

Almshouse Community Living

Welcome to your Almhouse News

# Happy Easter

The Origins of April

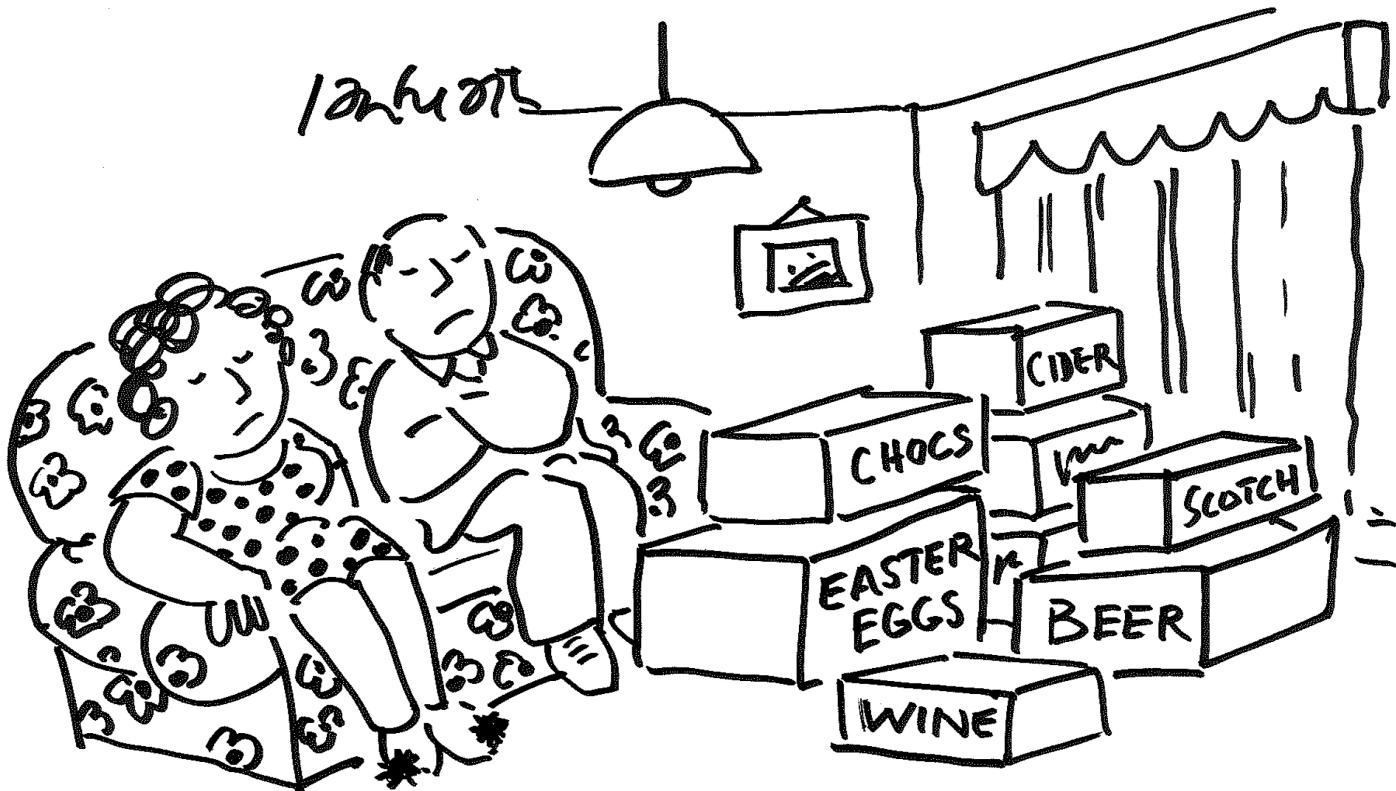
Films I Have Loved

My Career:  
William Cunliffe

Easter Eggs in Ukraine

Spot the Difference

Visit from Sarah Olney MP



**WAITING FOR LENT TO FINISH**

A New Baby Boy! Page Turners

Out & About Group

A Reflection on Current Events

Help with Energy Bills Bridge Club

The Nuts & Bolts of Blood Pressure

Do You Remember the 1960s?

Your Summer Garden

Chapel Schedule

# ALMSHOUSE NEWS

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## Chapel Schedule: April 2022

<b>Sunday, 3rd April</b> <i>Fifth Sunday of Lent</i>	<b>10.30am Eucharist</b> <b>5pm Lent Course and Compline</b>
<b>Sunday, 10th April</b> <i>Palm Sunday</i>	<b>10.30am Eucharist with hymns</b> <b>5pm Lent Course and Compline</b>
<b>Thursday, 14th April</b> <i>Maundy Thursday</i>	<b>6pm Memorial of the Last Supper with hymns</b>
<b>Friday, 15th April</b> <i>Good Friday</i>	<b>2pm Liturgy of the Cross with hymns</b>
<b>Sunday, 17th April</b> <i>Easter Sunday</i>	<b>10.30am Eucharist with hymns</b>
<b>Sunday, 24th April</b> <i>First Sunday of Easter</i>	<b>10.30am Eucharist with hymns</b>

## Competition Winners

Thank you to everyone who submitted competition entries for March's herb quiz and Spot The Difference. Picked at random, the winners this month are:

**Debbie Asquith - Quiz**

**John Hassett - Spot The Difference**  
**Congratulations!**

Answers from last month's competitions are on page 27.

### Credits:

**Editorial Committee:** Juliet Ames-Lewis, Lorraine Bradley, Debbie Flaherty, Chantal Richards & Mike Townsin

**Design & Photography:** Chantal Richards



This magazine is recyclable.

# Letter from Chantal Richards, Editorial Committee



*"On the Italian island of Sardinia there are six times as many centenarians as the Italian mainland. Why?*

According to psychologist Susan Pinker, "it's not a sunny disposition or a low-fat, gluten-free diet that keeps the islanders healthy — it's their emphasis on face-to-face interactions".

So whilst we would probably all love to go and live in Sardinia tomorrow, what is keeping folk alive longer in Sardinia is face-to-face interactions. Right here in the Almshouse community, you too are lucky to have a very unique lifestyle, that is a community with regular face-to-face interactions. Regular contact with your Scheme Manager, and a wealth of neighbours right on your doorstep!

To encourage and continually activate face-to-face interactions, The Almshouse News strives to deliver a magazine that is reflective and informative for all residents; encouraging you to take part in activities, clubs, outings, parties, coffee mornings, quiz and film nights, bridge afternoons... the list goes on!

