



## **Lockdown Newsletter Number 12**

### **May 2021**

Many years ago, in her song 'With These Hands' Shirley Bassey sang:

*'I will bring to you a tender love, as warm as May'.*

Well, I hope the lyricist had in mind a somewhat warmer May than we have been experiencing so far! With lockdown restrictions easing a little, and the possibility to meet with friends and family in ways that we haven't been able to do for twelve months or more, it would be lovely to be able to enjoy that association in warm sunshine, wouldn't it? I noticed that this evening's weather forecast on TV was for strong winds and heavy rain over the next twenty-four hours. Clearly not a good time to think about inviting anyone round for a barbecue!

My Daily Telegraph tells me that on Monday, the first day when it was possible, lots of people jettied off to Portugal in search of fun in the sun. It seems that each day we receive several brochures advertising foreign holidays but, tempting as they look, we don't feel inclined to book any trips abroad just yet. I wonder how you are feeling about that? We had two holidays carried over from last year - one a river cruise in France and the other a Dalmatian coast cruise - but we have opted to carry them over to 2022 now, hoping the ravages of Covid will be past.

So, it's to be holidays in the UK again this year. We're not unhappy with that as there are lots of beautiful areas to visit in this relatively small island. In last month's newsletter Iain wrote about his experiences trekking in Nepal, which brought back many memories of our visits there, and to India - somewhere I would love to visit again some time in the future, but definitely not now!

Perhaps for future newsletters members could think about sharing their experiences of lovely places visited in the UK? The rest of us could then share vicariously in the delights those places offer. I look forward to receiving your digital postcards. Thank you in anticipation.

Enjoy hugging each other while you can. Who knows what's around the corner?

*David*

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# Who do you think you are?

by Liz Baldrac



Liz and David today

As you may have gathered, with his three screens and fast typing skills David is the computer whiz in the household. Like a lot of Upbeat members, I can just manage to open emails and that is about it. However, a lot of autobiographies are written by ghost writers and for this newsletter we have the benefit of an excellent editor in David Axton, so here goes with a combined effort of my story.

I was born in Lewisham, London, and adopted just as WW2 was ending by a couple in their late thirties who could not have children. My adopted mother was a nurse and my father had a long career with the CWS. As I was growing up we moved home a lot for my father's work. That was unsettling but I had a comfortable and caring upbringing. I knew from an early age that I was adopted but it was never discussed other than to allude to a story of my paternal father being killed in the battle of Arnhem (A Bridge too Far – you would have seen the film) which fits with my birth date. I understood my birth mother to have been a nursing friend of my mother but this does not now appear to be the case from the records I've found. I can understand the dilemma of the poor lady and do not hold it against her. We are just coming out of a pandemic which still cannot compare with wartime London.

When I had children they were asked at school to develop a family tree, which was a bit sensitive for me at the time. I wondered if they took after my side of the family; our son (now 49) is six foot, stocky, and bald - not a bit like us. It was always an issue with medical questionnaires about family history, especially in recent years when I have been living with a rare type of cancer. However, whilst my parents were alive, I would not have dreamed of doing any research as I felt it would have been disloyal. My mother died nearly forty years ago in tragic circumstances and my father, who I then took care of, died nearly twenty-five years ago.

Ten years ago I eventually made a start at research and found that I was in a residential children's nursery in Lewisham. It was run by nuns and my birth mother was an Irish catholic lady living in Bromley, Kent. This re-enforced the awareness I always had that I could have been in a Dr Barnardo's home and sent to Australia like a lot of wartime babies were in those days. In any case the



Liz, aged four months

picture of the home at that time looks very forbidding, with rows of black, iron cots on bare floorboards and no toys or furnishings in sight. It was an old workhouse changed to a children's home in 1940 for 140 kids from 0 to 5. Unfortunately, the pictures are copyright protected and a download licence is very expensive so I am not able to show any here.

I got the record of my adoption and my original name, which was a bit surreal - a good Irish name, Kathleen Hunt. I am a C of E London girl. This is where the trail ended as my birth mother, Mary, did not have a middle name and it is quite a common surname. I did not know where she was born but the record showed that she was 29 when I was adopted, which surprised me as I always thought she may have been a young girl.

Over the lockdown periods I have been watching, in addition to 'Line of Duty', various TV programmes about tracing family history and I realised that the advancement with DNA could be the way to go. I signed up with Ancestry and gave a DNA sample. It has been a long-winded process but very efficient with progress reports. I have now got the results and find that I am 68% Irish, 28% Scottish, and 4% unknown - and me a demure London (and Ilford, Essex) girl! A further breakdown shows that the Irish DNA is from the Ulster area, so I could have been brought up in the midst of the troubles in Ireland.

