Welcome

Welcome to the tenth edition of ‘Together we Stand’, a short pamphlet full of activities and ideas that we hope will keep us connected, encourage us to be creative and hopefully bring some cheer into our lives. This pamphlet is created in collaboration between Portswood Dementia Action Group (a local group who run events to raise awareness of dementia and provide support to people living with dementia and their carers), Caraway (a local charity that resources the spiritual well-being of the older person in Southampton) and the NHS Solent Admiral Nurses (Dementia UK). Together We Stand is funded by the Listener’s Trust.

A huge thank you to our readers who have sent us photos and articles for this edition

This month’s edition has a European feel to it with articles about celebrations in France and Germany. As autumn turns into winter the trees continue to delight us with a riot of colour.

On bright days it is good to get out into nature for a walk. When outside, take in all the colours and autumnal signs around you. Captain Tom Moore is urging us all to go for walks. This will help keep our mood buoyant as we deal with the second lockdown. On the back of the magazine are resources that can assist. Do refer to this if you need anything.

Katherine Barbour is relocating to France this month for a year to trial living in a more rural setting. She will still be working on Together we Stand, the beauty of the internet being that people can be anywhere in the world and still be a part of a local community.

In friendship,
Katherine Barbour,
Erica Roberts, Ros Simpson
and Freya Elliott

If you would like to contribute to the newsletter please email Katherine Barbour at Portswood Dementia Action Group on:
portswooddag@gmail.com
07763863360

www.caraway.uk.com
Christmas in France

Written by Gillian Gain

Christmas is called ‘Noel’ in French, which is why we call one of our favourite carols ‘The First Noel.’ But it is celebrated rather differently over there. Christmas is not the protracted festival as it is in Britain. It begins on Christmas Eve when the tree is decorated in the evening, before religious families go to Midnight Mass. Father Christmas (Pere Noel) comes, but not down the chimney. Few houses have a fireplace in France. Instead, children put a pair of shoes beside the radiator. If there is a pair of clogs belonging to an old family member, they put those down, and in the morning someone will have filled the clogs with sweets and fruit. Christmas Day is mainly for the children and adults do not exchange gifts very much. Present giving for grown ups is reserved for New Year’s Day.

Christmas is for ‘La ‘Bouf’. This is the slang term for Grub. The main meal is at 1pm and often starts with oysters. Then there is the traditional turkey or another bird, and all the trimmings, except for bread sauce and cranberries. But Christmas Pudding or mince pies are not the dessert. Once I sent a pudding to France by post and my friends put it in the oven and were surprised when it tasted horrible. No, the French would have a delicious gateau to follow the main course and plenty of Champagne to accompany the meal.

Christmas does not begin in November in France. Shop windows are not decorated until mid-December and no one comes round carol singing. Christmas cards are less popular than in Britain and the French certainly don’t display them on ribbons or on the mantel piece. They don’t have a mantel piece anyway!

But the greeting to use is ‘Joyeux Noel’ and I do wish you all a happy one, wherever you are.

Reader photograph

By Trixie McGregor
Every Christmas my mother and I head off to one of Europe’s Christmas Markets. It’s such a special time and we love experiencing the ‘Christmassy atmosphere’. Our favourite markets are in Germany. We set off on the coach early in the morning and catch the ferry from the port of Dover and land in France, then it’s often a long drive to our destination. The next morning we are treated to a continental breakfast, then we head off to our first Christmas Market. Everybody is in high spirits and excited to see what the market will be like.

The Christmas markets sparkle with lights, the air is crispy and cold, and sometimes it’s snowing. The sound of German Christmas carols billow through the air, and you can smell sweet gingerbread, bratwurst sausages and Gluhwien (hot sweet aromatic red wine filled with Christmas spices).

The stalls are all lit up with their wears hanging off the tiny roofs and sides. There is so much to see and do, it’s a feast for the eyes. My favourite stalls are the German wooden painted Christmas ornaments, I always buy a new one every year for my tree.

After a couple of hours browsing around the stalls and the shops, Mum and I head off to the food stalls for hot bratwurst sausage, Fried fluffy potatoes fritters with hot apple sauce and a hot chocolate. At the end of the day we head back to the coach to take us back to our hotel where we are served traditional German fair seated by a log fire, it’s my favourite time of the year.
We would love to see your finished colouring, so please do send a photo to portswooddag@gmail.com or put a physical copy through the door of 18 Grosvenor Road, Highfield. The best colourings will receive a prize so be sure to put your contact details on the back or in the body of the email.
5 tips to look after yourself in lockdown

1. Look after your physical health
   • It can be scary to go to the GP or hospital right now, but no one should delay getting help if they need it.

2. Make sure you are getting fresh air
   • Take time to go for a walk each day if you can, and see the beautiful autumn scenes around us.

3. Keep in touch with family and friends
   • Whether you have access to the internet and email or you keep in contact by good old-fashioned letters, staying connected in a time when we can’t be together physically is very important.

