



## Success After Stroke News Bulletin No. 12 Friday 12th June 2020



Picture by Fran Williams taken during her '82 miles challenge'

### Hello Everyone,

I hope you are all keeping well and continue to enjoy the News Bulletins. This week's is another packed edition and thank you for all your contributions. I am also in the process of preparing the regular Summer Newsletter which will be published at the end of June or beginning of July and will incorporate that week's News Bulletin. So far, even though we haven't been able to carry out our regular meetings and trips, the Summer Newsletter is looking as though it will be full, although maybe slightly different to usual!

Enjoy this week's News Bulletin and keep in touch.

Jan

### Fran and Pam's Essex Way Walk Challenge

Earlier in 2020, inspired by 2019's SAS 'Olympics' at Nedging Hall and Jeannette's idea to complete 50 challenges for turning fifty, Pam Lawrence and I discussed ways that we could challenge ourselves to do things to improve our health and wellbeing. We decided we would aim to walk our variation of the Essex Way; 82 miles in the countryside in Essex and Suffolk, over a period of months, by walking together every weekend. This we hoped to complete by the end of the summer 2020 term.

Lockdown put paid to that idea but we decided to try and achieve our goal anyway by walking around our own villages. We started slowly, each walking when we felt inclined, using a pedometer or iPhone to track steps, but the amazing spring weather resulted in us both achieving this target by the end of May instead of July! We have done this by walking 2-3 miles, often on a daily basis whilst rarely being more than ½ mile from our homes on any one occasion.

Whilst always being fit and active, 2019 saw me have a significant knee injury so I started slowly to avoid recurrence. Having built up slowly, I am now able to walk for 2-3 miles without leaving the comparative safety of my village, and where I rarely meet anyone save the occasional dog walker. I have discovered several routes (that I vary to avoid boredom) around my beautiful village of Elmsett, near Hadleigh. My particular favourite is to walk to Buckle's Wood (yes, a relation of Mrs B) and just listen to the birds, bees and sounds of village life. Some days, there are only the sounds of nature and others I can hear the industry in

numerous gardens, with lawnmowers, hedge cutters or DIY projects. Last week I saw a deer crash through the wood (too fast to photograph) and I often see rabbits, Cinnabar moths, dragonflies and butterflies. I have also been taking pictures (although I keep forgetting my camera so have to rely on my phone) and asking Bob to help me identify new (to me) birds such as yellowhammers and skylarks.



Pam has been walking regularly around Great Tey (although she has been hampered on occasion by plantar fasciitis), also discovering new routes and taking beautiful photos along the way. We have both now joined the Facebook group 'One million women walking' set up by a lady who is a former head of education for the British Heart Foundation, who aims to impact the lives of one million women through walking. We are part of a worldwide group, walking one million miles a month for the good of women's health.



For me the benefits of walking are multiple. Physically, I am stronger and fitter and have lost about 3 kgs in weight. I have found lots of places that I didn't know existed so close to my home and have met and chatted to new people when occasionally we meet (socially distanced of course). I am challenging myself to learn something new about nature every day too, with new insects, birds and plants encountered every day. I have found it excellent for my mental health, particularly in the role of a carer. With no face to face contact with family and friends for 65 days (and counting) it can be challenging to keep cool and calm, not getting frustrated over minor issues with understanding, or expectations of me. I always come home in a better place than I go out and am kinder to myself.

Coronavirus notwithstanding, I plan to continue with regular walking in the future. I look forward to being able to meet with Pam in person, for a socially distanced walk together, but feel an immense sense of

achievement that we have managed to reach our goal of 82 miles (each) by the end of May.

