

## Message from the Chairman

Hello once more and welcome to our second bulletin. I hope you enjoyed the first bulletin and of course our quarterly Newsletter issued recently. My thanks to contributors who set aside time to produce articles for you to read.

We are very fortunate to have fantastic weather to enjoy during this awful pandemic; I've very much enjoyed mowing and strimming grass and other jobs around the house and garden; well perhaps "enjoyed" is not quite the right word but it's satisfying to see the end result – before starting all over again!

I often wonder how you are all fairing with the lockdown measures. Now they have been eased a bit, it was great to take my XJ-SC (it's an XJS Cabriolet and most owners call them "Cabs" or "Cabbies"). My poor girl had been stuck in the garage since the beginning of the year and it showed. She (yes it's a girl) didn't have the exhilarating performance I've been used to and she protested to being locked up by coughing and spluttering for the first 15 minutes out on the open road; eventually, it cleared and the joyous sound of its 5.3 litres V12 was back. Jaguars of that generation were designed to be used!

Before returning home, I stopped at my local Shell garage to top-up the fuel tank while V-Power is at the cheapest it's been for 4-5 years. It was reassuring to see that many customers were wearing masks and gloves (I was adorned in a black face mask and some disposable blue vinyl gloves!)... but it was concerning to see some individuals had not bothered.

This was first time I'd left my house for 10 weeks (I started lockdown before it was implemented, because I'm at higher risk of being unable to cope with Covid-19 if I get it). So Katie braves the supermarkets weekly –also with a black mask and blue vinyl gloves and has a "decontamination" procedure she follows meticulously when she gets home.

While the Government has relaxed restrictions on travelling by car, (with certain conditions still in place such as who you can/cannot travel with), IAM RoadSmart/WAM continues to be inactive when it comes to taking our Associates out on observed drives; this is because the "2 metre rule" is impossible to implement in the confines of a car when doing an observed

drive, so until conditions allow the rule to be relaxed, observed drives simply cannot happen.

IAM RoadSmart has recently asked all Group Chairs to complete an on-line survey which will help inform its "readiness" plan to swiftly get back up and running when the time comes. -David Walton collated mine for me (thanks David!).

Enjoy the weather. Stay safe and when groups of people are allowed to meet (with the appropriate social distancing measures in place), I look forward to seeing you at Hatch Beauchamp Village Hall once again.

My best regards to you and your families.

Andrew

## Events Corner

So, the lockdown continues for another few weeks then? Or does it?

The advice seems to be that if we can't work from home we should go to work. But if we *can* work from home, we've still got to socially distance and therefore can't really see anybody. But! We *can* chat to our neighbours over the garden fence, but I can't stand in their *garden* to chat to them. Even if we work together!

We can travel anywhere we like without restriction, except to Wales, where I have family. We don't need to wear masks when we're out, but face coverings *are* to be encouraged.

Personally I find it all so confusing (I'm old, I get confused easily) but as I'm retired and just plain antisocial to boot, I find it far easier to just continue to lock myself away and not see anybody. Much simpler, all round, eh?

Anyway, moving on... you remember that in my Events Corner piece for the Summer Newsletter I said that I had a couple of breeding Wood Pigeons move in? (Walter and Martha Pigeon, "There Goes the Neighbourhood") I also mentioned that being a good, if not originally, a somewhat *reluctant* host, that I'd read up on the mating habits of a Wood Pigeon and found that once they've paired up they remain together for that season, generally having a clutch of two eggs which the hen and her mate incubate for about 18 days. After that the chicks will leave the nest on the 25<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> day.

In other words I could expect to see them in and around my garden until early June sometime.



Well my two love birds certainly seemed to be following the rules; they chose their nesting site (it could have been better to be honest but at least it allowed me to get a close look at how they were doing without being outside to disturb them all of the time) and together they made the nest by carrying twigs and small branches from my neighbours tree at the front of the property to my tree at the rear. Lord knows why they chose to go to the front tree to collect their nesting material when they had a varied and abundant choice from not only their chosen tree, but from its three immediate neighbours as

well! But there you go, such are the mysteries of a mating pair, eh?

