



**Success After Stroke
News Bulletin No. 16
Friday 10th July 2020**



Hello Everyone,

I am indebted to Pam Lawrence for supplying so much of the copy for this week’s News Bulletin. She has written a very interesting article about one of her favourite places, the Marks Hall Estate, as well as her normal well-being piece - this week on the benefits of music. Thank you, Pam. The lovely photo above was taken at Marks Hall and there are more with the article. I have definitely been inspired to make a visit there. I hope you feel the same way ... might even see you there!

Jan

**The Marks Hall Estate, Marks Hall Road,
Coggeshall, Essex, CO6 1TG**

As with many other similar places that were closed during lockdown, the Marks Hall Estate is now open again to the public and if you haven’t visited it in the past, then it is certainly worth a visit soon. It is definitely my ‘go to’ place to walk, to feel calm and re-energized. The Estate always creates a sense of well-being in me, as well as being a great place to take photos and I cannot recommend it highly enough.

In case you don’t know of it, Marks Hall Estate, which is also known as Marks Hall Garden and Arboretum, is a beautiful area of countryside that covers over 2,200 acres and lies between Coggeshall and Earls Colne in the north of Essex. It is approximately 17 miles from Sudbury.



A Brief History of Marks Hall

In 1897 it was sold by auction to Thomas Phillips Price, an MP from Wales, having previously been owned by many generations of the Honywood family.

Thomas Phillips Price had a great passion for Marks Hall and it was his vision to leave the Estate in his will

to the nation as a preserved English Country Estate. So, in 1907 he began to explore this possibility with his friend William Jackson Bean of the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew. By the time he died in 1932, he had bequeathed the Estate in trust for the nation, stating it was to be administered by Kew for the advancement of Agriculture, Arboriculture and Forestry. But it was not until 1966 when Mrs Phillip Price died that the Estate finally reverted to the nation.

However, by this time it was in a state of disrepair, particularly following the war years when the old deer park at Marks Hall had been requisitioned by the Air Ministry to serve as a base for fighter and bomber forces of both the RAF and the US Air Forces. It was from there, as well as airfields across East Anglia, that some of the 440 gliders of the Glider Pilot Regiment took off to take part in Operation Varsity.

Work began in 1966 by Kew Gardens to renovate and re-landscape the estate and when the first Charitable Trust was set up in 1971, a master plan was created and work began to develop an arboretum with scientific and educational value and of national interest.

In 1993 Marks Hall Gardens and Arboretum finally opened to the public, and it now attracts some 40,000 visitors a year (pre-lockdown). It remains a charity and has a Board of Trustees as well as some skilled and dedicated employees and an army of volunteers, all of whom work tirelessly for the upkeep of the estate.

Marks Hall Today

For today’s visitors there are so many facets to the garden and arboretum, not least the 800 year old Honywood Oak tree. There are examples of many varieties of trees from the temperate areas of the world, as well as a walled garden, lake and at the end of the Millenium Walk an obelisk in tribute to those airmen who died in WW2. There is also an 18th century Coach House which is used for weddings and other functions.





Every spring there are masses of snowdrops and bluebells in the wooded area and the autumn colours are a treat for the eyes. You may also see and hear some water birds, Canada Geese and one or both of the two peacocks who wander around and who are quite tame and not at all averse to being hand fed (*see the photo of my grand-daughter doing just that!*).

As lockdown restrictions are gradually being lifted, from 4th July 2020 visitors are not only able to walk around the arboretum, they can also spend time in the café and shop, as well as use the toilet facilities, including the accessible one. Please note that, at present, payment for entry tickets is by card only, not cash. There are also a few other restrictions, in line with government guidelines, about social distancing and using the café so please check their website or phone them in advance of visiting. But please don't let this put you off going to Marks Hall as the restrictions are all in line with other cafés in similar places.

I hope I may have at least piqued your interest about visiting Marks Hall soon and I am sure you won't regret it. It is a photographer's delight and you may even see me or other people from SAS there!

For more detailed info please see www.markshall.org.uk

Pam Lawrence

July 2nd 2020

Lockdown Jokes (Australian Style)

David Guthrie was sent the following 'Lockdown' jokes which he received from a friend in Australia and he suggests reading it as if you were watching a 'stand-up' routine. He said the jokes made Rita laugh and he hopes they make you giggle too ...

