terrible with the rain pouring down. I bought the two plants because they were a bargain, I had no idea what colour they were , I just thought I might take cuttings for this year. Imagine my pleasure this Spring to find these lovely colours, reminding me of raspberry ripple, and the second one is also bi-coloured but paler. Another bonus , this is the second time they have flowered this year. This seventh edition of the Isolation Special has taken longer to put together although I now have enough material for a magazine. As there appears to be no indication when we are to return to “normal”, I will continue to produce the special “Up2Date” magazines but obviously need content for them.

So if you have anything you would like to contribute please send it to me, stories, poems, reports on holidays for those daring enough to have one, everyday experiences which have changed because of Covid19.

Please send your contributions to :

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Thank you very much. Take care and stay safe.

LOCAL LOCKDOWN

Linda, (whose husband, Gavin, is keeping many of us provided on a weekly basis with a variety of quizzes) was Facebooked the following description of boundaries of Greater Manchester. We don't know who the original author was but would like to thank them for trying to clarify the situation. Please note that a lot of the opinions included in the piece belong to the author.

Personally, despite spending the first ten days of my life in Manchester and accepting when I first moved to Heaton Moor that historically I now lived in Lancashire, the Mersey being the border, I have never included the term Greater Manchester in my address. That is, of course until I reached sixty and became the proud owner of a Greater Manchester travel pass.

So, for those of us who have survived three weeks of extra tougher lockdown with what appears a fourth week to come I hope this helps to clarify the situation.

WHERE EVEN IS GREATER MANCHSTER?

Where even is Greater Manchester? Someone might need to clarify to us Greater Manchester residents that we do actually live in GM for this new lockdown. Here's why. Altrincham, Hale, and Bowdon think they're in Cheshire. They're not anymore, they're in Trafford, but are heavily in denial and often driving large Range Rovers and erecting obscene gates (that defeat the object of them where living in any beautiful scenery as they can't see it) to ensure people think they're definitely Cheshire. Cheadle Hulme is also in denial. They'll tell you they moved there "for the schools". There's a whole load of "Cheshire influencers" in Altrincham and Stockport getting a reality check tonight as to what county they're in. Sale also claims to be in Cheshire but that's just whack. Trafford is home to the Lancashire Cricket Ground, even though it's now geographically closer to Cheshire and definitely not in Lancashire. Stockport changes its mind as to whether it's Cheshire or Manchester according to the situation and current trends (and in fairness, Bramhall is pretty posh, and Hazel Grove perhaps -

they would say they're in Cheshire though). Marple used to be part of Glossop which is actually Derbyshire although Marple was at one point in time, Cheshire. It's now Greater Manchester with a Stockport postcode but kind of still looks a bit Derbyshire-ish and calls itself Cheshire. It's near a whole load of villages filled with people that have no idea where they are and who all look strikingly similar. Anyway, over to Wigan, you have Standish - the semi-posh part of Wigan. The top of Standish borders Chorley which actually is genuinely Lancashire. Head across to West Lancs or is it Merseyside? Basically it all starts to sound a bit Scouse as you go towards Skelmersdale. In fact, where the hell does Skelmersdale even fall? Mind you, no one goes to Skem anyway, it's just a sign on the M58. Ah, Bolton. Another proud Lancastrian sat confused in Greater Manchester's sprawl (at least residents of Horwich have Rivington close by for outdoor exercise, which while extremely popular with doggers from across the North West - avoid twilight jogs by the way, is technically Chorley so is in proper Lancashire). Bury, Rochdale and Oldham think they're in Lancashire still (although some parts of Rochdale and Oldham used to be in West Yorkshire and many remain confused as to where the border is - somewhere in Saddleworth apparently, could be near trendy Uppermill or maybe near where they built a motorway around some poor farmer's house, or maybe Oldham Mumps wherever that is - you may have seen it on a tram, it's a place not a disease). Many in these towns also drive Range Rovers, although they're best avoided as they tend to be career criminals (there are career criminals in Cheshire too, but they're posher and serve more affluent clientele). This particularly applies to Prestwich, a generally popular area in....well, it's close to the city centre and Salford but calls itself Bury, the cosmopolitan part. It's Greater Manchester nonetheless. You can get a closer look at this good looking crowd on a roofbar in Spinningfields like 20 Stories, they'll be taking selfies for the 'Gram near the lifts, with Beetham Tower in the background. Chorlton and Didsbury are safely in Greater Manchester and both seem content with this, even though many of their residents actually live in Rusholme and Whalley Range but ride a bike and look quirky so fit in with the West Dids crowd. Now