With Covid almost behind us, there will now be increased face-to-face interactions. The editorial committee

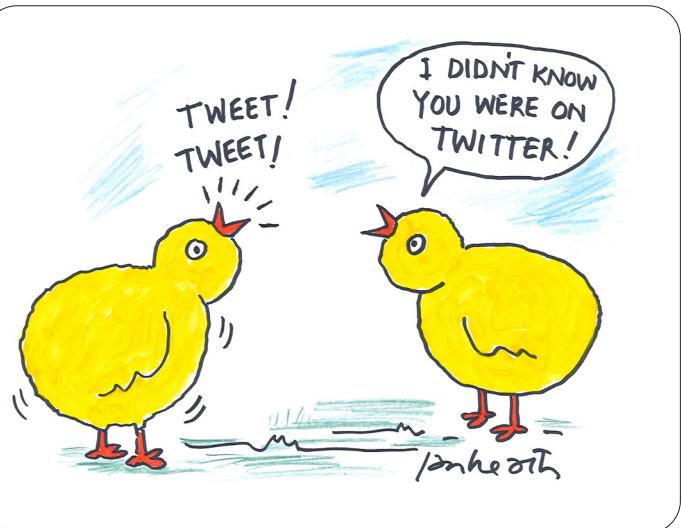
endeavours each month to inspire you to get out and have fun together. We've added rainy day activites too with puzzles, poetry and life stories!

This month, our Chaplain, Stuart Lee, tackles the issue of the devastating effects on us all of the war on Ukraine alongside the upcoming Easter traditions of Ukrainian Easter eggs. There is a new baby on the Hickey's block and Mike Townsin's interview with one of the organists at Hickey's chapel.

Wishing you all continued good health and face-to-face interactions for a long and happy life. If there is anything you would like to add to our magazine, please do drop me an email at [c.richards@richmondcharities.org.uk](mailto:c.richards@richmondcharities.org.uk) or talk to your Scheme Manager.

Wishing you all a Happy Easter!

*Chantal*



# Gennie and Marco's Baby Boy!



by Juliet Ames-Lewis

Our Scheme Manager, Gennie, and her partner Marco welcomed their new baby boy on the auspicious date of 22/02/2022. He was born in the Nurse's Lodge at Hickey's – perhaps the first baby ever born at one of our almshouse estates!



Gennie and Marco have named their baby Tafari Koa Bennett. His name means 'awe inspiring'. Gennie, Marco and Tafari are all doing well. Tafari is very smiley and Gennie is looking forward to introducing Tafari to everyone in the coming weeks and months.



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# Bridge Club

by Margaret Goddard



Well, perhaps not quite that often!

But the Tuesday morning Beginners Bridge and the Friday afternoon Bridge Club seem to have merged! The Friday Club couldn't get enough of it!

We now have enough people not to have to rely on everyone to be there. There are several days in the coming two months when I will be unable to be at one or the other but the rest of the group will still meet in the Garden Room as usual.

Although it is a game for four players, if we have don't have a multiple of four we take it in turns to play and the others watch – we all learn a lot from watching.

Learning to play is an on-going process; you can begin at any time- don't feel you've missed the boat if you weren't there at the start of the group. And don't worry if you have to miss a session; you can learn at your own pace.

You are welcome to join us at any time - to watch or to play.

Tuesdays 10am – approx. 12.30.

Fridays 2pm – approx. 4.15

Only exceptions – Friday 15th April (Good Friday) and Tuesday 19th April (Tuesday in Easter week).

# Sarah Olney's visit to The Richmond Charities

by Juliet Ames-Lewis



Sarah Olney MP recently came to Head Office for a meeting with me and two of our Trustees, Cllr Richard Pyne and Serge Lourie.



Sarah has long known about the work of the charity (and indeed has attended events such as the Macmillan Coffee morning last year) but she wanted to learn more about the charity's history, aims and objectives and our plans for the future.

We had a wide-ranging discussion about all of these. Sarah is hugely supportive of the charity and the housing and community that we offer to those over

65 in our borough, and she is also very supportive of our plans for the future which include developing more almshouse estates and improving energy efficiency on our existing estates through the installation of renewable energy sources.

We are working hard on both of these. With the latter, it is a struggle to get permission from the Council to install renewable energy sources on listed buildings but with the Council declaring a climate emergency in the borough, things are starting to shift and we are hopeful that the Council will recognise, as Sarah does, that we have a duty of care to provide cheaper electricity for our residents as well as, of course, our duty of care to maintain and preserve our listed building heritage.

We took Sarah on a tour around Houlton's, Church Estate and Hickey's and she was delighted to meet and chat with a few residents along the way.

In the Spring/Summer we are going to organise a coffee morning for Sarah to come to the Chapel or Garden Room to meet and chat with residents – we will let you know the date once it's been arranged with Sarah's office.



# More Help with the Cost of Energy Bills Strategy



by Juliet Ames-Lewis

The Trustees and I are very pleased that all residents have taken up the £250 grant offer from The Richmond Charities and all residents should now have received that funding. Trustees and I also very much hope that all residents have applied to the Council for a £170 grant and to RPLC/Hampton Fund/Barnes Fund (depending on where you live) for additional help and to Age UK/CAB for a grant as detailed in my letter to all residents of 1st February.

The Government has recently issued a package of support known as the Energy Bills Rebate to help households with rising energy bills. You should have received a leaflet about this with your Council Tax bill but I summarise the main points below:

All households in Council Tax Bands A-D will be eligible for a £150 non-repayable rebate. This is for help with energy bills but is known as the Council Tax rebate. This £150 grant should be paid by Richmond Council to all households in Bands A-D in April. If you currently pay your Council Tax bill by direct debit, the Council should make an automatic payment of £150 back to your bank account in April. If you pay your Council Tax bill in another way, for example by

cheque or cash, and the Council does not hold your bank account details, the Government had said that it expects Councils to make all reasonable efforts to contact the household as early as possible to invite them to make a claim. You should keep an eye out for a letter about this. Please ensure that any communication you receive is definitely from the Council before providing them with your bank details – we have to be alert at all times to potential scams. If in doubt, please contact your Scheme Manager.



If you do not pay any Council Tax currently as a result of being eligible for Council Tax Support, you are still eligible for the £150 grant and the Council should contact you about how you can claim the £150. Again, you should keep an eye out for a letter about this.

For any households with Council Tax bands other than A-D, the Government will be providing all Councils with an additional Discretionary Fund. The Council will determine which households in other Council tax bands are most in need of the £150 grant, which is likely to include people on benefits. It is up to

## Community News - ALMSHOUSE NEWS

local Councils to decide locally how best to make use of this additional funding. Payment under the Discretionary Fund should be made to those whom the Council has decided are most in need before 30th November 2022.