Anyway they build their nest and she settled into it quite well, laying the regulation clutch of two eggs.

True to my reading she'd sit on the nest keeping the eggs incubated and he'd go off and perch on the roof of my house, or some other suitable vantage point and keep watch. After a while he'd pop down to the nest and take over whilst she went off to get a drink and a meal. I even placed a bird bath nearby so she wouldn't have to stray too far, but oddly enough, it was never used.

Anyway after a while she'd come back from her wanderings and take over again. This went on for about 12 days or so until one day I realised that I hadn't seen Walter around the place for a few days. I assumed that he'd come to harm.

As I mentioned they made their nest right outside my kitchen window so it was easy to keep a watchful eye on their comings and goings without being outside to disturb them. A couple of times I saw that whilst there was no sign of Walter, Martha had clearly gone to get food and water for herself, but very quickly she was back. Until one day she wasn't. I was out in my garden in the morning and saw that she was missing, but as recent events had shown that this wasn't unusual, I wasn't unduly alarmed. I started to get concerned when later that afternoon I saw she was still missing. By late evening, just as it was getting towards dusk and when she should be firmly planted on her nest and yet was **still** missing, the only conclusion I could draw was that Walter *had* perished and Martha, being unable to keep up with the task of incubating the eggs on her own, had abandoned the nest.

Believe it or not, considering I didn't want them there in the first place, I felt incredibly sad. The truth is that I would really have liked to have seen the eggs hatch and the chick flourish. It's almost with envy that I look into my neighbours garden and watch 'his' Blackbirds flitting in and out of their nest doing what 'my' Martha and Walter should be doing. And the thing is, my neighbour didn't even know he had a nesting pair until I told him! (From my bedroom window, yelling at him in his garden, I might add!)

Oh well, maybe next year, eh?

For those of you who completed Bulletin 1's quiz, here's the answers. This month's quiz is at the end of the bulletin. Have fun!

Stay safe, stay well!

**Barry,**

Events Co-ordinator

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### Quiz Answers Bulletin No. 1; April 2020

- |    |                      |    |                    |
|----|----------------------|----|--------------------|
| 1  | Gordon Brown         | 11 | 80 mph             |
| 2  | Iceland              | 12 | Occupy London      |
| 3  | Ed & David Miliband. | 13 | Ruth Davidson      |
| 4  | 111                  | 14 | Ash Dieback        |
| 5  | 95                   | 15 | Sixty              |
| 6  | Colin Firth          | 16 | Dr. Rowan Williams |
| 7  | J. K. Rowling        | 17 | Britain            |
| 8  | Christchurch.        | 18 | Daniel Craig       |
| 9  | HMS Ark Royal        | 19 | Low. (14.9%)       |
| 10 | Westminster Abbey.   | 20 | Andy Murray        |

## Lockdown isn't all bad!

Our current circumstances have allowed me the time to do things that otherwise would have been left until I 'got around to it'.

The first was on a grey wet afternoon, when Alice and I decided to sort through a box full of old random photographs that had never found places in albums. Amongst them was this picture of my 1969 VW Beetle,

Wikipedia says; The Great Storm of 1987 was a violent extratropical cyclone that occurred on the night of 15 - 16 October, with hurricane force winds causing casualties in England, France and the Channel Islands as a severe depression in the Bay of Biscay moved northeast. Highest winds 86 mph. Highest gust (in UK) 122 mph. Damage £2 billion (£5.667 billion today). Lowest pressure 953 mb. Among the most damaged areas were Greater



*LCM 260G. Beetle Under Tree. This reminded me of the 1987 storm.*

London, the East Anglian coast and the Home Counties. There was also extensive damage in France and the Channel Islands. That day's weather reports had failed to indicate a storm of such severity, an earlier correct forecast having been negated by later projections. The apparent suggestion by the BBC's Michael Fish of a false alarm is celebrated as a classic gaffe, though he claims he was misquoted.

