

Keeping in Touch..... Number 49

Welcome to this week's KIT. Thank you so much if you sent something in this week. Please keep the articles coming! The deadline for next week is **noon on Monday**. And if you wish to send Easter greetings to your church friends please let me have the wording for next week. 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.

Char challenges us to an Easter quiz—answers next week....

EASTER QUIZ 

1. The name of which goldsmith is associated with decorated eggs?
2. What are the 2 months in which Easter can occur?
3. The word Easter is derived from EOSTRE ,who or what is EOSTRE?
- 4 Which animals from the Leporida family are associated with Easter ?
5. What is the first day of Holy Week,the week before Easter?
6. Which holy day comes before the day on which Jesus was crucified?
7. Which prisoner was spared by Pontius Pilate ?
8. To which genus do forget - me - nots belong?
9. How many balls of marzipan are placed around the top of a Simnell cake?
10. Where is Easter Island?

Extra points awarded for a full answer for question 10



In response to Irene's article about her dad, Freda writes.....

I was amazed as I read the article about Irene Carters dad. I immediately got on the phone to Irene and we had a lovely chat about Tottenham as my secondary school was next to Bruce Castle Park and I lived in The Avenue just off Bruce Grove. She followed me around the haunts of Tottenham about 8 or 9 years after I did. Memories – what would we do without them? Especially now !



Lent and Esater Appeal

Great video—see

caid.org.uk/lamChange

From Cliff Downing Remembering Sheila

The Friends of Holt Island Committee have allocated me a place to donate a bench in Memory of Sheila. It is sited on the square near the information Hut.

I hope that many of you will visit and enjoy this peaceful place.

Cliff was able to visit this week and took photos of the bench.



Ed. A very fitting memorial to a lovely lady. I'm sure when Holt Island fully reopens many of us will visit and make use of Sheila's seat! And also admire that lovely view downriver to "our" spire!

Hi, everyone, Spring is here and I thought you would like to see this poem from my 1980's scrapbook.

.....Cliff

Flowers

In our garden flowers grow, red and yellow pink and blue.

They grew up tall they grew up straight, under the window and by the gate.

Neighbours come to look at the sight, of our pretty garden in daylight.

Then one day I did see my daughter down on bended Knee.

Oblivious to all in her task, I too bent down and her did ask.

Is it a slug or a bit of blight, up she jumped I had given her a fright.

A little box and a little press, that's what she had, did you guess. ?

Flowers she collects and pictures make, all original not one fake.

I admit they are pretty, they are fine, but they are flowers that once were mine.

Now neighbours come to add their name, to a picture card or one in a frame.

A second life, the flowers have more, hanging on walls as pretty as before.

Now captured and displayed for all to see, planted originally by my wife and me.

In her garden flowers grow, all the colours of the rainbow.

Not for picking, not for press, just for family and neighbours to impress.

Sheila was the daughter of a local gardener, and we used to have one of the best looking gardens in Fairfields. She loved all things Flora and Fauna, and we visited Holt Island regularly. We were especially fond of sitting and looking over the river to the Bridge and seeing our Church Spire .

Two items from John Williams—One on music and a poem.....

Having read the inspiring article by Liz Denham, here are a few thoughts of mine on the subject:

Music has always been important to me, from an early age. My father and mother often had various types of music playing on the radio when I was young. My father was secretary of the Jubilee Choral Society in west London in the 1930's.

At age twelve I began piano lessons, both at school with a piano teacher, and at home with a friend of the family who put me through my paces. We already had an old "clanky" piano at home, but when we moved house in London to Acton, my parents decided to buy me a new piano to practise on. I was very honoured, because to afford it, they had to pay in instalments. I loved it, and started to write little pieces of my own. Pathetic scratchings though they were, they were a creative outlet. I sang as an alto in the school choir and at Christmas we sang carols at the local Congregational church. I didn't attend church at that time but I enjoyed the yearly visit.

I learnt Music at school and won a prize one year. Later on, in Sixth-Form College I met a fellow student who was well into jazz and he introduced me to the art of improvisation. He had his own jazz group which I sat in with once. We sometimes played together, four hands on one piano.

I also listened to both radio and gramophone music of all sorts. My father encouraged me a lot and had a good collection of 78's of classical and other music.

When I went to university there were many distractions (!) and so I failed to practise regularly, having very little access to a piano. I have regretted this ever since, because my sight reading and ability to play classical music and hymns are woefully inadequate.

I cannot make any further progress now, but content myself with simple stuff, folk tunes, pop, jazz and blues and much improvisation.

