

Cambridgeshire Older People's Enterprise

COPE

The voice of the County's over 50s
Reaching a readership of over 2500

Registered Charity No. 1110887

December 2023—January 2024 Newsletter 173

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Cambridgeshire
County Council



Editorial

The Congestion Charge proposals for Cambridge have been put aside for the present, but this does not mean that there won't be further attempts to charge for vehicles in the City. Would it be too much to ask that the taxes we nationally and locally pay are used to ensure we have infrastructure that provides our essential services? Developments in and around Cambridge and in the rest of the county are being undertaken without sufficient infrastructure such as clinics, schools, shops and pubs but worse, without affordable housing.

We are also being told to find services online, but when we do we find that the person dealing with the matter is working from home and hasn't the necessary information to hand. But with one Local Council only working a four day week, the situation has become worse. If they are only working for four days a week, it implies there is not enough work for a five day working week. Will our rates be reduced because they were being paid for only four days work? Once again we are rushing into relying on technology, notably digitalisation, to solve our problems. Wikipedia may give us the answer to a quiz query, but does not provide much needed services at weekends or nights.

Technology needs to slow down and consider the consequences of its actions, and its reliance on statistics. As Mark Twain said 'There are lies, damn lies and statistics', so beware of those justifying their actions only with figures. Statistics can be made to prove anything..

David Bailey and the Executive Committee



**HAPPY CHRISTMAS to
all our members, their
families, carers and
friends, and a happy
and healthy New Year
from your COPE team.**

Talking Together



Talking Together is COPE's unique programme of telephone-based conversations for older adults. Small groups meet weekly over the phone for stimulating discussions on topics of shared interest, facilitated by a skilled leader. Each weekly session lasts 45 minutes and the discussion series runs for 6 weeks.

The autumn series of TALKING TOGETHER, the telephone-based series of discussion groups, has begun with some groups oversubscribed due to community interest. Participants are looking at works from the Fitzwilliam Museum and Kettle's Yard and examining health issues with scientists from Cambridge University laboratories. A unique combination of discussion and outing is underway with the group exploring villages around Wimpole Farm in preparation for a visit to Wimpole House in mid-November. This multi-layered approach has been introduced successfully for several groups and we hope to continue it for appropriate topics.

Please watch for the winter series which will begin in early 2024. We always appreciate suggestions for discussion topics. Do phone or email COPE with your ideas.

Two one- off participatory Zoom (video call) sessions are happening in November and December:

The Muddy Hoard Friday 10 November at 1:30 pm

Rodney Scarle from the Norris Museum joins us to learn about the largest coin hoard ever found in Cambridgeshire. Covering the reign of 14 Emperors and an Empress, the hoard, now housed at the museum, includes a previously unrecorded coin and could be one of the ten most significant Roman coin hoards yet found in the UK. **Registration by 6 November**

Scams and Fraudsters – How to Avoid Them Monday 11 December 11:30am

Nigel Sutton Fraud and Cyber Security Advisor for Cambridgeshire Police will share information about Scams which deceive people into believing they are communicating with a genuine person or organisation. Fraudsters will try to trick you into providing them with a payment, or sensitive banking or financial information. This talk will help everyone to recognise a scam and protect themselves from fraud. This discussion is especially important during holiday periods. Registration by Wednesday 6 December.

Deborah Katznelson (member)

Costs for the Talking Together and Zoom programmes are covered by COPE – all sessions, including materials, are free for participants, though registration is required.

We very much hope you will join us. If you have any queries, please contact us at:

copetalkingtogether@hotmail.com

We are always interested in gathering your opinions and reactions to TALKING TOGETHER as well as any recommendations for group topics and facilitators. Please email us or phone the COPE office to share your views.

Happy birthday to all members celebrating in December and January



Supporting older people to live well, independently and safely in their own home.

 **0300 666 9860**

 **infoandadvice@ageukcap.org.uk**

www.ageukcap.org.uk



Registered Charity No. 1165856

Data Protection Act

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DONATIONS

Once again, thanks for all the donations, both monetary and raffle prizes, which are very much appreciated. With the monetary donations, would you please fill in the 'gift aid' section of the application form.

Peter Murfitt, Treasurer

COPE FORUM

Cambridgeshire Older People's Enterprise

New member application form

New Member

Number: _____
(To be allocated after joining)

(BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Post Code _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Are you happy to receive Newsletter by email? Yes/ No

AGE RANGE

PLEASE CIRCLE RELEVANT GROUP

Under 50 50-64 65-74 75-84 over 85

Disability - Yes / No

Ethnic Origin _____

Signature _____

Date: _____

How did you hear of COPE?

Special Interests:

Open to all residents of Cambridgeshire over 50, and to carers and "Friends of COPE" as Associate Members any person, whether or not he or she is aged 50 or over.

By completing and returning this form, you are giving COPE permission to hold your personal details on their database.

