

THE AGEING JOURNEY PROJECT

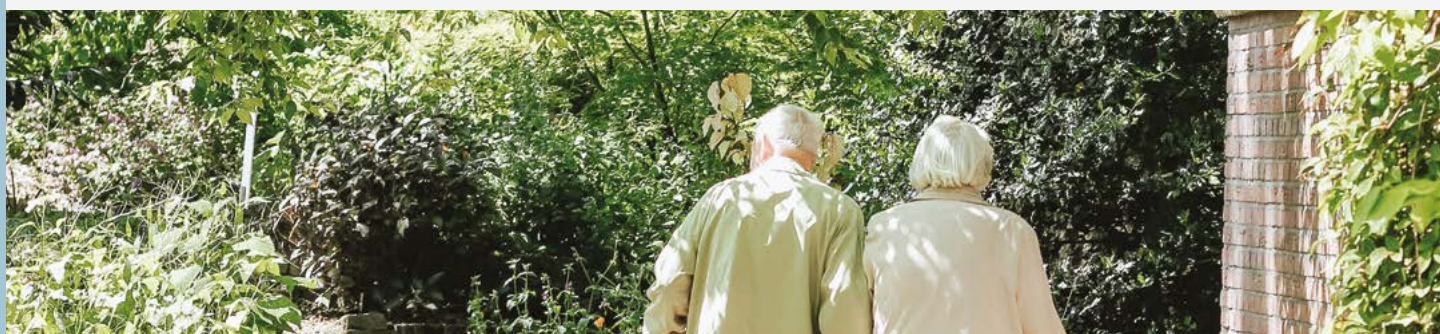
Did you know that the United Nations have made 1st October the 'International Day of Older Persons'?! Whilst it is great there is a special day dedicated to celebrating older people, we honestly think those in their later years should be remembered, honoured and valued every day!

Our motivation has always been to provide opportunities for our members to feel valued and to positively contribute towards the development of the charity which is why this latest edition of the newsletter is full of stories and articles from our Time to Talk Befriending Community.

Building on our core aim to provide opportunities for our members to share their life history and wisdom we have launched a new project called 'The Ageing Journey' which we are excited to tell you about within this newsletter!

The project has come about as a result of meeting (face to face or over the phone!) amazing older people every day through our work. Our members have so much to give that we would like to capture their thoughts and views about questions such as 'What brings you the most joy in your life now' and 'What brought you the most joy in your life when you were younger'. 'What is the best thing about ageing?', 'What is the most challenging thing about ageing'. 'What would you say to the younger generation to help them on their ageing journey?'

It is this knowledge and wisdom we would like to share widely across the generations.





We hope you enjoy
their wisdom and
insights as much
as we do!

DURING THE BRIGHTON AND HOVE AGEING WELL FESTIVAL WE LAUNCHED THE PROJECT IDEA THROUGH AN ONLINE EVENT.

We also had the privilege of sharing a video produced by the talented filmmaker and friend of the charity Lydia Shellien-Walker. The video features our wonderful scheme members Helen, Tony and Barbara. We recognise that not everyone is online however if you are you can access the film via the following link:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=fNnOtwYXmgw

THE AGEING JOURNEY PROJECT

Call to action for volunteers and scheme members

The Ageing Journey project will be run over two years. Our core aims are to change perceptions and the negative discourse about ageing and positively prepare people for ageing across the life-course to prevent loneliness as we age. We intend to achieve this through a programme of inter-generational co-produced resources and peer led training which is where you come in!

If you are a volunteer or scheme member and would like to be involved in a range of workshops, group discussions, interviews, films and podcasts to share your thoughts and insights about ageing and how to overcome loneliness then we would love to hear from you! **To express your interest please contact us via info@tttb.org.uk or call and leave a message on the answer phone and one of the team will get back to you 01273 737710.**

TIME TO DRAW AND CONNECT



Our 'Time to Draw and Connect' Ageing Well Festival workshop was a wonderful event expertly led by friend, and our designer, Ellen Stewart. It was a brilliant, creative and connecting morning hosted at the lovely City Coast Centre. **The participants gave some really positive feedback.**

"This session has left me feeling really happy" "Fabulous fun"

"Wonderful..." "This met my expectations over and above!"

"Lovely warm, friendly, atmosphere"

We are planning to run the workshop for our volunteers in the future – watch this space!



BRIGHTON & HOVE
AGEING WELL
FESTIVAL



Creativity playing an important role in befriending!

With special thanks to volunteer Vicky and scheme member Rosalind for sharing this lovely story!

"I have been visiting Rosalind since before the summer holidays, and it's pretty much becoming one of my favourite times of the week. She's a joy to be with. We have so much in common and can chat for hours.

It's amazing how well Time to Talk Befriending match people so well and find genuine connections between people. We have been sitting outside each week for a couple of hours and each week we decide what we will do. Both being very creative we have a rather long list, so far we have done some knitting, embroidery and drawing together".



Creating meaningful moments of connection are so important! How do you get the best out of your be-friendship? If you have a story you would like to share please contact us info@tttb.org.uk / 01273 737710.

Charlotte had a beautiful baby boy!



Charlotte Evan's (formerly Overton-Hart) has been a friend of the Charity since 2014! A lot of you will know her through volunteer dementia inclusive workshops or through our peer telephone groups 'Conversations with Friends'. Earlier this year Charlotte was also commissioned as an official Anna Chaplain at the Charity.

We are delighted to announce that Zephaniah Evans arrived safe and sound on 26th August 2021! Isn't he adorable?! Charlotte and her husband James are over the moon - as are we!



Poem chosen by Charlotte...

