

# Babergh News and Views

News and views from your local friendship group

## A Christmas Hello to One and All...

**Looking back to the previous issues of Babergh News and Views I see I started the first with '... as I write this' and I am still at it, writing about everything and all things from music, to what makes me grumpy, to the wonderful instances of care from strangers and neighbours, over the last 30 weeks or more. Half a year has passed by, summer has been and gone; I ventured out of lockdown late summer to visit the grandchildren to find in November, lockdown will begin again. Ah well, life has its challenges.**

I wrote last week to those who have email address that nothing has changed, but everything has changed and this is so true of the current government guidelines for our lives.

To keep safe, we need to keep at home;  
To keep healthy, we need to exercise;  
To keep well, we need to wash our hands;  
To keep mind, body and soul together,  
we need to talk and rant, talk and listen, talk and comment, and talk until we feel as though we are not alone.  
Keep at it folks; I believe my writing keeps me altogether.

Now the cheery bit... we have singing and dancing in the house at home. Probably because my children think I am weird and I have to keep up with the image, but also because I enjoy it. Talking of weird, I saw the wonderful comment the other day that if your mother is weird then you will be successful and clever. Therefore, children of mine, you have me to thank for your successes in life; I look forward to the show of appreciation in the form of chocolate (actually the oldest son, when he visited me recently did bring chocolate, but we had our conversations and catch up whilst in the garage, in the rain, with the doors open for self-distancing measures - yep, told you I was weird).

Talking of chocolate, a most exciting promise has been forthcoming in the news lately and that is, the old Philips Avent factory along Lower Road in Glemsford, is to become a cocoa processing factory. Well! I am in my element! Chocolate on the doorstep! I wonder if they will do visitor tours around the factory. I am imagining the aroma of chocolate, the sight of all that liquid goo swishing around large commercial bowls and the end result, bars of the delicious, magical, endorphin producing, product, laid out to taste. Told you I was weird!

And of course the time of year is approaching when we all indulge in chocolate; pressies on the tree, pressies under the tree, pressies that arrive on the doorstep. Oh joy, Christmas is upon us and the boxes of chocolate will hopefully appear in bulk.

Whilst in Devon (yes, I am always travelling to that county), I found in a second-hand shop in the delightfully named Bovey Tracey, the mysterious brown, crinkly item that rattles when you shake it, pictured below. Yes, you have got it, it is a cocoa pod, complete with cocoa beans inside it; amuses the grandchildren enormously. For me it adds to my love affair with chocolate... (told you I was weird).

Love and a virtual hug.

And a Chocolatey Happy Christmas.

**Margaret Maybury**



**Welcome to the latest edition of the Babergh Branch News and Views.**

### Christmas Greetings to you all

And what a strange Christmas it is going to be! I dare say we are all holding our breath in the hope that something like normality will be returned this month following the second lockdown. However, no promises there.

I would ask you to look below and take note of Margaret Maybury's new phone number. Unfortunately she has been the recipient of nuisance phone calls from the previous owner. Patience is a virtue but I think eight years definitely makes it a virtue.

The Committee of Management wishes you all the best of greetings for Christmas and the New Year and hope this newsletter will bring you some cheer. We will all hold each other in our hearts even if we can't gather our nearest and dearest in our arms.

**Louise Smith**

### How to contact your Branch

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## Do we expect snow this year?

Do we expect snow to cover us all?

Do we expect snow to make us shiver?

Do we expect snow to make us think of summer?

Do we expect snow to make us dream of better days?

Do we expect snow to make us dive under the covers of our beds?

Do we expect snow to make us wish for hot drinks and lots of hot food?

Do we expect snow to make us recall that once it melts spring is on its way?

Or do we expect snow as we love to make snowmen, have snowball fights and just pretend to be children again of our spring when the world was different and Christmas was just around the corner and everything was okay?

You decide, you make the difference, you make fun in the snow.

**Happy Christmas!**

## Twelve Oddfellow Days of Christmas

1. A partridge in a pear tree - our Noble Grand John S\_S.
2. Two turtle doves - our two secretaries, Louise and Margaret.
3. Three French Hens - our three Trustees, Sue, Greg and Jane.
4. Four French Hens - four target recruitment themes for Oddfellows nationally; Friendship, Bereavement, Retirement and New Homes.
5. Five Gold Rings - the five degrees of ritual. White, blue, scarlet, gold, purple.
6. Six geese a laying - Principles of the fraternity; friendship, love, truth, faith, hope, charity.
7. Seven swans a swimming - national objectives for membership.
8. Eight maids a milking - the A Team for running a Branch; Social Organiser, Branch Secretary, Committee of Management, Volunteer Helpers, Front of House Team, Keen Members, Member Advocates, Trustees.
9. Nine ladies dancing - your Committee of Management - minus the Trustees.
10. Ten lords a leaping - £10 shopping voucher for first referral of a friend.
11. Eleven pipers piping - Eleven Directors at Unity.
12. Twelve drummers drumming - twelve months of friendship and fun at Oddfellows.