The Olive Golding Room
St Luke's Community Centre, Victoria Road
Cambridge CB4 3DZ Phone; (01223) 364303
email; cambridgecope@hotmail.co.uk
Registered Charity No. 1110887

COPE FORUM

Cambridgeshire Older People's Enterprise

Donation Form

I would like to make a donation of £_____

[Please make cheques payable to COPE]

☐

I DO NOT pay UK Income Tax

☐

I DO pay UK Income Tax

Please tick the box above applicable to you

☐

I would like Cambridgeshire Older People's Enterprise (COPE) to treat as Gift Aid this donation, all future donations and previous donations within HM Revenue and Customs time limits, until I notify COPE otherwise*

Please tick this box if you would like COPE to reclaim from HM Revenue and Customs the tax you have paid

Please sign below and print and date underneath

Signature_____

(BLOCK CAPITALS BELOW PLEASE)

First Name_____

Surname_____

Address_____

Postcode:_____

Date_____

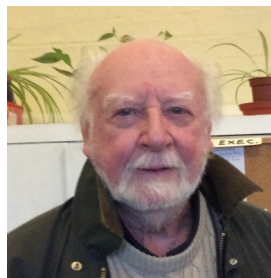
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*Notes

- You can cancel your declaration any time by notifying COPE
- If in future your circumstances change and you no longer pay Income Tax, please notify COPE
- Please notify COPE if you change your name or address whilst the declaration is in force.
- I confirm by signing this form that I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations, it is my responsibility to pay any difference

Many thanks!

Trustees (2022/2023)



David Bailey,
COPE Chairman



Peter Murfitt



Vacancy



Jennie Jenks



Doreen Ryan



Vacancy



Deborah Katznelson



Brian Reynolds

Disclaimer

Whilst every effort is made to ensure information is accurate at the time of going to print, no responsibility can be accepted for loss or damage caused by published information found to be inaccurate.

Submissions for our February / March issue must be received no later than
2nd January 2024.

Word Search / Quiz

December 2023									WORD TILE								
A	L	L	H	A	N	P	A	R									
A	R	C	H	L	E	P	H	E									
B	E	T	H	E	M	R	R	Y									
C	H	R	I	S	T	R	D	S									
C	R	A	I	A	H	S	H	E									
C	E	S	L	A	S	T	L	E									
D	G	E	M	I	S	T	R	I									
E	L	U	M	A	S	T	O	E									
G	E	L	N	B	E	W	E	N									

AIM: Place the 27 three-character 'tiles' in the left-hand grid to the CORRECT spaces in the right hand grid giving NINE CHRISTMAS words horizontally and in alphabetical order. Solution in the next Newsletter.

Last month's solution

B	O	T	T	E	C	I	N	I
C	A	N	A	L	E	T	T	O
C	O	N	S	T	A	B	L	E
D	E	L	A	C	R	O	I	X
D	O	N	A	T	E	L	L	O
F	R	I	E	D	R	I	C	H
K	A	N	D	I	N	S	K	Y
R	E	M	B	R	A	N	D	T
V	E	L	A	Z	Q	U	E	Z

The Sixties Quiz Answers

1. Twiggy
2. Woodstock (location)
3. Mary Quant
4. Andy Warhol
5. Sindy
6. Che Guevara
7. Jean-Paul Sartre
8. Economics
9. Albania
10. Phil Collins
11. Breathalyzer

On Christmas Day ... but in what year ...

1. Was Humphrey Bogart born?
2. Charlie Chaplin died?
3. Christmas Island founded and named by Captain William Mynors of the East India Ship Company?
4. Henry III was crowned Holy Roman Emperor by Pope Clement II?
5. George Michael, British singer and songwriter died?
6. Justin Trudeau, 23rd Prime Minister of Canada was born?
7. Crown Prince Hirohito of Japan assumes the throne upon his father, Emperor Yoshihito's, death?
8. The James Webb Space Telescope was launched?
9. Dean Martin, American singer and actor died?
10. First definite year Christmas was celebrated on Dec 25th?
11. Kenny Everett, British comedian and broadcaster was born?
12. St Paul's Cathedral was officially declared complete by the British parliament after 35 years construction?

Answers in next Newsletter

Who Invented Christmas?



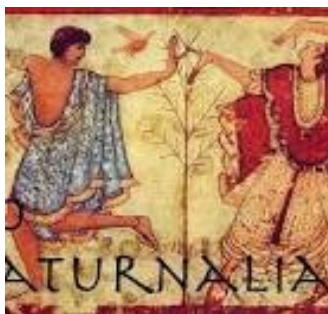
The smart answer is the Victorians, and for those who want bonus points, 'Coca Cola'.

The usual Victorian suspects are Prince Albert and Charles Dickens, while Coke is the reason Father Christmas dresses in red, not green. But is Christmas really as young as that?

Of course not, although celebrating the Nativity on the 25th December can be traced back only as far as AD354, when it is mentioned in a Roman calendar.

The date had almost certainly nothing to do with the Actual date of Christ's birth. Though Lancelot Andrewes and T.S. Eliot say of the Magi, 'A cold coming they had of it', that 'it was no summer progress', nothing in the Bible tells us so. And shepherds tend not to watch their flocks by night in the depths of winter if they can help it.

In fact 25th December was already a Roman feast day: Saturnalia.



It was a time of bawdy celebration around the winter solstice, honouring the god of fertility at the darkest time of the year. Perhaps Constantine, the first Christian emperor, or his successor wanted to control the excesses of the Saturnalia by associating it with the newly adopted religion. Or perhaps it was felt that pairing it with the established rite would popularise the Nativity and what it meant.

So 25th December is Roman. What about the trimmings attributed to the Victorians? Prince Albert introduced the Christmas tree didn't he?



Well the idea of bringing in greenery and the 'Yule Log' predates him. Albert was hardly the first German in the British royal family. While it's true to say the Christmas tree tradition is a German import, it was imported by Queen Charlotte, consort of George III, who had a yew tree set up in a tub at Windsor Castle in 1800. She may have done so before but this is the first recorded time.