Personally, I seem to remember him saying, "There will be no storm". Alice and I went to bed that night to the sounds of increasing wind noises and the swishing of the 3 fir trees just outside our front garden. Later that night we lay in bed, wide awake, listening to the Roman pantiles sliding off the roof one at a time, a moment's silence, and then the loud crash as they smashed against the paving slabs near the front door. When I got up on the morning of the 16<sup>th</sup>, I couldn't believe what I saw. We had lost more than 20 roof tiles

and at least ½ dozen ridge tiles. But the most alarming thing was the fir tree laying across the roof of my VW Beetle. By a massive stroke of luck, the 6ft Hawthorn hedge had prevented the tree from falling completely. Leaving the poor little bug almost completely covered, but entirely undamaged. I had to clamber under the branches to get into the car so that I could reverse it out of the way, to enable the tree to be cut up and disposed of. Thankfully we had buildings insurance, which paid for the roof repairs and the removal of the tree. The hills around Dorking were hard hit, Leith Hill particularly, lost many acres of woodland scythed down by the force of the winds.

The second thing that I found time for was learning to bake cakes, for the first time in very nearly 52 years of marriage. My mother was an extremely good cake baker having learned her skills whilst serving with the WAAF at Moreton in Marsh NAAFI during the second half of WW II. Alice perfected her skills, baking cakes and scones for the Corner Store in Bishops Lydeard during our 10 year tenure there. So I had never needed to learn the skills myself. However, a recipe was shown on the National Trust Facebook page, which I thought would be fun to try. The cake in question was a favourite of the wartime Prime Minister, Winston Churchill and was baked for him by his personal cook at Number 10, Georgina Landmare. Here is the recipe for you to try also.

## Churchill's Favourite Fruit Cake

### Ingredients

225g (8ozs) Butter

170g (6ozs) Dark brown sugar

285g (10ozs) Self Raising Flour

280g (10ozs) Dried mixed fruit

2 Cups strong black tea (or Brandy if you want to be extravagant)

5 Medium eggs

110g (4ozs) Halved glacé cherries

1 tsp Mixed spice

1 tbsp Black treacle

### Method

- 1) Soak dried fruit in tea overnight.
- 2) Preheat oven to 150° (Gas 2 – 3) and line and grease a cake tin.
- 3) Cream together the butter and sugar in a mixing bowl until almost white. Remember to scrape the bowl and continue to cream together.
- 4) Gradually beat the eggs into the mixture, remember to add a little flour to stop the mixture splitting.
- 5) Fold in the flour and add the mixed spice to the mixture.
- 6) Add the mixed fruit (minus the tea) and the glacé cherries and continue to fold together.
- 7) Continue to fold and stir whilst adding in the black treacle.
- 8) Once completely mixed together, scrape the mixture into the cake tin and bake for 2 hours. Check that the cake is cooked throughout before leaving to cool on a wire rack. (NB our gas cooker took nearly 3 hours on Gas Mark 2). (Alice suggests Gas Mark 3 for 2 hours).
- 9) Finish with a light dusting of caster sugar.
- 10) Enjoy with a lovely cup of tea or coffee.

Brian Howe

Walk around your vehicle before  
you leave!  
Take Note 🙅



# Medical Detection Dogs and COVID-19

Earlier this year there was a Medical Detection Dogs display at Crufts. It took place less than three months ago at the beginning of March when we had no idea that our lives would soon change completely.

Dogs have an incredibly powerful sense of smell, more accurate than any technology. There are up to three hundred million scent receptors behind those cold, wet noses. To quantify that, they can detect one teaspoonful of sugar dissolved in a million gallons of water which is the equivalent of two full Olympic-sized swimming pools - remarkable.

Twenty years ago the first anecdotes started to be heard that dogs seemed to be able to detect cancers in their owners. Dr Claire Guest was part of the first study. She is also co-founder and Chief Executive of the charity Medical Detection Dogs which was formed in 2008 to take this work further.