Two final pieces of financial support from the Government will be a £200 discount on energy bills for all domestic electricity customers in Britain. This is not a grant; the £200 will be discounted from your energy bill in the autumn of 2022 and then paid back by you to your energy firm automatically over the next 5 years. This is not a debt, no interest is charged and no credit ratings are affected.

The Warm Home Discount Scheme will be expanded so that more low-income households will benefit from another £150 discount. If you do not already receive the Warm Home Discount (not to be confused with the Winter Fuel Payments or the Cold Weather Payments which are different schemes), then you should contact your energy supplier to see if you are eligible – this is a means tested discount.

I realise that this is complex – there are now so many different schemes and funds! However, the Trustees and I urge you to do everything you can to ensure you are accessing all possible funding open to you. If you need help with this, please ask your Scheme Manager for help. They will be able to assist you or direct you to the Age UK Welfare Team for support if necessary.

## Your Summer Garden Photos from 2021

To keep the beauty of summer alive all year long, we have a stock of photos from many of our residents' gardens to cheer you up through the winter (and spring!) months.

These photos were taken at Susanne Munslow-Adair's garden in July 2021.



# Out & About Group: The Museum of London Docklands

by Michael Hobbs

Out  
& About  
Group

Thursday 21st April 2022  
Meet at 10.30am at  
Richmond Railway Station (WHSmiths)

The Museum of London Docklands, based in West India Quay, explains the history of the River Thames, the growth of Port of London and the docks' historical link to the Atlantic slave trade.

If you've not been down this part of London lately why not make this your opportunity to see how the area has developed. The museum is modern, well laid out and has many audio visual(video) presentations. It's a beautiful museum and makes for an easy visit. Lots of seating provided as well as a lift. The outing is free with the exception of refreshments.



# Balance and Falls Prevention Classes

Weekly sessions will begin on Monday 4th April

Time: 10.30am - 11.30am

Location: Chapel at Hickey's.

Relax afterwards with a cup of tea or coffee.



Many of you have been asking about ways to help with balance and falls prevention. One of the Richmond Charities Trustees, Dr Alex Hall has offered to host a four-week course to give practical advice on ways we can all improve our balance thus preventing falls. Alex will also be able to show you ways to actually help yourselves get up off the floor safely if you do have a fall.

Places are limited to 6 people per course so that quality time can be spent with each resident during the session. Places will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

All dates will be published in the Monthly Activities leaflet. **Please book your place via your Scheme Manager.**

# Friends and Neighbours Fundraiser Tea



by Ann Ellington

What a good idea I thought as I read our monthly event list. Many of us donated something that might raise a little money for an afternoon of fun.

Some very kind people had arranged the tables and chairs in the chapel which were covered with plates of tasty food, sandwiches, cakes and cookies. Delicious. There was also tea and coffee, freshly made. Around 30 plus attendees came along to enjoy the afternoon all for a good cause and the company of friends. They came from many estates. In the middle there was a long table laid out with all sorts of goodies to buy, jewellery, CDs and handbags amongst other things. There was a raffle for some handsome bottles of plonk (one of which I was lucky enough to win) and some wonderful boxes of chocolates.

Pat was busy selling the raffle tickets, she is a real trouper. The time flew by with laughter, chatter and a wonderful sense of companionship and friendship. The event raised £522.45.

Thank you to Pat for organising the event, to all the helpers for making it a lovely afternoon and to all of those who attended and those who donated money.

**Here's to the next one!**

## National Awareness Days

### Bowel Cancer Awareness Month

**1st-30th April.** Beating Bowel Cancer and Bowel Cancer UK, aim to ensure that there would be no victim of Bowel Cancer by 2050. For more info: <http://www.bowelcanceruk.org.uk/>

### Stress Awareness Month

**1st-29th April.** Health care professionals and health promotion experts across the country will join forces to increase public awareness about both the causes and cures for our modern stress epidemic. For more info: <https://www.stress.org.uk/stressawarenessmonth/>

### National Tea Day

**21st April.** National Tea Day's slogan is "Brew More. Do More." Founded in 2016, the date of April 21 was chosen because it is also Queen Elizabeth's birthday! Could the day be any more British?

### Parkinson's Awareness Week

**10th April - 16th April.** Lots of events to raise awareness about this potentially devastating condition. For more info: <https://www.parkinsons.org.uk>

### St. George's Day

**23rd April.** The legend of Saint George and the Dragon describes the saint taming and slaying a dragon that demanded human sacrifices.

### Easter Weekend

Good Friday - 15th April; Holy Saturday - 16th April; Easter Sunday - 17th April; Easter Monday - 18th April

## The Origins of April



by Mike Townsin

*"Though April showers may come your way, they bring the flowers that bloom in May"*

So sang Al Jolson in a 1921 Broadway musical called *Bombo*, composed by an American chap called Louis Silvers. Apart from "April Fool" – of which more later – perhaps the most oft repeated words connected with April are "April Showers", partly because of the song's lyrics which have been recorded by just about every crooner since. But Silvers didn't invent the term: many believe it originated in 1557 from the writer Thomas Tussler; in his collection of writings called "A Hundred Good Points of Husbandry", he wrote: "Sweet April showers, do spring May flowers".

Back to origins. Although it is the fourth month of the year, that's only because we adhere to the 1582 Gregorian calendar; it was previously the fifth month in the earlier Julian calendar, to which Caesar added a 30th day.



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The month probably ended up with its name because the ancient Romans called it "Aprilis", which emanates from the verb "aperire" meaning "to open"; it is commonly believed that the word refers to the season when trees and flowers "open" or bloom. This theory is supported by the modern Greek word for spring, *anixi* (phonetic) which means opening.

A few centuries later the Anglo-Saxons called April easter-monath. The scholar/monk Bede says in The Reckoning of Time that the month of easter is the root of the word Easter, and further that easter was named after the goddess Eostre whose feast was in that month.



Eostre by Johannes Gehrts



And if you didn't know it already, those of us born in April – like me, Leonardo da Vinci, Shakespeare and HM Queen – have a diamond as our birthstone and Daisy or Sweet Pea as our birth flower.



The burning question, though, is why does Easter Day vary each year. It does so because

Easter is based on the lunar cycles of the Jewish calendar, and is set to coincide with the first Sunday after the Paschal (Passover) Full moon, the first full moon after the spring equinox; the church fixes this equinox at March 21st.

