

## **Keeping in Touch.....Easter 5**

*Thank you again to all those who have sent contributions: Thank you too for the many positive comments we have received! Send anything to [c.a.curtis@ntlworld.com](mailto:c.a.curtis@ntlworld.com) by lunchtime on a Thursday . Please keep things coming, people look forward to KIT dropping into their in-box on a Friday! Did you complete Rosemary Whiffen's Brain Stretcher from last week? There are 16 hidden books—the solution can be found at the end of this newsletter.*

## **VE Day—75 years on... A medley....and a melody!**

### **From David Viles.....**

I was still wearing short trousers when it was VE Day as I was only 10. I didn't want to go to the village VE dance like that so I borrowed my brother's long cricket trousers. They had a few grass stains! They put a pole at either end of the road in Hemingford Grey (where I lived) so no cars would come - but because of rationing there were no cars anyway. We danced the Quick Step, the Waltz, Palais Glide, and did the Hokey Cokey. I had been taught the dances at school. It was fun but I was aware of a family in the village who had lost a son in the war so it wasn't a celebration for everyone. They had fireworks at the end of the dance - they were the first fireworks I'd seen since before the war.

### **Chris adds.....**

As David says above, VE day wasn't happy for everyone. My mother, then just 19 and recently "graduated" from the "Dough School", the domestic Science college in Glasgow, had just started her first job—in charge of all the school meals in North Lanarkshire. Sadly the week before VE Day her father passed away after a long illness and she had to return to look after her mother, as one did in those days. She never had paid employment again. In her nursing home if asked what she used to do, she always replied "War Work"!

### **From Derek Newton**

**Can you spot Derek in this?**



*The street party is not in St Ives but was taken by the Nottingham Evening Post . It shows the Newton Clan at their street party in Clifford Avenue, Beeston, Nottingham. In the photo I am there with my three sisters and my brother. Can you spot me? The tables and the forms on which we were sitting were carried a half mile up from the Congregational Chapel where the Newton family were members.*

*Hope and pray all of the Free Church are well and healthy,  
God's blessing be with you all,*

**Derek**

## Post-War Bananas, Balloons and Ice Cream.

VE Day - May 8th 1945 happened just three weeks before my fifth birthday and four months before I was due to start my first primary school in Boston, Lincolnshire where I was born. I can remember very little about the events of VE Day itself. But I do remember restrictions on travelling around the country gradually being lifted in those first years after the war, and it became possible to visit relatives again who lived in other places - freedom to travel again after being in 'war lockdown' during the war - sound familiar?

I remember two trips with my parents and older sister Julia to visit aunts, uncles and cousins in the late 1940's - one to Sheffield and the other to Ilkeston. Sheffield sits in the river Don valley and my aunt there lived high up on one side of the valley with her garden giving a wide panoramic view over the city below. I vividly remember that view - for above the city was a sea of barrage balloons still in place after the war, 'fluttering and dancing in the breeze' and tethered to the ground by wire cables. It was a most eerie sight - like a scene from a science fiction movie and as a five / six year old, one I have never forgotten.

In Ilkeston my aunt and uncle gave my sister and I our first tastes of bananas and a delicious drink called Cocoa made with real milk. And the best treat of all - ice cream!

Sorry no memories of VE Day itself, but just two vivid memories of the years shortly after VE Day. Unknown and in the future to come was the memorable year of 1951 and a visit to the Festival of Britain - perhaps more of that later next year at the Festival's 70th Anniversary. **Stewart D**



## And from Grace Mooreen

Carmichael.....



May 8<sup>th</sup> 1945 was the date when the Allies celebrated the defeat of Nazi Germany and the end of Adolf Hitler's Reich, formally recognising the end of the Second World War in Europe. This became known as Victory in Europe Day.

