

Bramhall u3a learn,
laugh,
live

Uplbeat 2021

Photograph courtesy of Yvonne Sutcliffe

January

Stay Safe Stay in Touch



Did you know?

January is named after the two-faced **Roman god, Janus**, the Roman god of doors, because this month is the door into the new year. Janus is also called the two-faced god who represents all beginnings and possesses the ability to see the past and the future.



Originally, January and February were the last months of the calendar year with the Roman calendar beginning in March (Martius), due to the March Equinox, which still marks the beginning of the tropical year today. In 450 BC, the beginning of the year was moved to January 1. January initially consisted of 30 days when it was added to the 10-month Roman calendar. However, a day was added in 46 BC by Julius Caesar's astronomers, making it 31 days long. They also introduced Leap Years.

January starts on the same day of the week as October and ends on the same day of the week as February and October in common years. During leap years, January starts on the same day of the week as April and July and ends on the same day of the week as July.

January's birth flowers are **carnations** (*Dianthus caryophyllus*) and **snowdrops** (*Galanthus*). The birthstone is the **garnet**, which symbolizes constancy.

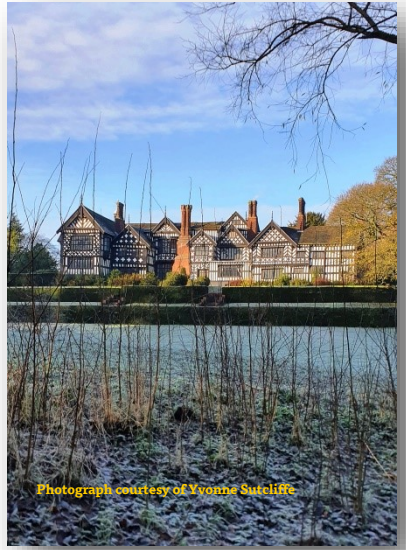
ACTION CALENDAR: HAPPIER JANUARY 2021

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
"Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony" - Gandhi				1 Find three good things to look forward to this year	2 Make time today to do something kind for yourself	3 Do a kind act for someone else to help to brighten their day
4 Write a list of things you feel grateful for in life and why	5 Look for the good in others and notice their strengths	6 Take five minutes to sit still and just breathe	7 Learn something new and share it with others	8 Say positive things to the people you meet today	9 Get moving. Do something physically active (ideally outdoors)	10 Thank someone you're grateful to and tell them why
11 Switch off all your tech 2 hours before bedtime	12 Connect with someone near you - share a smile or chat	13 Be gentle with yourself when you make mistakes	14 Take a different route today and see what you notice	15 Eat healthy food which really nourishes you today	16 Get outside and notice five things that are beautiful	17 Contribute positively to a good cause or your community
18 Focus on what's good, even if today feels tough	19 Get back in contact with an old friend you miss	20 Go to bed in good time and give yourself time to recharge	21 Take a small step towards an important goal	22 Try out something new to get out of your comfort zone	23 Plan something fun and invite others to join you	24 Put away digital devices and focus on being in the moment
25 Decide to lift people up rather than put them down	26 Say hello to a neighbour and get to know them better	27 Challenge your negative thoughts and look for the upside	28 Ask other people about things they've enjoyed recently	29 Use one of your personal strengths in a new way	30 Count how many people you can smile at today	31 Write down your hopes or plans for the future

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

www.actionforhappiness.org
Happier · Kinder · Together

Learn more about this month's theme at www.actionforhappiness.org/happier-january



Photograph courtesy of Yvonne Sutcliffe

This is your magazine. Help us to keep it UPBEAT for everyone.
All submissions to magazine@bramhallu3a.org.uk by 22 JANUARY 2021*
The Upbeat Magazine team ...



