

# Hollywood at Home Issue 15 (of 22 May 2021)



## Chairperson's Letter

Dear members of Hollywood District u3a,

First can I start by saying what a wonderful job Liz did as chairperson during a very challenging time. I am sure when she took on the job she did not expect to be a zoom expert by the end of her term in office. Thank you for trusting me to be your chairperson for the coming year. I will do things differently from Liz as I am not as efficient and I cannot arrange flowers but I am sure we will muddle through.

The last 15 months have been difficult for everyone. Who could have imagined in March last year what was ahead of us. The important fact is we have survived and realise better what is important in life. We can exist without designer clothes and expensive holidays but not without family and good neighbours.

As I write this it is Mental Health Awareness week. During lockdown everyone has suffered down days and I wanted to share with you 5 ways to Wellbeing:

1. Connect with the people around you every day. This leads to greater security and improves our sense of purpose.
2. Be active - physical activities or a new hobby will improve your level of mobility and fitness. (Next Amblers is on 27th May)
3. Be mindful - take time to smell the roses.
4. Keep learning - sign up for a course or take on a new project.
5. Give to others. Random acts of kindness go a long way to improving our own satisfaction.

One sure way to lift your mood is to listen to our speaker at our **general meeting on Friday 28 May**. We are lucky enough to have the world-famous storyteller Liz Weir who will keep you glued to your screens.

Look forward to seeing you all there.

Stay Safe,

*Joy*

PS Thanks Robin and Rosemary for all your hard work putting together this magazine. It is much appreciated.

## **The Creative Writing Group**

We hear on the grapevine that Denise will shortly be moving to England. She will be hugely missed locally, but the good news is that she has agreed to continue as leader with the Creative Writing and Short Story groups via Zoom.

**The Creative Writing group takes on new challenges every month prior to the next meeting and last month they wrote descriptive pieces of a place. Below are two fine examples, which evoke the places they describe in quite memorable and haunting ways.**

### **The Potting Shed by Janine Houghton**

Inside the potting shed the mellow light of the setting sun slanted through the side window, casting a soft luminescence over the rear wall where picnic bags, ice buckets, citronella candles, rugs and cushions were stored on racks.

Deeper in gloom on the side wall stood the ready battalions of slug pellets, aphid killer and ant powder. Packets of top dressing and bottles of liquid fertiliser remained in a random array where busy hands had returned them. In a wooden trug, a worn pair of gloves lay beside a ball of twine and shiny secateurs, blades bound by the safety clip, duty done.

The scent of roasted wood crept in furtive eddies along the rusty surface of the shelves by the door and meandered among the towers of unoccupied pots. It rose on a draft to linger a while among the garden tools hanging on old nails above the window, before tumbling downwards and mingling with the odours of the dried debris lying spilt on the potting table.

The sun-warmed air filled the shed with the smell of wood, soil and compost before the door swung softly closed on a late afternoon breeze, sealing the tiny sanctuary shut. From a nearby tree came the muffled sound of a blackbird singing evensong. The contracting timbers clicked and sighed in response, snoring softly in the waning of the day.

### **Maritime House by Ellie Duly**

The mist was already falling along the dusty, conifer-lined roads of the Maritimes. In the slowly descending darkness a house loomed up, large and wooden, in the traditional Canadian style. A few shutters were hanging loosely on their hinges, and the paint on the wooden slats of the house was peeling off. The once bright cheerful colours of blue and yellow paint were now sadly faded. A number of unkempt bushes fought for space amongst the tall weeds in the large patch of land surrounding the house. A few meters from the house a broken-up car rusted away in the side garden. The sound of waves lapping along the edges of the estuary could be heard, meaning the road had come to an end.

Some of the windows in the house had curtains and a bicycle had been parked near the porch. A paved pathway, nearly concealed by weeds, led to the faded blue door left slightly ajar.

# Gardening Group



## Some blooms which butterflies cannot resist

### SPRING

Apple blossom – Bluebells - Cherry blossom - Forget-me-nots  
Grape hyacinths - Plum blossom - Primroses

### EARLY SUMMER

Ceanothus - French marigolds - Hawthorn blossom – Wallflowers  
Roses (single flowered varieties) – Sage - Thyme

### MID-SUMMER-EARLY AUTUMN

Catmint – Fennel – Ivy - Lavender – Sedums – Sunflowers – Verbena

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## Some gardening housekeeping tips:

*Don't forget that God made rainy days so gardeners could get the housework done.*

Plastic garden chairs – wipe with 2 tbsp bicarbonate of soda per 1 litre of water

Tackle your barbeque grill with a sprinkle of bicarbonate of soda on a cleaning brush.

To keep hands clean when gardening - scratch your fingernails over a bar of damp soap, then massage petroleum jelly or heavy hand lotion into your cuticles before you head out to the garden. Scrub your nails with warm water and soap when you're done for the day, using a soft fingernail brush.