The tree was decorated with 'candles, sweetmeats, almonds and raisins in paper, fruits and toys, most tastefully arranged', according to a witness. The toys and sweets were distributed to local children 'who then returned home quite delighted'.

A pre-Victorian Christmas has been made to sound less appealing because 'Cromwell abolished it'. That isn't quite true. Parliament did, beginning in 1644, when Cromwell wasn't a national figure. The ban was certainly kept up during Cromwell's time, but it seems it was not successfully enforced. In 1656, MP's complained that there were Christmas parties disturbing them in their lodgings. In fact, the various Puritan attempts to ban Christmas give us an insight into how the festival was observed in the 17th Century. The first anti-Christmas ordinance saw Nativity celebrations as a great hypocrisy, 'pretending the memory of Christ into an extreme forgetfulness of him, by giving liberty to carnall and sensual delights'. Here is Saturnalia living on.

Grovebury Ladies Club

But it wasn't all cakes and ale. Special provision had to be made to keep churches closed on the Nativity, as on all 'Festival dayes, vulgarly called Holy dayes, having no warrant in the Word of God'. So Whitsun and Easter were out, too. The Puritans were however, capable of carrot as well as stick. The ordinance to get rid of Holy Days declared that 'Scholars, Apprentices and other Servants', should be given 'convenient reasonable recreation and relaxation from their constant and ordinary Labours on every second Tuesday in the moneth throughout the year'. But the persistence of Christmas celebrations is a sign that the traditional focus on a special time of the year was already well established.



Does Dickens as the inventor of the Family Christmas stand up to scrutiny? Before him, there is more evidence of communal than of family celebrations. There was medieval wassailing. In

1712, Joseph Addison described the habits of his fictional character, Sir Roger de Coverley: 'The laudable custom of his ancestors, always keeping open house at Christmas'. But Christmas as a family time is hardly original to Dickens; it's there in the Bible.

Some have made much of the transformation of the Christmas of Mr Pickwick at Dingley Dell. That was an all-in celebration. It becomes the nuclear family of Bob Cratchit in a *Christmas Carol* published in 1843. Still, when Scrooge sees Mr Fezziweg's office knees up, there is no suggestion it's a moribund tradition. As for Coca Cola, Santa Claus was red-suited well before its invention, as 'Sinterklsas', a red-robed saintly bishop began visiting Dutch children for Christmas in the Middle Ages.

Christmas is really older than some would have you believe.

Article by David Horspool in The Oldie, January 2023

THE GROVEBURY LADIES CLUB

It is hard to believe that for sixty years the Grovebury Ladies Club has been running. It was first started in 1963 when the Arbury Estate was just being built in Cambridge and young families started moving in. When it was formed, it was mainly for young mums who had been at home all day; Tuesday evenings were a chance to meet up with other mums and have a natter, a cup of tea and listen to guest speakers who came to talk to the group. The Grovebury Ladies first started in The Grove School and after a few years moved across the road to The Arbury Community Centre where they meet to this day.

Over the years the ladies have been involved with many activities that the Arbury Community Centre has arranged, and always have a float in The Arbury Carnival. On one occasion they dressed up as bunny girls and danced on the back of an open topped lorry.

The Group try to find interesting speakers for at least three times a month. When they do not have speakers, Bingo, Scattergories, and quizzes are sometimes played - or even a game of Beetle. Various outings are also organised throughout the year – they visit places of interest as well as trips to the seaside. At Christmas, Easter and other social dates they plan and arrange parties, and for major events like the Coronation they open up the club to non-members; on that particular occasion this year they entertained seventy four members and friends with a sit down meal with singing and dancing.

The club is an extremely friendly group of ladies of all ages and is enjoyed by everybody. The Grovebury Ladies meet every Tuesday Evening at The Arbury Community Centre from 7.00 p.m. - 9.00 p.m. The cost to join is £10 per year and £3 weekly. If anybody would like to come to this club please get in touch with Barbara Watts on 01223 570707 who would be pleased to speak with you.

Council Tax



Council Tax is one of the most hated taxes, and this year it is higher than ever. The average per dwelling in England is £1,578 per year (around £30 a week); in Wales it is £1,682 and in Scotland £1,302. So it's more important than ever to make sure you are getting any discounts or reductions that you are entitled to.

Living Alone

If you live by yourself then your Council Tax is cut by a quarter, but you have to apply to your local Council for it. Make sure it's backdated for the time you have been living alone. Also remember living alone does not mean you are the only person in the house. Others can live there too if they are also exempt from paying Council Tax. That includes anyone under 18 (or aged 18 or 19 and still in education or just left school), full-time students including student nurses, live-in carers who are not the disabled partner, and those severely mentally impaired. Any of those can live with you, but you will still count as living alone and get 25% off.

Disabled Adaptations

If your home is bigger than normal because of your disability, perhaps with an extra bathroom, bigger kitchen or space for a wheelchair, you can get Council Tax reduced by one band, bringing it down by between 10% and 18%. If it's already in the lowest band, you will get a reduction of 17%. Apply to your Council for this.

Low Income

You can also get a reduction if you have a low income. The reduction is higher for anyone aged 66 or above. So once you reach that landmark age make sure you apply again or get your existing reduction checked. In Scotland and Wales everyone on low incomes can get their tax reduced, sometimes to zero. In most of England, working age people have to pay something – usually 20% of the tax – even if their income is very low, although pensioners do not. The rules differ between local authorities, so check with your local council.



