
Editorial

Welcome to our August Newsletter. This edition mainly consists of contributions from our members. What an interesting variety. Perhaps next month will be the month for **you** to send something in.

Stephen Shipley, Editor

Committee

Chair

It's so good to have Stephen back and able to produce the Newsletter for us, and we must record out thanks to Susan and Norman Irving for keeping it going in the interim.

I know the warm weather doesn't suit everyone, but it has been nice to be able to plan ahead in confidence that events won't be rained off, and now the school holidays have begun I hope there will be plenty of sunny days for the grandchildren to enjoy outdoor activities. It seems ages since we've had a really sunny summer.

I expect like me many of you will remember the summer holidays as a time when we were out all day with our siblings or mates just going home to be fed and then out again to play; so different now! How did we survive?

Hope to see you all at the next T@2 on Monday 4th,

Angie

Contributions from Members

Town twinning

I am the council representative for the twinning between Igny and Bures, two southern suburbs of Paris. These are on the south west side, quite close to Versailles.

We left Crewkerne by coach on 29 May and returned on 1 June. It was a very quick visit, so quite tiring, but well worth the effort.

We stayed with French families. Some people had already been on the twinning for a few years, so they knew their hosts. It was my first trip. I enjoyed meeting another retired teacher. We spent an afternoon at Dampierre chateau. We learned that the Duke de Luynes had escaped losing his head at the revolution because he was such a caring landlord. In a time of famine he had converted his park into a vegetable garden for the people. They looked after him in return and his heirs lived in the chateau until the mid 20th century, when they ran out of money and sold up. On the Saturday evening I went to the newly restored Notre Dame cathedral for Saturday evening vigil mass. The cathedral was packed with worshippers, but I was lucky to be given a seat very near the altar and could see everything.

It was tiring and quickly over, but a very good visit to two Parisian suburbs with which Crewkerne has been closely linked/twinned for almost 50 years- next year we celebrate that anniversary .

I hope that some of you reading this and not part of the twinning may decide it would be a good thing to do. How can you join us? Call at the Town Hall and the helpful volunteers at the welcome desk will give you more details.

Thank you for reading and "a bientot".

Judith Morris

The Balearic Islands

In my early 20s I went to Ibiza which at the time was full of hippies. First of all I looked after and cleaned holiday apartments and then got a job working for a retired Army Major at an estate agents. It was one big holiday. I eventually returned to the UK to live in London, find employment and become an adult.

I am very fortunate to have friends who have a luxurious apartment in Mallorca. A very busy island and from the recent press the locals aren't happy with all the tourists. Cruise ships dock and their passengers flood Palma town on a regular basis. Palma airport is a nightmare and traffic to the airport is similar to the M4 to Heathrow. Marinas are full of super yachts that never go to sea. They wait for their doggy Russian owners to arrive. As they say, "Mallorca is a sunny island for shady people".

However, this June I went to Menorca. My cousin and his wife have a small holiday apartment near the coast. The airport is a dream, customs was a doddle, and I was out within minutes. Not having been to Menorca before, my cousin had organised a full itinerary. I saw the whole island which is delightful and unspoilt. Lovely sandy beaches, very green and roads not crowded. Every time we went out to eat or drink the locals were so welcoming. May Menorca remain off most people's holiday list. Ibiza is still a party island and very much in demand for stag and hen parties.

Jennifer Armstrong

EASY 🚫HOW TO RID YOURSELF OF FLIES !🚫

2 Lemons (cut in half)

Whole Cloves (spread on top)

4 egg cups

If you put these on your window ledges they will last for a week, and flies HATE the smell ! Flies will disappear within 1 hour! Amazing, but it works 🚫

Carole Jay

Science and Lifestyle

Much scientific research has been done into the effects of ageing. Specifically, why do some people remain active and healthy well into old age whilst others show physical and mental decline at a relatively young age? Recent results have identified 5 key areas, as follows:

- *Diet:* lots of different diets to choose from with the Mediterranean diet often recommended. In broad terms we need healthy and nourishing foods which provide enough nutrients (e.g. protein, carbohydrates, fibre, vitamins and minerals). Eat enough to maintain a healthy weight – avoid processed food and too much salt and alcohol. Drinking plenty of water is also important.
- *Exercise:* again, lots of recommendations and guidelines on this. For elderly folk it's important to keep moving at regular intervals – housework and walking provide a good base. Preferably take some exercise to get you out of breath. Activities which improve strength, balance and flexibility are invaluable as we get older.
- *Purpose:* it's important to have a sense of purpose in life – something to make you feel motivated and, perhaps, get you out of bed in the morning. Try and define your purpose in terms of what it means to you and stick to it. It could

be something as “ordinary” as tending the garden or caring for grandchildren. Something that you enjoy and gives you a sense of satisfaction when it’s done.