Dogs have been trained to identify medical conditions such as malaria, Type 1 diabetes, Parkinson's disease and postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (POTS) as well as some cancers. They can detect minute odour changes emitted prior to an emergency and can be trained to alert a person to take preventative action. This early warning transforms the lives of their owners.

I first heard Professor James Logan being interviewed soon after lockdown in the UK. Having planned to write this article for some time, coincidentally I heard him speaking on BBC Radio Somerset again this week. Professor Logan is the Head of the Department of Disease Control at The London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Working in collaboration with teams from Medical Detection Dogs and Durham University he is leading a Government backed trial to determine whether dogs can detect COVID-19.

Odour samples need to be collected from people infected and uninfected by COVID-19 so NHS staff have been recruited to take part in the trial. Many of the participants will be uninfected but sadly and inevitably the virus will have infected some of them. Samples will be collected from used facemasks and from nylon socks which they have been asked to wear.

Asher is a working cocker spaniel, an experienced dog already able to sniff out malaria and Parkinson's disease. He has been chosen to determine whether COVID-19 has an odour and if it does then six younger dogs are ready to be trained to detect it.

The welfare of Medical Detection Dogs is taken extremely seriously. The dogs will be training with samples that do not contain the live virus and following their training the dogs will be able to detect the odour present in infected people without having any contact with those people. Strict procedures will be followed to minimise any potential risks.

The initial phase of the project should be completed by August or September. This diagnostic tool is intended to provide rapid non-invasive screening for large numbers of people with a high degree of accuracy. Importantly the dogs can detect odours from infected people who are displaying no symptoms. The dogs work in teams, each dog working for twenty minutes at a time. It is amazing that they can screen up to two hundred and fifty people per hour.

If successful the process is quick to scale up and could be used on a global scale in the fight against COVID-19.

Pauline Wills

Information gathered from various sources:

BBC

youtube.com

medicaldetectiondogs.org.uk

indiegogo.com

## A man of calibre... continued

Since the first bulletin, I've been desperately trying to find time to use my newly acquired Stoeger rifle; it has, by necessity, come low on the list of things to do, trumped by mowing grass, car maintenance and general upkeep of house and garden.

So with some of the chores done –the other things on the ever-growing list will have to wait- I would like to share with you some photos of the air rifle. It's not nearly in the same league as the 7.62 SLR I fired when I was in the Royal Corps of Transport many years back. It has hardly any recoil for one thing and it's pretty much the same weight of the SLR; but I don't have to do route marches, "yomping" and other dumb things with the air rifle as I did with the SLR.



**Photo1: The Stoeger .22 air rifle (very different to a .22 firearm)**

The rifle has a scope mounted on it which makes sighting onto a target easier and more accurate. The stock is made from Cedar; I chose wood rather than resin because I think wood is more tactile.

You will hopefully see in photo1 that the barrel is bigger towards the "business end". This is because this model has a built-in silencer which has been designed so that it doesn't slow down the pellet.

This type of rifle is called a "crack barrel" because to load it and prime it for firing, I have to "crack" open the barrel to insert the pellet (photo 2) and even further to compress a powerful spring to provide propulsion (photo 3)



**Photo2: where the pellet goes**



**Photo3: barrel cracked open and spring compressed for firing**

It's a .22 calibre (5.5mm diameter). The propulsion is provided by a compressed spring but some air rifles are powered by compressed air. It is suitable for hunting small animals (such as rabbits) and vermin but all I hunt is a target shown in photo 4.



**Photo4; bull's-eye target card 5.5 inches square.**



**Photo5; The lead pellets. These are domed for target practice rather than pointed for hunting.**

So the idea is to aim the rifle at the centre of the target, release the safety catch, squeeze the trigger and hopefully the pellet (photo 5) will go straight through the centre. Yeah right! Sounds easy but when I first tried this, my aim wasn't sufficiently steady to even get onto the target from 20m let alone near the centre. So I bought a tripod specifically designed to rest the butt on and that has helped

Now I was ready to "zero" the weapon; this requires firing a few pellets at the target in a tight group as possible, adjusting the sights and repeating the process until the group of pellets falls at the centre of the target. There is more science behind "zeroing" than I am going into here.