Paying

You can pay your bill in ten or 12 equal monthly payments. If you have difficulty paying, councils have hardship funds that may be able to help.

Article by Paul Lewis in the Radio Times 23-29 September 2023 issue

Ageing In Place

Wanting to live safely, comfortably and in familiar surroundings often shapes how we older people see our world.

Sometimes health conditions, financial considerations or feeling drawn to be closer to family may necessarily dominate thought processes in later years.

Increasingly though the prospect of living in the home that has been owned for many years and which is full of happy memories is a desirable and feasible ambition. Technology makes this increasingly possible. It may be simple aids to mobility or appliances that have been designed with older people's needs taken into account.

My particular reason for optimism about Ageing in Place lies in wireless technologies. Phones for easy and immediate contacts (variously Smart), phone apps, Smart Watches, Apps for monitoring blood pressure, heart health, activity levels, diet, falls. Alarm and Alerting applications. Remote GP interaction, online support both through the health bureaucracy and self help groups and organisations including specialist charities. On the face of it there is enabling technology to support Independent Living and Ageing in Place that was undreamed of a decade or two ago. (Other than by those inventors and entrepreneurs who, through inspiration and perspiration, have brought these things to fruition and wide availability).

So apart from a health condition reaching a critical threshold what does experience tell me is still lacking?

The thing that has triggered my wife and I to review our situation is our garden. We have been in this house for sixteen years and in everyone of those years we have worked on our garden until now it is mature and our haven. My wife has always been the one with the gardening finesse, I have been more of an enabler.

What we have discovered is that finding good people who can manage hedges, trees and even lawns is not so difficult. It seems that mainly retirees or people wanting to work part time take up gardening as a business. In our experience they have good vehicles

and very good equipment and they don't charge too much to do what I call cutting and clearing work. What doesn't seem to be available in the 'gardening economy' is 'plants people' with the more subtle skills of hand weeding, timely deadheading, cutting back when plants have given their best weeks and months. The sort of skills that my wife has in abundance.

So what is it that has changed? A number of things. Reduced mobility, inability to kneel and bend, generally going slower. What was a daily pleasure to be in the garden and work through a section and have the great satisfaction of seeing everything tended and in its place slowly transitions to, 'I can see what needs doing but cannot get through the weeding and trimming as quickly as I once could so what I now see is backlog'.

It may be the lack of 'finesseful' gardeners for hire that triggers us to re-evaluate Ageing in (this particular) Place.

David Cudby (member)



An Almost Forgotten King

King Henry VI (1421-1471)

Crowned King of England as a baby, and in 1431, when 10, as Henri II of France, he lived under the shadow of his father, Henry V. Thanks to Joan of Arc and his political indifference, by 1452 all his French possessions were lost. Henry's interests were religious and cultural, he was apparently a good man but a weak king.

However, without him Cambridge would not be the University or City it is today. In his late teens he conceived the idea of building a school in Windsor where he was born. This became Eton and was to educate 70 poor scholars and be twinned with a sister college, King's College, Cambridge. At King's Henry took a keen interest in building the Chapel.

His other achievement was dynastic which led to the founding of other Cambridge Colleges. He raised his Tudor half brother, Edmund to the Earldom of Richmond and married him off to the greatest heiress in England, Lady Margaret Beaufort, whose son became Henry VII, the first Tudor monarch.



As well as King's, Henry was closely involved in the founding of Christ's College, while his wife, Margaret of Anjou, founded Queen's College. Lady Margaret Beaufort vowed to continue with Henry's projects, founding St. John's College and further endowing Christ's College.

Henry VIII completed King's College Chapel, adorning it with the heraldic devices of Richmond, Tudor, Beaufort and Lancaster, and also founded Trinity College. All this royal patronage turned Cambridge from an obscure town adjacent to the Fens into an international centre for Humanism.

Tudor England emulated Henry VI in founding grammar schools, and a popular cult of sainthood grew up around him after his murder in the Tower of London in 1471 by his successor Edward IV. Under his son, Henry VII and Henry VIII there were representations to the Vatican to canonise Henry VI. Henry VII's chapel in Westminster Abbey was originally built to hold Henry VI's remains and allow pilgrims to visit his shrine and pray for his assistance.

But unfortunately for Henry, Henry VIII's break with Rome stopped any chance of his sainthood. He was buried in Chertsey Abbey before being moved to St George's Chapel in Windsor. He was committed to educating the poor and built world class universities, was a religious and moral conservative and a peacemaker. Alone among medieval English monarchs, he did not lead an army against Scotland, Ireland or Wales.

David Bailey, based on an article by Benedict King in The Oldie, March 2021

Dementia / Herbert Protocol

Most people would be forgiven for taking just one quick glance at an elderly man waiting for a bus. But thanks to one passerby in Soham, who saw the same man again a few hours later, extra steps have now been taken to safeguard him.

The kind woman initially noticed the man walking towards Ely earlier that same day, and then near the station a few hours later – looking very confused and disorientated. The woman spoke to him, and the man in his 80s showed her his bus pass and said he was going to see someone but couldn't remember who.

He had no bag and declined a lift home from the woman, who then called Cambridge police just after 3pm that afternoon.

We spoke to the man's family and checks revealed he had dementia. We put further safeguarding measures in place, including the **Herbert Protocol**.

