

Hollywood at Home Issue 4 (20 May)

Chairperson's Letter

Dear Members,

Welcome to our 4th *Hollywood at Home*. I trust you are all well and managing to make the most of our slightly relaxed lockdown.

Hollywood District Committee continue to meet via Zoom and say 'Hi' to you all from our Zoom screenshot.

We have been busy with a major revamp of the Hollywood District U3A Website. It remains at the same address - www.hollywoodu3a.org.

It's still work in progress so not all the links are working just yet. When complete we hope that you will find the website interesting and easy to use.

It's your gateway to all our up-to-date news, group activities, contacts, membership and a photo gallery.

Membership renewals will be dealt with at a later date.

Thank You to Robin and Rosemary for all their hard work and enthusiasm compiling this magazine, and thanks to everyone who has contributed such interesting articles for us to enjoy. If you have something to share with others we would love to hear from you.

Do take care and keep safe as we continue to Learn, Laugh, Live together.

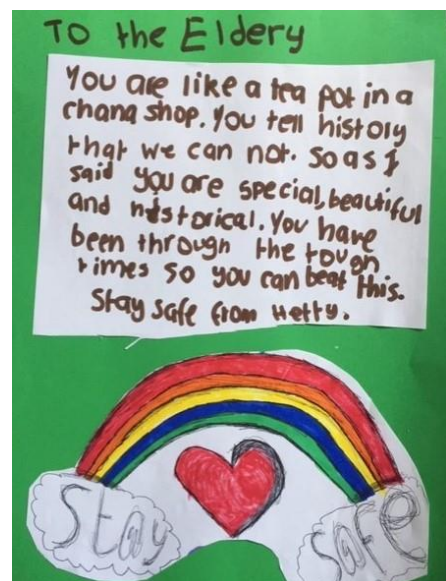
With my Best Wishes,
Liz (Chairperson)

Art to cheer us up!

One of our local initiatives has been to invite Hollywood primary schoolchildren to do drawings, cards, poems etc. which are then delivered to the 8 Care Homes in and around the town.

This lovely one was done by Hetty in St Patrick's Primary School. I think Hetty has invented a new term for U3A members - the 'Eldery'. We are not yet elderly, but getting there!

And on the theme of art, Rosemary and her helpers have created an **online exhibition of paintings by local**



artists, several of them Hollywood residents. There are 49 paintings, of many different kinds, to be seen at the Facebook page 'Painting Exhibition at St John's Church, Helen's Bay' or at this link direct:

https://www.facebook.com/events/1130001920709457/?active_tab=discussion. But quite a few have been sold already, and the exhibition is due to end on 31 May.

And this lovely thank you was made by a Hollywood resident and pinned to the fence outside Newcroft Lodge Care Home, after the Home's residents painted some lovely rainbows which were hung on the fence.



Hollywood and District U3A Gardening Group present

This Issue's Quiz - Local Garden Birds

We are all familiar with Robins and Magpies but can you identify other birds? When you see a small bird, can you decide what it is? The RSPB big garden survey in January this year revealed that House Sparrows are our most common garden visitors. Can you identify these birds, the last four of which were photographed by Arlene Jordan?



No. 1

No. 2





No. 3



No. 4



No. 5



No. 6

Topical Gardening Reminders

In your garden, no doubt all of the following have been done at this stage!

- Prune forsythia as soon as it has finished flowering, cutting back to strong young shoots
- Feed potatoes with high phosphorous liquid as they are heavy feeders
- Divide hostas before they come into leaf
- Lift and divide perennial plants to improve vigour
- Pinch out the tips of fuschia and sweet pea plants to encourage bushy plants.

- Add liquid fertiliser round the dying foliage of daffodils, tulips and other spring bulbs
- Divide primroses and snowdrops once they have finished flowering
- Tie in climbing and rambling roses
- Prune penstemons by cutting back all the old shoots to the base, provided there is new growth at the bottom of the plant. If there are no new shoots at the base, cut just above the lowest set of leaves.
- Trim winter flowering heathers as the flowers disappear, to prevent plants becoming leggy.
- Lift forget-me-nots to prevent heavy seeding and to reduce spreading
- Prune out overcrowded and dead stems of early-flowering clematis after flowering.