There are over 100 people listed that could be distant relatives but there is one whose DNA shows he or she may be a first or second cousin. I have responded on the website to see where this takes me. If this newsletter continues, I could serialise my story and after nine episodes you might find out who Kathleen Hunt ('H') is! Or maybe not! (If you have not followed 'Line of Duty' you will not understand this reference, and if you have, you may still be baffled but to quote Superintendent Hastings, 'Mother of god! We could be sucking diesel!')

## Absent Friends - Loved and Lost

We are sad to report the loss of the following members:

- Mrs Barbara O'Neil - Member since 2004
- Mr Brian English - Member since 2009
- Mrs Carol France - Member since 2011
- Mr David Battens - Member since 2016



We offer our sympathy and condolences to their family and friends.

# Welcome Back ...

The committee have decided that for the time being charges will be increased to £5 per session for exercise and £3 to see the nurse. Please note that as soon as we are able to resume having tea and coffee this will be included in the above prices and this will be reviewed later in the year.

## Arrangements for Long Melford. First session June 1st.

1. Book your exercise session beforehand. Telephone Hilary on 01359 232678. **Please do not turn up if you haven't booked. If you need to see the nurse as well as exercise, you must make a separate appointment.**
2. Arrive at the appropriate time, wearing a mask or visor. Bring a bottle of water (there will be no refreshments yet). Enter into the middle room (Tolchard) where there will be spaced chairs. The nurse will be in her usual spot in the corner.
3. It won't be possible for everyone to see the nurse before exercise, but Mandy/Anne assure me they will try and see people after exercise if possible.
4. Exercise will take place in the usual room (Chamberlain). Leave coats & bags in the hall or back room, just take your water into the exercise room wearing your mask. You do not need to wear a mask when exercising if you would prefer not to. The chairs will be spaced out at each place. There will be no moving around the room whilst exercising and each place will have a chair.
5. You will be given an exercise band and a bag with your name on it. Please put this band in your bag at the end of the session, as this can then be used next time you come.
6. After the session has finished (45mins) please leave your named bag, put on your mask, collect your belongings, and exit out of the side door. If you need to come back in to see the nurse, come in again at the front entrance.
7. The first session starts at 9.30 am until 10.15 am. Second session starts at 11.15 until 12 noon. The period in between will be for sanitising chairs/room etc. and for nurse appointments. The disabled toilet will be available in an emergency, but please sanitise afterwards. Wipes will be provided.

We realise this is not the 'norm' and some people will be disappointed if they cannot get booked into a class, but please bear with us as we hope within a few weeks we can be more flexible. Our main aim is to keep everyone safe, and not take unnecessary risks.

*Note of caution:- The Car Park next to the school is currently being resurfaced, but we are assured and reassured that it will be completed by the end of May. Let us hope so. We look forward to seeing everyone.*

*Hilary*

## Arrangements for New Bury Centre. First session June 2nd

1. Book your exercise session beforehand. Telephone Sylvia on 01449 774333. **Please do not turn up if you haven't booked. If you need to see the nurse as well as exercise, you must make a separate appointment.**
2. 1st class 9.45 am 2nd Class 11.00 am Exercise classes will last for 45 minutes.
3. Members should not arrive too early as set up and cleaning will be taking place.
4. Members enter via the double doors; temperatures will be taken on entry.
5. Masks or visors must be worn by everyone, except while actually exercising. The Instructors will have all taken rapid flow test before the class and will wear visors so we can see their faces.
6. Each member has a station by a chair; chairs will be two metres apart.
7. Bags and belongings must be placed on chairs placed beneath the windows. They must not be placed underneath the chair at which you exercise.
8. After exercise members exit via the back door.
9. The nurse will be in the room at the front of the building; seats on which to sit while waiting to see the nurse will be available.
10. Anybody using toilets will be expected to use sanitisation provided to wipe down the seat and door handles after they have used the facilities.
11. Members wanting to socialise must do so outside the building.

We sincerely hope that we will need to operate in this manner only until the end of June. If things change and we can operate more sessions on different days we will issue notice in a future issue of the newsletter.

We do appreciate your co-operation as we try to get Upbeat going again. The last year has been so awful but we look forward to holding a special Annual Lunch in October at Stoke-by-Nayland hotel. During the next few weeks I will be ringing all who have paid to confirm arrangements but I would ask if anybody wants a refund to please let me know.

It will be so good to meet up again. Stay safe.