The Herbert Protocol is a scheme that can help find people with dementia should they go missing from home. It encourages family and friends to keep a document that will help officers in the event a loved one goes missing by collating key pieces of information such as a physical description, familiar places, health details and an up-to-date photo.

Carers, family or friends of a vulnerable person, or the person themselves, can fill in a Herbert Protocol form in advance, containing information to help the police if the person goes missing. Keeping a completed form means you don't have to try to remember the information when you are under stress if someone goes missing. And it saves time, so we can start the search sooner. For more information or to download a Herbert Protocol form, visit our website—cambs.police.uk—and search for 'missing persons—Herbert Protocol'.

Learning new skills in later life

Swiss and German researchers have found that learning the piano in later life can slow down the process of cognitive decline in people who have had no previous musical training. Under normal circumstances the brain shrinks in our 60's and 70's, a process that develops into dementia. But after 6 months of music lessons, this had been reversed in some brain regions. Moreover, MRI scans showed an increase in the outermost layer of the brain, which helps decision making and storage of memories.

Professor Clara James explains why this is the case, 'when you play a musical instrument, or sing, you have auditory, visual, motor and sensory activities and they all interact, leading to neurons from various parts of the brain making connections, increasing parts of the brain.' But also it was found that study participants' hearing improved.

At Anglia Ruskin University, Professor Odell-Miller has conducted studies finding that singing, improvising on musical instruments and simply listening to music can reduce agitation and confusion for people living with dementia. She says: 'it is not changing the fact that they have dementia, but it's extending their powers of cognition and the ways that they can relate to loved ones, as well as lifting their mood. It also helps people who might be very confused and not know how to converse.'

Scientists say it is never too late to learn not only a musical instrument, but other creative activities, such as learning a language, pottery, gardening etc. which benefit your mind, making it more resilient to age related decline. Use it or lose it.

David Bailey from National News Articles September 2023

Poems

Remembering John F Kennedy

22 November 1963

Today our plastic world took one step closer
to becoming molten lead,
And the synthetic souls of men
leaned away further from the star-lighted dark of
the heavens.
In noisy, glaring, steel-hot, whirring chambers,
electrically lit
no scholars sit, but huge wheels bite the air.
Whilst outside
cold desolation creeps along dark streets
where men talk death and women
dance grotesqueness.
The jangle-bright, labour-saved, all-mod-conned
America
shrinks in his shadow; and the muted crying of a
thousand hearts
is unheard,
While barely seen in those hearts' empty eyes
there lives a shred more fear
an ocean more despair.

Stephen Manners (member)

30th Anniversary - 22 November 1993

Unique as a leaning tower,
The whole earth knew your name.
Because in that bloodstained hour
The bullets came.
Now in this world grown older
We ask what might have been -
Would your glory have grown colder
With an end to the dream?
Time now has blurred the vision, dimmed the eyes,
Twisted the image on the flickering screen.
Tangled the truth with legend and with lies.
Smeared what we thought was clean.

Here was a mighty structure built on unsure
foundation
Sinking aslant into earth.
Innocence stillborn twinned in creation
With the global admiration
You brought to birth.
No answer to the mystery-
No peaceful white dove -
Yet still through years of history
Stretches our love.

Rosemary Mathew (member)

My grandma taught me so many things,
Cooking, nature & fairy rings,
The sheets they'd rise up in the copper,
"Mind the sides, they're getting hotter",
With wooden tongs we'd push them down,
Then lift them up & swirl around,
When it was done, I'd grab the handle,
Of that groaning washing mangle,
My grandad was there along with his pipe,
We'd go fishing to catch a pike,
He'd wink & say, "Our dinner is liver,
Which I just caught from the Stour river",
In the morning at dawn I would awake,
To the aroma of a grandma chocolate cake.

Stephen Manners (member)

COPE NEEDS YOU!

We need volunteers to help with:

- Staffing the office—10:00 to 12:30
- Organising outings
- Helping with COPE administration

If you can spare some time to help, please
get in touch with Peter Murfitt, our office
manager:

- by phone—01223 364303
- email cambridgecope@hotmail.co.uk
- or by post to St Luke's Church
Centre, Victoria Road,
Cambridge CB2 3DZ

Packaging

How many times recently have you had to do battle with opening packages. I am fed up with having to line up a variety of tools to do this, including a nailfile, a stanley knife and mini shears.

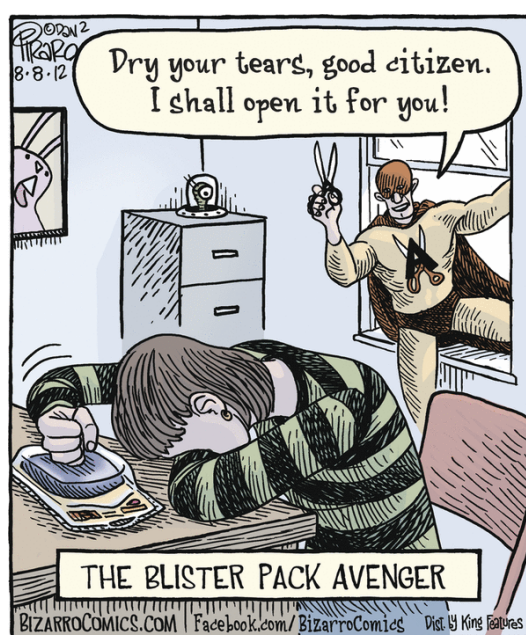
A cardboard container arrived recently. I pulled the end of the masking tape to yank it open. Surprisingly easy I reckoned. But....no. Inside was another thinner carton which had been sellotaped to death, even right across the perforated slot for supposedly easy access to the individual boxes. Time for impatient slashing with a stanley knife.

