

**Success After Stroke**  
**News Bulletin No. 23**  
**Friday 11th September 2020**



**Hello Everyone,**

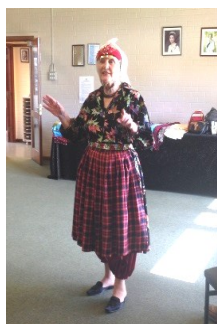
As you know, Jan is away having a well deserved holiday (maybe some news and photos on this in a future bulletin?) and so I have been taking this opportunity to get to grips with the job.

September brings Autumn and cooler days so I have remotely joined up with my friend in Cornwall to do a Race At Your Pace Challenge.... You choose your activity, distance you wish to undertake and keep a log to submit for a medal on completion. Very doable and keeps me motivated to walk out and about!

Do keep me posted on what you are all up to please....as Jan said, this is your news Bulletin and your contributions keep them going.

Meanwhile, have a great week and don't hesitate to get in touch with me if needed. Take care.

**Shirley**



**A Turkish Shirley Valentine**

Back in October 2017 Jenny Gibbs came to SAS to give a talk about her arrival in a Turkish village and the life changing events that followed. The talk was appropriately named "A Turkish Shirley Valentine".

In 1993 work colleagues persuaded Jenny that she needed a holiday abroad and booked her a single ticket for what Jenny thought was a cruise around the Greek Islands. Ironically, Jenny had never ventured abroad and had a fear of water, so it was a surprise when Jenny discovered herself in Turkey about to board a small sailing boat with eleven strangers destined to sail down the Turkish coast.

Jenny was last to board the sailing vessel and once aboard, discovered that she would be sharing a cabin with a young lady who had already bagged

the bottom bunk bed. Jenny was terrified and remained cabin bound for the first half of the week. Early one morning however, on a very calm sea, Jenny looked out of her port hole to see the magnificent turquoise sea flanked by pine forests and beautiful blue sky and Jenny decided there and then that this was where she wanted to live. Once on deck, all her fears left fell away and she marvelled at the sheer beauty of the Turkish coastline. Jenny could not wait to get back to the UK to plan how she could begin her new life in Turkey.

As fate would have it, on Jenny's return a letter offering her voluntary redundancy from the company where she worked awaited her. Jenny promptly accepted the offer and broke the news to her daughters about her decision to up sticks and head off to Turkey for a new life.

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> September Jenny set off with her one-way ticket to Dalaman Airport. On landing, she learnt that the only means of transport was a dolmus which is a shared taxi and only departs once full! After an afternoon waiting for it to fill up with passengers Jenny finally started on her journey. Because Turkish men are not allowed to sit next to a woman unless they are related, Jenny was seated next to a goat for the duration of her journey. After many hours of travel, the dolmus driver pulled up and all passengers including the goat disembarked and went on their way leaving Jenny still sat on the bus unaware that this was indeed the end destination. Sat in the dolmus in the dark Jenny could see a light shining in the distance and after a short while she decided she would have to go and find out where she was. The light turned out to be from a restaurant which was on the edge of a bay. It was the end of the season and the restaurant was closing early. Jenny asked whether there was anywhere that she could stay, but the only B & B was closed for refurbishment. Fortunately, the lady at the B & B took pity and found her a room to stay in so Jenny could at last relax and begin to discover the area, spending days on the beach and evenings enjoying the food at the restaurant.

One evening whilst eating at the restaurant she enquired about the ingredients of the food and was immediately sent through to the kitchen where she spent the rest of the evening working! At the end of the evening she was told to return early the following day to start prepping the vegetables. After a few weeks of working in the kitchen she was told that there was a Turkish holiday approaching, during which everything would shut down and everyone would return to their home villages or towns to spend time with their families. Unbeknown to Jenny the Head Chef, Mustapha, with whom she had never spoken had been nominated to take her back to his family in the Turkish Mountains for the holiday period, where she would discover that she was the first western woman ever to visit the village. Jenny fell in love with the rural mountain village where time stood still and it is here that the real adventure started after Mustapha suggested they should buy a house in the village! After the shock of hearing Mustapha's suggestion, she began to contemplate that he was really quite nice and this was not such a bad idea!

Twenty-four years later they are happily married and spend winters in Turkey and summers in Suffolk.

Original write-up by Gill Buckle and Ian Harper

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

Having recently written about oak trees, I decided to continue the tree theme for this article. Whether or not you are able to get out and about in nature, in a forest or wooded area at the moment, I am sure that in the past you have experienced spending time standing looking up at a tree and its leaves and branches. So, given that we are approaching Autumn, I think this is a good time to return to this topic.

As human beings, our connection with trees goes back for thousands of years and we have an interdependent relationship with them. As we know, the need for us to survive as a species is dependent on many things; perhaps none more so than our need for trees, since we breathe in oxygen and breathe out carbon dioxide while trees take in carbon dioxide and release oxygen into the atmosphere.

But surely our need for trees is much more than a physical one? Think about how much calmer and centred you feel when you stop and simply focus on breathing slowly while standing beneath a tree

whether it is large or small, old or more recently planted. There can be sense of being connected to the Earth and to times gone by when we put our focus on imagining the tree as a small sapling. We can then imagine it growing over time, provided of course it has enough water and nutrients to draw on from the ground.