When I married and moved to Ilford, the piano from home went with me and so when Mavis and I had children, we could teach them if they wished to learn. They both play some music, but not generally the piano, they play guitar (son) and Celtic harp (daughter).

Having decided to have our children baptized in the local church near where we lived, we were drawn into it and it became an important part of our lives. I became a member of the choir and we sang every Sunday. During Lent we sang Compline, the ancient form of night prayer. I loved the simplicity of form and deeply spiritual meaning of chant. What I didn't like particularly was the requirement of having to don cassock and surplice for every service!

Meanwhile, in the short breaks between working and looking after family, I delved into all sorts of music, especially from different countries, buying second hand records and borrowing from the library. Some of the music was astonishing, Romanian folk music and Bulgarian in particular

When we retired and came to St Ives we found the Free Church the friendliest and I was pleased to find an absence of the top-down, block-structured archaic systems of organisation that used to be prevalent in our old church in Ilford. I eventually joined in many activities as most of you probably know. One of them is meditation. I tried the idea of meditating to music with the U3A group but found that most types of music were not universally accepted! I might have eclectic tastes but many people don't.

I enjoy playing the piano for the "in-between bits" in morning worship occasionally and thoroughly enjoy Brian's playing. I have learnt over the years that there is a quality of certain types of music which I can say is "medicinal". That is, for example, when I wake up in the night and cannot get back to sleep, I listen with earphones to soothing music and it stops my "brain chatter," so that after a while I can go back and sleep easier. Was anyone else's first love Music?

Walking in Lockdown

As I walk,
I consider my life,
It's free from sorrow,
Free from strife.
A lucky man I seem to be,
But all the same it's a mystery
Why I seem to be so free.

As I walk,
The clouds float by
In the drama of the sky
And in the spaces in between
Heavenly colour blue is seen.
The quality of light
On such a sunny day
Is greater than I could ever say.

As I walk,
Others cycle ride
With quicker pace,
It can't be denied
But all the same,
I like my poles,
They keep me upright-
Help to avoid potholes!

John Williams 7/3/2021

In response to Liz's article on literature last week.....

From Ann Pike....

Louis de Berniere's book Captain Corelli's Mandolin

"Love itself is what is left over when being in love is burned away, and this is both an art and fortunate accident.

Your mother and I had it, we had roots that grew towards each other underground, and when all the pretty blossom had fallen from our branches, we found that we were one tree and not two."

The following poem is for Adopted Children and has a special resonance for Ann....

Not flesh of my flesh
Nor Bone of my bone
but still, miraculous,
my own.
Never forget
For a single minute,
you didn't go under my heart
but in it.

And from Freda.....

Thank you Liz for your article – I am afraid I was not a very avid reader in my youth, I do remember tho' when at school we had to learn the poem 'The Listener' by Walter de la Mare. Through my life I have often quoted the first few lines, at suitable times, of 'Is there anybody there? said the traveller, knocking on the moonlit door. While his horse in silence champed the grasses of the forests ferny floor'. When an old school friend visited me (before lockdown!!) we started quoting this together, so I went on to Google and downloaded the whole poem, as we could not remember it all.

And from Jackie Ballard.....

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now
Is hung with blooms along the bough,
And stands about the woodland ride
Wearing white for Eastertide.

Now, of my threescore years and ten,
Twenty will not come again,
And take from seventy springs a score,
It leaves me only twenty more.

And since to look at things in bloom
Fifty springs are little room,
About the woodlands I will go
To see the cherry hung with snow.

This poem by AE Housman is Jackie's favourite for this season of blossom.

She thanks Helen A for explaining the maths—a score being 20 therefore three score year and ten being 70.!



In response to Stewart's article on Chris Barber.....

Thank you so much Stewart for the memories of Chris Barber. Yes you are correct Peter and I went every year they played, to see him at the Burgess Hall, they were marvellous concerts.

The last one we went to was at the Hinchingsbrooke Centre can't remember the year tho'. It was an amazing evening, the band had doubled in size and there were younger musicians playing alongside the 'originals'. Rightly or wrongly we assumed that he was encouraging his music and 'The Chris Barber Band' to continue after he had gone, maybe there is some way to find out, I don't know.

I was aware of the 'Jazz scene' as on one occasion in my youth I went to Ronnie Scotts (pre Pete) but when I started going out with Peter in 1964 we went to Chris Barber concerts at Dunmow Village Hall in Essex, Peter had been a fan for years.