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## Some light hearted gardening quips:-

'A favourite of birds' means to avoid planting near cars or clotheslines.

'Carefree' refers more to the plant's attitude than to your workload.

'Vigorous' is code for 'has a Napoleonic compulsion to take over the world.'

'Grandma's Favourite' - until she discovered disease-resistant, free-flowering hybrids.

Whichever garden tool you want is always at the back of the shed.

The only way to ensure rain, is to give the garden a good soaking.

The only way to guarantee some colour all year round is to buy a garden gnome.

However bare the lawn, grass will appear in the cracks between the patio paving stones.



What do you get if you divide the circumference of a pumpkin by its diameter? Pumpkin pi.

If April showers bring forth May flowers, what do May flowers bring? Pilgrims.

The best way to garden is to put on a wide-brimmed straw hat and some old clothes. And with a hoe in one hand and a cold drink in the other, tell somebody else where to dig.

## Hollywood Town Clean- up

Hollywood Residents' Association had planned a major clean of the town in March 2020, as part of our efforts to win the "Best Kept" competition 2020, as in 2019 we had been 'runners-up' but Covid 19 intervened! However, in the summer, once lockdown was eased, we decided to go ahead with our plans as the town looked sadly neglected. The plan was to completely weed the whole town centre, the railway car park and the subway from Redburn Square to the Railway station. Volunteers from the Association and additional residents worked in teams to weed the main road through the town from the entrance at Palace Barracks to the exit at Croft Road, and the streets and lanes off the High Street. In their yellow vests the cleaning teams could be seen out and about in late August/early September on Tuesdays and Saturdays with hoes, shovels and brushes clearing away the weeds.

It was dirty work, but this was counterbalanced by the appreciation received from local business people, shoppers and residents. Included in the clean up was the underpass from Redburn Square to the Railway station; the Association with the aid of a grant from "Live Here Love Here" had the whole subway professionally power-washed to remove the dirt, weeds, chewing gum and graffiti and the shutters at each end of the tunnel and railings were repainted. The grant did not cover all the costs of the scheme and the shortfall was met by the funds of the Association. This year 2021 the next phase of the clean-up - the repainting of the Redburn Square tunnel - has been completed in collaboration with other community groups in the town, supported by our Council and DfI. Hopefully the graffiti vandals will not strike again too soon!

The Residents' Association is now applying for funding to tackle the final subway located at Strand Avenue. The subway by the cemetery was repainted in 2018 through a scheme organised by the Residents' Association.

The photograph shows artist Tim McCarthy with Hollywood Residents' Association members Mervyn Black and Gordon Wright (Chairman) in the repainted subway.



## U3a Netfest in mid-June

This programme is open to all u3a members to register and attend.

<b>u3a</b>		<b>Netfest Programme and Registration Links - 14<sup>th</sup> June – 18<sup>th</sup> June 2021</b>				
<b>Date &amp; Time</b>	<b>Mon 14<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<b>Tues 15<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<b>Wed 16<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<b>Thur 17<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<b>Friday 18<sup>th</sup> June</b>	
<b>Morning 10.00-12.00</b>	<b>Presenter: Hilary Jones</b>  <b>“What Networks do”</b>  <i>Co-host: Barbara Cordina</i>	<b>Presenter: Sam Mauger</b>  <b>“Networks, Constitutions and Licence Agreements Made Simple”</b>  <i>Co-host Barbara Cordina</i>	<b>Presenter: Derek Harwood</b>  <b>“Peer Support Networks”</b>  <i>Co-host Jane Bailey</i>	<b>Presenter: Derek Harwood</b>  <b>“Slow-Ways Project”</b>  <i>Co-host Hilary Jones</i>	<b>Presenter: Margaret Fiddes</b>  <b>“PR Introduction for Networks”</b>  <i>Co-host Allan Walmsley</i>	
	<b>Presenter: Liz Thackray</b>  <b>“Alternative ways of running meetings – hybrid and other options”</b>  <i>Co-host Hilary Jones</i>	<b>Presenter: Liz Drury</b>  <b>“Network Communication Challenges”</b>  <i>Co-host Jane Bailey</i>	<b>Presenter: John Bent and Julie Travers</b>  <b>“Click and Save Scheme”</b>	<b>Presenter: Avis Furness</b>  <b>“Successful Networks”</b>  <i>Co-host Derek Harwood</i>	<b>Presenter: Allan Walmsley</b>  <b>“TGIF (Thank Goodness It’s Friday)”</b>  <i>Co-host Avis Furness</i>	

**NetFest 2021 is a week of events selected and designed with the theme of ‘Celebrating, Connecting, Communicating’.** Along side sessions filled with useful information this will provide an opportunity for networks to come together to discuss issues, exchange ideas and share solutions.