When Six O'Clock Comes and Another Day Has Passed (by Kathryn Simmonds)

the baby who can not speak, speaks to me.
When the sun has risen and set over the same dishes
and the predicted weather is white cloud,
the baby steadies her head which is the head of a drunk's
and holds me with her blue eyes,
eyes which have so recently surfed through womb swell,
and all at once we stop half-heartedly row, rowing
our boat and see each other clear
in the television's orange glow. She regards me,
the baby who does not know a television from a table lamp,
the baby who is so heavy with other people's hopes
she has no body to call her own,
the baby who is forever being shifted, rearranged,
whose hands must be unfurled, and wiped with cotton wool,
whose scalp must be combed of cradle cap,
the baby who has exactly no memories
softens her face in the early evening light and says I understand.



VOLUNTEERS CORNER

FACE TO FACE BEFRIENDING

At the end of September 2021 we reintroduced face to face visiting in response to conversations with our members about their wishes. 29% confirmed they would like visits to commence hence moving forward!

Obviously not all volunteers are able to visit people at home and some volunteers will want to undertake a mix of telephone and face to face visits which is of course more than fine. However, for those that can visit people at home, we have produced guidance which you should have now received.

If you are a volunteer who would like to visit our members at home it is really important that you take the time to read this guidance. **Especially pages 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 14 and 16** where we outline our protocols for safe befriending indoors, boundaries, practicalities and safeguarding.

If you haven't received a copy please let us know as soon as possible and we will resend it to you! info@tttb.org.uk / 01273 737710 (please leave a message and one of the team will get back to you shortly).

Online Christmas Event!

Celebrating our volunteers is very important to us! Every year we host a Christmas event by way of saying thank you so if you like mince pies, bad cracker jokes and a quiz with prizes please save the date!

Thursday 16th December
6pm-7.30pm via Zoom.

Look out for an email from Chelsey in due course for further details!



SCHEME MEMBERS CORNER

Thank you so much for your patience

while we took the time to call all our members to identify your individual preferences for befriending as we move beyond the peak of the pandemic and into this new recovery and reintegration phase. Our one-to-one calls confirm that 29% of our members would like face to face befriending to resume so I am writing today to confirm that home visiting is being reinstated for those who would like to benefit.



There is very specific guidance that we ask our volunteers and scheme members to follow for face-to-face befriending. **At the beginning of October you should have received your 'home visiting information pack' through the post.** It is really important that you read the information pack but especially pages 4, 5, 7 and 8. If you didn't receive the information pack for any reason please contact us and we will arrange for another one to be posted to you.

We recognise that not everyone will want to benefit from face-to-face visits which is why we are continuing with telephone befriending as part of our core service.

If your volunteer is keen to visit you at home but you do not feel comfortable with this arrangement, please contact us if you would like us to speak to the volunteer on your behalf.

Not all volunteers are able to visit our members at home. So, if your volunteer can only provide befriending over the phone, please continue with this arrangement but also take the time to contact us to discuss other possible options for social contact.

To make contact with us you can either email info@tttb.org.uk or you can call the office number 01273 737710 and leave a message. One of the team will call you back shortly.



Stoneham Bakehouse

“We are excited to be back baking again! Repainted, refreshed, and rested, we’re ready to go! Whilst the maintenance work has been going on, we’ve been running some of our important projects; with our #BreadShed and #BakingAndBereavement groups both benefitting from some breadmaking time.

On our return, we’ll be baking as usual on Thursday-Saturday, with different group sessions on Mondays and Wednesdays. As with before the pandemic, we’ll also be running Tuesday workshops for small groups of people who want to learn to bake bread. There are a range of workshops available from basic breadmaking, to more specific breads, such as bagels, or focaccia. We’ve got places on daytime and evening sessions still available”.

Scheme members are welcome to join these welcoming and enjoyable groups. Contact the team at the Stoneham Bake House to find out more: 07786927110.

Bereavement Support & Workshops

“One of the certainties in life is that we will all experience the loss of those close to us at some point. However, having this knowledge still does not prepare us for the complexity of the feelings we will experience when the time comes. The depth and breadth of the emotions felt will be different for everyone, no one can predict the intensity. Here at Carers Support West Sussex (CSWS), we completely understand that everyone will experience their own unique journey in coping with loss. At the same time, we believe that connecting with others in a similar situation will provide you with a sense of support and a means of developing your own coping strategy”.

Monthly Former Carers Group

“This is a group specifically for those carers who have experienced bereavement, either having lost someone recently or a while ago. If you are feeling the loss and would like to join with others who are sharing a similar experience this is an opportunity to talk through grieving and to acknowledge that there is no expectation for what ‘should’ be happening, or indeed when it occurs during bereavement. Bereavement is different for each and every one of us, for some the caring role may have ended or changed into new roles, however it is affecting you, joining this group can give you the opportunity to talk with others who may have or are experiencing similar thoughts and feelings. This group takes place on the 3rd Thursday every month via Zoom 10.30am – 12pm”.

To find out more call 0300 028 8888.





Looking forward: maintaining wellbeing as we move into winter

By Emma Peskett and Bradley Hall who are both currently training to be clinical psychologists and working with older adults.

For the last 18 months, we've followed guidance to keep ourselves and others protected. We've had to stay home, limit seeing the people we care about and stop doing some of the things we enjoy. In some ways this way of living may have grown familiar and now we face changes that will require further getting used to. It is only natural that this may make us feel concerned.

You may have some understandable worries as we head towards winter, the colder weather and shorter days make it more likely that we will be less active and spend more time at home. The vaccination programme appears to be doing a good job of protecting us, but it is natural to feel some anxiety about how the Covid-19 pandemic will play out this winter. It's important to take care and look after ourselves during this time. **The last 18 months has been particularly challenging, and you may have already found some good ways of coping that work for you during that time:**

What helped you to cope during the first year of the pandemic?

Which people and relationships felt like a safe haven?

Were there any activities that helped you to cope or took your mind off things?

Were there things that made you feel worse, that you could avoid this winter?