New monthly budget: Gas £0, Entertainment £0, Clothes £0, Groceries £2,000.

We low maintenance girls are having our moment right now. We don't have nails to file and paint, roots to dye, eyelashes to retouch and are thrilled not to have to get dressed every day. I have been training for this moment my entire life!

Not to brag, but I haven't been late to anything in over 8 weeks.

It may take a village to raise a child, but I swear it's going to take a vineyard to home school one.

You know those car commercials where there's only one vehicle on the road? Doesn't seem so unrealistic these days.

They may open things up next month - I'm staying in until July to see what happens to you all first.

Appropriate analogy: "The curve is flattening, so we can start lifting restrictions now. Or could it be ... "The parachute has slowed our rate of descent, so we can take it off now."

People keep asking: "Is coronavirus REALLY all that serious?" Listen everyone, the churches and casinos are closed. When heaven and hell agree on the same thing, it's probably pretty serious.

Never in a million years could I have imagined I would go up to a bank teller wearing a mask and ask for money.

I am home schooling. The first day I tried to get this kid transferred out of my class.

Okay, so the schools are closed. Do we drop the kids off at the teacher's house?

For the second part of this quarantine do we have to stay with the same family, or will they relocate us? Asking for myself....

Coronavirus has turned us all into dogs; we wander around the house looking for food, we get told "No!" if we get too close to strangers, we get really excited about going for walks and car rides.

A note from Pam, SAS Well-being Therapist

This week's topic is music and the therapeutic benefits it has for us all, whether you like Hard Rock, 60s Classics, Soul music, Jazz or Classical music or indeed any other musical genre!

But firstly, a little of the background evidence related to the psychological benefits of music, in particular that written by Mozart. "The Mozart Effect" was first reported in 1993 by scientists at the University of California whose study found that subjects who listened to Mozart's music for at least 10 to 15 minutes appeared to show better spatial reasoning skills than subjects who listened to other music or just silence. Someone with good spatial reasoning skills has the ability to think about objects in three dimensions and to draw conclusions about those objects. This ability is critical for people who work in professions such as architecture, engineering and air traffic control to name but a few, but it also helps all of us make sense of the space around us when we are walking or driving – so an important skill to have and develop.

Since that time, the popularity of listening to Mozart's music has grown and has helped students to study,

babies to develop and older people to improve their cognitive abilities (thinking and understanding). Also, a very recent study showed that people with epilepsy had less seizures over a three-month period after listening daily to the first movement of Mozart's Sonata in D Major, K448.

But it is my belief that listening to music of all types affects us all at a deep and subconscious level and can help us release negative emotions as well as create positive ones. Hearing music can evoke lovely memories and transport us to a different time and place. It can enhance our ability to think mindfully and 'in the moment' as we listen and so help to stop us from worrying about the past or the present.

So now this is where you, my SAS News Bulletin readers, come in! Think about what type of music you like best and which artist and/or composer you like the most. Maybe even play some of their music on your CD player or old tape recorder or even your old record player if you still have one! Or if all else fails and you have internet access, a quick search on YouTube will almost certainly give you a recording of your favourite music.

Now think about how that music affects you. Does it make you feel happy? Does it bring back some memories? Does it make you want to dance? Does it make you want to sing? Does it energise you? Does it make you feel calm?

Thinking about how music affects you will help you to recognise that when you feel down, fed up, sad or anxious, there is almost certainly a type of music that will help.

We would love to hear your thoughts about this topic. It doesn't need to be a long piece – just a note with your favourite music and how it helps you. Please drop me a line at pam@pamlawrence.co.uk, via Jan at admin@successafterstroke.org.uk or telephone (for telephone numbers please see the accompanying compliment slip or email). I will collate your answers and we can see which is the most popular type of music and artist amongst the SAS family!

Stay well and safe.

Pam x

NB: The British Association for Music Therapy is the main body for professional music therapists and their website is a great source of information should anyone wish to find out more about this type of therapy, <https://www.bamt.org/>.

Lockdown Jobs

Inspired by Trevor Green remaking his garden gate a few weeks ago, my husband Barry decided on tackling a long overdue job ...

Tree Roots - the facts!

For about the last decade (perhaps longer), I have been watching a heavy kerbstone at the front of our house rise up at one end. Initially it amused me given that it weighs 50 kilos, but in recent years it began to look unsightly. Time for one of those lockdown jobs ...