- *Curiosity*: have you noticed how naturally curious children are? How everything is new and exciting? Adults can also keep their minds working in a similar way by, say, embracing new technologies and keeping abreast of new developments in an area of interest.
- *Social interaction*: often our social circle shrinks as we get older. Relatives and friends move away or pass on. We become less mobile and e.g. give up driving. This is the time to join new groups and take up different hobbies, if only to meet new and interesting people.

May you be active and healthy as long as you live!

Trevor Lowe

Echoes of Simpler Times

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| 1. In days gone by, when time was slow
And life was gentle, calm, and low.
Mornings whispered with the breeze
Comics rustled, bringing ease. | 5. Railway station, order’s grace
Flowers blooming, bright embrace.
Station Master, pristine and neat
His platforms smart, a well-kept feat. |
| 2. Jack de Manio’s voice so clear
On the radio, we’d hear.
Breakfast shared with mum and dad
Conversations made us glad. | 6. Shopping trips with mum, a treat
Friendly banter smiles to greet.
Goods were weighed, and coins would clink
Old money’s charm, we’d fondly think. |
| 3. Streets our playground, free and wide
No traffic chaos to collide.
Laughter echoed, pure delight
Postman greeted, always bright. | 7. Schooldays so simple and clear
Conversations flowed without any fear.
Assemblies began with heartfelt prayers
Logarithms, and the roots of squares. |
| 4. Sweetshop treasures, farthings spent
Blackjacks bought with sweet content.
Mr. Green, so dapper, seen
With his umbrella, calm and keen. | 8. Sunday’s quiet, our day of rest
Morning church in our Sunday best.
Sunday roast, none will speak
We know, Monday will bring bubble and squeak. |

Mike Luff

Creative Writing Group

Stolen Verses

At the age of 15, I really loved writing poetry, but without recognition of my unseen talents ! So you may well imagine the delight I had when my younger daughter returned home from school one day, and announced that she had been awarded an

A* for her poetry. I was thrilled for her, and asked to see it immediately ! It was called The Train.... She'd pinched it from me., and that was my reward about 30 years late !

Carole Jay

An outstanding sea and shore holiday

Out of 57 years of marriage I'd probably talked about doing this trip for the last few decades! So here we were at Exeter airport at the beginning of a 2 week experience that I will never forget, all arranged by my husband for my 80th birthday.

We flew to Edinburgh and stayed in a lovely hotel in South Queensferry with a tiny balcony looking straight at the Forth Bridge. My heart had leapt when I first saw it again, it has always held a special place for me there, remembering day trips in my Granda's old Ford, just to see The Bridge, and have an ice cream! The Scots Love Ice cream! Did I not tell you? I am, of course, a Scot through and through, from a Band of Border Reeves, cattle thieves, rogues and bounders! Born and schooled in Edinburgh but left over 60 years before.

The small cruise ship, The Balmoral was docked at Rosyth, just across the Firth of Forth and we made our way on board next day. That evening we sailed up the east coast and next morning found ourselves safely docked at Lerwick, capital of The Shetland isles. A small and simple town but amiable and interesting (especially for those with a passion for the TV series "Shetland", and Jimmy Perez, the lead in the earlier series of "Shetland". His house was well photographed!

We took a trip to Jarshof, the Prehistoric and Norse settlement near Sumburgh Head. Really fascinating, well preserved and immaculately maintained. Then tea and biscuits at the adjacent hotel. The bus ride was interesting, seeing the villages and hamlets of mostly white cottages, on rolling grassland, mostly haphazardly scattered with minimal gardens protected by low fences, if at all. Most houses were settled near the coastline, nestled into hollows seeking shelter from the winds. No trees, of course, which gives these northern, wind blown islands their special look.

Then off round Orkney, along the north coast and round Cape Wrath, turning south down The Minch, between The Outer Hebrides and eventually Skye. These islands were stunning, no trees again, and with my binoculars (borrowed from a kind ex-naval friend) I could see a few isolated cottages scattered along the coastlines. Harris was intriguing, with smooth, grey mountains, and deep valleys, sculpted by glaciers, no doubt.

Our Captain dropped anchor near to Fingalls cave, showing us in lovely sunshine, the intriguing hexagonal basalt columns, shaped by volcanic activity over millennia. A Meteorological helicopter was delivering equipment onto the rock and with a small fishing boat circling below, it made a memorable photo. The helicopter left with a couple of circuits of our ship and a "toot", with a blow on the horn by our captain in response. Magical!

We could see a bit of Skye coastline but then then headed down open sea to The Scilly Isles where we dropped anchor some way out from St Mary's, the main island.

We had been to Tresco, with its sub tropical gardens some 45 years before, when we had stayed on St. Mary's when the children were young teens. So we hired electric bikes and spent the

morning revisiting some of the sites and beaches we had enjoyed then. It was not as easy on these bikes as we had anticipated, but we completed the circuit of the island...without falling off!

