



**Success After Stroke  
News Bulletin No. 22  
Friday 11th September 2020**



**Hello Everyone,**

Shirley and I are now busy working together to ensure that we have a smooth transfer at the end of September. I know you will all support her as much as you have me, but please remember that these news bulletins are what you, the members and volunteers, make them and Shirley will need your contributions in order to keep them going. We know you have interesting tales to tell, be it about your past working lives, hobbies and interests, places you have been or what you've been up to since we met, so please send in your news. I can only reiterate, if you need help with writing your story down we can arrange it. Having said that, thank you to those of you who do contribute on a regular basis - David Guthrie and Pam Lawrence in particular. Pam has once again stepped up to the plate this week and we have two interesting articles which she has written

Thanks to Viv Bourne who supplied the picture above titled 'Five Flowers from Donegal'.

Jan

**The Honeywood Oak**



When I wrote about Marks Hall Estate in Coggeshall in July, I mentioned the 800+ year old oak tree which stands in the arboretum. It is only a few minutes walk from the entrance gate, so it is easy to find by taking the left path as you go through the gate and after about 300 meters it is to your left on a slight upwards slope.

At the end of July a book called "The Oak Papers" by James Canton was published and it features one man's thoughts and observations over a long period spent sitting by the oak in all seasons, weathers and times of day. This was a time of reflection, solace and inspiration for James Canton

and also a time of investigation into the connection between man through the ages and oak trees. The book was also featured on BBC Radios 4 as the Book of the Week during the first week of August. So, this article is intended to be a summary of some of the historical facts about the Honeywood Oak and oaks in general as well as an introduction to the book.

The Honeywood Oak was just a sapling at the time of the Magna Carta which was signed on 15 June 1215 when King John ruled England. There were many trees in the surrounding land and this oak was just one of around 300 that grew in the area and which sheltered soldiers during the English Civil War some 400 years later. By this time, the estate was owned by Sir Thomas Honeywood, a Parliamentarian and after whom, in more recent years, the oak was named.

Today and since the 1950s when many oaks in the park were felled for the value of their timber, there is just one oak tree still standing from all those hundreds of years ago – the Honeywood Oak. There are, of course, other old oaks in the arboretum, but none as ancient as this one. It is around 28 feet girth and is surrounded by a low wooden fence deterring people from disturbing the varied wildlife that lives in and around the tree, a biodiversity which James Canton describes as unparalleled by any other tree in the area.

The fence also protects the tree itself and the act of building a fence around it is known as "haloing". Its purpose is to open out the space around the oak and to allow more light in to support its growth and that of the wildlife which it provides a home to. The area is hand-weeded from time to time so that any acorns that have fallen over the last year or so can grow and form the next generation of oaks.



Oak trees have a special place in the hearts of humans from the time of early civilisations right through to modern times. Their very existence, especially ones that are hundreds of years old, can remind people of times gone by and of their ancestors. If one is able to stand by an oak, especially such an ancient one and maybe in an area where one's family lived, it is easy to imagine as you touch the rough bark, that an ancestor may have done exactly the same thing and so feel a strong sense of connection to the past.

Oaks have been used over the centuries and all over the world and to build homes for shelter and safety, provide fuel for fires to warm us and in times past, to build ships to take their passengers to far off lands. Although in modern times they are no longer used for these purposes, oaks continue to have a strong link to our past as well as a sense of something solid and immovable to lean on, whatever else is going on in the world.

Over the centuries, oaks have been central to many religious activities, some of which we would now call pagan. Whilst the word 'pagan' may conjure up pictures of Druids and our perception of their beliefs and activities, the word is actually derived from the Latin word '*pagus*', which means of the countryside. So, in times past, pagans lived in the countryside and, as such, had strong associations with the natural world. It is a natural progression of humans that in searching for meaning to life, the old oak trees were viewed as constant, wise and permanent and were evidence of the continuation of life as well as a connection to that which had gone before.



For us today, who among us hasn't picked up an acorn and marvelled at the fact that it has the potential to grow into an enormous tree?

So I shall finish there and suggest that if you would like to know more about "The Oak Papers" and the Honywood Oak, then you read James Canton's book. If reading the book doesn't appeal, do visit the Marks Hall Arboretum and spend some time in the presence of this ancient oak, perhaps remembering times past and imagining future times when the tree, under the loving care of the arboriculturists at Marks hall, will still be standing.

Pam Lawrence  
August 2020

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

Having written a piece about an ancient, my thoughts turned to how we, as human beings, can influence how well we age, if not to an age of 800 years or more like the Honywood Oak tree!