Which brings us to that famous (or infamous!) noun, “April Fool”, and April 1st, the day on which it is “celebrated” – at least up to midday: a person playing a prank after that deadline is considered the “April Fool” themselves. The origins of April Fools’ day are obscure, disputed among scholars and vary among European countries. The first British record of the celebration was in 1686 by the writer John Aubrey who referred to “Foole’s holy day, we observe it on ye first of April....” Happily, by the time you read this it will be all over!



a small act of kindness on his part, he finds that his eggs have been transformed.



Like a little miracle, they had been colourfully and beautifully decorated with shapes and patterns, thus beginning the tradition in the Ukraine of pysanka, decorating eggs at Easter time. There is another tradition too, that of krashenka. These are eggs that have also been coloured, but much more simply. They have been dyed red as a reminder of the blood shed by Jesus as he is sacrificed so that others can live a life in freedom, closer to the mystery of God. These eggs, symbolising beauty and freedom, horror and sacrifice, sit side by side during the Easter celebrations.

Perhaps this year, these symbols will have renewed significance for those who use them in an attempt to celebrate the presence of God in the midst of chaos and violence. Of course, in the folk-tale that is told, it is an act of kindness, an act of generosity, the sharing of someone else's burden that transforms pain into small miracles, a moment of beauty. For all the great universe-transforming significance that Christians claim for the Easter event, perhaps it is these small acts of kindness and generosity that might bring others an Easter-moment in the coming weeks.

## Easter Eggs in the Ukraine

by Stuart Lee

Last year, when I wrote something for Easter, I shared a traditional folktale from the Ukraine. It focusses upon an old man who was in Jerusalem to sell some eggs on the same day that Jesus was crucified. In the midst of all the violence and horror, following



# Outreach: Getting to Know Local Charities

Richmond AID is a user led disability organisation that delivers services to all ages and across all impairment groups. We support anyone who has an impairment, illness, injury or long-term health condition who may face barriers to being included in society, whether they self-identify as disabled or not. Our clients include deaf people, people with learning disabilities, people with sensory impairments, people with physical impairments or differences, people with mental health conditions, people with autistic spectrum conditions, people with long-term health conditions including cancer, diabetes, epilepsy and people who are HIV positive.

We run a wide range of services including Information, Navigation, Benefits Advice, Money Advice, Counselling, social activities with our Peer Network and BuddyUp support for young people, Counselling and our



Spade gardening service. More recently we have started our Surplus.2.U food stall where we distribute food to our clients. We also support people to access grants when they are struggling financially with food or fuel or need support with vital equipment.

We will shortly be starting our Connect to Tech project in partnership with other local organisations. If you want to learn about using a smart phone or tablet or want to try borrow some equipment to try it out, let us know!





Here is what some of our clients have said recently.

"The difference the help and advice I received was quite simply life saving... I was physically ill and as a result my mental health had been adversely affected. Without Richmond Aid and their wonderful team, I just wouldn't have survived."

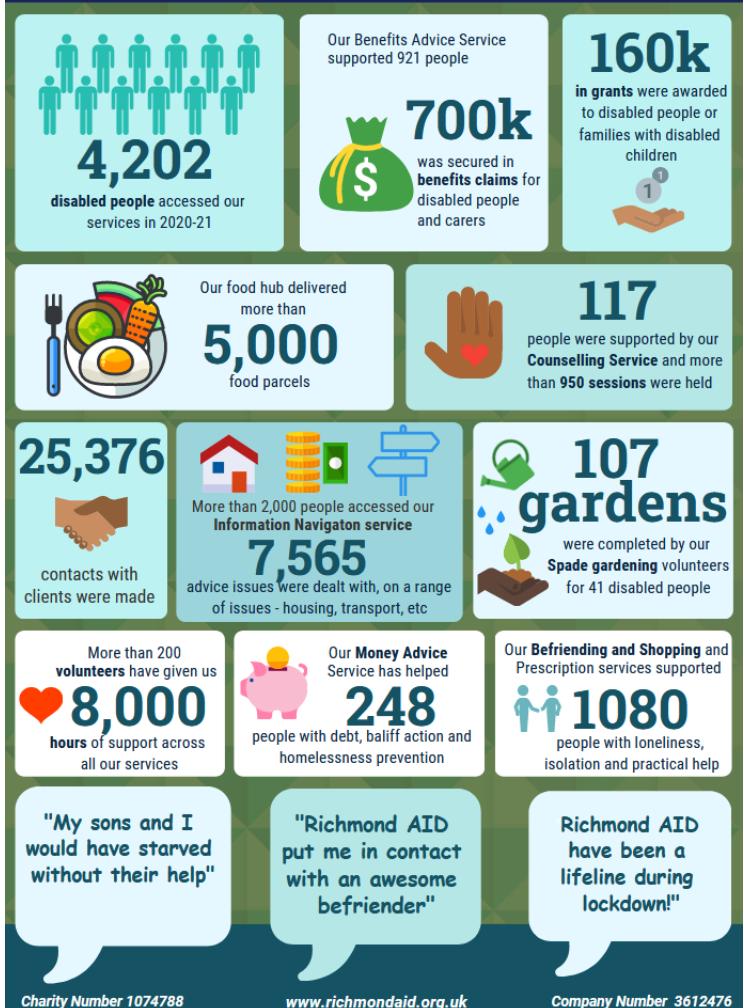
"I am now able to travel more as they help me to get a travel pass. I have also been awarded with PIP to cover the extra costs of my mental and physical disabilities."

"I'm no longer isolated and I'm not as depressed as I was. You have made it possible for me to help others again by helping in the groups you've set up."

For more info contact [info@richmondaid.org.uk](mailto:info@richmondaid.org.uk) or call 020 8831 6070.

## Richmond AID Impact Report 2020-2021

Richmond AID is a Deaf and Disabled People's Organisation (DDPO) that provides a range of outcome focused services in the boroughs of Richmond, Hounslow and Kingston that remove the barriers to living an independent life



# The Nuts and Bolts of Blood Pressure - What It Is and Why It's Important.



By Dr Alex Hall

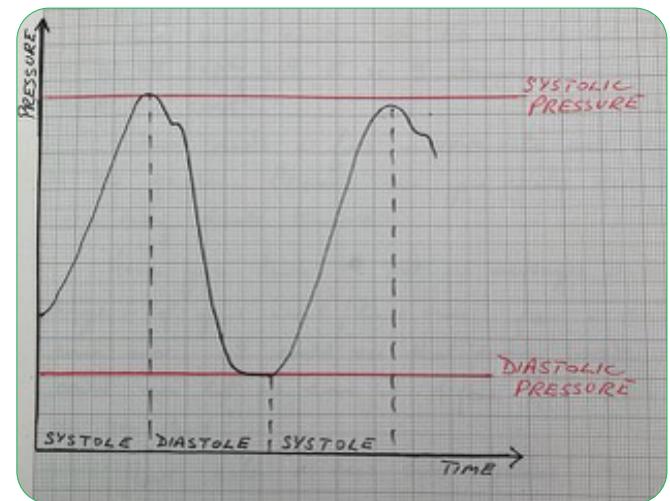
We've all heard of blood pressure and seen it written as one number over another number, for example 140/80. What does this mean?