And finally, here is the result (photo 6). The first pellet hit the centre and the other 9 went through the same hole, as I said to the Regimental Sergeant Major on the firing range in Pirbright many years ago!

Now **that's** entertainment.



## Remember your manners and share the road to keep everyone safe



In the strange world we find ourselves in now, traffic in certain areas has reduced to next to nothing. We should all be out only for essential journeys, but that is not to say the situation is without challenges.

We have families out walking in groups and children with their parents out cycling on roads that would not normally expect to see such traffic. Farmers are still going about their business and animals both wild and domesticated will be enjoying the relatively quiet traffic situation to explore roads they would normally avoid. In these circumstances, we mustn't forget our manners and the need to share the road space safely.

IAM RoadSmart's head of driving and riding standards, Richard Gladman, has put together a few simple tips to keep us all safe on the road.

- Children out walking on a quiet road even with parents can be unpredictable and they can dart out into the road for no apparent reason.

On a country lane, they will run across from an area of safety to hold a parent's hand, completely oblivious to anything other than mum or dad. Slow right down, let the pedestrians sort themselves out and only then pass slowly. Remember out of any bend there may be a family getting their daily exercise and combining it with social distancing, which may have forced them off the pavement and into the road away from other pedestrians.

- Cyclists may have earphones on and music playing and may well be completely oblivious to you approaching. Slow down and give them plenty of space, you may have to follow for a while if there is no safe place to pass. Don't try to squeeze past, you need to allow as much space as if you were passing a car. Also, remember the current limitations to our usual daily routines have seen a lot of novices back onto pedal cycles to exercise. The mixed family group is also a feature of the roads at the moment. Younger members may not be as steady and predictable as a seasoned cyclist. If in doubt stay back and do not crowd them. If in town remember a cyclist may be filtering either side of you so check before moving.
- There may still be horses being exercised by their riders, or riders being exercised by their horses. They still need at least the usual care and it may be that the quiet roads have encouraged more nervous riders or animals to try new routes. Pass wide and slow is the best advice. Most riders will find somewhere to create space for you to pass. Don't be tempted to drive too close behind them as this may startle the animal and will certainly be of concern to the rider. Keep your engine revs low and turn down the volume on your radio.
- Motorcyclists may be using the shopping trip to keep their bike running, so remember when pulling out of junctions to have that second look for them. It's easy to lose a bike in the background if you are not looking properly especially at night where the lights can all blend into one stream of traffic.

Richard says, "The last thing we want to do now is put any extra strain on the hospitals, a slight misjudgement when driving can result in an incident that ends up in casualty. Rural areas that would never usually see pedestrians or inexperienced cyclists are home to families trying to exercise in safety away from possible infection. By following the advice we are always offering to our children to 'share nicely' we can do our part to help keep our quieter roads as safe as possible for all road users."

## Flower Quiz

submitted by Pauline, our ever-resourceful Associate Coordinator (Barry's monthly quiz follows this)

1	Milk producing undergarments	7	_____
2	Dairy produce in a drinking vessel	9	_____
3	A confection and a vegetable	5,3	_____
4	Vehicle with a country's people	9	_____
5	Truthfulness	7	_____
6	Burning card game	3,3,5	_____
7	A very proper lady	8	_____
8	Say hello to this girl	8	_____
9	A bird and a measure	6,4	_____
10	Card game with St George's foe	10	_____
11	This boy is very sugary	5,7	_____
12	An animal and a hand warmer	8	_____
13	Concealed cowboy	9	_____
14	This colour might ring	8	_____
15	This animal went up	3,4	_____
16	An untidy Christmas bird	6,5	_____
17	Wed a precious metal	8	_____
18	A witches mode of transport	5	_____
19	Go fast to this source of water	9	_____
20	Would like to be remembered	6,2,3	_____
21	This girl comes from another continent	7,6	_____
22	Male bike riders	8	_____
23	Use to clean a glass vessel	6,5	_____
24	Hard working woman	4,6	_____
25	Boys comic with king of the jungle	9	_____
26	A Kentish cathedral rings them	10,5	_____
27	Oriental lights	7,8	_____
28	A little of the white stuff	8	_____
29	Could this be a valuable stick	6,3	_____
30	You would not see this girl at night	3,4	_____