**Fran Williams**

### **David Clapp was sent the following and thought it would be fun to put in our News Bulletin ...**

I know that many of you have been facing a multitude of really difficult challenges during these **Long, Long, Long Weeks** but hope that you can still manage to wend your way down this **Long and Winding Road** and to find some inspiration in these pages **With a Little Help From My Friends. Don't Let Me Down** but dig deep and stay strong - **We Can Work It Out**. It's hard for me to know what it's like on **A Day In The Life** of some of you and I'm sure there must be days when you feel like **It's All too Much** and **I'm So Tired**. It's not the same for me **In My Life** but it's so good at least to catch up with you to find out **What You're Doing**. Writing this Newsletter is **All I've got to Do** but I love the fact that it helps us to **Come Together**. **I Want To Tell You** that **I've Got A Feeling** that things are **Getting Better**. Hopefully **It Won't Be Long** before this all seems like **Yesterday** and we get **The Word** and can say **Here Comes The Sun**. I'm sure it won't seem like **Any Time At All** before we can **Get Back** and be **All Together Now** and have a good old **Twist And Shout**. I can't **Wait**. So sending lots of love **From Me To You** and with very grateful thanks to **The Beatles** for their **Help** in finding the right words.

### **SAS Conversation Group**

Today in our Friday conversation group we talked about the interesting article Henry Ruse had written for the News Bulletin about his experiences working in the butchers shop. This led us to conversations about the jobs we have had. Luckily all the group members have had really enjoyable experiences working in a variety of different roles. These were some of the memories:

- Diane recalls working in Sainsburys in 1964/5 when self service first started. She recalls working on the counter that required her to cut off portions of butter and wrap them in grease-proof paper for the customers! When she returned some years later everything was pre-packed as now!
- Stella taught me a new term when she told me she worked as a weft picker!! As you probably know (but I didn't) this was when she worked at Steven Walters and was weighing up the silk woven on the looms.
- Gill worked as a touch typist in a solicitor's office for many years – those skills, relying so much on memory, have just about died out these days with all the technology around us.
- Both Stella and Diane worked as hairdressers for

a time and noted they would be much in demand in these days of lockdown. Diane ran her own salons and really enjoyed talking to people and getting to know her regular customers - think we still recognise this trait Diane!!

We were surprised to learn that the most satisfying jobs in the UK these days are found to be marketing managers, operational managers and audit managers! We all thought these might be lucrative but a bit boring (sorry if any of those folk are reading this)! The most stressful jobs are pilots and journalists although we also thought surgeons and social workers should be on the list!

We are interested if anyone recalls interesting jobs they have had and want to share via the newsletter!

**Clare Keohane**  
**Speech and Language Therapist**

### **A note from Pam, SAS Well-being Therapist**

**National Carers Week** is an annual campaign to raise awareness of caring and by the time you read this, Carers Week (8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> June 2020)\* will be well underway. So I believe it is an appropriate topic for this week's News Bulletin as many of you reading this will come into the category of being a Carer.

I know for many people the name 'Carer' does not sit well but, as we have found in the SAS Carers Group, it isn't easy to find another name which encompasses the role. So please bear with me as I use the term and please replace the word 'Carer' with whatever word you feel describes you as you care for your husband, wife, loved one, family member or friend.

**Firstly some thoughts for the Carers.** Whilst recognising that the level of care needed may vary greatly from person to person and it may be more challenging for some than others to find some time for yourself, here are some tips.

**Self care is not an act of selfishness.** It is so important that you take time to care for yourself in whatever way you can. That may be by going for a walk on your own, reading a book or making a phone call to a friend or family member so you can offload what is bothering you. Or in any other way that gives you some time to take a rest from the responsibilities, even if those responsibilities are done with love.

**Take breaks.** If you can't take even 15 minutes break a day (*as an absolute minimum*) then please consider getting in touch with social services to find out what support you are entitled to. A family member or friend may also be able to help – just don't be reticent about asking.

**If you find it hard to ask for help, please just get over it!** I know it can be difficult to ask for help but the more you do it, the easier it becomes – just like riding a bike! I have yet to meet a Superman or Superwoman who can do the impossible and I suspect you can't

do the impossible either! You wouldn't expect anyone else to, so please don't be so hard on yourself.