Anna Chaplaincy at Time to Talk Befriending



Arrow Prayers

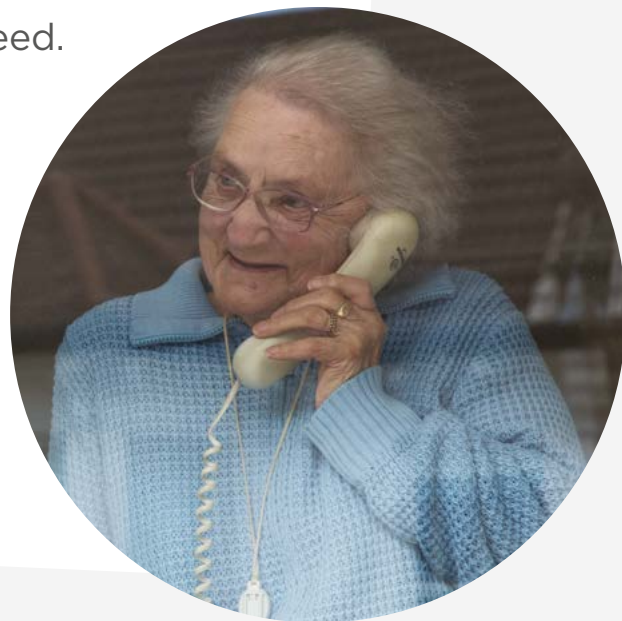
Have you ever thought that your prayers aren't long enough? Or that you don't use enough special words? In the Bible there are lots of little prayers – so little they couldn't be any littler!

“Help, Lord!”, “Lord save me!” They are arrow prayers, quickly shot up to God. Once, in the middle of the night, during a huge storm, Jesus came to see his friends on the lake – walking on top of the water. Peter wanted to try, so Jesus said, “Come on!” Peter stepped out of the boat and walked on water. But then he looked down – and, starting to sink, cried, “Lord, save me!” Immediately, Jesus caught him. Your prayer might be so little that it may not seem like a prayer at all. But it's enough. God hears it. Matthew 14:30-31 (NLT)



BEFRIENDING by Eileen M

Befriending, befriending, how wonderful you are
Helping the old and people in need,
We love your parcels and other things indeed.
On the phone to others
Was such a good idea
Strangers spoke to one another
About their goings on.
We look forward to a befriending party
And maybe a singalong!



MY FRIEND ANNIE by Eileen M

My friend Annie lives up the road and I like her a load,
She's sugar and spice and oh so nice,
That's what Annie is made of.
We go out in her little car,
We go near, we go far,
Charity shops and cut prices are always there to see.
I look at Annie, she looks at me and we know
we're ready for a cup of tea!
Her little car is waiting for us with a smile upon its face,
Then it's home again ready for tea.
Two happy bunnies, Annie and me!

VISITING GRACELAND

by Valerie Stevens



Here I am writing about Elvis as promised. I have always been a fan of his. So many years have passed by, but I still care for him and play his music, and my late husband, Maxie, was the same. Max and I always went to Memphis every year and started saving as soon as we came back.

It was lovely going there, and we went to so many places. Twice a day we went to his grave, early morning and in the evening. Security knew us well and we knew them! I was always playing tricks on them like one day I pretended the army was coming and everyone had to be on parade, they soon knew what I was up to!

Inside Graceland it is truly
Elvis everywhere, beautiful.
No-one could go upstairs,
which I thought was right,
as that was where he died.
It didn't bother me as I knew
his spirit was all around.

The first day we went there I froze outside the Golden Gates. I felt as though I was doing something wrong, walking in his grounds, and then into his lovely Graceland, but the security came out to Maxie and I and walked us up to his grave. It was our first time there and we were both crying but we put our flowers on his grave and sat on the bench and talked to him, which I still do, but now both to Maxie and Elvis.

When you've been there once, you want to go back time and time again, every year. But now it's all in lockdown there, and even if it wasn't, I couldn't go without my Maxie, so that will never happen again. It's been said that they are closing Graceland, but I'm not sure.

The last time we were there and waiting to get in for the vigil, two security guards came up to me. My friend and her husband said, "Now what have you done?" and I replied, "Nothing yet!". I asked the security guard, "what have I done?" and he said, "Nothing Madam, only you nearly gave us a heart attack!". Two more guards joined them, and they said to me, "Don't worry love, we had a shock too. You are definitely like Elvis's mum," I said to them, "Yes, I'm sure I am." Then they pulled a photo out and a mirror. I told them that I am the same age as Elvis, he was two weeks older than me. I was born on 31st January, and he was born on 8th January. According to my father, my mother was due to have me on 7th/8th January. Asked why she didn't, my father said that she kept falling asleep. I told him that he should have given her a bottle of Caster Oil.

We eventually got up to the grave. As usual there were thousands there. We then made our way back to the grass where I decided to have a look around and found lovely green leaves shaped as hearts over the grass. I picked up eight of them. When I got to the gates one of the security guards said, "What have you today Valerie?" and before I got down there, I had put them at the back of me between my legs. So, I said,

"Me sir, look" and showed him one hand. He wanted two hands. At this point Margaret and Maxie were laughing so much and taking photos. "Where could anything be?" I asked and added, "Why should I turn around?" and then I started to laugh so I got the leaves out and I was told to take them back. I spoke nicely to him. I said, "Elvis sent them down to us, there's loads for everyone, don't you agree with me Sir?", "No", he said, "I want you off of there." "Ok" I said. The other two were slow but they had long legs so I asked, "Will you help me down, it's too high?", "No" he said and added, "You got on now you can get off." "Ah yes," I replied, "over there is much lower, can I go back up there and get down from there?" He jumped up and carried me off! There was so much laughter, even he laughed! I said, "I'll see you tonight and I will be very good, very good." Max turned round to me and told me that I didn't know how to be good! I went out of the gates with my hands on my head, but a bag full of leaves (Ha ha!).