## June Quiz Questions 2013 - 2015

	<b>June Quiz Questions 2013 - 2015</b>	
1	Whose resignation made the news headlines around the world on February 28 <sup>th</sup> 2013?	
2	In March of that year, Pope Benedict was succeeded by whom?	
3	In June 2013, former CIA employee Edward Snowden revealed details of a mass surveillance programme by the US Government to the press and media. He later fled the country and was granted temporary asylum in what country?	
4	In July, amid mass protests across Egypt, which President was deposed in a military coup d'état, leading to widespread violence?	
5	In July 2013, The Duchess of Cambridge gave birth to her son George. What is his ranking in line to the throne?	
6	Nelson Mandell the 1 <sup>st</sup> post-apartheid President of South Africa wrote his autobiography. Originally published in 1994, but republished in 2013, what was it called?	
7	On the 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2013 Saudi Arabia rejected a seat on the United Nations Security Council, which Arab country took its place?	
8	The actor Peter O'Toole died on 14 <sup>th</sup> December 2013. For what film role did he first win international acclaim?	
9	A pair of winter storms greatly affected western Europe several days apart in early January 2014 bringing storm surges along the coasts of France, Ireland and the United Kingdom. Were these storms Cyclones, Typhoons or Hurricanes?	
10	On the 18 <sup>th</sup> January 2014, teenager Lewis Clarke of Bristol set a new world record after becoming the youngest person to trek to the South Pole. How old was he at the time?	
11	On the 24 <sup>th</sup> January 2014, which one of Somerset's 5 District Councils declared a "major incident" in flooded areas of the district as forecasters predicted even more rain to come?	
12	Still with the weather; 6 days later on the 30 <sup>th</sup> January figures released by the Met Office showed that Southern England and parts of the Midlands had experienced their highest January rainfall since records began in 1910. The announcement came as what type of personnel were mobilized to help residents in the flooded areas of Somerset?	
13	On the 20 <sup>th</sup> February 2014 a 4.1 magnitude earthquake was recorded under what local sea. The Bristol Channel, the Irish Sea or the English Channel?	

14	On the 6 <sup>th</sup> March Prince Harry launched the inaugural 'Invictus Games', a Paralympic-style sporting championship for whom?	
15	On 6 <sup>th</sup> April 2014, Sheffield's ½ Marathon was cancelled because there were not enough what for runners on the route?	
16	On the 19 <sup>th</sup> September 2014 following the resounding 'NO' vote by the Scots people to independence, the leader of the Scottish National Party and First Minister of Scotland announced his resignation. Who was he?	
17	On the 17 <sup>th</sup> November, the Church of England adopted legislation that paved the way for the appointment of who, as bishops	
18	In January 2015, the Met Office reported that 2014 was the hottest / coldest / wettest year on record for the UK?	
19	Which British driving legend won the 2015 British Grand Prix	
20	In October 2015, The Royal Mint released a special £5 coin to commemorate the six-hundredth anniversary of the Battle of what?	

### EXAMINER'S QUOTES

All those in favour of saving fuel, raise your right foot

There was a time you could rent a car for a week for what it now costs to park for a day

If drivers learn from their mistakes whilst driving, some are getting a fantastic education

The advisability of trying to overtake on a blind bend depends on whether your widow thinks the loss is covered by insurance

One thing about owning a horse is the body will not rust after just one winter on salted roads

ANDY POULTON

I went to the chemist earlier to see if they had any face masks; they said they were sold out and said I should try Boots.

I've been in A&E for 40 minutes and I know it's the doctors I can hear laughing!