## Trustees

**Babergh Branch as a financial Branch has three Trustees who oversee the financial running of our business along with the properties that we own and rent out. The current Trustees are:**

- Sue Lane elected in 2018
- Greg Deeks elected in 2019
- Jane Brockbank elected in 2020

All our Trustees work hard to ensure the Branch runs smoothly and attend both Trustee as well as Committee of Management meetings. They also help out with administration when and if possible. We are very grateful to them for stepping up to the mark and taking on this important role.

Jane has written about her work with another renowned organisation, which shows how committed she is to volunteering within the community.

## Nativity is cancelled

**Laughter is the best medicine and this did indeed make me laugh out loud. For anyone who has enjoyed a nativity play performed by children, animals and adults it is always an event. Enjoy this account too.**

The Nativity Play is Postponed this Year.

With regret there will be no Nativity play this year because:

Mary and Joseph are isolating and will not let anyone within two metres of the baby.

The three Wise Men face a travel ban.

Any gifts needed to be sanitized, copper is okay but not the rest.

The Shepherds have been furloughed.

The Innkeeper has had to shut his premises under tier three regulations. He is also almost bankrupt.

Santa won't be working as he would break the rule of six with Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Donner, and Blitzen.

There is no air corridor that covers the whole of the world either.

As for Rudolph, with his red nose, he should be isolating and taking a test!

**Happy Christmas One and All**

# Was this a good idea?

The postman dropped a white envelope through my door the other morning, not expecting anything I opened it to find a certificate and a letter saying I had been nominated for an award. Unfortunately, I had not got through to the final but had been sent a certificate for my endeavours. I am the Welfare representative for Sudbury Branch of the Royal British Legion, now called Branch Community Support Officer. It means I am the first port of call for those who need help.

Back at the beginning of lockdown I wondered how we as a Branch could keep

our members jolly and in touch with each other so I came up with the idea of a newsletter, yes lots of the organisations were doing it so nothing special. We as a Branch did not have a regular chat letter it was always business, so I involved a member who had more expertise than me on the computer, Yes he received a certificate as well, he had been bedridden for several months and I thought it would give him something to do, he agreed and off I went to get a four page newsletter born. It is still going but now once a month and not twice, other members write things of interest, we keep members updated on what is happening, include

quizzes, recipe, the birthday list, lots of noughts and fives appearing this year, photos of gardens and other items.

It goes out to about 80 members by email and about a dozen are posted every month, so I think we have covered all of our membership.

Yes I am enjoying doing it but when all this Covid thing ends, which I know it will at some point and we can get back to normal, I shall be able to put my hot keys away for a rest and find something else to occupy myself with.

**Jane Brockbank, Trustee**

## Christmas 2017

A lovely meal was enjoyed by members at the Brewers Arms in Polstead. Spot prizes were awarded to lucky attendees.



Christmas tree at Christmas tree festival in Sudbury.

## Winner of the Photo Competition



Bumble bee on a hollyhock - Michael Debenham, Winner

.....



On the water meadows early morning - Sue Ayres, Runner-up

.....



Woodpecker - Heather Excell, Runner-up

# Tree Decorations by Margaret Maybury

**Instructions: Using an eight inch saucepan lid the tree decoration will end as a 3.5 in decoration.**



*Use a saucepan lid as a guide.*

1. Cut two rounds of differing material - I used two types of Christmas cotton material that I had in my work box.



2. Place the two rounds front sides together to stitch, either by hand (backstitch) or machine.
3. Stitch close to the outside of the rounds leaving a gap of about one to 1.5 inch to allow for turning into the right sides (see picture with scissors highlighting the gap).



*Scissors showing gap to allow for turning inside out.*

4. I pressed the item as I went along to end with a neat decoration.
5. Turn the item to the right sides and use the blunt end of a pencil to push the sides out to form a round. Then press in the open section so it completes a round.

6. Stitch again close to the edge which will close the gap and form a secure edge (see photo).



*Turn inside out, close gap with top stitching all the way round.*

7. Now the fun part of putting it together. Fold the rounds in half and half again and mark slightly with either an iron or your fingers (see photo).



*Fold in half*

8. Take a length of cotton (I used some button cotton ie thicker) and stitch the two middle edges together to make a half moon. Stitch from back of material to the front as this will pull it together. You only need to do a couple of stitches.
9. Then do the same with the quarters which will form the pocket shape (see photo). Fix so firm.



*Fold into quarter and mark to stitch middle edges together. First as folded in half and then as folded in quarters. Edges only.*

10. Turn the pockets out to form the star effect (see photo of front and back). Pull and flatten to your desired effect.



*Pockets are formed.*



*Turn pockets out.*

11. Fasten a loop to the top under the turned out pocket. In the end I crocheted 100 loops with a 1.25mm crochet hook (as I had nothing in my work box that would match).



*Front*



*Rear of item*

12. Add a button (or in my case a bell) to finish the tree decoration (guess where the bell came from - a well known chocolate item).



*The finished product.*

**The cathedral window tree decoration is finished. Happy Christmas.**