I hope you will find this fun to read (I'm not really naughty!).

Valerie and
XXX MAXIE XXX

Joanna lives in Brighton and many of her short stories are inspired by the people she meets and everyday events happening around her.

The coach chugged its way out of Poole Valley bus station in the autumn drizzle and Debs sat back on the faded red seat.

"You didn't tell me we'd be on this old thing for seven hours," Sue moaned as she settled in beside her friend. "It's certainly seen better days." She downed her third coffee of the morning and opened a magazine. All went quiet as the coach picked up speed and Debs was able to doze. She felt her spirits rise after the stop at the services when the sun started to shine.

"I've been looking forward to this break for ages," Sue said. "Working from home on my own, thanks to Covid, is so boring. I need a bit of fun."

At 3pm Debs poked the sleeping Sue as they drew up outside an old English hotel, not far from the seafront, in the old part of Weymouth.

"That's definitely seen better days," Sue said, taking off her eye shades and looking at the building's peeling facade. "A lick of paint would help."

"Ladies and Gentlemen, we've arrived at our destination. Enjoy your holiday!" the coach driver announced and helped everyone to find their bags and cases. They all went into the hotel reception.

"Inside's better than outside," Sue said looking around at the chrome and silver fittings but as they made their way up in the tiny lift to the fourth floor, Debs felt as if they'd entered a time warp. Gone was the shiny, ultra-mod look; instead the corridor was dimly lit with low ceilings and dark wooden panelling.

"Here we are, two rooms next to each other," Debs said as she turned the key in the lock. Her room was narrow with a single bed, a bedside cabinet and an old brown wardrobe. A musty smell hung around the airless room and she tried opening the little window but it was stuck fast.

"Let's take a quick shower and freshen up," Sue suggested.

"Meet in half an hour?"

Debs stripped off and stepped into the dank little bathroom. Water gushed out of the shower's rusty nozzle and she gave her hair a good shampoo.

Then the water stopped and, despite every combination of tap turning, she couldn't get more than a trickle. Out of desperation she filled the tiny sink with water and dunked her head in it to rinse away the soap.

Drying and dressing quickly she made her way down to reception.

"So sorry," said the man at the desk, "due to Brexit we can't get the parts for the new pump." He was about Debs age with a friendly face and a weather beaten complexion. He looked at his computer screen. "Good news. There's a single free on the first floor with a sea view."

He showed Debs the room and he turned on the shower. "All good here," he said. "I'll help you move your things."

She settled in and Sue came down to have a look. "Better," Sue said, "but I can smell cigarette smoke. I'll open the window." As she did so, she noticed a couple of huge seagulls basking in the afternoon sun on the adjoining parapet. "Looks like you've got a couple of peeping toms," she said and laughed.

They walked down to the beach and along the promenade.

"Great location," Sue said looking around. "We can do a bit of retail therapy tomorrow. There's loads of little shops over there."

After a pleasant walk the friends headed back to the hotel to get changed for an early dinner. They followed the sound of clatter in the dining room and the man from reception showed them to a table in the corner and handed them a laminated menu card.



“Covid,” he said brightly in his gentle local accent. “So we can clean it. I’m Roger by the way. We’re short staffed due to Brexit so we all double up on the jobs.

“This isn’t the menu on the website,” Sue said after a quick look. “I was looking forward to the Caesar Salad.”

“Ah yes, so sorry. The chef left yesterday and the new one doesn’t start until next week,” Roger explained.

“That doesn’t help us,” Sue muttered through gritted teeth. “Bang goes my diet. I’ll have the mushroom stroganoff – with chips and a side salad.”

Loud laughter and “Cheers!” came from a large table in the other corner. A group of men wearing the same t-shirts seemed to be gearing up for a lively evening.

“They’re rugby supporters,” Roger said as he delivered their cheesecake desserts. “Come every year. It’s always a laugh when they’re around.”

The girls decided to get an early night and went to their rooms. Debs quickly fell into a deep sleep as the wine and the 6am start took their toll. However, at first light she was awoken by a scream outside the window and a tapping noise.

“Who’s there?” she whispered. She crept out of bed and opened the curtain. The large gull that Sue had spotted was tapping on the window with his bright orange beak. Seeing her face, he squawked again and was joined by a number of juvenile gulls, possibly his offspring.



Debs glanced at her watch on the bedside cabinet – 5.30am. She tried to get back to sleep but the screeches through the now closed window made sleep impossible. She was glad when a text arrived from Sue. *‘Morning. Meet for breakfast in 15.’*

Debs sat down at their allotted table and waited. The phone buzzed again. *‘Yes it’s me. I’m stuck in the lift.’*

Debs headed for reception and found Roger at the desk.

“This happens all the time. We’re waiting for the parts to arrive so we can fix it properly. I blame Brexit,” he muttered. After fumbling in a drawer, he found the keys to the controls and a few minutes later Sue was brought safely down to the ground floor.

“Thank goodness you had your phone,” she wailed. “I’ve been calling out for ages. Don’t forget I’m claustrophobic.”

Sue was shaky and pale so Debs sat her down at the table and suggested they order breakfast. “A bit of food will soon sort you out,” Debs reassured her friend. She ordered scrambled eggs on brown toast for both of them. Roger took their order but returned with two plates of fried eggs on white toast.

“We ordered scrambled not fried,” Sue reminded him.

“There was a new girl on breakfasts,” he replied brightly. “She seems to be confusing the orders. Do you want me to take them back?”

They shrugged and said it didn’t matter. They ate quickly and headed out towards the town centre. The early mist had lifted and the sun shone through.

“Let’s go to the shops,” Sue suggested but found few of them open.