We all know that the blood is pumped round the body by the heart – a pump that works continuously from before we are born until we die. Contraction of the heart is called systole (pronounced sistolee). During systole the blood is pumped into the arteries at pressure – this is called the systolic pressure and is the 140 reading in the example above.

Having contracted and pumped, the heart needs to relax so that it can fill up with blood again before the next contraction. Relaxation of the heart is called diastole (pronounced diastolee).

Now, the blood in the arteries has been pumped up to the systolic pressure. The blood then passes into the arteries round the body and the pressure falls. However, before the pressure in the arteries falls to zero, the next contraction of the heart (systole) occurs.

The lowest pressure that is reached before the next systole is called the



diastolic pressure – i.e., the pressure that the blood in the arteries goes down to when the heart has relaxed – 80 in the example above.

If the pressure is at too high a level it can damage major organs. Most importantly the brain, kidneys and even the heart itself become damaged (e.g., stroke, kidney failure, heart attack).

If the pressure is too low the person may feel light and faint. That is why it's very important NOT to take a double dose of blood pressure tablets if you've forgotten to take a dose.

Finally, don't sit and worry about your blood pressure – that will only send it up! Just be sure to get it checked once a year or more frequently if advised.

And, although it may be tempting, don't think that you know better than the doctor!!

## Ukraine War: How to Look After Your Mental Health During Worrying World Events



by Stuart Lee

Harrowing images and distressing updates from Ukraine have filled the media these last few weeks. It is normal that anxiety and fear will start to be on the rise for many people as uncertainty about security and safety is in the front of our minds again.

Here are some tips on what you can do to help your mental health and wellbeing during this time.

### Manage your news intake

It is important to manage our news intake during worrying times. It is natural to want to stay informed, but too much news can be overwhelming. Find a couple of trusted sources that you can rely on and set a time limit for how much you consume, for example, once a day for 10 or 15 minutes.

### Remember your emotions are valid

It can be tempting to push difficult feelings aside, but this tends to make them come back stronger. Let yourself feel whatever you are feeling. You may feel angry, anxious, sad, confused, or even numb – all of these emotions are valid. Notice them and name them, for example, "I am feeling angry... I am feeling scared...". You are having a normal response to an abnormal situation.

### Practise gratitude

Being grateful for what we have keeps us centred and grounded and distracts the mind from negativity. It also reminds us about how precious our life is when we start losing hope and motivation in relation to what is happening out there in the world. By practising gratitude, we start to train our brain to look out for these things too. Try ending each day writing down three things you are grateful for.

### Reach out for support

If how you are feeling is affecting your daily life it might be time to reach out for support. You could invite a friend round and let them know you would like to talk through your worries, or arrange to speak with a Scheme Manager or the chaplain.

A good listener will help you understand and explore your feelings and learn how to cope with them without telling you what you should or should not do.

### Meditate

Meditation or simple breathing exercises can be useful. They take us out of our mind and connect us to our centre and our body. There are a number of websites that can help you, or you can take a look at the chaplaincy section of The Richmond Charities...

*..This article continues on page 27*

# ALMSHOUSE NEWS - Local News & Events

## Event: Olympic Studios - A History



The Olympic Cinema in Barnes began life in 1906 as a community hall

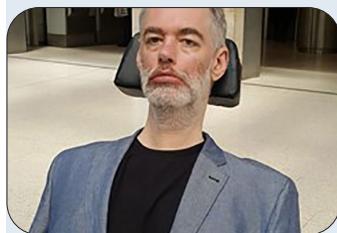
and was variously run as a dance hall, cinema and theatre until 1966 when it was converted to hugely successful recording studios. For the next 43 years many famous faces passed through its doors. Roger Miles, the Olympic Studios archivist will be recounting some of the many stories of this historic establishment. Tickets will be available on the door on the night. Kew Society members £3, non-members £6. Presented by Kew Society

**6th April 2022 @7pm.**

**Cash bar available from 6.15pm.**

**Location: National Archives, Kew, TW9 4DU.**

## Alan Benson MBE to receive Freedom of the Borough



The Leader of Richmond Council has announced the Council's intention to offer 'Freedom of the Borough'

to Alan Benson MBE. Alan is Disability Campaigner and Trustee of local charity Ruils, in recognition of his dedication to championing the rights of disabled adults and children, particularly in Richmond upon Thames.

## Help for Ukraine



Richmond upon Thames College is continuing to collect items and has already donated a large amount

of clothes, female hygiene products, long-life food, bathroom products and more to support the people of Ukraine following the Russian invasion.

The Prosperity is a Ukrainian café based in Twickenham, and the staff are volunteering their time and effort to help collect, sort and deliver vital supplies to those in need in Ukraine.

## Help Vulnerable Skylarks



Friends of Richmond Park Patron Clare Balding OBE is helping launch a campaign to protect the park's

skylarks population, which begin their breeding season in March, and help stabilise numbers despite the huge numbers of visitors to the park during the pandemic. Park visitors will now see signs and some fencing in three key breeding territories with visitors asked to keep to main footpaths only. The three areas are: Crown Field, opposite Roehampton Gate car park (beyond Beverley Brook) just south of the playing fields; Lawn Field, between Lower Pen Pond and White Lodge (Royal Ballet School); The Bog, between Holly Lodge and Bog and Sheen Gates

## Local News & Events - ALMSHOUSE NEWS

### Safety Of Women At Night

Richmond Council allocates significant funding to support its commitment to the safety of women at night. A new ambitious, long-term strategic approach to ending violence against women and girls (VAWG) was reviewed at February's Finance, Policy and Resources Committee. This includes allocating £139,000 to support a local approach on improving the safety of women at night.

### Council Tax increase lowest for six years



Richmond Council plans to keep the Council's share of the Council

Tax increase at the lowest level for six years, recognising the increased financial pressures residents face due to the rising cost of living.

### Event: The Twickenham Art Circle Spring Exhibition



The exhibition will take place at The Landmark Arts Centre for the first time in two years next month.