Another horror is blister packaging. It's as if no one's meant to open what's inside. My teenage granddaughter recently bought nail scissors in a pharmacy because she had to repair a broken fingernail. She couldn't break through the plastic front or tear off the cardboard backing which was firmly stuck on. So she had to ask for help. 'This happens a lot', the shop assistant moaned as she cut it open with large scissors. 'Toothbrushes are a right pain too.'

By far the worst of all is hard plastic clamshells. These are made from two clear plastic halves hinged together and then securely glued shut. Here's a typical case: I found a perfect Christmas present for my great nephew, but his poor father had to attack the pack with a junior hacksaw before eventually his son was able to play with the toy soldier inside.

Why do we have to put up with all this nonsense? So that manufacturers and retailers can boast that these almost impenetrable barriers protect against tampering (they mean theft) or rough handling. Is this more important than buyers not being infuriated? It seems so. Please think about us harassed customers. I am sick of having to hack into, stab or pierce almost everything I buy. Why not put on readable opening instructions and proper perforation tabs you can actually tear. It can't be that difficult or costly.

Article by Carolyn Whitehead in *The Oldie* August 2023



Who does Age UK's Silver Line Helpline help?

Everyone, no matter who they are, needs someone to talk to and connect with sometimes.

The Silver Line Helpline is a free, confidential telephone service run by Age UK, providing friendship, conversation and support for older people over 55. Lines are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

We give older people the chance to pick up the phone and enjoy a chat, get some support, and feel all the wonderful benefits that come from talking to a friend.

Free Call 0800 470 80 90

Music for Remembrance



The most well-known music for Remembrance is, of course, the Last Post, composed by a bugler called Arthur Lane. It is interesting to note that the last post was originally a signal sounding that the final sentry post had been inspected in a military camp, meaning that it was secure for the night. The First World War was notable for the number of British classical composers who wrote music in memory of those who died in the conflict or who produced music marking specific events. Edward Elgar in 'The Spirit of England' set three poems by Laurence Binyon : 'The Fourth of August' (the date on which Britain went to war), 'To Women' and 'For the Fallen' ,which includes the words starting "They shall not grow old...".

A much less well-known piece is the Elegy for Strings 'In Memoriam Rupert Brooke' by the Australian composer Frederick Kelly. He was present on the hospital ship where the poet Rupert Brooke died in 1915.

Turning to the Second World War, Benjamin Britten's 'War Requiem' is the most famous British classical piece arising out of the conflict. It was written for the opening of the new Coventry Cathedral, built next to and incorporating the bombed remains of the previous building.

Popular songs from World War 1 included "Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag" (a marching song) and " Keep the home fires burning", published first as "Till the boys come home" .

Songs from World War 2 include "Run rabbit run" and, of course, those made famous by Vera Lynn, including "The White Cliffs of Dover" and "We'll meet again" . The latter's enduring popularity bears witness to the strength of the words and the music.

Michael Bloy (member)

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Electric Blanket Safety

Electric blanket safety

- Always follow manufacturers' instructions for using your blanket. This will help you use and store it safely and prolong the life of your blanket. Store it flat or rolled and do not store other objects on top of it.
- Electric Blankets should be replaced every 10 years and tested every 2 years by a qualified electrician.
- Always check your blanket for scorch marks, water damage, mould or exposed wires. If you see any of these on your blanket do not use it, replace it.
- Never use a hot water bottle or drink fluids in bed when you have your electric blanket fitted to it. If you spill you drink or the water bottle leaks you will be mixing water and electricity.
- Do not fold electric blankets.
- Protect the wiring inside them by storing them flat or rolled up.
- Do not leave an electric blanket switched on all night.
- Electric blankets should carry the British Standard Kitemark and the British Electrotechnical Approvals Board (BEAB) symbol on them.

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Recipe

Old English Trifle

This is always suitable for a Boxing Day spread and can be prepared (up to stage 3) a couple of days before eating.

Serves 6 -8

Ingredients

6 trifle sponges OR any leftover plain cake - Victoria sponge or Madeira cake is suitable.

3 tbsp raspberry jam

150 ml / ¼ pint sweet sherry

125 g / 4 oz seedless white grapes

125 g / 4 oz black grapes, halved and deseeded

2 peaches, peeled, stoned and chopped (tinned sliced peaches a possible substitute)

2 bananas

2 tbsp lemon juice

45 g / 1½ oz cornflour

600 ml / 1 pint milk

1 tsp vanilla flavouring

3 egg yolks

45 g / 1½ oz sugar

300 ml / ½ pint double (thick) cream

To decorate

glacé cherries

angelica

toasted flaked almonds



1 Split the trifle sponges in 2 and spread with the jam. Arrange in the base of a 2 litre / 3½ pint serving dish.

2 Sprinkle the sherry over the trifle sponges and spoon in the grapes and peaches. Slice the banana and mix with the lemon juice. Add to the trifle.