*Sylvia*

# Upbeat:

- here to help you and your heart!

I'm sure many members will welcome the news on Pages 4 and 5 that we are restarting our weekly exercise classes next month. The lockdown situation of the last year and more has meant that we've generally been far less active than usual. For many of us there haven't even been the trips to the supermarket or into town to the shops. Government restrictions allowed us out of the house once a day for exercise and that had to be 'locally', which obviously limited where we might go for our walk or bike ride.

Apparently we aren't the only group of people looking forward to becoming active again. According to the British Heart Foundation the easing of pandemic restrictions could lead to a great increase in the number of fitness enthusiasts in the country. A survey carried out by the BHF showed that following the pandemic more than 64% of those surveyed made getting more exercise a priority in order to improve their physical health. Not only that, they believed that improved physical health would lead to improved mental health also.

The BHF survey also showed that many felt that their fitness levels were poorer as a result of being indoors more. I'd certainly say that's true for me. I've gained quite a few pounds during lockdown and (I should be ashamed to admit) I've actually enjoyed **not** having to go out! I've got to know the Amazon and Tesco delivery personnel much better, but the size of my waistline has increased!

Of course, there were others who felt that the pandemic had led them to try alternative ways to exercise and that they had actually improved their physical fitness. Valerie and I have friends who, being unable to enjoy their weekly table tennis club meetings in their village hall, set up a net on their dining table in the conservatory so that they could play indoors. They were a bit limited for space but found themselves playing more frequently than before!

We know that regular physical activity is good for us and that it can reduce the risk of developing heart or circulatory problems but often we lack the motivation to exercise. That's where Upbeat can help, offering the chance to exercise with a group under the watchful eyes and expert guidance of a trained instructor. Exercising regularly helps our hearts in several ways. It can:

- Work like a beta blocker to slow the heart rate and lower blood pressure,
- Improve the muscles' ability to pull oxygen out of the blood, reducing the need for the heart to pump more blood to the muscles,

- Lessen the risk of developing diabetes,
- Help to maintain a healthy body weight,
- Reduce stress hormones that can put an extra burden on the heart, and
- Increase high-density lipoprotein (HDL) or "good" cholesterol.

Of course, while exercise has benefits in itself, it is most effective when combined with a healthy diet. Exercise can help with weight loss but reducing the number of calories you take in, while increasing the calories you use up through exercise, will bring greatest benefits.

Experts tell us that the key to a successful exercise routine is staying interested and motivated. They recommend setting aside a specific amount of time each day for exercise and making it an integral part of your daily schedule. Exercise with a friend, or as part of a group. This can give you mutual support, help to keep things interesting, and keep you motivated. Again, membership of Upbeat and



attendance at our exercise sessions will help greatly with these. Our heart is the engine which keeps the blood circulating around the body and which, together with our veins, arteries, and capillaries makes up the circulatory or cardiovascular system. The cardiovascular system has three main functions:

1. To transport oxygen, carbon dioxide, and nutrients around the body,
2. To deliver the various biological agents involved in blood clotting at open wounds,
3. To regulate body temperature.

Blood is vital to our survival and the heart is vital to the transportation of blood to all our organs. For those reasons, it's essential that we do our best to keep our hearts working as well as they possibly can.

Upbeat is here to help us all do that.

## From our Treasurer/Membership Secretary

Many, many thanks for all the donations that Upbeat has received over the last year. As we have had no fund-raising events, and are unlikely to have any in the next few months, the donations will be immensely helpful as we restart exercise classes and nurse appointments.

I would like to thank especially those of you who have been adding 60p to any cheques you have written, and to those who have paid money via BACS. Thanks also to 100 Club winners who have allowed me to pay their winnings via BACS. Every one of these actions is most helpful.

For possible future use, please note the following details for Upbeat's bank:

CAF Bank (Charities Aid Foundation)  
Sort Code 40-52-40  
Upbeat Account Number 0000 9019

These are the correct details but sometimes, for some reason I don't know, you have to persevere!

Can I remind you also about Smile Amazon? I know many of us have used Amazon much more during the lockdown than we did previously, and everything you buy can help to raise money for Upbeat, without costing you anything. Please check it out on your computer or tablet and register Upbeat as your preferred charity to receive donations when you shop with Amazon. Thank you all.

I am currently contacting by telephone members who have not yet returned renewal of membership forms and there seem to be quite a few. Please don't forget to let me know if you move house or change your phone number or email address. My email address is:

valerie\_axton@hotmail.com



(that's an underscore after valerie!)

and my phone number is 01284 747238.

Thanks again, everyone.

*Valerie*