Bob Dumbarton (Content Editor); **Peter Webster** (Layout & Graphics) & **Helen Webster** (Production Assistant)
The next edition will be available on the FRIDAY 5 FEBRUARY

We would really welcome your articles, pictures, quizzes, jokes and, of course, feedback.

A Happy New Year to one and all ...

I hope you had a merry Christmas. I know I did. I spent it in the sunshine of Lanzarote. I enjoyed the New Year festivities there too. However, I'm now in self-isolation for 10 days but it's worth it.

Hopefully, none of you are locked up at present and are all religiously practising your New Year resolutions whilst we await our vaccine. Who's giving up smoking or drinking? Who has joined a gym? I never managed to complete last year's resolutions so I'm not bothering this year. I probably won't next year either!

Most of us got through 2020 with its restrictions, but a few were very unlucky in that they lost a loved one or a close friend. My sympathies go out to them.

There's much to look forward to this year, though. As more and more people get vaccinated and we become free to do our own thing again, it'll be a vast improvement on 2020. Our groups will be able to meet face to face once more and we can restore our monthly meetings. What will Helen Webster dig up for us in the way of speakers?

Who knows what's ahead of us? Isn't it exciting!

Alaister Macrae - Chairman

Travelling in transit

I love travel and have been in many places, but I've never been **in Cahoots**. Apparently, you can't go there alone. You always have to be **in Cahoots** with someone else you know.

I've also never been **in Cognito** as I hear no one ever recognises you there.

I have, however, I have been **in Sane**. They don't have an airport or harbour there, but you can be driven there quite easily. Oddly, I have made several trips there myself, thanks to my children, friends, family and especially my work.

I would love to go **to Conclusions**, but unfortunately, you have to jump to get there, and I'm not too good on physical activity anymore.

I have also been **in Doubt**. I know that it is a sad place to go, and I try not to visit too often.

I've been **in Flexible**, but only when I felt it was very important to make the trip there.

Sometimes, I'm certain that I've been **in Capable**. I know that I seem to go there more often as I get older and especially over a weekend.

One of my favourite places to be is **in Suspense!** It really, really gets the adrenaline flowing and pumps up the old heart! At my age I need all the stimuli I can get!

I may also have been **in Continent**, but I don't remember what country I was in. They tell me it can be very damp there.

Anon

January Brings The Snow by Sara Coleridge

January brings the snow,
Makes our feet and fingers glow.

February brings the rain,
Thaws the frozen lake again.

March brings breezes sharp and shrill,
Shakes the dancing daffodil.

April brings the primrose sweet,
Scatters daisies at our feet.

May brings flocks of pretty lambs,
Skipping by their fleecy dams.

June brings tulips, lilies, roses,
Fills the children's hands with posies.

Hot July brings cooling showers,
Apricots and gillyflowers.

August brings the sheaves of corn,
Then the harvest home is borne.

Warm September brings the fruit,
Sportsmen then begin to shoot.

Brown October brings the pheasant,
Then to gather nuts is pleasant.

Dull November brings the blast,
Then the leaves go whirling past.

Chill December brings the sleet,
Blazing fire and Christmas treat.

*An alternative version of this poem, by the late, great, **Flanders and Swann** appears on page 7*

Bramhall u3a Information



Alister Macrae
Chairman



Peter Webster
Vice-Chair,
Newsletter & Magazine



Alistair Gardner
Treasurer



Chris Stubbs
Groups



Christine Hollingsworth
Holidays



Bob Dumbarton
Events,
Newsletter & Magazine



Meg Rowell
Minutes
Secretary

Along with: **Helen Webster*** - Speakers; **Dudley Newall*** - Outings; **Kay Witham** - Membership;
Edward Haynes - Community; **Frances Bell** - Theatre; **Jill Rickman** and **Vera Moore**
New committee members for 2021* **Vacancies: Business Secretary + Groups Accommodation Secretary

Your committee for 2021

Contact information

Our website address, for everything u3a, you need to know: www.bramhallu3a.org.uk

Group enquiries: groups@bramhallu3a.org.uk **General enquiries:** enquiries@bramhallu3a.org.uk

Charity items: charities@bramhallu3a.org.uk **Upbeat Magazine:** magazine@bramhallu3a.org.uk

Bramhall u3a - Subscriptions for 2021

Just a reminder that the Committee unanimously agreed that the annual subscription for 2021 will be held at £10. It will not be required to be paid until the end of March 2021.