The source of the problem was far from a mystery. There are four large silver birch trees at the front of the house and a root as thick as my leg was the cause of the problem. With the aid of my son, the kerbstone was lifted, the tree root cut away and the stone cemented back in. However, it did make me wonder what other possible damage the roots could cause, so I started investigating and soon found out that there are a number of 'urban myths' surrounding tree roots:-

- Root spread can extend outwards for a distance equivalent to the height of the tree and sometimes further, not just to the edge of the canopy of leaves as I originally thought.
- Roots distant from the trunk are usually very close to the surface where water, oxygen and nutrients are most readily available. 95% of tree roots are typically within 2 metres of the surface and most are within 60 centimetres.
- There is no such thing as 'deep' or 'shallow' rooted trees. It all depends on the soil conditions.
- When a root meets an obstacle (such as foundations) they are usually deflected, but once clear of the obstruction, they resume their original direction of growth.
- Finally and of some reassurance to me, it is rare for tree roots to cause damage to buildings. It usually only occurs when a tree is planted less than 2 metres away from lightly loaded structures such as garages, paving slabs and (as in my case) kerbs.

Oh, and one last word from Jan. If you have trouble sleeping, reading about tree roots will more than likely cure it!

Barry

A word of warning ...

Pam sent in a video, the gist of which is that we should be very careful with the alcohol gels which we are all rubbing on our hands at the moment. They are highly flammable and it is possible for them to catch light and continue burning with the flame being virtually invisible in daylight. This is due to the alcohol (think of setting light to the Christmas pudding). Do not leave alcohol gel in cars where it can overheat and be careful around naked flames such as BBQs.

Jan

NB 15 Quiz Answers

1. Clacton
2. Chelmsford
3. Sir John Betjeman (note: Southend Pier is the longest in the world at 1.34 miles)
4. Tilbury
5. Harlow and Basildon
6. (The birthplace of) Radio
7. Knives (three Saxon knives that look rather more like scimitars)
8. Grayson Perry
9. The Royal Saxon tomb
10. Aethelred the Unready
11. Canvey Island
12. Brentwood
13. Epping Forest
14. Mountain Biking
15. Glen Hoddle
16. 19
17. Newmarket Ridge ... Great Wood Hill
18. Orwell bridge
19. ONE ... Havergate island
20. 300
21. Long island
22. Hazlewood
23. Oxlip
24. Alder
25. The Brecks (or Breckland)
26. 1887
27. JF Kennedy
28. Henry II
29. Ransomes
30. 1982

NB 15 Riddle Answer

The word is 'empty'!

NB 16 Quiz

FAMOUS DOGS

Can you name these famous dogs from fact and fiction from the clues given?

- 1 The Darling's family dog in "Peter Pan"
- 2 The dog featured in the HMV logo
- 3 The Simpson's pet greyhound
- 4 Bill Sikes' fearsome dog in "Oliver Twist"
- 5 Faithful dog sung about by Elvis Presley
- 6 Dorothy's dog in "The Wizard of Oz"

- 7 The beagle in the "Peanuts" cartoon strip
- 8 Andy's dachshund in the "Toy Story" movies
- 9 The German Shepherd in "Paw Patrol" who is always "on the case"
- 10 George's dog in "The Famous Five"
- 11 He found the World Cup in 1966
- 12 The dog that always followed Tin-Tin
- 13 The first "Blue Peter" dog
- 14 Dennis the Menace's unruly dog
- 15 Faithful dog of Odysseus
- 16 The dog that accompanied "Three Men in a Boat"
- 17 Mr Rochester's dog in "Jane Eyre"
- 18 First animal to orbit the Earth
- 19 Wellington's Old English Sheepdog in "The Perishers"
- 20 Hitler's German Shepherd dog
- 21 The talking dog in TV's "Family Guy"
- 22 Peter and Janet's dog in Enid Blyton's "Secret Seven"
- 23 Hagrid's pet dog in Harry Potter
- 24 Multi headed dog that guarded the gates of Hades
- 25 The dog in "The Magic Roundabout"

With thanks to 'Ken's Quiz'

NB 16 Riddle

If there are four sheep, two dogs and one shepherd, how many feet are there?



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Take care, stay safe and well.