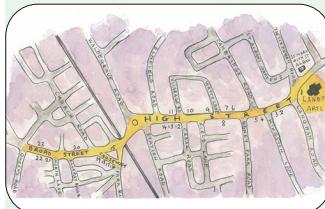
The exhibition will take place on Saturday 9th and Sunday 10th April 2022 from 9.30am to 5pm each day. Landmark Arts Centre, Teddington TW11 9NN

### Council announces new Jubilee Grants



Residents, local groups and organisations are being encouraged to apply for a Jubilee Grant of up to £1,000 to help organise local events to celebrate this year's Platinum Jubilee. For more info: [www.richmond.gov.uk/news/march\\_2022/new\\_grants\\_to\\_celebrate\\_platinum\\_jubilee](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/news/march_2022/new_grants_to_celebrate_platinum_jubilee)

### Event: Art Trail in Teddington



Local charity Arts Richmond has spearheaded a collaboration between

independent shops in Teddington and artists from across Richmond upon Thames to create a free art trail launching this Spring. All works will be available for sale to support both artists and independent shops. A total of 19 artists will be displaying their work in 23 locations across Teddington High Street, The Causeway, and Broad Street. A map of the Trail will be available from local libraries and the Landmark Arts Centre, and each participating store will also have details in their window.

The Trail will be officially launched by Mayor of the Borough, Councillor Geoff Acton, at the Landmark Arts Centre on Friday 1st April, from 5pm to 8pm. For more info: [www.richmond.gov.uk/news/march\\_2022/new\\_teddington\\_art\\_trail](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/news/march_2022/new_teddington_art_trail)

# Where is God? A Reflection on Current Events from the Chaplain

by Stuart Lee



In the face of tragic events people often ask hard questions about

God. Looking at current situations in Ukraine and Afghanistan, many people are asking where God is or why God allows such things to happen. Of course, more personal struggles such as the illness and death of a loved one, or the breakdown of significant relationships may also prompt such questions.

But the problem is that these questions all rest on an assumption. And it is an assumption that Jesus tries to challenge. The assumption is this: that if I want to understand where God is and what God is doing I should look outside of myself. I should look at the sometimes terrible and sometimes wonderful events of this world and try and make sense of God's will. This is the assumption we make every time we ask why this good person suffered or this terrible event occurred. But, taking my lead from Jesus, I want to suggest that as human beings created in the image of God, the first place to look for, and try and understand divine activity is within ourselves.

The flag of Ukraine

The flag of Ukraine, featuring its characteristic blue and yellow horizontal stripes.

God's presence and God's will is first found within us and then – and only then – can we carry it into the world. God's will is done in us and then through us. That is the thrust of the prayer that Jesus teaches his friends. We are sons and daughters of 'our Father in heaven'. When we become aware of this intimate relationship then we can do God's will 'on earth as it is in heaven'. The assumption of that prayer is that God's will is not done on earth until I do it. Therefore, to look at the events of the earth to find God's will is to look in the wrong direction. I should

In the Christian scriptures, Jesus was asked by the people about God's involvement in tragic events. Should they see these outer events as blessings or curses? Is God rewarding or punishing? Why do bad things happen to good people and good things happen to bad people? These are good questions, and Christians down the centuries have tried to answer them.

not expect to find evidence of God's will in falling towers, earthquakes, wars or suffering and dying relatives. It is in the space within me that I can touch God and know God's will.

So, instead of asking all the wrong questions, we need to ask the only question that really matters. How can I carve out that space in order to come near to God, the ultimate mystery and source of all? We spend so much time preoccupied with the events of the world, looking for meaning in random or humanly-created events. But we carry a great gift within us. The gift of intimacy with God, the gift of knowing the will of the one who created us and then choosing to do it.



On This Day:  
3rd APRIL 1973

Motorola showcase the first hand-held mobile phone.

On This Day:  
5th APRIL 1955

Buckingham Palace announces that Sir Winston Churchill, age 88, will resign as Prime Minister and will be replaced by Sir Anthony Eden.

On This Day:  
7th APRIL 1827

John Walker a chemist of Stockton-on-Tees markets the first ignitable match.

*wit and wisdom*  
When old people used to wish each other peace, we didn't understand what they meant. Now we do.

*Natalia Balasynovych,  
Mayor of Vasylkiv,  
near Kyiv, in  
The Guardian*

On This Day:  
23rd APRIL 1616

Celebrated poet and playwright William Shakespeare dies on his fifty-second birthday.

*wit and wisdom*  
If you invite a bear to dance, it's not you who decides when the dance is over.

*Russian proverb,  
New York Times*

On  
This Day:  
10th APRIL 1633

Never seen before in England, the exotic banana goes on sale in London shops.

# William Cunliffe - Organist at Hickey's Chapel

By Mike Townsin



Very occasionally you meet someone whose story is not only

interesting but inspirational. Such a person is Will Cunliffe. Will plays the recently installed electronic organ at our Sunday morning services in the Chapel; before we met, he was described to me as an “organ student” who appreciated the opportunity to practice in our chapel, so I asked him where he was studying. He laughed and said he was 30 years of age and long past university – I congratulated him on his youthful looks! Will is, indeed, an organ student but one



who only began playing the instrument a year ago. He studied politics at Newcastle University following school at Sherborne, one of four pupils on music scholarships in his year. Sherborne is located next to Sherborne Abbey, and music is a tradition: in 2015 it was named as ‘The Best Independent School for Music’.

His love of music was influenced by his parents: his father, an army Colonel, “had a love of choral music... singing in choirs all his life” and his mother is “a fantastic artist and painter”; both have “always encouraged creativity”. He is a tutor in Music, Maths (requiring the same aptitude as music) and English, and is a highly accomplished (non-professional) pianist;

## My Career – ALMSHOUSE NEWS

on his progression to the organ he says: “My faith has had a significant impact on choosing to play the organ as I see it as a form of worship. Bach was a Christian and much of his music was about Christ and written as a form of worship. The organ was actually built to replicate the awe and wonder of God”.

Johann Sebastian Bach is known for orchestral music, instrumental compositions for keyboard and cello, vocal music and, in particular, organ works – hence Will's progression from piano to organ, though he has toyed with harpsichord and clavichord en route.

He talks passionately about the range and power of organs, particularly in the acoustic context of churches, cathedrals and concert halls, and he would, of course, one-day aspire to command one of the large instruments available at those locations, or, indeed, Westminster Abbey itself!