Next day, Falmouth and a trip to The Lost gardens of Heligan, except it bucketed with rain so most of the time was spent in the cafe and shop. I did manage a quick sprint...down to The Jungle, which was excellent and will warrant a return visit in better weather.

Dartmouth in glorious sunshine was a casual stroll and apart from being dive bombed by a gull to remove my sandwich from my hand, a good day was enjoyed. Delightful place! We returned to ship by Tender and watched as they were hauled back up to be stored on the side of the ship, as are the lifeboats. You learn something every day!

Our last docking was Portsmouth, where we declined to revisit The Historic Dockyard, and spent a few hours ambling. (just one shop!) and trying not to look at those choosing to abseil the Spinnaker tower!

Homeward bound.....back to Rosyth. An amazing 10 day ocean trip! Just one day of rain, calm seas all the way and a mesmerising sea to watch every day. We saw dolphins and many sea birds. Whales 2 or 3 different types, and porpoises were spotted but mainly by a team of Wildlife Biologists who kept a daily record, and were on deck from 5 am till 10 pm.

We met many lovely people, about 98% Scots, but my husband (English from head to toe!) coped very well and I didn't have to translate for him once! The food was excellent, staff superb, and plenty to do if you were not on deck for most of the daylight hours as we were. We are not seasoned cruisers, but this one might just tempt us to browse another brochure....one day!

Edinburgh...still to be reported! I will write about our 3 days in Edinburgh as I absolutely loved that too. But maybe for another time. I have made notes for that.

Catherine Balaam

Memories of a walk in a park

Recently, I took my grandchildren for a leisurely stroll in their local park. As we ambled along, vivid memories from the 1950s came flooding back—those cherished times when my grandparents would lead my sister and me on enchanting walks through Battersea Park in southwest London. Our journey would begin in Chelsea, where they lived. I recall the vibrant street artists, their coloured chalks transforming the pavements into magical canvases, with flat caps placed nearby to collect donations. We would then meander down to the Embankment, crossing the majestic Albert Bridge, and finally entering the wonderland of the park. From the Embankment, the imposing Battersea Power Station loomed like a colossal monolith on the skyline, a silent sentinel observing our adventures.

What a contrast those days were! Back then, there were no 'park run's' or little black bags filled with dog excrement littering the ground, sometimes even dangling from trees. I recalled the simple joy of hiring deckchairs from the Park Keeper. The system was charmingly straightforward: we collected the multi-coloured deckchairs from a stack and carried them to a spot on the grass. I always marvelled at the ingenious design of those fold-up chairs.

The Park Keeper would make his rounds, diligently collecting fees for the hire and issuing receipt tickets—reminiscent of the bus conductors who once roamed the city before the advent of single-driver systems. My grandparents would settle into their deck chairs, my grandfather hidden behind

his newspaper while my grandmother's knitting needles clattered away, creating garments that would undoubtedly end up on us children.

My grandfather's life had been a tapestry of hardship and resilience. He was the sole survivor of his family, who were consigned to the workhouse. When he was around seven years old, his mother and three siblings perished within those grim walls, and the fate of his father remained a mystery. Grandad bore the physical scars of war, having been wounded at Arras in the First World War. A piece of shrapnel lodged in his leg served as a painful reminder for the rest of his short life.

Unaware of these sombre tales, we children revelled in the simple joys of the park. We played on the swings and roundabouts, our laughter blending with the distant sounds of trains rumbling their way to Victoria Station.

One vivid memory stood out: a young man attempting to escape without paying the deck chair fee with the Park Keeper hot on his heels, an altercation took place. I can still see my grandparents frowning at the miscreant's behaviour, their disapproval clear. For many at that time, the Park Keeper symbolized a changing society. The days of deference to authority were fading, and he had become an anachronism, often viewed by many as a comedic figure.

On my recent expedition through the park with my grandchildren, the scene that unfolded before me was impossible to ignore. Litter was strewn about, like a modern-day breadcrumb trail of our consumer culture. Plastic containers, still holding the greasy remnants of takeaway meals, lay discarded alongside empty soft drink cans and crumpled paper tissues. Black bags stuffed with junk stood like forsaken sentinels, abandoned by those who couldn't be bothered to take them to the local waste centre.

All around us, people of every age moved like automatons, with phones glued to their ears. They drifted through the park, oblivious to their surroundings, their loud conversations punctuating the serene air, unaware of how their voices echoed through the greenery.

It is said that everything changes with time, but I feel so privileged to have experienced past times where connection meant face-to-face conversations and the simple joy of being present in the moment. As I watched my grandchildren laugh and play, I realised that despite the whirlwind of modern life, some things remain timeless. The beauty of a park, the joy of companionship, and the memories we create together are the threads that weave the tapestry of our lives. In these small moments, amidst the chaos, we find our true treasures.

Mike Luff, Creative Writing Group Leader.