Our Short Story

Denise Dichard-Head introduces it:

‘Although the story may seem rather grim, short stories like these can have the opposite effect. While they examine a life that seems wasted or unappreciated, they at the same time can often encourage others to modify their lives while they still have the chance’.

Sticks by George Saunders, an American short story writer, (who won the Man Booker Prize in 2017, for his novel, *Lincoln in the Bardo*)

Every year Thanksgiving night we flocked out behind Dad as he dragged the Santa suit to the road and draped it over a kind of crucifix he’d built out of metal pole in the yard. Super Bowl week the pole was dressed in a jersey and Rod’s helmet and Rod had to clear it with Dad if he wanted to take the helmet off. On the Fourth of July the pole was Uncle Sam, on Veteran’s Day a soldier, on Halloween a ghost. The pole was Dad’s only concession to glee. We were allowed a single Crayola from the box at a time. One Christmas Eve he shrieked at Kimmie for wasting an apple slice. He hovered over us as we poured ketchup saying: good enough good enough good enough. Birthday parties consisted of cupcakes, no ice cream. The first time I brought a date over she said: what’s with your dad and that pole? And I sat there blinking.

We left home, married, had children of our own, found the seeds of meanness blooming also within us. Dad began dressing the pole with more complexity and less discernible logic. He draped some kind of fur over it on Groundhog Day and lugged out a floodlight to ensure a shadow. When an earthquake struck Chile he lay the pole on its side and spray painted a rift in the earth. Mom died and he dressed the pole as Death and hung from the crossbar photos of Mom as a baby. We’d stop by and find odd talismans from his youth arranged around the base: army medals, theatre tickets, old sweatshirts, tubes of Mom’s makeup. One autumn he painted the pole bright yellow. He covered it with cotton swabs that winter for warmth and provided offspring by hammering in six crossed sticks around the yard. He ran lengths of string between the pole and the sticks, and taped to the string letters of apology, admissions of error, pleas for understanding, all written in a frantic hand on index cards. He painted a sign saying LOVE and hung it from the pole and another that said FORGIVE? And then he died in the hall with the radio on and we sold the house to a young couple who yanked out the pole and the sticks and left them by the road on garbage day.

On a lighter note, we are indebted to Grace Burnside for this lovely palindrome:

‘Feeling stressed?

Do you realise that STRESSED spelt backwards reads DESSERTS?

Problem solved.’

Advice When Sending Emails

If you are sending an email to a group of people it’s a good idea to blind copy their names in ‘bcc’, rather than the top ‘To’ box. It protects people’s email addresses and reduces the chance of virus and spam.

Age NI Free Telephone service

Are you living on your own and climbing the walls or are you on the point of strangling your ‘better half’? Age NI would love to hear from you.

If you need advice or someone to talk to Age NI offer a Freephone service from 8am – 7pm, 365 days a year. Just phone 0808 808 7575. They will provide regular telephone contact or information and help with any problems you may have.

And remember the local Hollywood Connects Helpline number is 028 9039 3636.

From the Local History Group

It seems right, in this issue, to pay brief tribute to two individuals who have made a great contribution to our town. Sadly, Con Auld and Dennis Ogborn have passed away during the lockdown. Both had their own pages in our book *Hollywood People*; their legacy very much lives on. The photograph is of our memorable visit to Con’s charming bungalow at Port Braddan which the Local History Group visited in our first year.



Answers to Bird Quiz

1. Male Sparrow
2. Dunnock
3. Male Bullfinch and male Blackcap
4. Male Chaffinch, the female is similar but paler in colour
5. Female Blackcap and Goldfinch
6. Coal tit and female Blackcap.

The female sparrow, bullfinch and chaffinch are very similar to the males but not as bright in colour. This is to be less conspicuous when nesting and blend in with the local habitat.

The RSPB website has an A-Z bird identification section on its website for UK birds; it also has the option to listen to birdsong to help identify those singing in your garden when you can hear but not see the bird. If you have binoculars they will help to identify those birds spending time in trees or hedges near your house or in your garden. I enjoy watching my local birds and feed them in the winter, but let them enjoy the natural food at this time of year.

Arlene Jordan

And finally

Question:

What is cross-fertilisation?

Answer:

That is when the flower isn't in the mood.