On 8<sup>th</sup> May 1945 I remember very vividly walking with my family to join neighbours and friends ~ wearing Union flags & lion rampant flags..... What a celebration! ~ No longer spending nights in air raid shelters with my dolls, one in each coat pocket ~ a soldier called Bertie and an airman called Dougie. The airman still wears my identity disc which I wore to school. I also carried my gas mask to school as we lived near the river Clyde ~ which was targeted by enemy bombers. Identical dolls are to be found in the Victoria & Albert Museum (Mabel Lucy Atwell dolls ~ mine ~ much loved & well used!).

## ***And from Babs and John.....***

**May 6th 1995**

John and I are too young to remember the end of World War 2 but we got married 25 year ago on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> May. It was the weekend of the celebrations of 50 years since VE day. We got married in The Free Church as I had lived in the area for more than 10 years by then, and had been a member of the church for most of the time. I wanted to get married where I felt at home and belonged. It was an incredibly hot day and people were using the order of service to fan themselves to keep cool. The Church was very supportive and several members came to the service. Eileen Springbett officiated and my mother gave me away as dad was not well. He died later the same year and sadly, of our 4 parents, only John's dad is still with us. I am sure they have long forgotten, but Stewart and Liz Denham gave us a square floral tray as a wedding present and it is still very much in use in our kitchen today. Our Silver Wedding celebrations, due to current circumstances, will be low key and we will enjoy a meal in each other's company at home and be thankful for good health . Certainly our love is as strong as ever but our appearances have changed a bit! Here is to the next 25 years.



## ***And the melody.....***

***We'll meet again  
Don't know where  
Don't know when  
But I know we'll meet again some  
sunny day  
Keep smiling through  
Just like you always do  
'Till the blue skies drive the dark  
clouds far away***

Few sets of words in the English language so readily bring one melody to mind. Who could possibly have known when this was chosen to be a centrepiece to the VE Day commemorations that it should have such poignant connotations for us all now?



## ***A letter to Mary Cox from Traidcraft Exchange***

Dear Mary

A couple of months ago I was in Mumbai, meeting with our India and Bangladesh teams to discuss Traidcraft Exchange's plans for the future. We didn't know then that the lives of billions of people were about to be turned upside down by the coronavirus.

As CEO of Traidcraft Exchange, I wanted to write to you personally to share what life is like for the poor people we support in developing countries.

**For some communities we work with, the impact of the lockdown has been immediate and devastating.**

Migrant workers in Bangladesh and India have been left without work. Not registered for the government support available, and used to living hand to mouth, people are struggling to survive. Many are travelling hundreds of miles on foot trying to get back to their home villages.

Our partners have been amazing in adapting our programmes to meet these challenges - running a helpline, linking people up with transport and local support services, and critically, providing food.

Garment factory workers across Asia are also facing extreme hardship. Factories have been closing as orders dry up. Some have not even been paid for work they did back in March. That's why we're **calling on UK clothing brands to honour their existing contracts** and not to leave workers destitute.

**For others we work with, the impact is less immediate but equally serious.**

The crunch point for the farmers we support will come when they need to harvest their crops and sell their produce. Without access to transport and many markets closed, will they be able to do this? How will they navigate a completely new set of circumstances? As yet, we just don't know.

We have never faced a pandemic of this magnitude before nor have we had to manage such unprecedented levels of uncertainty. At Traidcraft Exchange, we are focusing our resources on responding to the immediate needs of communities who are most vulnerable and most affected by this crisis. But we're also turning our attention to how we can support people beyond survival - to recover and rebuild their businesses and livelihoods.

We wouldn't be able to react so quickly to help those in need without your continued support - thank you; it really is appreciated.

**But as we hope to return to some form of normality in coming months and years, this crisis has reminded us that a return to 'the way things were' is simply not good enough.**

The coronavirus is shining a spotlight on the huge inequalities and injustices that lie at the heart of our international trading system. People working at the bottom of global supply chains have been living in extreme vulnerability and poverty for far too long.