**Details of each presentation and link to registration form:-**  
**MONDAY 14<sup>th</sup> JUNE**  
**What Networks Do:** This session will explore the benefits of belonging to a network - Hilary Jones discusses the variety of networks, what they do and the key advantages of u3as coming together. We will hear from a variety of networks how they help and support each other with shared events and learning activities. Ian McCannah will talk about the future of networks within our organisation and there will be time to swap ideas with each other in breakout rooms.  
**Link for registration:** <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/what-networks-do-tickets-155602397961>

## Commemoration of the Centenary of the Founding of the Royal British Legion

Saturday 15 May was the centenary of the British Legion’s founding. A small ceremony was held in Redburn Square by the Craigavad and Helen’s Bay Branch, presided over by Canon Gareth Harron.

The British Legion’s formation is interesting. By the end of the Great War, there were four separate veterans’ organisations:

- The National Association of Discharged Sailors and Soldiers
- The British National Federation of Discharged and Demobilised Sailors and Soldiers
- The Comrades of The Great War



- The Officers' Association.

Two men were largely responsible for bringing them together in one – Field Marshal Earl Haig, and Lance Bombardier Tom Lister, who had served in the Royal Garrison Artillery and been medically discharged in 1916. The Lancastrian Lister was a leader of the National Federation. He was elected the first Chairman of the British Legion, and Haig its President.

On Sunday 15 May 1921, a wet and dreary day, a small number of ex-Servicemen walked to the Cenotaph war memorial in London's Whitehall. As Big Ben struck nine, four men representing societies that for three years had been rivals laid a wreath at the base of the memorial. On that wreath were the badges of the four organisations that would officially amalgamate to form the British Legion.

This moment was the starting gun for the Royal British Legion we know today. By the time of its formation, the tradition of an annual Two Minute Silence in memory of the dead had been established. The first ever Poppy Appeal was held that year, with the first Poppy Day on 11 November 1921. By Christmas 1921 there were 2,500 branches across the country, as well as overseas.



## The Esplanade

In the History Group Archive in Holywood Library we have many old postcards and photographs. But this lovely photograph of the Esplanade is unusual – we are indebted to Grace Burnside’s son for sharing it with us. It shows an early Boy Scout in the foreground, and the Kinnegar Hotel in the background. The photographer was William Alfred Green, a nephew of Forster Green who had Holywood connections.

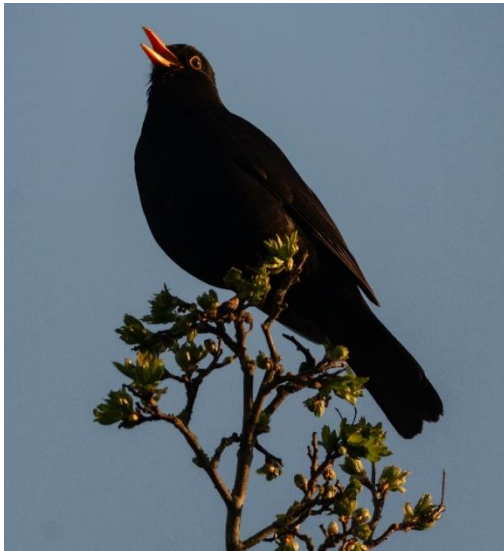


## The Dawn Chorus by Dot Blakely

**Sunday 2 May was Dawn Chorus day. So, the editor asked Dot for words of avian wisdom.**

Some say this special day, is in Spring, some say it is the beginning of summer. But for the birds it is warmer weather, longer days, more food. Our local woodland/garden birds, Robin, Blackbirds, Song, Mistle Thrush can already have either young in the nest or young fledged. If there are worms, spiders, insects around they nest early. Dawn chorus is an especially important time of the year for the male song birds to let all other males know where their habitat is, and not to be entering their territory, the female can be sitting on eggs, or feeding the young. From first light they start to sing, the higher in the trees and the stiller the air the better, if it is windy the

song will get blown away and off course; everyone loves to hear the Blackbird at 4am. The reason why 4am, is because it is just not light enough to find the food, so let's sing, the louder the better.



I was watching a Blackcap in Castle Grounds in Bangor the other week; the more you look the more you see, he was sitting at the top of one bush singing, then moved about 9ft, to the other bush and back again. So, this let me know the size and habitat he was going to take for the breeding season. All woodland/garden birds have their own special song. Some are easier to hear than others, but they chat and call and scold just like we do. Only they know what they are saying. Once the sun is up the feeding starts for most of the day.

The dawn chorus has become an international event. In different parts of the world and at their dawn time, people enjoy the wonderful sounds of the songbirds.

Here, the last one to sing at night before dark is the blackbird. Just before he does a bit of scolding.

Hopefully, people will remember to keep our beautiful country green and look after our woodlands. If we lose more woodlands and wild places, we will lose our beautiful songbirds. Then all will be quiet. Not a nice thought.