I can also remember several of us from church making up a party (with plenty of booze and food) and going to open-air concerts at Wimpole, Audley End and other venues too. These were not always Chris Barber tho. On one occasion I can remember a concert when Peter, Judes (our eldest – who is also a Jazz fan still) and I went to Audley End to see Acker Bilk, Humphrey Littleton and Kenny Ball. It was here I bought my favourite CD of the Chris Barber Band (which I play a lot) with Acker Bilk called 'That's it Then' it is a compilation of many venues and Chris Barber says on it to quote 'Playing with Acker was just as much fun as anybody could imagine'. I got Acker to sign my CD (with XX on it) and reminded him of the time playing at Dunmow in '65 (with Chris Barber) when he stopped the music and suddenly said (there is a b----y great spider walking across the stage) then just carried on playing where he left off. I won't repeat what his reply was !! They were truly an amazing band the like of which we shall probably never see again – so thanks Stewart for for the memories. **Freda.**

Lent Course

Eleven people have been regularly attending Catherine's Monday evening online Lent course. It has been lovely to see people that we haven't seen face to face for some time. Catherine used the book *Let Me Go There: The Spirit of Lent* by Paula Gooder as the focus for our study. The hourly sessions were wonderfully interactive with shared reading of the Bible, followed by lots of discussion, and then the chance to pray together for our church and the world. We covered such topics as Wilderness, Temptation, Following Jesus, and Keeping going with the Faith through thick and thin.



Wilderness questions included, 'Have you ever been to an actual place that might be described as a wilderness? What kinds of emotions did you experience there?' One really thought-provoking meeting was when people looked back in their lives to reveal the moment that they realised they wanted to follow Christ. Commitment demanded lots of time said some, but the gain was peace and calmness, throughout any upheaval.

The final session covered passages in the Bible including 'Jesus Calms a Storm' (Mark 4. 35-41) and 'Jesus Walks on the Water' (Mark 6. 45-53). These show the disciples' lack of understanding of Jesus or lack of belief in Him. Yet, we know they carried on following Jesus, all the while striving to know what was wanted of them. The course conclusion urged lifelong learning about the role for each of us to follow Jesus in the best way we can.

Nev and I will certainly attend again next year, thank you, Catherine –**Sally.**

Irene calling.....

SPRING AWAKENS

Green shoots unfurl, stretch their leaves
Rising up through earth to breathe,
Fearful of the frosty days,
Tender hopes of sunny rays.

Jack Frost loves to spite the new
Buds he nips with fingers blue,
Some will live and some will die
Natural life we can't defy.

Spring has sprung and natures' goods
Begs us walk in dappled woods,
Insects in the world below
Hear our footsteps come and go.

Ladybirds en masse alight
Plants displaying Spring delights,
Wild life stirs and yawns to call
Refreshed and hungry one and all.

Lifts the heart and calms the mind
Food for thought, the human kind,
Life's full circle everywhere
Mother Nature's thankful prayer.

cc IRENE CARTER



Commitment for Life

In March, I volunteered to take over from Mary Cox in being the **Commitment for Life** representative for our church in St Ives and hope to keep you informed of some of the initiatives. I have been reading some of the literature. *Commitment for Life* is the United Reformed Church's global justice programme. The URC took seriously the UN challenge to 'global north' nations to spend at least 1% of the gross national product (GNP) on development for 'historically pillaged' nations. With our funding contributions, the World Development Movement (now Global Justice Now) took a lead in many of global justice campaigns such as ensuring that a COVID-19 vaccine is affordable to all countries. Our grants helped get going, and keep going, the Fairtrade Foundation and Jubilee 2000.

Commitment for Life works closely with Christian Aid and Global Justice Now. They focus on four regions of the world: Central America, Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory, Bangladesh, and Zimbabwe. Each of these regions face the intersecting injustices that are often economic, environmental, and racial in nature. They continue their support for the Fairtrade Foundation, Jubilee Debt Campaign and The Climate Coalition.

Importantly, *Commitment for Life* helps local congregations focus on the global justice dimension of their mission. In the newsletter they ask for prayer for justice in the world. They produce some resource for congregations including an Annual Prayer Partners resource which I will request. The prayer ask is quite specific: it ought to very intentionally be directed towards a 'Jesus-shaped' justice; it must focus on the breaking in of God's kingdom into those worldly systems that depend on inequality, domination, and oppression – increasingly referred to as 'Systems of Empire' by the World Council of Churches.

Christine Macleod

21st March 2021

Joan and Tony Bullough would like to thank everyone for the many calls and cards they have received expressing good wishes for Tony.