to my old friend Salford. Salford stands alone as a city in a city - is it even "proparr Manc R kid?" Media City isn't in Manchester really. It's in Salford. But that's Greater Manchester apparently, even though it's a whole separate city with a separate council and pretty pink bins. You'll also find plenty of Range Rovers and huge houses in Worsley, although they don't claim to live in Cheshire, they're Salford done good. They're not really Mancunian either, they're Salfordian, although haemorrhage Manchester bees at an alarming rate. They're just focused on pretending they live in Worsley and NOT Swinton despite the M27/M28 postcode giveaway (I once lived near the border and actively engaged in those antics myself). Nearby, well not that nearby, you'll find Little Hulton, a place that is definitely in Salford but close to Bolton yet calls itself Worsley. Worsley is on the way to city status if you believe the postal addresses of most in the region. Worsley is close to Leigh which is kind of Wigan-ish and down the road from Haydock, which isn't Lancashire any more. It's Merseyside. Even though it's right down the road from Wigan, and therefore Greater Manchester. Phew. Oh, and I've absolutely no idea where Tameside even is, sounds like it's in Newcastle.

I think I'm the person to clear up the confusion.

PS no offence to Range Rovers.

PPS I've lived in many of the above areas.

PPPS I still live in "Greater Manchester"

PPPPS this is clearly a bit of fun, don't take it to heart.

www.u3asites.org.uk/stockport

Don't forget you can always keep up to date if you use our website.

Please keep on checking the website, even though now we are understandably not meeting, because there may be information from the many group leaders. Please encourage any members you speak to, to continue checking the website.

My “New Normal” Library Experience

In the last issue, Ruth mentioned that 4 branches of Stockport library would be re-opening from 13 July. This was good news for me as I had been in the habit of visiting my local library every 3 weeks to borrow books, and had 4 books at home that I had borrowed before the lockdown in March. I received an email from the library informing me that one of the books had been ordered by someone else, so I wasted no time in setting off to return my books.

There was a socially distanced queuing system similar to supermarkets, and only one entrance. A library assistant was seated at a desk about 2 metres inside the entrance. Before I could go into the building, I had to give my name, address and phone number for “test and trace” purposes and also read out my library card number. I’d advise taking reading glasses if you need them!

Once inside, I had to use hand sanitiser, follow the one-way system and deposit the books I was returning in a box, ready for them to be quarantined for 72 hours. I was then about to exit by an open door leading to the car park, but the librarian shouted across to say the door was only open for ventilation purposes and I had to continue round and exit by another door.



It is no longer possible to browse for books. Instead you have to use the “order and collect” system. This can be done either by phone or online, and I decided to use the online system which seemed quite straightforward. You can either request specific books or say which authors or genres you like and leave it to the librarian to select books for you. I opted for ‘modern authors’ and



'crime'. Unfortunately, when I received an email confirming my order,



I realised I should have specified 'crime **fiction**'. My order had been classified as 'research' and I am not planning to commit a murder! I then tried to edit or delete my order, but there seemed to be no way this could be done. I gave up and rang the

library to explain the problem. They confirmed there was no way of editing or deleting the order, but said they could add a note explaining that I wanted novels.