Over twenty years ago, the ecologist Professor Suzanne Simard discovered that trees are able to "talk to" each other via a network of fungi buried in the soil and other scientists around the world have confirmed and developed her findings. Trees use this network of fungi to communicate their needs and send each other the nutrients they require to grow. In wooded areas trees also have a "mother" tree, usually the tallest tree in the forest, which acts as a hub and is the one that supports the seedlings the most.

So how does that relate to us? Well, given that the trees, like us, are energetic beings, they communicate energetically as we do. I know we use speech and body language to communicate, which initially may not seem like an energetic connection, but these are forms of energy. If this is a bit airy-fairy for you then think about how we use our mobile phones, connect to the internet and watch TV – these are all types of energetic connection.

Both humans and trees have creative and resilient ways of growing and dealing with the challenges that life and our environment throw at us and we see so much evidence of that in you, our SAS members. Think about how often have you seen a tree growing by a railway line or through a rock, not only surviving but growing stronger.

So, I believe that by standing under a living tree and spending some quiet time there, we too can connect with the energy of that tree and absorb some of the nurturing that trees provide each other. In these strange times of the Coronavirus, and at other more "normal" times too, we need all the support we can get, from whatever source.



Of course, I realise that this may all be a bit fanciful for some of you. I understand that and it is absolutely fine, but my challenge to you is to stand under a tree for a few minutes (or longer)

and simply breathe slowly, making the out-breath slightly longer than the in-breath, if that is comfortable for you. You could even imagine that, like the trees, you have roots or cords going into the earth and you are absorbing some of the tree's nurturing energies – just like we have often done during my guided meditations at SAS.

If getting out and standing under a tree is difficult or impossible for you, then perhaps you can find a photo of a tree in a magazine or on the internet and use that - or just let your imagination guide you.

As always, do let us know how you get on!

Stay well and safe.

**Pam x**

## **News and Views**

### **News from the Conversation Group**

Our final session before the summer break was a lively one with virtually all the group attending plus their partners/carers; Alf, Gill, Antonia, Anita, Stella, both Dianes and Ann, all on screen together!

Some of the members had decided to take on Viv's 5 Challenge ... to tell the rest of the group five facts about themselves. Well done to Diane S, Antonia and Anita for bravely presenting to the rest of the group. Being able to talk to a group and find the right words is tricky enough when you have aphasia but there's even more pressure when you are online and have all those faces on screen in front of you. All participants were well prepared with information written down to prompt them and had practised numerous times beforehand so they could get across what they wanted to say on the day. We discovered new and interesting facts about them all.

Diane S has 2 sons and 3 grandchildren, who she named clearly too, which was very impressive. Both she and Anita were hairdressers and Diane also told us that she likes shopping - but doesn't like vegetables, particularly broccoli, and I'm with her on that one!

Antonia has been on travels to Bali and has seen the Taj Mahal, which she told us was stunning. She played piano and golf and used to sail with her husband from Aldeburgh round to Iken. Interestingly, none of us knew of Iken and yet it is just across the river to Snape.

Anita told us that not only did she have a hair salon, but she also used to run a craft shop at Blake

House, which is near Dunmow. She and Barry had taken part in the London to Brighton veteran car rally and enjoyed autocross! Anita also used to return to Italy to stay with her family for the summer holidays.

Everyone did so well, thank you for rising to the challenge!

Holidays are usually a hot topic for July, talking about the ventures we have planned for August. Sadly most trips organised for this year have been postponed until next year, although we are looking forward to hearing about your caravan holiday Diane A and Peter Y, we hope you had a good time too, sorry we missed you and Geoff at our last session.

We are very proud of all the members and their families, and Ann, our volunteer, for taking on the challenge of Zoom and mastering it so that we have been able to keep going with our conversation group. Keeping in touch has been so important over what has been a very strange lockdown experience. We plan to continue in September, and we are looking forward to seeing you all and catching up again.

**Chris & Clare**

### **Viv's High Five Challenge**



Viv B sent this photo of five of her friends in Donegal ... in a bath!

## NB 22 Quiz Answers

- 1) A Suffragist eschewed a violent campaign whilst a Suffragette embraced it.
- 2) 1929
- 3) 'The Flapper Election'
- 4) 1832
- 5) Two million
- 6) Womens Social and Political Union
- 7) Emmeline Pankhurst
- 8) Marion Wallace Dunlop was the first Suffragette to go on hunger strike.
- 9) 1918
- 10) Constance Markievicz (although she did not take up her seat in line with her party's policy)
- 11) Sinn Fein
- 12) Nancy Astor
- 13) Rt Hon Margaret Bondfield was the 1924 Minister of Labour
- 14) 1959
- 15) There are 220 female MPs in the House of Commons (August 2020).

- 24 0.05 ounce
- 25 640 acres

With thanks to Kensquiz.co.uk

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

## NB 23 Quiz

### MEASURE FOR MEASURE

Can you name these imperial units from the description given?

- 1 12 inches
- 2 112 pounds
- 3 5 fluid ounces
- 4 4 inches
- 5 6 feet
- 6 8 gallons
- 7 10 cables
- 8 3 miles
- 9 8 pints
- 10 16 ounces
- 11 120 acres
- 12 22 yards
- 13 16 drams
- 14 2 gallons
- 15 3 feet
- 16 2240 pounds
- 17 20 fluid ounces
- 18 5½ yards
- 19 9 gallons
- 20 14 pounds
- 21 2 pints
- 22 1210 square yards
- 23 5280 feet