3 Blend the cornflour in a large jug with 4 tbsp of the milk. Heat the remaining milk with the vanilla flavouring until warm, and then pour on to the blended cornflour, whisking well. Beat the egg yolks and whisk them into the mixture. Return to the saucepan and heat gently until the mixture is thickened and blended. Remove from the heat and add the sugar. Pour over the fruit and leave to cool completely.

4 Whip the cream until it holds its shape, and then spoon about one-third of it into a piping bag fitted with a star tube. Spread the remaining cream over the custard. Pipe a border of cream around the outside and decorate with glacé cherries, angelica and toasted almonds.

5 Chill until ready to serve.

Jennie Jenks

Sowing Salad Mixes



Salad leaves are easy to grow, and are cheaper than buying them from the supermarket in plastic bags. Oriental salad mixes such as mizuna, red and green mustards, rocket and pak choi can be sown outdoors now. You can buy the seed ready mixed, individually or mix your own as an experiment. Whatever you do they will be tastier than shop bought salads.

Where to plant

Salad leaves like a well drained place. Prepare an area in a raised bed or flower bed. Dig and rake it over. They can also be grown in pots and containers, using peat free multi purpose compost mixed with some grit to ensure its free draining.

How to Sow

The best way is to scatter the seeds over the patch, having watered it first to ensure the small seeds are not displaced. Then cover with a little well sieved compost. Water regularly with a fine rose on the watering can, and feed with a weak organic liquid feed every two weeks.

Harvest

Some salad leaves are ready to harvest in 20 days. Once they get to 4 inches (10 cm) long, start cropping with kitchen scissors. Cut the leaves as low as possible, then water and feed again, and the plants will reshoot a few times. If you wish you can leave some to get bigger, such as pak choi and use them in a stir fry. Good luck!



Looking for sheltered housing in Cambridge?

We are a Cambridge charity providing sheltered accommodation for people in need, aged over 60, who live in Cambridgeshire or who have a professional connection to the Church of England.

Our properties on Mount Pleasant, Cambridge and in Vicarage Close, Melbourn are for women only and our flats in Church Street, Chesterton are mixed.

For further information please visit our website: www.edwardstorey.org.uk, call: 01223 364405
or email: info@edwardstorey.org.uk

Did we ever think that ...?

Did we ever think that....

- 60 years ago did we ever think that the Rolling Stones would still be rolling, or that Mick Jagger, Cliff Richard, Paul McCartney and many other singers and musicians would be knighted. Over the last 60 years there have been many similar changes that we would not have thought possible. Some of them are:
- The phone would evolve from being a black Bakelite instrument in the hall into an ingenious portable sliver that could do anything, and which to the young would become a vital and wholly addictive adjunct to their limbs and heart if not their soul.
- A pandemic would result in unprecedented lock downs for two years, necessitating working from home.
- Rolls Royce Car Co would be sold to a German company.
- The price of a birthday card could be £2.99 and a second class stamp £1.10. In the 1960's this £3 plus would have bought an LP., six paperbacks a pound of Black Magic and a couple of pints of beer.
- Glorified gym shoes would become the footwear of choice? Or that men would dress like sloppy children, with T-shirts bearing cartoons, adverts or idiot slogans.
- Smoking would become illegal almost everywhere, including pubs, leading to the extermination of tobacconists.
- A daily newspaper could cost £3.
- Communities would have to fight to retain a bank, post office, police station or library. Or that a butcher, fishmonger, greengrocer or sweetshop would become ever scarcer, while coffee and charity shops would proliferate.
- British history would be seen to be almost wholly malign, with its heroes as warmongering racists.
- Britain's most-loved authors (including Shakespeare and Dickens) could be censored, rewritten and issued with 'trigger warnings'?
- Almost everything essential to living could be conducted on a computer, which most people would own.
- Something called Google would render the Encyclopaedia Britannica superfluous.
- A drive for inclusivity and diversity would make 'elite' a dirty word, and a mockery of merit and superior ability.
- Food staples – beef, ham, bacon, sausages, eggs, butter, cheese – would be branded as dangerous, or that vegetarianism would take such a hold.

David Bailey based on an Article by Joseph Connolly in The Oldie, November 2023 issue

The above are just a few of the changes since the 1960's – please let us know your views on what has changed the most for you.

Activities and Events

Arbury Artists Watercolour Painting Art Classes: Tuesdays 10am– 12noon at Meadows Community Centre, Cambridge. Contact **Celia Conway 01223 523680**

Abbey Leisure Centre Complex Astro turf, CB5 8NT. Supervets football. Contact Helena.knock@gll.org **01223 576412**

Barrington Forget-me-not club Meets fortnightly on a Thursday. Tel. **Jim Burton 01223 870192** or email jimandlindab@lineone.net. All welcome.

Castle Street Methodist Church Coffee Morning every Wednesday 10:30—12 noon followed by over 50s Strength & Balance Class 12:00—1 pm (£3 per session) Contact **Amanda 01223 354904**

Cherry Hinton Church End WI meets every Monday. Contact **Margaret** on 01223 249247 or kjrmdp19@btinternet.com

Cherry Hinton Friday Friends: group for senior citizens offering knitting, crafts, scrabble and cards 1:30 - 3pm every Friday at the Family Centre, Fishers Lane, CBI 9HR. Contact **Nic or Jo Boyns 01223 561139**

Cherryhinton Care Home (TLC Care) 369 Cherryhinton Road CBI 8DB. Afternoon Tea and Cakes on the 2nd Thursday of each month - join our residents. To book contact **Amber Christou on 01223 210070**

Cherry Hinton Leisure Centre Contact Julie.howard@gll.org **01223 576412**

1 **Men's Social Group** Mondays 2-4 pm for cards, dominoes, scrabble, chess, curling and darts.

