

Keeping in Touch..... Number 39

Thank you as always to those who have sent in contributions this week. As we continue in lockdown the need for us as a church community to keep in touch is more important than ever so please keep sending things in. The deadline for next week is noon on Wednesday. Please send anything to c.a.curtis@ntlworld.com if you would rather just tell us something, rather than type, then please lift up the phone to Chris or Alan—01480 350787 or pop a note through the door.

Keep safe everyone!

Hope for the future? - two articles sent by Mary Cox

A message from Helen Dye—St Ives EcoAction

I invite you, in the year ahead, to focus in on finding your way back into the heart of what matters. For me, caring for the environment, creating community and supporting endeavours that (re-)connect people with the natural world matters. In paying attention to the cycles and seasons of the natural world, of the moon and the planets, I find a natural harmony and a regenerative flow that supports a more intuitive and healthier approach to life.

If you are unsure yet of where you will target your EcoActions this year, things to watch out for in 2021 from the EcoAction Community and which invite your participation, include: the launch of **St Ives Against Rubbish (STAR)**, a collaborative community campaign to keep our streets, verges, parks, river and other public spaces litter free; and the establishing of a **Repairers Network**, and ultimately **Repair Cafés** (email stivesecoaction@gmail.com more details). Spread the word, get involved, tell your friends and family - as ever, all welcome!

Here's to a regenerative and fruitful 2021...may it be full of green-linings!

Helen 

Helen Dye

St Ives EcoAction Organiser

stivesecoaction@gmail.com

And news from Compassion

As you will have read before, a group of us at the Free Church are sponsoring a boy, Lameck in Tanzania.

We receive updates from time to time about what is happening in Compassion projects and we have been able to hear information about the impact of Covid in Tanzania.

I thought you would be interested to see the latest update - below.

The government of Tanzania has not released information about cases of COVID-19 since 29 April 2020, but the U.S. Embassy in Tanzania warns that, given the presumed ongoing community transmission in Dar es Salaam and other locations, the risk of contracting COVID-19 remains high. The embassy also says that health care facilities have become overwhelmed, which could result in life-threatening delays for emergency medical care. However, tourists who test negative are being welcomed into the country. Schools are open. Masks and social distancing are not required.

Compassion projects reopened for group activities on 5 September. Children attend in shifts at some projects, so they are able to maintain social distancing as much as possible. Hygiene kits and multiple hand-washing stations are available at every project. Classrooms and playground equipment are regularly sanitised. Staff members continue to educate children on COVID-19 prevention. Since the beginning of the pandemic, they have been able to distribute about 56,000 food packs and 104,000 hygiene kits to families and provide medical support to more than 19,000 individuals.

An Update from the Denhams.....

Yes, as reported in last week's KiT - we awoke on Christmas morning (6.30am) to hear that 'ominous click' which often accompanies the start of a power cut and immediate blackness. Desperate attempts at turning several wall switches on and off, confirmed that it was indeed 'an outage'! Trying to be optimistic and recalling previous outages, we started to reassure ourselves that all would be restored in time to get our turkey joint into a sizzling oven. By 10am we were resigned to a cold sandwich for Christmas lunch - when the doorbell rang! Standing there was a long-standing friend offering to deliver two Christmas lunches. We would both have hugged him but sadly could not. Our dear friend Freda said we could put our turkey joint into her oven as soon as it was free and our neighbour boiled some hot water for us - all acts of loving kindness shown to us and to so many others also that day. And we cannot forget all the staff of UK Power Networks who worked so hard on their own Christmas Day to restore power to us. They were brilliant.

'When we needed a neighbour you were there, you were lovingly there!' Thank you all so much.

Liz and Stewart

Are you keeping some lights on to join in "Together in January" - A CALMtown initiative....



www.calmtown.org

Irene calling.....

What a world we are living in! I am writing this on the day Washington in America was stormed by the Donald Trump protesters and caused such havoc and violence. What a sad day for America.

I have written a simple "American Army" type marching poem to exercise too. This is to spur all of us on, to keep as well as we can, and keep us as strong as possible, helping us and the N H S who are in such dire straits at the moment. Our ex son-in-law was a soldier and when they march they often sing to keep in time. Here goes,

THE MARCH OF THE TIMES

(To the American Army type of March)

One two three four,
Lock Down's here,
We've been before!

We must be strong,
Listen to my
Marching song.

Don't cry wipe eyes,
Let's get fit
And exercise.

Mask on outside,
Keep your distance
Nice and wide.

Can't walk? Grab chair
Reach your arms
Up in the air.

One two three four,
N H S
We're fighting for!

Slap smile on face
Lift those knees
Keep up the pace.

Try dance, or sing
Depression
Won't help anything

Strain no, pain STOP!
We want fit,
Not fit to drop!