The membership fee has remained at £10 since Bramhall u3a started in 2010.



One significant development that you may, or may not, have noticed is the new **u3a** logo. Gone is the title 'University of the Third Age', which has been replaced by a simple logo along with new posters and graphics, which will, eventually, be used by all local groups. Already, you will notice that we have adopted the new logo at the head of our Magazine and this will be followed shortly by similar changes to our forms, paperwork and also on our website. This change of logo is the beginning of a much larger drive to promote the organisation nationally, which will gradually take place over the next few months.

Your Bramhall U3A website:

www.bramhallu3a.org.uk/

Or, to contact Stockport Council

The website is:

www.stockport.gov.uk/

or Telephone: **0161 480 4949**

If you can, use the SMBC website.

It is often the fastest and easiest way to access the council.

Use the links to make payments, report issues, make applications and also to find information about council services.

<https://www.stockport.gov.uk/contact>

Check your bin collection days

Please refer to the sheet recently distributed by Stockport MBC
or go to ...

www.stockport.gov.uk/find-your-collection-day

Please put your bins out by 7am

Please share your Upbeat

If you can, please send your magazine on to a friend or 'buddy' who has not yet seen it. Please contact them to chat about it or give them your copy. Or, if you can, print parts of it yourself and post it or give it to them to enjoy. **Its always worth being UPBEAT with others**

Our groups, U3A and general info.

Happy New Year to all our Group Coordinators and members, many of whom persevered during last year's difficult times to keep their groups running.

Let's hope with the promise of vaccination that 2021 sees us back to normality as quickly as possible and we can enjoy face to face meetings and lively conversation in groups once more.

Chris Stubbs Groups Organiser

Art Appreciation group

The next Art Appreciation Group talk will be at 2pm on Wednesday 13 January when Frank Vigon will be speaking on the subject of Political Cartoons.

Kay Witham

Science for All group

The Science for All group has met using Zoom for 10 talks since it recommenced in May. Talks are on the first Wednesday of the month, starting at 2pm. The talks programme for the beginning of 2021 is:

- | | | |
|-------------------|--|--------------------|
| January 6 | Body and Soul – Lucretius and Life Sciences | by Ian Black |
| February 3 | Building HS2 | by Bernie Rowell |
| March 3 | The Solar System and a little of what is beyond | by Martin Whillock |
| April 7 | Fibre and how the internet gets to you | by Brian Wells |

If you would like to join the Group, please email groups@bramhallu3a.org.uk with **Science for All** in the Subject line.

Mike Hollingsworth

North West Region u3a - Tuesday talks

The committee for the North West Region of the U3A has initiated a series of monthly talks, similar to our monthly meetings, using Zoom. **The talks will be held on the second Tuesday of the month starting at 10.30 am.** The program to date is:

January 12 Cyber Security

Dave Carlos, a Lancashire Police volunteer, will provide advice in keeping safe in the digital age.

Gill Russell is planning a Beginner's short course in Japanese starting in January 2021

U3A members from the North West can register for the talks or find further information by going to:

www.u3asites.org.uk/north-west/events.

Please **note: There is probably a limit on numbers so all places may have been taken by the date of publication**

Events from u3a national office

U3A National Office have organised a large number of online talks and short courses on a wide range of subjects. The talks and short courses are frequently updated.

For details and booking go to <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>.