A few days later I received an email to say that my books had been selected but I needed to wait for 3 days before collecting as the books were in quarantine. I finally collected them today. They had already been booked out on my ticket and were tied up in 2 bundles, labelled with my name. The bundles of books were set out on tables in alphabetical order of the names of the borrowers. There were 8 books in total including several hardbacks, so they were quite heavy. Fortunately, as it was raining, I had driven to the library.

It will take some time to adjust to the new system. Is it worth it? I'm not sure at this stage. I used to really enjoy browsing in the library and reading the notices to find out about local events. However, as Ruth said to me, "There aren't any local events!"



Sheila Fleming

WHY ENGLISH IS SO HARD.

We'll begin with a box and the plural is boxes
But the Plural of ox becomes oxen not oxes
One fowl is a goose but two are geese
Yet the plural of moose should never be
meese
You may find a lone mouse or a nest full of
mice
Yet the plural of house is houses not hice.



If the plural of man is always men
Why shouldn't the plural of pan be called pen?
If I speak of my foot and show you my feet
And I give you a boot, would a pair be called beet?
If one is a tooth and a whole set are teeth
Why shouldn't the plural of booth be called beeth?

Then one would be that, and three would be those
Yet hat in the plural would never be hose.
And the plural of cat is cats, not cose
The masculine pronouns are he, his and him
But imagine the feminine she, shis and shim !.



Found and sent in by Joan Davies.



CALENDAR

Many of you buy the U3A calendar which celebrates all the activities we undertake throughout the year. However, the calendar for 2021 has, for obvious reasons, not much content. Ron and Beryl have asked for anyone who has photographs which could be used to be sent to Vivian Bath so that she can hopefully produce a calendar which demonstrates how we survived "Lockdown".

Some groups are meeting using Zoom and photos to demonstrate this could and have been sent to Vivian. For those unable to "meet" because their group does not lend itself to virtual meetings an idea would be a collection of individual photographs demonstrating that you are still continuing with the interests represented by your group, even though we accept that the wonderful social side is missing. Having checked the list of groups on offer some suggestions could include walking, cryptic crosswords, family history, arts and crafts, bowling, Tai Chi and food appreciation now that we are allowed to meet in eateries in very small groups.

Show us how ingenious you can be in producing something to represent the groups you attend. And help the team turn this blank canvas into an interesting memento of “Lockdown in 2020”



We will also have to show ingenuity when it comes to ordering, paying for and distributing the calendar but we will cross these bridges when we come to them.

Vivian would like you to send your contributions digitally to:

vivian.heaviley@btinternet.com

We look forward to what could be a very interesting calendar for 2021.

FIRST MEAL OUT AFTER LOCKDOWN

And I don't know if it was one of "Rishi's Dishes" because my daughter paid for it. We were shopping at Ikea, found out that the café was open and that there was room for us. And what a new experience it was.



For those of you who may have never been to Ikea or eaten there here is a brief idea of what used to happen. This is a very basic self-service café, queue for your food, chose it from huge menus above the counter, pay for it, collect your knives, forks, napkins etc and make your chosen brew from the machines. Then find yourself a table and when finished clear your table. The menu is basic, though does change regularly with vegetarian options included over the last few year. It is best known for Swedish meat balls served with chips, cream sauce and lingonberries or the very reasonably priced breakfast £1.75 for sausage, bacon, beans, omelette, hash brown and tomato, and if you're a member of the Ikea family free mugs of tea or coffee. Breakfast has proved very popular with those of U3A age as many are to be seen when the store opens enjoying breakfast and reading their newspapers.

This has, like so many things, all had to change. No longer can you get a breakfast, understandable really because many who were eating it were probably not shopping in the store. The choice on the menu has been limited. And the serving area remodelled on a temporary basis. Now you form a queue, still socially distanced to 2 metres, until you reach the till where your name and phone number are taken, and you are allotted a table number. A masked member of staff then appears to take you to your seat and give you your menus. Once you have



made your choice you have to wait for your waitress to appear. This being the longest wait but gives time to admire how Ikea have used inhouse materials to form barriers, wardrobe doors with Perspex inlays. Very practical.