4. Keep your brain active
   • Try doing puzzles, crafting or learning a new skill to keep your mind active.

5. Make sure you reach out if you need help
   • If you need someone to talk to, or you need help with shopping or collecting prescriptions, please make sure you talk to family and friends, or contact local organisations to help you. See the back page of this pamphlet for details.

Autumnal Wordsearch

V L E S L W D H L A H E O R
S P O K E C E O O A P T C A
T A H U E E C T R S A L C H
T C A T L S C E B O O T L
R O S L T B W H E E R R O H
I R R O S O U O A N R O O L
S A B P D N L C S E E O B T
O N T E L F R O A E S P I E
G G N T O I A L N O U A F H
O E E O C R W A S E N E C V
B U T R E E S T E A S B N L
Y E L L O W H E O O E H E L
L L E A V E S T E L T N C A
T N I K P M U P S E V O L G

YELLOW
GLOVES
HOT
CHOCOLATE
SUNSET
COLD
ACORNS
TREES
HAT
PUMPKIN
LEAVES
ORANGE
BONFIRE
My Ideal Day / Ma journée idéale

Written by Rick Cockroft

Just right now my ideal day
Is the day that Covid goes away
We can catch a bus, or tube or train
Crowd into doorways to avoid the rain

I’ll invite my children to all stay here
Go to a pub, just for a beer
Talk to people face to face
Visit friends at their place

Hold the grandkids nice and close
Without the fear of a Covid dose
Sit with them on my knee
As we read a book after tea

No more thinking ‘are we six feet?’
When a neighbour we chance to meet
We can buy the paper, without a mask
A simple, but forgotten, task

A day to meet in my front room
Not on Facetime, nor on Zoom
To visit other people’s houses
Get dressed properly, in shirt and trousers

Not to worry if friends encroach
Nor when sitting on a coach
I’ll forget forever this Covid menace
And play a set or two of tennis

Or plan some holidays, or a trip
By car or plane or on a ship
Go to somewhere to have a meal
Without it becoming some big deal

Do all the things we took for granted
Before this virus got implanted.

Rick and his grandson Benji
Beetroot Soup Recipe

Thanks to Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, photograph by Katherine Barbour

Ingredients

- 3-4 medium (apple-sized) beetroot (about 500-600g/1lb 2oz-1lb 5oz, grated coarsely, or diced
- 1 tin of tomatoes (400g)
- 1 clove garlic, chopped roughly
- 1 medium onion, peeled and finely chopped
- 2 tbsp olive or sunflower oil
- 500ml/16½fl oz good strong stock (beef is best, but chicken or vegetable will do)
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 125g/4oz real (i.e. Greek not Danish) feta cheese

Method

1. Heat the oil in a pan and sweat the onion for a few minutes until soft. Add the beetroot and the stock and bring to the boil. Season lightly with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Simmer gently for 7-10 minutes until the beetroot is tender.
2. Stir in the tin of tomatoes, heat, then transfer the soup to a blender and process until completely smooth. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary.
3. To serve cold, chill the soup in the fridge, then divide between six bowls. Using your fingers, crumble a little feta into each bowl. A sprinkling of grated raw beetroot makes a good garnish for the cold version.
4. To serve hot, reheat the soup until thoroughly hot but not boiling. Divide between warm bowls and crumble over a little feta into each bowl. Serve with crusty bread. It is delicious hot.
Information that might help you during this time

- **Admiral Nurses: 0300 123 4026** - support to carers’ of people living with dementia

- **Alzheimer’s Society: 0333 150 3456** - huge range of information sheets and support for carers and people living with dementia

- **Carers in Southampton: 023 8058 2387** - offer the services below on weekdays by phone/email 9am-5pm.
  - **Email**: enquiries@carersinsouthampton.co.uk
  - **Website** at https://www.carersinsouthampton.co.uk has information on many support services.
    - **Carers’ Assessments** evaluate support needs and eligibility for a personal wellbeing payment.
    - **Carers’ Cards** give you access to some discounts and identify you as a carer.
    - **Carers’ Support Workers** signpost relevant support services and make referrals on your behalf.

- **Independent Age: 0800 319 6789** - Advice and support for older age, information sheets on money, housing, health, future planning, personal life, support and care

- **Meals on Wheels** accepting new referrals on **023 80 83 38 66** or by email on care@citycateringsouthampton.co.uk

- **Southampton City Council: 023 8083 4800** - Community Support Hub, to ensure vulnerable people have access to the support they need, helpline open Monday to Friday 8.30am-5pm

- **Southampton**: Help for self-isolating members of our communities – if you live in Southampton and are self-isolating or quarantined due to the Covid-19 pandemic, there is help at hand. We are a group of volunteers who can help you with shopping and other necessities. Call or text on **07923 353365** to arrange this.
  Note: this is not a medical advice line. Please call 111 for medical advice.

- **Headspace**: This app can be used to relax with guided meditations and mindfulness techniques to bring calm and wellness. This can also be used to support with sleep and practicing good sleep hygiene. (Payment is required after the basic free course if offered). Download it from your smart phone / tablet’s app store.