Mike Hollingsworth

Local Libraries - Due to Tier 4 restrictions, local libraries are not open for browsing for books. However, you will be able to return Library items and fines will not be charged, for the foreseeable future. Two methods of borrowing books will be via our current reservation system or contacting us for some Staff Picks. Pre-booked use of Public Network PCs is allowed.

For opening hours go to: <https://stockport.spydus.co.uk/cgi-bin/spydus.exe/MSGTRNGEN/WPAC/LOCATIONHOURS>

Bramhall Library

Bramhall Lane South,
Bramhall,
Stockport,
SK7 2DU

Phone: 0161 217 6009

Email: bramhall.library@stockport.gov.uk

Cheadle Hulme Library

Mellor Road,
Cheadle Hulme,
Stockport,
SK8 5AU

Phone: 0161 217 6009

Email: cheadlehulme.library@stockport.gov.uk

Cheadle Library

23 Ashfield Road,
Cheadle,
Stockport,
SK8 1BB

Phone: 0161 217 6009

Email: cheadle.library@stockport.gov.uk

Quiz Time ... *Answers to all questions are on the back page, but no cheating ...*

Collective Nouns for Birds Submitted by Colleen Worrall

Match the bird with the correct collective noun:

1. Bullfinches	A. Company
2. Crows	B. Exaltation
3. Eagles	C. Quarrel
4. Geese waddling	D. Ostentation
5. Geese flying	E. Party
6. Goldfinches	F. Mischief
7. Jays	G. Charm
8. Kingfishers	H. Convocation
9. Larks	I. Pitying
10. Magpies	J. Unkindness
11. Nightingales	K. Skein
12. Owls	L. Descent
13. Parrots	M. Bellowing
14. Peacocks	N. Crown
15. Ravens	O. Murder
16. Robins	P. Murmuration
17. Sparrows	Q. Gaggle
18. Starlings	R. Watch
19. Turtle doves	S. Ruby
20. Woodpecker	T. Parliament

Some thoughts on being of mature years . . .

'I love having the freedom to do what I want, when I want and not care a darn what anyone thinks. Like the old lady in Jenny Joseph's poem "I shall spend my pension on brandy and summer gloves and no one can stop me".'

Lillian Howard

'I always make a point of starting the day at 6am with a champagne. It goes straight to the heart and cheers one up. White wine won't do. You need the bubbles'.

John Mortimer. Writer and Dramatist

'They say the first thing to go when you are old is your legs or your eyesight. It isn't true. The first thing to go is parallel parking'.

Kurt Vonnegut. Writer

'There are three signs of old age. Loss of memory . . . I forget the other two'.

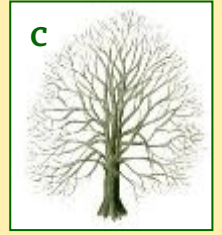
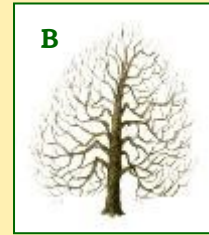
Red Skelton. Actor

'You know you are getting older when the candles cost more than the cake'.

Bob Hope. Entertainer

Winter Tree Outlines Submitted by Colleen Worrall

Match the bare tree outlines with the tree name:



Choose from: Lime, Alder, Horse Chestnut, Silver Birch, Sycamore, Beech, Ash, English Oak, Rowan & Hawthorn.



On a lighter note ...



Your Eye Test



A man goes to the Optician for his annual eye test. The Optician puts a contraption on his face, and asks him what he can see. "I see empty Airports and empty Football grounds" he says. "I see closed theatres, closed pubs, closed Restaurants" That's perfect says the Optician, you've got 2020 vision.

EXERCISE FOR PEOPLE OVER 60

Begin by standing on a comfortable surface, where you have plenty of room at each side.

With a 5-lb potato bag in each hand, extend your arms straight out from your sides and hold them there as long as you can. Try to reach a full minute, and then relax.

Each day you'll find that you can hold this position for just a bit longer.