There has certainly been plenty of research going on in both in recent years and currently. Unfortunately, some of these research conclusions are conflicting so it is difficult to know what to believe to be true! But there are some themes on which most researchers agree and so I am going to focus on these results in my articles for this and some future News Bulletins.

However, before I get too far into this theme of "Ageing Well", I should say that for those of you who are stroke survivors, i.e. our SAS members, I am not going to suggest that you do something which your post-stroke condition makes impossible. Just know your limits, but don't be hampered by them. Simply do the best you can with the resources and energy that you have. That said, sometimes it is necessary and beneficial to push ourselves to do something rather than simply sit in front of the TV watching whatever happens to be on – something we have all done at times!

As a first step though, consider what you can do to help yourself age well by thinking about members of your family and/or friends who are living or have lived to a great age. How did they live or what did they do that may have influenced their longevity and which may give you some clues and habits that you could take on board? A great example of living well is Captain Sir Tom Moore who raised so much money for the NHS.

In my own case, my father lived until he was 101, having survived being wounded in the WW 2, the death of my mother soon after he retired, a serious illness in his seventies (when we thought he was going to die) and a broken hip following a fall in his mid-90s. In fact, most of the suggestions I will share with you over the coming weeks are the things that my Dad did, i.e. eat well and moderately, keep active mentally by reading the newspaper from cover to cover almost until the end of his life, keep physically active by climbing the stairs at our home and by walking daily and, perhaps the activity that made the most difference, helping others. One of his thoughts about living well was to be curious and learn something new every day – hence the reading the entire newspaper daily.

However, before we get to the need for some

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physical activity which will be in a future article, I am going to focus in this NB on keeping mentally fit by exercising your mind. I know many of you will spend at least part of the day in doing cross-words, sudokos and other mind puzzles which is great. The only downside to doing the same type of puzzles every day is that you are using the same mental processes to solve that style of puzzle, rather than developing and expanding previously unused brain patterns. As the saying goes, "Doing the same things in the same way, gives you the same results!" So, one of the keys to maintaining a healthy brain and mind could be to challenge yourself to a different type of puzzle – maybe one that uses numbers instead of words or vice versa. Or perhaps buy a different newspaper to your regular one or read a different style of book to your usual choice.

Or maybe, just for fun, you could learn a new language, begin by learning some common phrases in that language so that if we ever get to travel abroad again post-pandemic, you will know how to greet someone or order a coffee and a cake or a beer in the local language.

Perhaps you could take pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard) and write a piece for the SAS News Bulletin? You could even make a donation to Viv's Challenge by setting yourself a target of writing say 100 words or even 500 words! Or maybe write some poetry or a piece of prose?

The possibilities to increase your brain power at any age are limitless and what we sometime lack is not the ideas, but the motivation to act on them. If that is the case for you then is there something you could learn which would be of help to others and inspire them to do something similar?

Please do write and/or phone with your thoughts on this topic and we can share them and maybe inspire others. To finish off, here is a quote from the physicist Professor Stephen Hawking, who was no stranger to life's challenges, "However bad life may seem there is always something you can do and succeed at. While there's life there is hope."

Stay well and safe.

Pam x

(Research material came primarily from two books - "The Changing Mind: A Neuroscientist's Guide to Ageing Well" by Daniel Levitin and "How to live joyfully: Eight steps to a happier, fuller life" by Maggy Pigott.)



SAS was lucky enough to be one of the Sudbury Rotary Club's chosen charities of their 2019/20 President and the picture below is of Loudon Greenlees receiving a cheque for £1,800 from David Lowe (whilst observing social distancing of course). The members and volunteers of SAS would like to thank Sudbury Rotary Club for their generosity.

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Dearest All ...

Firstly, I do hope you are all surviving this unusual time? Its lovely to hear from a few of you and what you have been doing to occupy your lock down time, whether it be reading, watching tv, tidying and culling the house or garage, cooking, cleaning, knitting, gardening etc! The charity shops have never been so full!

As you are all aware, very sadly Jan has decided to leave SAS. Before she does though, I/we know that a huge thank you for all she has contributed to SAS over the many years she has been with you needs to be said. THANK YOU, Jan, VERY much for looking after us, keeping us well informed and organised with all the administration that is required today ... looking after our nails and hands, her sense of humour with the dreaded GDPR etc, etc! Thank you, Miss Money Penny!

We of course won't be letting Jan depart without an SAS party, any excuse for cake and fizz! Obviously under the circumstances it is not possible, so a party will have to wait until

we can ALL meet again at the Stevenson Centre, and we WILL MEET AGAIN!

On the back of Jan's departure, we must welcome Shirley who will be taking over in October. Thank you, Shirley for coming forward for the role and we welcome you with open arms! Let's hope we can get SAS back up and running as soon as permitted.