“It can’t still be Covid,” Sue said as they stood there peering through the shuttered window of a fudge shop. “Oh well, let’s get a coffee.”

The café on the front was busy and they found a table overlooking the beach. The rest of the day passed pleasantly but as they had seen pretty much all of the town they decided to take up the offer of a trip offered by the hotel.

“Tomorrow’s itinerary includes the swan sanctuary and that cute castle,” Debs said excitedly as they looked at the events board in reception. That night she slept well as the gulls seemed to have gone elsewhere and she was looking forward to the outing.

“Welcome Ladies and Gentlemen,” a familiar voice came over the speakers. “We won’t be visiting the castle today as it’s still closed, and the grounds are rather too steep for our older friends on the coach...”

Sue looked around but could only see a couple of ladies who were older than them.

“So we hope you’ll enjoy our alternative.”

“That’s annoying,” Debs said, “but let’s hope he tells us about this area. Guides are often good at recounting local history and stuff.”



Instead the guide, aka Roger, turned off the microphone and spent the rest of the journey laughing with the driver. The coach dropped the group at the swannery for an hour with a warning not to be late back on board. They could see many of the birds on far off lakes but a new barrier had been put up. *‘For safety reasons, you are asked to view the wildlife from behind this barrier. Due to Covid, the bird hides will no longer be open to visitors.’*

The coach then took them to another small town around the bay.

“At least the shops are open,” Sue said pointing to a cluster of little gift shops and craft stalls along the front.

She dragged Debs into each one, then they found a little place for lunch.

“This is more like it,” Debs said happily as she tucked into a Salad Nicoise.

They headed back to the coach with bags full of fudge and knick-knacks for friends and neighbours.

That evening the rugby group were in party mood by the time the girls headed down for dinner.

“I think we should join them,” Sue said, finishing her dessert “We might have a laugh. I’ve got my war paint on so I’m ready for anything,” she added, touching up her lipstick.

Against her better judgement, Debs agreed and the men made room for them on the comfy sofas in the bar. Someone put money in the ancient juke box and Debs turned to see Sue up and dancing to Stevie Wonder with Roger.

“Come on Debs, come on you lot,” Sue shouted and some of the families sitting nearby joined in. Debs really enjoyed herself and went to bed at midnight.

Next morning Sue looked pale as she sat down at the table. “Toast and black coffee please,” she muttered to Roger.

In reception the other families were already waiting for the coach.

Sue looked at Debs and said, “Train?” Debs nodded and asked Roger to order them a taxi to the station.

“Good idea ladies,” he said. “They say the traffic’s bad down the road due to roadworks. Expect they didn’t fix potholes during Covid.”

The train journey home was quick and quiet.

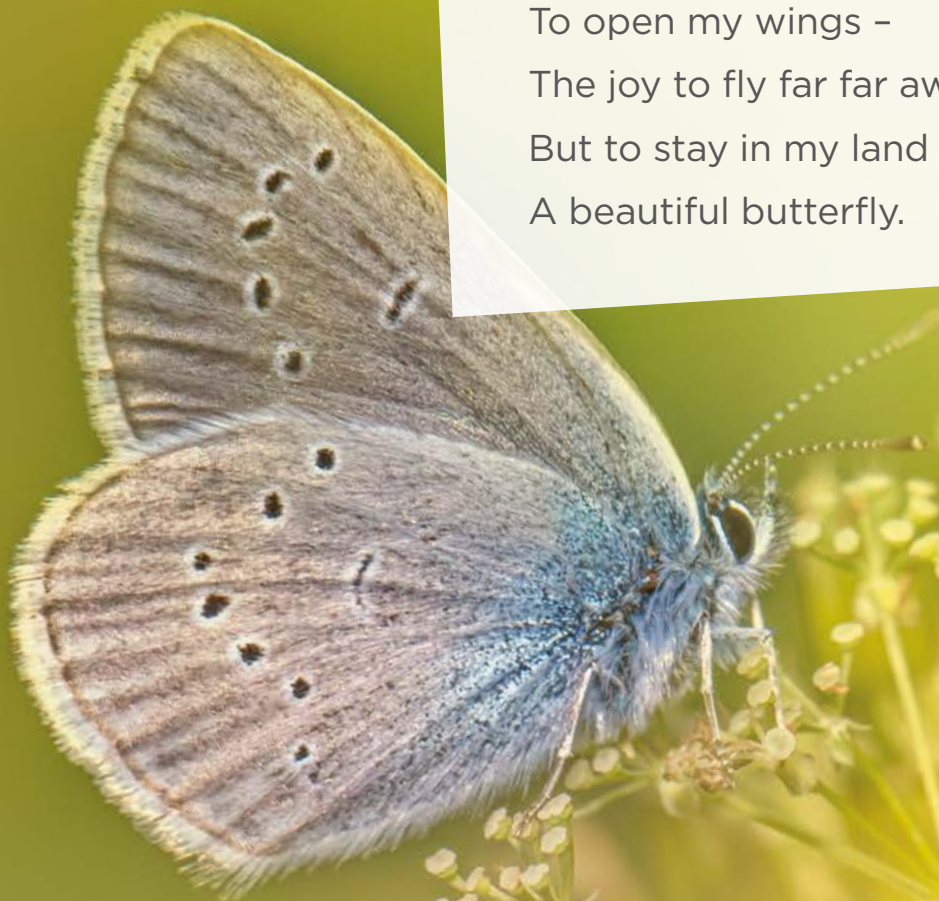
“Shall we try Spain for our next break away?” Debs asked as they heaved their cases out of the taxi.

“Brilliant minds...” said Sue as she hugged her friend. “I’ll get the language app for my phone so we can practise the lingo. Hasta manana baby!”