2 **'Young At Heart'** Women's social group. Open to all women 50 plus every Friday 2-4.00pm.

Cambridgeshire Companions: A lunch club for the single over 50s Contact **Celia Conway - 01223 523680**

Chesterton Knitters meet on the 1st Thursday of each month 2.30-4.30 at: Café 121, 121 Milton Road Cambridge. Bring your own work if you wish. Telephone **Eileen Flood—01223 369376** for details.

Comberton Friendship Club: meet on 2nd Thursday of each month 2.30 p.m. at Comberton Village Hall. Telephone **Sue Allin - 01223 262990**

Coton Garden Club Contact **Ailish Meadows** 07952 694666. email: ailishmeadows@gmail.com. Meet 1st Monday September –April at 7.30 pm.

Coton Village Hall Internet Club Thursdays 10.00—12.00 Contact **Carolyn Postgate 01954 211033** email: carolyn@clara.co.uk.

Dunstan Court Wolfstan Way: Bingo! Wednesdays, 6.30 pm for an hour and a half. Contact **Beryl 01223 240918**.

Ely Library Activities - Scrabble, creative Tuesdays, local studies, arts and crafts. Contact for all activities: **0345 045 5225**, Alvina De-La-Mare, Ely. Referral@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

Grovebury Ladies club: meet Tuesdays 7.30-9.30pm Arbury Community Centre, Campkin Road Cambridge. Contact **Barbara Watts** on **01223 570707**

Hiam Sports & Social Club, Prickwillow, Ely. Ballroom Dances 3 times every month, Tea Dances every Thursday. Contact: **01353 688 269 (club) 07842 146308 email: info@hiam.co.uk**

Keep Fit for the over 60s. With exercise and dance classes. Tuesdays 2-3pm St Thomas's Hall, Ancaster Road (off Birdwood Road). Enquiries **Val Ford 07870 911556**.

Meadows Bowlers (Carpet), Meadows Community Centre, Arbury Road. Every Thursday 2-4 pm £3 per session incl. refreshments.

Newnham Walkers meet every Monday at 10:30 by the Crofters Café (Lammas Land) for a short, gentle walk followed by refreshments in a local café. Contact **Michael Bloy 01223 355686**

Papworth Wheelchair Tennis Coaching runs every Tuesday morning from 11 – 12 noon. Rackets will be provided. Contact the coach **Diane** on **07964 839688** or email cobb955@btinternet.com

Rampton Tea Club for the over 60s restarts 18th May 2021 at Rampton Village Hall, alternate Tuesday afternoons 2.30–4.30pm. Telephone **Sylvia Beaumont - 01954 252043** for date of next meeting.

St Augustine's Community Centre, Café 99, Richmond Road., Cambridge. Open Monday, and Friday Mornings from 10.45 to 12.15—all are welcome.

St Luke's Knitting Group: Meets last Tuesday of each month, 2-4 pm. All welcome, it doesn't matter if you cannot knit or crochet. Telephone for information **Judith Crowe - 01223 357627**

Tea@3 St Giles Church, Castle Street, Cambridge every Wednesday afternoon at 3 pm.

Victoria Homes Victoria Road bring and buy coffee morning 10.00 first Saturday of the month.

Willingham Social Club, Fen End CB24 5LH: Jazz Club on first Sunday each month Feb-Dec 12:30—3:30 pm Tea, coffee, rolls, dancing. Admission £10. Contact **Rosie Val Barrett** 01954 789670.

COPE Events, Activities and Outings
Please contact the **COPE Office** for further information
COPE, St Luke's Community Centre, Victoria Road, Cambridge CB4 3DZ.



The Evelyn Charnley Memorial Lunch Club

Peter Murfitt — 01223 364303

Queen Edith Chapel, Wulfstan Way, Cambridge, CB1 8QN

12.00 (Noon) – 2.00 p.m. every third Wednesday. Tea & Biscuits provided, bring own Lunch if required.

£1 Raffle with donated prizes. Everyone is welcome

December 20th

David Taylor - Dambusters

January 17th

Marion French—Touring Cambs

COPE in St Ives

2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Corn Exchange, The Pavement, St Ives, PE27 5AG

Meetings held on third Thursday of each month. Contact Angie 01480 300726

Entry is £2.00 to help meet costs of these meetings and includes refreshments and the celebrated £1 Raffle. COPE membership is free and members are encouraged to bring friends, carers and partners. Everyone is welcome.

21st December

Christmas Lunch (Corn Exchange)

18th January

Hunts Society for the Blind

15th February

Sue Lacey: Writing Books

21st March

Josea Malawi

18th April

Age UK

Victoria Road Friendship Club

Just turn up! Meets the last Friday every month at the meeting room, Victoria Road Homes from 2.00—4.00 pm.

Next meetings: December 29th, January 26th

Contact Barbara Watts 01223 570707

SENIOR CITIZENS' CHRISTMAS ENTERTAINMENT

Wednesday 6th December

Chesterton Community College, Gilbert Road Cambridge CB4 3NY

An afternoon of music provided by the Chesterton Community College Music Department. Join in with carol singing, listen to musical items and enjoy some seasonal refreshments.

Booking is essential—Phone College reception on 01223 712150 to reserve your place.