After a couple of weeks, move up to 10-lb potato bags. Then try 50-lb potato bags and eventually try to get to where you can lift a 100-lb potato bag in each hand and hold your arms straight for more than a full minute. (I'm at this level).

After you feel confident at that level, put a potato in each bag.



Self testing for Covid-19.

Pour a measure of whisky, gin or rum into a glass, then see if you can smell it. If you can, then drink it and if you can taste it it's reasonable to assume you currently free of the virus.

I tested myself nine times last night and was virus-free each time, thank goodness. I will test myself again today because I have developed a headache which can also be a symptom.

Not More Cracker jokes ... mercy please?

What is Dominic Cummings' favourite Christmas song?

Driving Home for Christmas.

Why are Santa's reindeer allowed to travel on Christmas Eve?

They have herd immunity.

Why is it best to think of 2020 like a panto?

Because eventually, it's behind you.

Why can't Boris Johnson make his Christmas cake until the last minute?

He doesn't know how many tiers it should have.

Why couldn't Mary and Joseph join their work conference call?

Because there was no Zoom at the inn.

Why did the pirates have to go into lockdown?

Because the "Arrrr!" rate had risen.

The other **January Brings The Snow** by Flanders and Swann

To listen to them perform it, go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1qV-VO5eXOA>

January brings the snow,

Makes your feet and fingers glow.

February's ice and sleet,

Freeze the toes right off your feet.

Welcome, March, with wint'ry wind,

Would thou weren't not so unkind.

April brings the sweet spring showers,

On and on for hours and hours.

Farmers fear unkindly May,

Frost by night and hail by day.

June just rains and never stops,
Thirty days and spoils the crops.

In July the sun is hot,

Flanders: Is it shining?

Swann: No it's not!

Both: August, cold and dank and wet,
Brings more rain than any yet.

Bleak September's mist and mud,
Is enough to chill the blood.

Then October adds a gale,
Wind and slush and rain and hail.

Dark November brings the fog,
Should not do it to a dog.

Freezing wet December, then...

Both: bloody January again!

Both: (January brings the snow),
(Makes your feet and fingers glow)

The original version by Sarah Coleridge is on page 3

Sentinel



Sentinel has been both my name and my role for some five hundred years. I am a majestic, gnarled, widely spreading oak tree, providing shelter and sustenance to a myriad living creatures. I first saw light of day in a balmy Spring, part of a thinly wooded area where wild flowers bloomed, foxes hunted and smaller animals took refuge.

My first human contact came when I was a mere sapling. A fine young man approached, dressed richly in doublet and hose, with a brocaded cloak flying from his shoulders. He dismounted, looked around him, paced what appeared to be a rough measurement then departed at a gallop. I later learned that he had found favour with our capricious

monarch, one Henry Tudor, and had been given land and means to build a fine house. I watched it grow nearby, with sturdy walls and mullioned windows.

As the years passed, I grew to impressive proportions, as did that same young man, following his great king's habits of excess. I witnessed the arrival of a shy, pretty lady, a lively wedding day and subsequent numerous progeny. I also had the pleasure of providing climbing practice for each son in turn, as I grew to a useful height and strength. A great keeper of secrets, I was privileged to offer a trysting place for clandestine meetings and even a furtively stolen kiss or two in my leafy privacy.

As generation succeeded generation, I became a landmark, even giving my name to the house as it was known locally: Sentinel Oak Hall. The family grew in importance, becoming courtiers, advisers and intimates of successive monarchs, until the monarchy's darkest day dawned and Charles Stuart was beheaded, power passing into the hands of a strong parliament led by Oliver Cromwell. As may be expected, the family were Royalists to the core. During the turbulent years of the Civil War, I stood firm, a representative of a bygone era.