**Let go of the need for perfection and control.** Yes, I know that you may think that no-one else can do what needs doing as well as you do it. But if you don't let go of some of the jobs, you will wear yourself out and become physically and mentally exhausted. You are also denying the other person the chance to help themselves or help you.

**Now some thoughts for the person being cared for:**

**Show your appreciation and gratitude to your Carer.** A simple "Thank you" and a smile goes a long way and needs to be a daily practice at the very least. Gestures of appreciation can have a big impact and you will (or should) know what brings a smile to the face of your Carer. If you aren't sure, then ask the question "What can I do to show you how grateful I am for all you do?"

**Don't beat yourself up for being in this situation.** No-one chooses to have the ongoing consequences of a stroke. Whatever you think you should or shouldn't have done in the past, please just let it go because you can't change it.

**Do whatever you can for yourself.** However, *only* if you can do it safely! I know it can be easier to let a willing Carer do things for you, but by doing what you can, you can retain some level of independence, however minimal.

To finish off, perhaps the most appropriate words for now and the new post-Covid-19 virus times are "Be kind – not only to others, but also to yourself".

**Pam x**

\*For more information check out this link <https://www.carersweek.org/>

### **This time 50 years ago ...**

On the 12<sup>th</sup> of June 1970 most of us would have been dancing along to "In the Summertime" by Mungo Jerry. It was the most popular record of the year, staying at number one for seven weeks after knocking "Yellow River" by Christie from the top of the charts. By now there was no competition in the music charts from The Beatles as they had disbanded earlier in the year.

The year was challenging economically; more than 6% of the workforce were unemployed and the mood of the nation did not improve as England lost 3-2 to West Germany in the quarter final of the World Cup, held in Mexico. Golfing fans had a reason to be cheerful though as Tony Jacklin won the US Open.

If you fancied going out for a drive with the family, this was the year that the Hillman Avenger was launched by Chrysler UK, going on sale for the princely sum of £811 4s 9d exactly! We had to wait until February of the following year for decimal currency to be introduced!

For those fortunate enough to be in work, the average

wage was around £32. A loaf of bread was 9p and a night at the cinema was 90p for two tickets! For the more modern gentleman a pint of lager cost 20p, although this was still somewhat of an acquired taste with keg bitter remaining the nation's favourite drink. Wine was nowhere near as popular as it is today (I don't know how Jan would have coped – mind you she was still only 9!), but if you did want a glass of something to accompany the prawn cocktail, steak and black forest gateaux, a glass of German Blue Nun would have gone down well.

In the world of politics the general election that was held on the 18<sup>th</sup> of June resulted in a surprise victory for the Conservative Party under leader Edward Heath, defeating the governing Labour Party of Harold Wilson.

The year was memorable in terms of both flight and space travel. Concorde made its first supersonic flight and the Boeing 747 "Jumbo Jet" went into service. Who can forget the Apollo 13 space mission and the famous line "Houston, we've had a problem" as only the third manned trip to the moon ran into trouble just 3 hours after launch on April 11<sup>th</sup>. The world was gripped as the crew rationed supplies and power in an attempt to safely return to earth. Six days later all was to end well with a successful splashdown in the Pacific Ocean.

Closer to home, it would be lovely to hear of your memories from 50 years ago, or the inventions that have taken place since which have had the biggest impact on your lives. Share your memories with members in future News Bulletins.

**Barry Williamson**

### **Notices**

**John Crookenden** sent the following link;

The Royal Opera House has announced a series of events to be streamed in a variety of modes. Some are free and the charges for others are very modest. <https://www.roh.org.uk/tickets-and-events>

**Jan says;** The Royal Academy of Arts website has lots of things to read and do.

<https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/>

**Jeannette's 'Guess Who' quiz;** we have now enjoyed two Zoom sessions of Jeannette's quiz which was great fun and got everyone talking. Thank you to all who sent in photos - some were easier to guess than others! For members and volunteers, you will find an edition of the quiz with this News Bulletin and answers will be with next week's. Very many thanks to Jeannette for a terrific idea and her hard work in compiling the quiz.