Life of the Green Caterpillar

by Cecilia
Abdeen

I am tired of being a green caterpillar
Crawling all the day,
Eating up the green cabbage leaves
As I grow crawling through the mud and clay.
I dream that one day
I will turn into a beautiful butterfly
With wings of yellow and blue -
Flutter my beautiful wings
Through the trees and bracken too
Then from the light of day
Comes the darkness of night
I fold my wings on a large green leaf
In my silence I watch the setting of the sun,
At night the moon and stars shine down on me,
How that gives me great power within me.
Then in morning light the presence of the dawn
To open my wings -
The joy to fly far far away, never to return,
But to stay in my land of dreams where I belong
A beautiful butterfly.



As it was for me

The Diaries of Chrissie and Ken Ingle (edited by Julsie) We continue with the writings of Ken.



Ken & Chrissie

THE GANG I knew, and cared little of politics between the ages of four and seven, even though the Doctor Greaves always had their 'short discussions' with me. I do remember one Election Day.

An older lad from school who lived down 'that' end, walked along with me for a bit after school. I think he must have started early training as a recruitment officer because he did a good job of putting his message over. It was election time and this meant rival gangs had an excuse to 'have a go' at each other. One 'lot' supported the 'other side' who were going to gather for a 'do' just up the hill from school and across the tramlines!

The older lad belonged to the Napier Street/Pomona Street gang and wanted to go up the hill and "face out" the other lot that very night, apparently as a political gesture. Can you imagine it? At that age! But, oh dear, they didn't think that there were enough of them for a victory, hence the recruiting drive.

It was a version of the modern BYO, "bring a can with a stone to rattle and a stick as well if you can find one".

Well, cans were in the midden and stones were easy enough to find so I said yes, if I could manage it! I did wonder 'should be with the other lot', but they hadn't asked and I didn't know who they were anyway!

We hung around a long time rattling cans and beating sticks. I was beginning to understand that the accoutrements were not only to make noise, but also to throw at the 'other lot'! Some lads said they'd have to be nearer home before it was dark, so a decision was made to go and look for the other gang quickly! And off we all went!

I don't know how many of us there were but we filled the roadway twenty deep. Quite a mob I suppose. Tension mounted, but there was no unison, just



uncoordinated clatter. We reached Cemetery Road and crossed the tramlines. There was nobody there, the other mob hadn't turned up! The confusion up front was obvious and the mob broke into groups. Most of them turned back home because they knew that "they'd better not be too late if they knew what was good for them".

At the bottom of Pearl Street I left my little group to go up the hill by myself and don't know what happened to my can. The banging and shouting had been exciting and enjoyable for a while, but I realised that sort of thing was something to fight shy of. It smacked of group bullying and I didn't like bullies – whether blustering, dictating, intimidating, or tyrannising!

I might not have met up with any of the street-gang children again but I did strike up an acquaintance with their school. Pomona Street School was sandstone, asphalt and gravel.

The older kids from my St. Matthias School played there occasionally. There was an arrangement as our school playground wasn't big enough to swing a cat in. It seemed that weeks went by without a visit, then we'd be told that it was "sports" and all toddle off in a crocodile. We kept largely to the pavements, with some lads carrying the kit, we didn't seem to have much!

It could never have been more than five minutes walk between the two schools, but I suspect that our crocodile had a broken leg! The journey took ages! There was another suspicion, that it didn't matter how long it took! Whoever was in charge realised that our journey's end was a risky place to play!

Pomona Street playing field was huge, stretching from the Stalker Lees end of the school to Porter Brook. Its surface was shingle, tons of loose, mixed, sharp-edged gravel. Anybody doing 'games' would suffer the consequences of playing or running about on the 'field'.

If lucky enough not to be blooded on head, hands, elbows or knees, we would still find sharpened pieces of rock had invaded our boots! And whatever size the ball was, it always spent some time in the river! Even my big brother Norman was brought home once after being knocked out cold by a cricket ball!



Dixon of Dock Green ... I Salute You!

by Mary Smith

My husband joined Wiltshire Constabulary in 1958, after completing 7 years apprenticeship as a Carpenter and Joiner, in a small village on the edge of Salisbury Plain. He was 22 years, and I was 19 years when we married the following year.



Photo from imdb.com

Of course, life was completely different from now. T.V's were usually rented, with no guarantee as to what the picture would be like. Black and white only. One of the favourite programmes was 'Dixon of Dock Green'. A life like portrayal of village policemen. Always polite, always smart, a fountain of local knowledge and he always got his man!!! Violence was rarely featured, unlike today.

We started married life in a rented flat. Buying your own house was completely unheard of on a salary of £8.00 a week plus allowances every fourth week (bike allowance, watch allowance, boot allowance, torch allowance etc).

After a year we were moved to a village station. Things were looking up, or so we thought. The house was large and very nice. However, it lacked a few facilities. No hot water, no bathroom, no wash boiler, and a bucket lavatory down the garden – further away than the coal shed! However, we did have a large shed. In it was an adult size aluminium bath. Nick had to empty the bucket in the garden as and when. We had a lovely show of red roses!

Our one Rest Day a week was spent at our parents' homes – mainly for a bath, and then to scrounge any veg from the garden. Policeman's wives who lived in country stations were expected to help anyone who knocked on their door, in the absence of their husband on duty.

"Are you Mrs Constable?" asked one old man at the door. He said he had lost his walking stick and asked if I could go and look for it! I said I would send my husband down as soon as he returned. It turned out that the walking stick was hung up behind the door, in its usual place!

A brace of pheasants appeared – hung on the garden gate one day. Most acceptable!

The Village Fete was a big event, held annually. Nick, of course, was expected to attend. He was invited to inspect the beer tent on arrival.

I believe he arrived home leaning awkwardly on his push bike with a big grin on his face...

In those days we had an annual Police Ball. Very grand affairs! I was determined to attend and made a lovely dress out of my wedding dress and dyed black. However, fate was not on my side. The zip broke at my first attempt to get dressed! There was nothing else for it – I had to find another dress from the wardrobe, homemade of course.