Our waitress appeared wearing a full-face visor and my daughter, Joanne went with her to order the food and pay for it. Within minutes the waitress returned with a serving trolley containing everything we needed: food, drinks, condiments in paper and cutlery with napkin in a cellophane wrapping. We were then left to enjoy our food. When we had finished, no more clearing the table, just leave the table and the clearing up for someone else.



I'm very impressed with how Ikea have adapted to the restrictions of Covid 19 and judging by the queue the café will as busy as usual within these restrictions.

Ruth Faulkner

STOCKPORT DUSTBINS.

We now have another change to our dustbin rota, and this will be the last until March when hopefully the green bins will return to a weekly collection. From 31st August blue bins will be collected every two weeks. Despite being told on many occasions that bin collections have changed my two elderly neighbours across the road have been throughout lockdown been putting their bins out as usual and for some reason everyone on the street has copied them. So the rotation for those in the Heaton area is as follows starting next week (WB 7/09.20) :

BLACK & GREEN , BLUE, BLACK & GREEN, BLUE & BROWN.

I believe the rotation is the same throughout Stockport its just that different areas will start at different points on it. Apologies to those living further afield than Stockport.

DOCTORED NOTES (Philip Howard in *The Times*)

As a relief from lectures, students at St George's Hospital Medical School, London, have compiled an alternative medical dictionary. Some examples:

Adenoma: what you say to your mother when you don't know.

Alimentary: what Sherlock Holmes said to Watson.

Benign: what we want to be when we are only eight.

Cauterise: what the registrar did before he winked at a student.

Dilate: to live to a great age.

Fibula: a little white lie.

Ganglia: a very tall, thin person.

Rectum: what being up all night did to the houseman.

Serum: what you do when you barbecue steaks.

Specimen: chaps who wear glasses.

Testes: small quizzes.

Tolerance: what you get if you give growth hormone to ants.

Vitamin: what happens when you see friends passing your front door

MY SAT-NAV

I have a little sat-nav; it sits there in my car.
A sat-nav is a driver's friend – it tells you where you are.
It gives me full instructions, especially how to drive:
“It's thirty miles an hour,” it says, “You're doing thirty-five!”
It tells me when to stop and start and when to use the brake
And tells me that it's never ever safe to overtake.
It tells me when a light is red and when it goes to green;
It seems to know instinctively just when to intervene.
It lists the vehicles just in front and all those in the rear
And, taking all this to account, it specifies my gear.
I'm sure no other driver has so useful a device,
For when we leave and lock the car, it still gives me advice.
It fills me up with counselling: each journey's pretty fraught,
So why don't I exchange it and get a quieter sort?
Ah well, you see, it cleans the house, makes sure I'm properly fed,
It washes all my shirts and things and keeps me warm in bed.
Despite all these advantages and my tendency to scoff,
I wish that on occasion I could turn the darn thing off.
I've had this little sat-nav for a large part of my life;
It's better than the normal ones: my sat-nav is my wife.

THANK YOU

These last two amusing pieces were sent by Judith Sumner who says that she doesn't believe she has any more. So, thank you to Judith who has kept us amused throughout the last few editions. I would like to thank everyone who has sent items for our seven Isolation Specials and I look forward to hearing from you all with pieces to keep this going into the Autumn.

Joan Davies and the Committee would like to thank all group leaders

for keeping in touch with their groups and where it has proved possible, “meeting” with their groups. Joan sends a special “Thank You” to members of the Committee. Especially Gill Cameron and Milly Gillespie, who as leaders of the Computer group, have used their skills to produce a master list of all in Stockport U3A with e-mail addresses and then e-mailed to give up to date information. Those without e-mail have been contacted by post. Also Peter Collins, Treasurer, who has set up on-line banking, and refunded all money paid to the U3A for trips etc which could not go ahead. So a big “Thank You” to everybody.

And as a final note.
What a difference four months makes, from empty shelves to this.
Tesco can't get rid of the stuff now.