**Zoom;** if you have a computer/tablet or other device and would like help to download Zoom, please ask.

You don't need to have email as we can text you the code to take part in the online exercise and/or speech and language groups. The classes are great, not only for the exercise (in Jeannette's case), but also in being able to see and hear fellow members and volunteers once or twice a week.

Please get in touch with Jan if we can help. Jan's mobile number will be on the email or compliment slip to members and volunteers accompanying the News Bulletin.

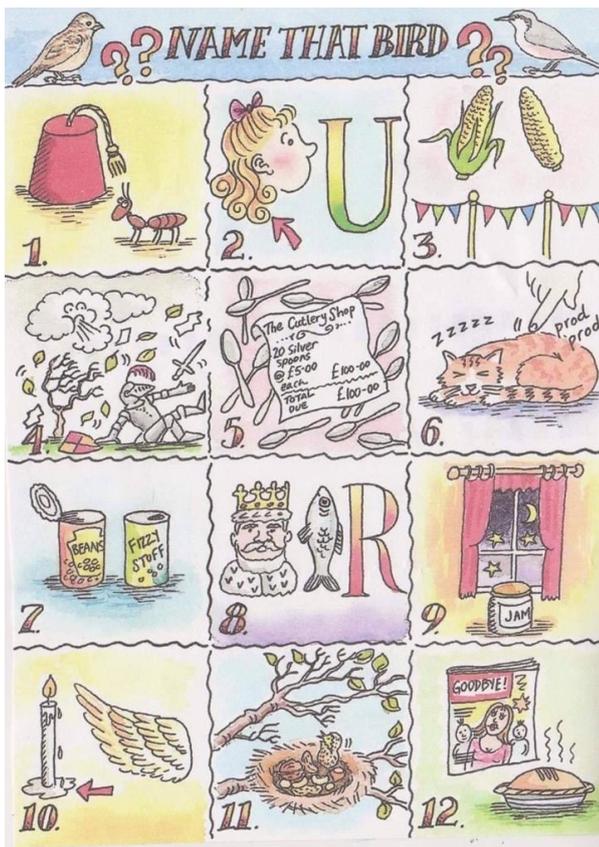
**And finally ...**

As mentioned last week, Sylvia Bunt has **two** walking aids and an exercise bike (used from a chair) that were Bob's and which are available to anyone who would find them useful. There is no charge but Sylvia would like you to make a donation to SAS. If you are interested please email or telephone Jan.



**NB 12 Quiz**

Jacques and Angela Forrest sent in the following 'birds' picture quiz. Can you name the birds from the clues?



And a few more 'bird' quiz questions from David Guthrie (cryptic clues can relate to the sound as well as the spelling of the name) ...

1. Walks with a stride
2. Cower in fear
3. Stealin'
4. Hairless symbol of the United States
5. Nine carat tuft
6. Clever deity
7. Copy someone
8. Rod Hull's pet
9. Tenth letter of the alphabet
10. The Queen owns these

**NB 12 Riddle**

I am a bird, I am a fruit and I am a person. What am I?

(On a bit of a bird theme this week, sorry)!

**NB 11 Quiz Answers**

1. Cattle
2. Type of native New Zealand flightless parrot
3. Clifton
4. William I
5. Spencer Percival
6. Hartlepool
7. Hawaii
8. Walker
9. Anna Sourbry
10. Muirfield
11. Scotland
12. Warrington Wolves
13. Nine
14. Snow White
15. Edinburgh

**NB 11 Riddle Answer**

The mother will name her next baby Tilly. She is following the scale, Do, Re, Me, Fa, So, La ... !

**Contact details:**

**SAS phone number: 07434 931962**

**Email: admin@successafterstroke.org.uk**

**Take care, stay safe and well.**