But these are early days. For now he practises piano and organ for up to three hours a day both at home and in various London churches: Christchurch Chelsea, St Peters Notting Hill and Putney Methodist Church, which give him opportunities to perform before congregations, and to practise on their large electronic and reed instruments. He says wife Emma has always been supportive of his work ethic: she “is very patient with my musical ambitions allowing me to practise whenever I have spare time”

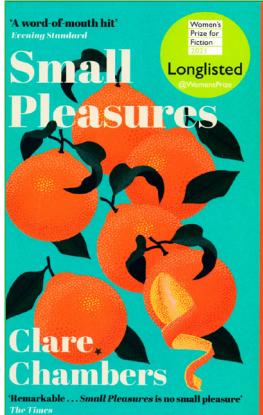
He also has a tutor, Samuel Ali, presently organist at Christ Church Chelsea, where he teaches, who has a Masters from the Royal College of music, and is former organ scholar of Rochester Cathedral.

Because Will is a classical musician, I inevitably asked if his musical tastes also embrace pop, rock and jazz. I wasn't particularly surprised by his answer: I had already taken him to be someone who simply loves music, enjoying many genres and artists, which he said include the Beatles, Daft Punk and many Jazz musicians.

At the beginning of this piece, I used the word ‘inspirational’ advisedly, because I felt that anyone who takes on an instrument as complex as the organ, at age 30, and becomes accomplished in one year, through sheer hard work and commitment, deserves that accolade; moreover, Will is not a concert performer, and confesses to having had to overcome his nerves when playing the organ in public – which he says has been the biggest challenge on his musical journey thus far!



## Page Turners



### Book Review by Stephen King

#### *Small Pleasures* by Clare Chambers

This book was first recommended by Debbie Flaherty in

January. Steve King, a Trustee, also enjoyed it and shares his views here.

Debbie mentioned a book in the last magazine that she had read with her book club, *Small Pleasures* by Claire Chambers. Coincidentally I had read it too so here's my view.

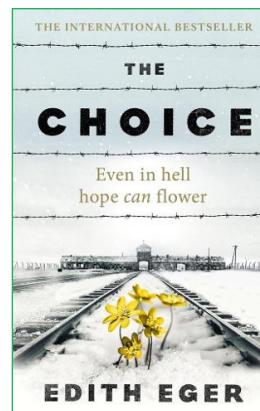
Set in the doldrums of England's post WW2 1950s, *Small Pleasures* is a poignant love story exploring themes of duty, self sacrifice and repression but also joy, fulfilment and love.

Whilst researching a story of a self proclaimed Virgin birth, local reporter Jean Sweeney begins to uncover a complex tale of hidden secrets and lies involving the darker side of human nature. But she also begins to find herself.

The characters are beautifully realised each displaying fragile fault lines as well as light bulb moments of tenacity and courage. Their lives comprise of small heroic acts which, although inconsequential in themselves, do have huge consequences.

The dour 1950s setting invokes a sense melancholy, curtain twitching and disapproval but this is counteracted by wonderful moments of kindness, honesty and acceptance.

Above all, author Clare Chambers imbues her work with a generous humanity which is tender, compassionate and thought provoking. A compelling read.



### Book Review by Mike Townsin

#### *The Choice* by Edith Eger

The late Desmond Tutu – theologian, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, erstwhile Archbishop of

Cape Town – said "The Choice is a gift to humanity. One of those rare and eternal stories that you don't want to end and leaves you forever changed". I humbly agree: this is a life affirming story.

Reimagine your 16 year old self. You are deported to Auschwitz. Selected for the gas chamber. Separated from your mother by the notorious Dr. Mengele who, noting that you are a ballet dancer and Olympic gymnast, makes you dance for him in your barracks to The Blue Danube. You never see your mother and father again.

The only way I could thoroughly appreciate the ordeal of Edith Eger, the author, was to put myself in her shoes and reflect on what it would have been like for me at 16 faced with this horror.

Edith survives the unspeakable brutality of Auschwitz and various other camps and, as the allies approach, is sent on a 35 mile 'death march' to Gunskirchen camp where conditions are so bad she has to eat grass to survive. Left for dead, she is miraculously rescued from a pile of bodies by an American soldier who sees her hand move. She has a broken back, typhoid, pneumonia and pleurisy.

But rather than let this painful past destroy her, she chooses to transform it into a powerful gift: she moves to America, marries, has three children and qualifies as a clinical psychologist, having suffered for many years with "survivor guilt". As a leading therapist she specialises in helping clients, including soldiers traumatised by war, to free themselves from their own thoughts, and heal. As she has done.

Edith is now 95, still practising her craft.

## Films I Have Loved



by Jenny Ruff

### BELFAST

Director: Kenneth Branagh  
2022

*"An exceptional film"*

*Belfast* is an emotional roller-coaster of a film from beginning to end. When my son Nicolas said "shall we see it Mum?" I wasn't sure if it was for me

but I was so wrong. It's a compelling, thought provoking film. Shot in black and white and set in 1969 during the "Troubles" between the Catholics and the Protestants in Northern Ireland, it is told through the eyes of Buddy, a nine year old boy who is so fearful of what is happening in the streets that he lives and plays in. He is also struggling with his obsession for his classmate Catherine and his love of football and comics. He passionately loves his family but especially his granny (played by the wonderful Judi Dench) and his "Pop" (Ciaran Hines) who is always ready to help with his maths and relationship advice, which is essential when you are nine years old!

Kenneth Branagh has written an exceptional script loosely based on his own experiences of growing up during these troubled times and with music by Van Morrison - a stroke of genius.

The last words though have to go to Granny when Buddy and the rest of her family are leaving for England to make a new home. Granny has her face at the window waving to them departing and she says "Go now and don't look back" – heartbreakingly.

You have to see this film – it's a masterpiece – I know I will see it again some time maybe when the tissues have dried out!

# Getting to Know You



by Margaret Payler

**• What is your most valuable possession?**

God's word. The bible.

In it God tells me how much he loves me – and the world that he made. He shows me that Jesus is the way, the truth, the life – the light of the world. He guides, comforts, restores and forgives me. I see God's promises and plans fulfilled. He shows me the future and makes sense of the life we are living now – Hope.

**• What's your earliest memory?**

Under 3 years old. Sitting on my Grandma's knee in Harwell Methodist Church. She whispered rhymes to me like "Lucy Locket lost her pocket!" and calling out "Mama" when she sang a solo in the choir.

**• What is your greatest achievement ? Why?**

Getting a prize for midwifery. I didn't pass any exams as a child, a happy child, it didn't worry me. But I always wanted to be a nurse! How? I see it as God's hand on my life – through unexpected circumstances I was able to study and complete my nursing training.

**• What do you never leave the house without? Why?**

Shoes, keys, purse/bag and cards, freedom pass and money. Because I don't want sore feet! I want to get back into house! I need to buy something! Have some form of identification.