There was no money for new clothes in those days. In fact, with the aid of my Granny's old Singer sewing machine, I became quite adept at making something out of nothing. The gingham kitchen curtains took my eye one day and they turned into lovely dresses for my two little girls!

The only available transport for village constables were push-bikes. No radio's either. The Sergeant would give Nick a 'Point' to meet him somewhere on his beat – come rain or shine, to check his Pocket Book to prove he was working and to exchange messages. He wore a cape in bad weather. Anyone who has seen the painting called 'Daylight Robbery' set in Letsby Avenue, will be able to visualize the scene.

HAPPY DAYS !!

A Troopship from Southampton to Aden 1952

by Don Pearman

I volunteered to join the Royal Air Force in 1949. After Square Bashing and Trade Training, I got posted to RAF Cranwell, there I volunteered for overseas service. After some-time I was told I was to be posted to, of all places, Aden. I was given two weeks embarkation leave, then to a camp near Blackpool. From there around a hundred or so of us spent a day travelling by troop train to Southampton Docks. There we, and many more, would board the troop ship Empire Medway. What we did not know at the time was that this was its last voyage. It was going as far as Mombasa and was then to be scrapped!

Those for Aden and Mombasa boarded first, boarded at stern, then went down three decks to where our quarters were to be. Long tables with bench seating came out from one side to about mid-way across the deck. In one corner was a pyramid of hammocks which we were informed at 10pm

we could hang them. We were shown the way to hang them and how to use them. We were also told that when we got up, we must roll them up properly and stack them neatly in a pyramid as the captain inspected the ship each morning.

As I have said, we were in the stern of the ship, that part and up each side of which we were allowed, but not onto the bow. All the upper decks and cabins were for officers and married couples only. On one side of the stern there was a hut from where a man in grubby whites would dollop out the food. Two chaps from each mess table would, at mealtimes, carry a two handled Dixie pot up to him to collect our meals. The meals were awful, mostly stews of some sort of meat!

On the other side of the ship was a long building, this housed the toilets and wash basins. No doors on the toilets and we were issued with salt

water soap as that was the only water we had to wash in. I do not think this applied to the officers and married families.

At certain times of the day, a hatch opened up on the side of the cabins. This was like a shop with quite a selection of items. We were pleased they had cigarettes, until we purchased some as they were Turkish cigarettes! They were oval and tasted and smelt awful. We used to try to eak out our few English ones. We played cards using the cigarettes instead of money, playing to lose! There was very little entertainment on board, I think they were going to try to show a film up on deck one night, but it wasn't very well received. I had a fold up Kodak camera which used black and white roll film, and with this I took a lot of photos of the voyage.

We set sail from Southampton with a military band playing on a lovely sunny day 23rd February 1952. What could go wrong??? Here we were going on a 4,500 mile cruise, two years in Aden, and a cruise home, free, and we were being paid for it! Lucky lads, oh yeh?!

We began to make our way past the Isle of White, just passing the Needles, when there was a loud bang. The ship shuddered and began to slow down. We sailed along slowly, then the captain announced that one of the engines

had broken. We were going to carry on, on one engine, as the weather as far as Port Said was said to be good. As we were travelling so slow, we did not call into Gibraltar and Malta as we should have. The weather all through the Mediterranean was really good.

We did see dolphins playing around the ship, also, what was really nice, shoals of flying fish shot across the waves, a really fine sight.



I am sure that at least once, a chap overtook us in a rowing boat!

At last, several days late, we arrived at Port Said. There was lots of shipping and it was very busy.

A lot of the troops left here, mainly Army, and a few RAF. But several of the Pioneer Corps came aboard. They were homeward bound to one of the islands in the Indian Sea. They had been sent to Egypt to do some construction work. We soon found out that they had not been paid properly. Luckily, when the canteen shop opened, it had English tobacco and cigarettes. *The Pioneer Corps had no cigarettes, so we gave them all our Turkish ones, they were so pleased, and so were we! We often bought them tea, cakes, and odds and ends.*

The next part of our voyage was the part that I really wanted to do, to go along the Suez Canal. We went in convoy and entered the canal. The left-hand side was not very interesting, this being the Sinai Desert. The other side was a mix of desert, vegetation, and some monuments. Also, at set points, there were Check Point buildings. Along the way there were the remains of burnt-out vehicles, and at times a person would appear, shout at us, and make a death sign. I was kept busy taking photos when I realised that we were entering the Bitter Lakes. Then it happened. There was a loud bang, the ship shuddered, and we slowly got out of line and anchored. *The captain made an announcement, the engine had broken down! Would we ever reach Aden?*

We were there for two days. It was so hot that we were allowed to change into Khaki Drill. This was a jacket, shorts, and long woollen socks folded over so that the top was one inch from the kneecap. The shorts also ended one inch from the kneecap, so that you exposed two inches of kneecap as per Kings Regulations.

We got on as usual playing cards, chatting, and wishing our time away. Some of the crew would dive off the ship and swim around, lucky chaps. We would throw some of our stale bread up at the sea gulls, or our 'dog ends'. They got their own back by dropping something from their rear end on us! At times, the crew would throw rubbish overboard and the locals would row over and pick out some bits.

Then at last we were on the move, leaving the lakes, down the last bit of the canal, and past Port Suez. The next part was sailing down the Gulf of Suez. This was quite narrow with desert on either side, not very interesting. Then came the Red Sea and then our first landfall, we sailed into Port Sudan and docked.