All that is left for me and ALL of you is to finally thank Jan, wish her all the best and please, don't be a stranger!

With much love to each and every one of you, and your families.

Sj xxxx

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Following her article, Pam sent the a link to the

Woodland Trust which is promoting a nationwide tree planting campaign, but I have copied some of the information, which was particularly interesting, below.

[https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/large-scale-planting/?utm\\_source=/plant&utm\\_medium=furl](https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/large-scale-planting/?utm_source=/plant&utm_medium=furl)

- 1 Trees can help modify crop microclimates by reducing wind speeds and water evaporating protecting crops from drought.
- 2 Planting trees along rivers and streams, and across catchment areas, can help improve water infiltration and control flood peaks.
- 3 Strategically planted trees can create natural barriers to protect soil and crops from the full impact of strong winds and intense rainfall.
- 4 Trees and hedges help pollinators – including bees – by providing refuge and nesting sites, as well as pollen and nectar feeding sources.
- 5 Trees planted for livestock provide shelter and shade, helping reduce both heat stress and the chill factor to maintain animal welfare and increase productivity.
- 6 Planting native trees as fodder can provide animals with health benefits.
- 7 Trees can provide wood fuel as a crop – a mixed broadleaf coppice, for example, provides about three tonnes of air-dried wood per hectare per year.
- 8 Trees can help you keep quality land in production and integrate areas that are otherwise hard to work.
- 9 Native trees provide homes to thousands of species. Planting more trees creates more spaces for wildlife and makes the landscape more resilient to change.

#### NB 21 Quiz Answers

- |    |                 |                                   |
|----|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1  | 3 = BM          | Three Blind Mice                  |
| 2  | 3 = S to H      | Three Steps to Heaven             |
| 3  | 6 =W of H the E | Six Wives of Henry the Eighth     |
| 4  | 6 = Z in a M    | Six Zeros in a Million            |
| 5  | 10 = Y in a D   | Ten Years in a Decade             |
| 6  | 12 = S of the Z | Twelve Signs of the Zodiac        |
| 7  | 12 = I in a F   | Twelve inches in a foot           |
| 8  | 12 = D of C     | Twelve Days of Christmas          |
| 9  | 12 = D in a G   | Twelve Dozen in a Gross           |
| 10 | 2 = K of the RT | Twelve Knights of the Round Table |

- |    |                   |                              |
|----|-------------------|------------------------------|
| 11 | 13 = BD           | Thirteen - Bakers Dozen      |
| 12 | 13 = C in a S     | Thirteen Cards in a Suit     |
| 13 | 16 = O in a P     | Sixteen Ounces in a Pound    |
| 14 | 24 = H in a D     | Twenty-Four Hours in a Day   |
| 15 | 26 = L in the A   | 26 Letters in the Alphabet   |
| 16 | 26 = M in a M     | 26 Miles in a Marathon       |
| 17 | 36 = I in a Y     | 36 Inches in a Yard          |
| 18 | 50 = S in the USA | 50 States in the USA         |
| 19 | 60 = M in an H    | 60 Minutes in an Hour        |
| 20 | 80 = DA the W     | 80 Days around the world     |
| 21 | 101 = D           | 101 Dalmatians               |
| 22 | 147 = MB in S     | 147 Maximum Break in Snooker |
| 23 | 66 = D in a LY    | 366 Days in a Leap Year      |
| 24 | 1760 = Y in a M   | 1760 Yards in a Mile         |
| 25 | 20000 = LU the S  | 20000 Leagues Under the Sea  |

#### NB 22 Quiz

**Women in politics - thanks to Pat Williamson for inspiring this quiz.**

- 1 What is the difference between a suffra-ette and a suffragist?
- 2 In which year did **ALL** women in the UK aged over 21 finally get to vote in a general election?
- 3 What was that election nick-named?
- 4 In which year was the first petition on women's suffrage presented to Parliament?
- 5 During the 1914-18 war, what is the estimated number of women who replaced men in traditionally male jobs?
- 6 The WSPU party was founded in Manchester in 1903 - what do the initials stand for?
- 7 Who founded the WSPU?
- 8 What was Marion Wallace Dunlop the first to do (with regard to the Suffragette movement)?
- 9 In which year were women given the right to stand as candidates to become Members of Parliament?
- 10 Who was the first woman to be elected as an Member of Parliament?
- 11 Which party did the answer to question 10 represent?
- 12 Who was the first women to take her seat after being elected to Parliament?
- 13 Who was the first women to be appointed as a Cabinet Minister?
- 14 When was Margaret Thatcher first elected to Parliament?
- 15 Out of 650 MPs in the current (August 2020) House of Commons, how many are women?

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