**• If you were Prime Minister for the day, what would you do? Why?**

Call the nation for prayer/pray and ask God to guide me and show me what he wants me to do today. Because he says "without me you can do nothing!" I believe he is in control and therefore would help me make that 24 hours count/relevant for the situation around me.

**• How do you relax?**

Gardening, knitting, sometimes drawing and painting. Slippers on, feet up, and these days, falling asleep when watching or listening to the TV! Even fallen asleep over the knitting and dropped the stitches! Hard to see how to pick them up again!!

**• If you could travel back in time, where would you go? Why?**

Back to Thailand to see the many friends and "families made over the years" (would be easier to chat in person than at present on video or phone calls).



### Quiz: Do You Remember the 1960s?

Put a circle around the correct answer:

1. Today the cost of the Daily Mirror newspaper is 95p. How much was it in 1960?

15p      32p      55p

2. Today the cost of a first class stamp is 95p. How much was it in 1968?

1p      2p      4p

3. Today the cost of 1 dozen eggs (large, free range) is £2.10. How much was it in 1960?

8p      18p      28p

4. Today the cost of a gallon of petrol is £6.31. How much was it in 1960?

23p      43p      83p

5. Today the cost of second class return train to Bournemouth is £11.30. How much was it in 1968?

80p      £1.75      £2.90

6. The most popular girl's name in the 1960s was?

Sharon      Diane      Susan

7. The most popular boy's name in the 1960s was?

Richard      Ian      David

8. Jackie Kennedy wore a Chanel suit on the day of John F Kennedy's assassination. What colour was her suit?

Red      Pink      Black and White

9. The Summer of Love happened in which year?

1960      1964      1967

10. Radio One was launched in 1967.

Who was the very first DJ:

Tony Blackburn  
Jimmy Young  
Terry Wogan

11. In 2021, there were 39.2 million licensed vehicles in Great Britain.

In 1960 there were:

1 million      5 million      10 million

12. What year was Princess Margaret's wedding to Antony Armstrong-Jones (1st Earl of Snowdon) ?

1960      1962      1969

13. All of these people were born in 1960. Marina Sirtis, Kristin Scott Thomas, Sarah Brightman, Finola Hughes, Tilda Swinton and Maryam d'Abo.  
What do they all have in common?

Your chance to win a £10 M&S Voucher! Give this whole page to your Scheme Manager, or place in the suggestion box before **Friday 8 April 2022**. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Answers in next month's issue

# Spot The Difference

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**There are TEN DIFFERENCES. Circle the differences on the bottom photo. Your chance to win a £10 M&S Voucher! Give this whole page to your Scheme Manager, or place in the suggestion box before Friday 8 April 2022.  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_**

Answers in next month's issue

## ..Continued from page 15

website where there are several meditation and relaxation exercises.

Use the password 'francis' to watch the videos.

### Do something to help you feel useful

In the face of current events we can feel powerless, but there are small steps we can take to make a difference. If you are somebody who prays, keep the people of the Ukraine and the surrounding countries in your prayers. You can also be honest in your prayers about how you feel.

The chapel community is also using the time of Lent to financially support the Disasters Emergency Committee . The DEC works with 15 major UK charities to ensure that aid and care is delivered efficiently in areas where there is great humanitarian need. Work is currently focussed on the Ukraine but also on Afghanistan, where the Taliban are using the world's focus on the Ukraine to increase their campaign of persecution and torture.

You can donate online or use the Charity jar next time you are in the chapel.

### Answers: Do You Know Your Herbs. March Issue. Page 23.

1. Mint/Mentha
2. Dill/ Anethum graveolens
- 3.Sage/ Salvia officinalis
- 4.Basil/ Ocimum basilicum
- 5.Rosemary/ Rosmarinus officinalis
- 6.Thyme/ Thymus vulgaris
- 7.Coriander/ Coriandrum sativum
- 8.Fennel/ Foeniculum vulgare
- 9.Chamomile/ Matricaria chamomilla
- 10.Lavender /Lavandula
- 11.Lemongrass/ Cymbopogon
12. Lemonbalm/ Melissa officinalis

### Spot the Difference. Answers: March Issue.



## Upside Down Cake

.....  
by Richard Yardley

### Ingredients

200g self raising flour  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
60g butter  
60g caster sugar  
2 eggs  
4 tablespoon milk  
1 teaspoon milk  
1 teaspoon almond essence  
Fruit (plumbs, peaches nectarines or pineapple)



### Method

1. Grease and line the tin with paper. Cut fruit into thin slices and place in bottom of tin.
2. Add baking powder to flour in a large bowl. Rub butter into flour with fingertips.
3. Add sugar.
4. In a separate bowl mix eggs, milk and essence.
5. Add milk mixture to flour and gently stir. DO NOT REMIX.
6. Spoon over fruit and bake for 20 to 25 minutes at gas 5 (190C).

This cake is low in sugar and butter.

# Poetry Corner

by Nigel Davis

I don't suppose any poem has been more frequently included in poetry anthologies than Kipling's If ("If you can meet with triumph and disaster, and treat those two impostors just the same..."). This poem by Elizabeth Bishop is a take on one of those two themes.

Elizabeth Bishop, the award-winning poet (1911 – 1970), wrote tightly crafted and very lucid poetry, where every word counts. This particular poem, written in a traditional villanelle format, seems in many ways to be ironic and flippant. It draws on her own life experiences (she indeed lived in several continents in her lifetime, for instance). Losses of various kinds, small and great, happen, so what, get a sense of perspective, get used to it, it's no big deal. That is what this poem seems to be saying. But then the last verse draws the reader deeper in. You get the impression that the poet while trying to shrug is at the same time trying not to cry. And she is reminding us that to lose something may be bad enough, but to lose someone may be altogether worse.

## One Art

by Elizabeth Bishop



The art of losing isn't hard to master;  
so many things seem filled with the intent to be lost that their loss is no disaster.

Lose something every day.  
Accept the fluster of lost door keys,  
the hour badly spent.

The art of losing isn't hard to master.  
Then practise losing farther,  
losing faster: places, and names,  
and where it was you meant to travel.  
None of these will bring disaster.

I lost my mother's watch.  
And look! my last, or next-to-last,  
of three loved houses went.

The art of losing isn't hard to master.  
I lost two cities, lovely ones.  
And, vaster, some realms I owned,  
two rivers, a continent.

I miss them, but it wasn't a disaster.  
— Even losing you  
(the joking voice, a gesture I love)  
I shan't have lied.  
It's evident the art of losing's not too hard  
to master though it may look like  
(Write it!) like disaster.