CC IRENE CARTER



Using Old Birds..... From Babs Moore

A few years ago, we were away with friends over New Year on the Gloucestershire/Oxfordshire border when we came across a shoot. We were walking on footpaths so conversations ensued so they knew where we were going, and hopefully no dead pheasants would fall out of the sky on our group which included young children. We spotted a trailer loaded with pheasants and bought 2 brace for £5 dutifully hung them in the passageway of where we were staying. The plan was to meet up a week later as a group and enjoy pheasant casserole. John, thought no issue, Jackie and myself who were on the trip were both farmers daughters and would know how to dress (always seemed a strange word to use to me as dressing involved “undressing” or at least defeathering the birds!) poultry and I was brought up on a chicken farm at that. When I explained I had always avoided dressing poultry we rang my mum for advice and I made it clear I would not be helping. In the end John looked up on the internet and opted to skin them and now having had their “hang time” another friend cooked them and the party went ahead.

I was the despair of my mother being too squeamish to dress poultry and even took a friend for university down for the weekend to learn how to do it and all I did was pass regular cups of coffee through the door where Karen and Mum were working. Mum was delighted to have someone who wanted to learn. As a farmers daughter she remembered the week before Christmas having the whole family dressing chickens and geese to sell for Christmas and they always had beef on Christmas day as had had enough of poultry

The pheasant recipe, with mention of how old the bird was, reminded me of “roast” chicken on the farm. As a youngster I was an extremely fussy eater and the only meat I liked was chicken and we used to have chicken for lunch every Saturday (that was our “roast” day as not time to roast with church on Sunday) for months on end until my brother and father protested. After my father had a very bad farm accident money was short as he was limited in his work and mum never wanted to waste anything. We used to have 3000 chickens at a time from day old (cute) to Point of Lay i.e. when they were old enough to lay eggs and would move on to egg farms. For ourselves we would have a few hens to lay eggs for our own use and when they got beyond productive laying age, so distinctly tough to eat, Mum would boil the chicken in a large pan for hours on the cooker to make it edible so as not to waste it before roasting it. So different to my 90min roasting of a chicken all ready prepared for the over now. Picture shows



Lovely photo Babs!!

Your family weren't alone in having their Sunday roast on Saturdays. Alan's parents did the same allowing Sunday to be free for church.

More on pheasants....

Legless Pheasants – not for squeamish readers! - from Alan

The recipe for roast pheasant and Babs' recollection of pheasants when staying in Gloucestershire have prompted me to recall how we used to have roast pheasant during the breeding season (Pheasant shooting would have been illegal at that time)

When pheasants are sitting on their clutch of eggs they will, if disturbed, run several yards away from the nest before taking flight in order to fool predators. Nesting coincided with the time when long grass was cut for hay. Occasionally a pheasant running from the nest would run straight onto the cutter bar of the grass mower - resulting in the loss of legs. My father would expertly break the bird's neck to kill it quickly. Later he would pluck it and prepare it for cooking another roast dinner. We would always collect the eggs from the nest and put them under a broody hen and release the young pheasants back into the wild when they had grown.

To this day, pheasant is one of my favourite foods!

A couple of things to help you smile, hopefully.....

From Philip—with apologies to our jigsaw addicts.....

A little silver-haired lady calls her neighbour and says, "Please come over here and help me. I have a killer jigsaw puzzle, and I can't figure out how to get started."

Her neighbour asks, "What is it supposed to be when it's finished?"

The little silver haired lady says, "According to the picture on the box, it's a rooster."

Her neighbour decides to go over and help with the puzzle.

She lets him in and shows him where she has the puzzle spread all over the table.

He studies the pieces for a moment, then looks at the box, then turns to her and says,

"First of all, no matter what we do, we're not going to be able to assemble these pieces into anything resembling a rooster."

He takes her hand and says, "Secondly, I want you to relax. Let's have a nice cup of tea, and then," he said with a deep sigh

"Let's put all the Corn Flakes back in the box."

And from Freda

SERIOUS LOCK DOWN ADVICE

Everyone PLEASE be careful because people are going crazy from being locked down at home!

I was just talking about this with the microwave and the toaster while drinking my tea, and we all agreed that things are getting bad.

I didn't mention any of this to the washing machine, because he puts a different spin on EVERYTHING!!

Certainly couldn't share with the fridge, cause he's been acting cold and distant!

In the end, the iron straightened me out! She said the situation isn't all that pressing and all the wrinkles will soon get ironed out!

The vacuum, however, was very unsympathetic...told me to just suck it up! But the fan was VERY optimistic and gave me hope that it will all blow over soon!

The toilet looked a bit flushed but didn't say anything when I asked its opinion, but the front door said I was becoming unhinged and the doorknob told me to get a grip!! You can just about guess what the curtains told me: they told me to "pull myself together!"

We will survive!!

News from Oakington..... It was lovely to hear from Char once again after being so poorly.....

Two photos taken from my kitchen window

The boys came round to clean the bird boxes out as spring is just around the corner.

Rowan is holding a snowdrop.

Galanthus , I remembered from my Greek holidays that gala is Greek for milk and anthus Greek for flower,so could gala also be Greek for snow ?.We like quizzes dont we?



Was the kitten in Alice Through the Looking Glass called Snowdrop?