The Army were told to form up on the dock side, they were going to fly the flag by marching around the town. The RAF would catch a ferry to the main part of town. We were warned not to drink the local booze or to meet up with the 'ladies of the night'. It was dark when we left the

ship and taken to a short quay to get the ferry. There was a lamp at the end, I stood by it, looking down into the sea. What a sight! The water was crystal clear and a mass of highly coloured fish of all shapes and sizes, several of us just stood and stared into the water. It felt as though you could put your hand in and touch them, but by putting in a small stone, it took ages to reach the bottom. Although I cannot remember much else about that evening, that is something I will always cherish. Next morning, we got ready to leave port. A lot of native children were on the dock side calling out “baksheesh sahibs baksheesh”. We threw some coins into the sea, and they dived in to collect them. They were not happy when they realised that we had wrapped halfpenny coins in silver paper, and they were not actually silver coins.

*Off we sailed down the sea
Here we had some excitement.
We started counting the large blue
jelly fish of which there were lots.*

Well, it passed the time! Also, we noticed that it got dark earlier with shorter periods of dusk. Dawn and sunsets were quite dramatic and very colourful.

We then ended up at anchor just outside the port of Massawa, Eritrea. Ships were unable to enter the port as it had silted up too much. While we were waiting for the South Wales

Borders to be taken off ship by tugs, we were given a display by RAF Auster aircraft. More excitement, when will it all end! And where is this place called Aden? We should have been there days ago.

We continued slowly on our way, then we felt the ship change course and soon on the port (left) side, we saw the Arabian coast. Not a pretty sight, bare rocky hills, some very high, and not a tree in sight. We followed a line of ships. One of which Johnnie recognised as the Otranto. Years ago, his father had served in the RAF and had been posted to Hong Kong and the family had gone with him on that liner. As it got dark, we turned into a wide gap and entered a big bay. There are no docks at the area called Steamer Point, so ships have to anchor in the bay with people or goods taken off by lighters. An officer called out our names and we fell into two groups. Johnnie and I were in the same group, which was great as he asked me to give him my rolls of film. He explained that his sister worked at Kodak so would develop and print all the photos for both of us, which was perfect. We boarded an RAF launch which took us ashore where we got onto lorries. These took us to the aerodrome RAF Khormaksar which was to be our home for the next two years!

**We had finally arrived
at our destination.**

THE PACIFIST *by Helen Mason*

Can I ever forget, can I ever forgive?
Millions were murdered and now cease to live.
Their lives destroyed, shattered by pain.
What can we do to stop it again?

We talk of defence but it's often attack
The 'enemy' retaliate and then they fight back
The war escalates as others join in.
We stop and ask, how did it begin?

Why are we fighting? What is our aim?
Will we achieve it and have peace again?
Or will it continue to maim and to kill?
What are the benefits? I think they are nil!

War is horrendous. War is not right
We must make decisions without all the fight
We have to adapt, we have to agree
I'll love my neighbour and he will love me.

We must discuss. We must foresee
Settle all disputes so carefully
Withdraw all out weapons so they'll be no war.
Calling all nations, this I implore.

Lay down your arms. Give up the fight.
Peace and long life should be our right.
Love all your neighbours. Help them to see
Living in peace creates prosperity.

Weapons cost money. They distract from our wealth
All of that cash could be spent on our health.
Research needs our funding. Why can't we see?
Fighting and war cause world poverty.

Remember the dead. Remember the pain
More and more conflicts again and again.
If we all had no weapons, we'd have to agree
To live side by side amicably.

Why talk of our 'boys' when they are grown men
Who go into battle again and again.
They die in their thousands, we replace them with more.
"Please no more battles" their mothers implore.

If I ruled the world, we would not fight
We'd all love our neighbours – black, brown and white.
We've got different opinions and different ideas.
But we'd all live harmoniously, without any fears.



Final word

I am being asked a lot lately by partners and friends of the charity 'how can we support you' so I thought I would close today by sharing just a few ways that people can continue to support our work should they wish to:



SPREAD THE WORD !

Who can you share your experience of Time to Talk Befriending with? Perhaps you know someone who would like to benefit from a befriender or who would make an excellent volunteer?



GET INVOLVED !

Join us on the Ageing Journey project, write articles for our newsletters and social media, take photographs and participate in surveys or be part of our Members Panel quality assuring our work and contributing towards projects and events. We want to continue to make sure that our service continues to be inclusive and is led by the wishes of our members and volunteers so your input is always valued and appreciated.



PRAY !

For those who are happy to pray for us and feel comfortable doing so, we would be grateful if you can join us to pray with thankfulness for all we have achieved and the amazing people we connect with. In addition, please join us in prayer for ongoing provision through volunteers, finances and opportunities to continue to reach, engage and connect with older people experiencing loneliness.



GIVE !

During the pandemic the numbers of people we are supporting has doubled (over 1000 scheme members and volunteers combined!). As a result, our income and expenditure has grown. In addition, as group befriending events begin to start again (slowly but surely and more information to follow about groups in our January 2022 edition!), the transport costs alone will increase our outgoings by £15,000 per year. Transport is vital to helping our members leave the four walls of their homes safely which is why this provision is so important. There is absolutely no pressure for anyone reading this newsletter to financially give towards our work. However for those who might like to, here is how you can support us to make a difference in the lives of people in their later years:

Set up a regular direct debit

via: www.tttb.org.uk/donate

Give a one off donation

via our website www.tttb.org.uk/donate or by cheque sent to our office (address on the final page of this newsletter) – cheques can be made payable to Time to Talk Befriending.

Leave us a gift in your will.

If you would like to discuss this option or view our 'leaving a gift in a will' policy **please contact us 01273 737710 / info@tttb.org.uk**.



Thank you so much for reading this newsletter!

**We hope that you have enjoyed the contributions from
our members and volunteers as much as we have!**

The team and I are thankful for everyone who is part
of the Time to Talk Befriending community and look
forward to opportunities to connect with you all as we
continue to stay together and recovery together.

Take care and keep in touch.
Many blessings Emily

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!



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Time to Talk
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