As we look to recover and rebuild for a different future, we are working hard to ensure that it is a better and fairer world that we create.

At this difficult time, let me once again thank you, wholeheartedly, for joining us in this journey.

Charlotte Timson

*Chief Executive Officer at Traidcraft Exchange*

# Went to my first social distancing Christening last Sunday



Hello, Chris and all friends of the Free Church.

I hope all are managing to cope with the restrictions of the lock down.

I have prepared a short Reading List which might help activate those little grey cells.

Gray's Allergy

Homer's Oddity

Pope's Heroic Cutlets

Tess of the Dormobiles

101 Damnations

I was going to read James Joyce's Useless but it didn't seem worth it - even with the lock down.

Regards,

Hazel

## *Something to make you smile from Mary Cox*

### **Mothers of the famous:**

Columbus' Mother: "I don't care what you've discovered, Chris. You still could have written."

Michelangelo's Mother: "Mike, can't you paint on walls like other children? Do you have any idea how hard it is to get that stuff off the ceiling?"

Mary's Mother: "I'm not upset that your lamb followed you to school, Mary, but I would like to know how he got a better grade than you."

Batman's Mother: "It's a nice car, Bruce, but do you realize how much the insurance is going to be?"

Goldilocks Mother: "I've got a bill here for a broken chair from the Bear family. Do you know anything about this, Goldie?"

Albert Einstein's Mother: "But, Albert, it's your senior picture. Can't you do something about your hair? Styling gel, mousse, something...?"

**We fell asleep in one world and woke up in another**

Peter German has suggested this YouTube video: <https://youtu.be/sqRIWjeqoPw>

It is believed that the author of the text is Haroon Rashid.

## *Prayers for families and children*

### **A Prayer for Coronavirus**

Dear God,  
When I feel worried about what is  
happening in the world,  
Blow my worries away like the wind  
blows leaves on an autumn day.  
When I feel sad about how this virus is  
making so many people sick,  
Wash my tears away like a waterfall  
washes over rocks and makes them  
smooth.  
When I feel scared that I might get this  
horrible virus,  
Calm my fears like the dawn makes a  
dark night fade away and I feel safe  
again.  
Thank you that you are with me and  
everyone I am worried about.  
Thank you that you love me and will  
always be with me.

Amen.

*Dorothy Moore Brooks, Chaplain at Great  
Ormond Street Hospital*

## **From Irene Carter.....**

### SHATTERED DREAMS

Our holiday was due to start  
Today, and as we ponder,  
What wonders that we'd yearned to see  
Out in the wide blue yonder.

to travel to the other side  
The world we'd yet to see,  
Our list compiled, the weird, the wild  
Is now, the not to be.

The Rocky Mountaineer, the train  
The scenery, the ride,  
The towns, the stops, the scary drops  
The views from every side.

And then Alaska, on we'd go  
Wrapped up against the cold,  
Whale watch eyes and Dolphin spies,  
And wonderment untold.

We sit here still, but resolute  
Instead we count our blessings,  
We're safe and well, far as can tell,  
And now we are confessing.

The holiday was once our goal  
It's gone and sadness with it,  
'Cos life can change and rearrange,  
And hope will help us live it!

## **The solution to Rosemary's "Hidden Books of the Bible"!**

I once made a **remark** about the hidden books of the bible (merely by a **fluke**). It kept people **looking so** hard for the **facts** and for others it was a **revelation**. Some were in a **jam**, especially since the names of the books were not capitalised, but the **truth** struck home to **numbers** of readers..... To others it was a real **job**. We wanted it to be a **most** fascinating few moments for you....

**Yes there** will be some really easy to spot. Others may require **judges** to help them. I will quickly admit, **it** usually takes a minister to find one of them and there will be loud **lamentations** when it is.....A little old lady says **she brews** a cup of tea so she can concentrate better. See how well you can **compete...relax** now.

**Well done to all those who spotted them all!**