Mother called them Candlemas Bells ,and Fair Maid of February another name .

The gardens will be waking up again but my cat Bill sleeps and sleeps ,what a good idea ,wish we could all be Mrs Tig-gy-winkles, sleep for 6 months ,wake up and no covid, sun shining and lost one third of body weight !

Stay safe and take no risks

Lots of love

Char

Xxx



Pause for thought.....

I was listening to a news report last week about a Sikh Gudwara that was feeding 17.000 people a week in the pandemic. Sikhs have a rich heritage of providing food whenever and wherever it is needed. Their leader said something that really stuck a chord.

He said he told all their volunteers to remember that they were not there to feed, but there to serve.

A Green Heart by Kate McIlhagga

Into a dark world

A snowdrop comes,

A benison of hope and peace,

carrying with it a green heart,

symbol of god's renewing love.

Come to inhabit our darkness

Lord Christ, for light and dark

are alike to you.

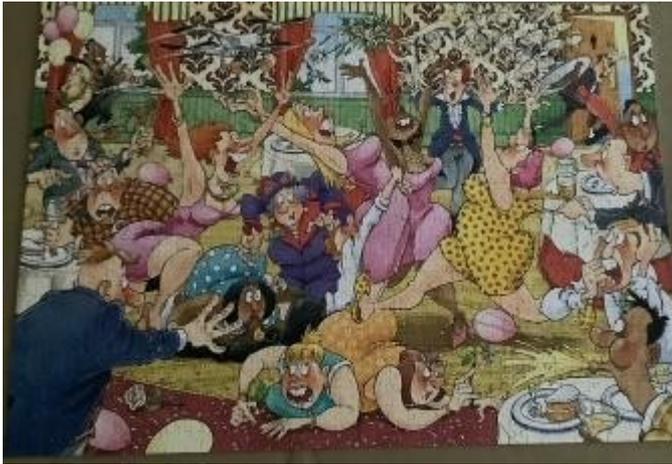
May nature's white candles of hope

Remind us of your birth

And light our journey through Lent and beyond.

WASGIJs

Following on from Sally's Jigsaw Therapy last week I have completed a number of Jigsaws over the last few months and also a few Wasgijs. I call these back to front jigsaws since there is not a picture of the finished puzzle. There is a picture on the box and the question posed is: What are they looking at or what happened next? I find them quite intriguing and can happily while away a few hours doing them. If anyone would like to try one I have quite a few I am happy to pass on.



Mary Anthony

From Barbara, a couple of weeks ago.....

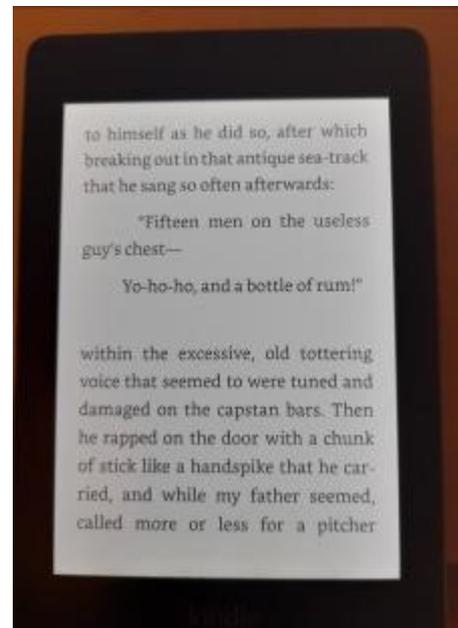
As the flood waters recede we managed to walk most of the length of the Fen today, Saturday, to see the adjacent fields being taken back back by a variety of bird life. Gulls, lapwings and, of course, geese! A few days ago we had a couple of egrets in the field at the bottom of the garden too.



Classical literature versus fake translation

by Sally Runham

January is a good month for decluttering, after receiving gifts at Christmas. Unwanted items can be taken to charity shops or recycled. It would be nice to reduce a vast array of books, too. One way could be to replace them with electronic versions stored on an e-reader. I read free downloads of Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina* before Christmas. A lightweight device that allows change of font and is subtly lit, my Kindle lets me read well into these dark evenings, when eyes tire otherwise. My daughter interrupted this foray into Russian historical literature, by planning to engage her year six class with classical British works, and I could not resist helping, so decided to refresh my knowledge of her proposed set book *Treasure Island*.



I was horrified with the change of meaning in the electronic version, though, and sat with mouth agape and a reliable Penguin Classic hard copy beside me. At one point, Captain Flint, Long John Silver's parrot, was referred to as a 'chicken' on his shoulder. The famous pirate chant 'Fifteen men on a dead man's chest' had 'Fifteen men on a useless guy's chest' as shown in the photo.

So, I read the true version alongside, and was more reliably able to help with ideas for class assignments. I suggested that parents be warned against strange and inaccurate Kindle downloads.

But had I read accurately translated versions by that wonderful Russian author?

And what about *The Good News Bible*? Downloaded as one of my New Year's resolutions, I will read it alongside a known pukka version. Don't throw out your books, yet!