However, the youngest daughter of the house risked all by falling head-over-heels in love with the son of a neighbour, scion of a strict Puritan family, ardent supporters of the Parliamentary cause. I ached in my wooden heart to see their snatched encounters, frequently in the shelter of my drooping branches. I bear to this day the distorted scar of their names carved in my bark, this being the only remaining testimony to a doomed love affair. Needless to say, that sweet child was given in an arranged marriage to another Royalist family, who, like mine, returned to glory at the Restoration.

Many years later, the house passed to a cousin of the family when, during the reign of George of Hanover, an only son died childless. A settled period of several decades passed and I had become something of a talisman to the family. The legend took hold that, as long as I stood, no harm could befall them. It was, of course, a source of great pride to me, but with the experience of a couple of centuries behind me, I knew better than to believe too whole-heartedly.

During the reign of the third George, the second son of the family, a dashing cavalryman, went to fight in the Americas in that chaotic war when we lost one of our most precious colonies. It was a disturbing time for all the landed aristocracy, particularly when the French monarchy was toppled. I was party to many agonised conversations as friends endlessly discussed the strange times in which they were living. I also absorbed the tears which fell when the news finally reached home that our handsome hussar had met an heroic end defending British interests in that faraway place. I doubt his mother ever recovered.

A strange few years ensued when the lord of the house fell under the influence of the dissolute court of the fourth George. Wild gambling parties took place in the now much enlarged, elegant house built around that ancient, loved, original building. Drunken men would stagger towards me, one even walking straight into my now wide and very visible trunk. I feared for the prosperity of the family, as vast sums of money were wagered on trivial events. The threat of financial disaster loomed, when miraculously, an eldest son inherited and took on the task of restoring their fortune.

I was unaware that beneath our beautiful, green lands lay huge reserves of coal. As the Industrial Revolution took hold, this source of previously unimaginable wealth rebuilt the fortunes of a near-annihilated dynasty. While I was much relieved by this, I was equally heart-broken to see the destruction of our glorious landscape. Black pit-heads were served by blackened, emaciated miners and green acres became a thing of the past. I became increasingly fearful for my own existence, as woodland and pasture were swallowed up in the quest for

the black gold. However, by great good fortune, I stand quite close to the house and Milady did not wish her view to be spoiled. I was quite definitely large enough to block out any unfortunate sights.

I had nearly four hundred years to my credit, when catastrophe struck again. The greatest, most brutal war yet to be conducted in the name of liberty crashed in on the family. Such strange times. Once again, tragedy struck, when two precious sons did not return, one from Gallipoli and the younger from Passchendaele. Our beautiful house became a hospital for wounded servicemen and, once again I grieved for the vulnerability of the human species and marvelled at their heroism and fortitude. I also had the great pleasure of watching romance blossom between a daughter of the house, now a nurse in her own home-hospital, and a kind, quietly charming soldier who passed through the house while recovering from an injury to his leg. He survived the carnage and I provided a backdrop for photographs of their joyous wedding celebrations. Once again, I was considered to be a good luck charm, a role I devoutly hoped I deserved.

The years gathered about me and, while I was still impressively strong and full of vigour, I could feel my huge trunk emptying and the occasional branch peeling off. I loved the Spring, when the sap flowed through me and my dusting of tender leaves appeared. Fruitful Autumn held its own rewards, when children came to collect acorns and the jays took full advantage of their abundance.

The twenty-first century brought a sad end to our glorious manor house. It was simply too expensive to preserve after the imposition of death duties and during the austere years after that second great conflict. The ancient and noble family dispersed, the house crumbled and was finally deemed unsafe; I was left as the sole reminder that this was once the focal point of many lives.

I believe some form of transport network is to pass through here, costing many millions to our country. I fear that my precious preservation order may have to be waived . . .

Helen Webster

An indulgent but tasty winter warmer

Submitted by Colleen Worrall

Pear and Chocolate Oat Crumble

Ingredients:

- 4 large, ripe pears
- Half a lemon
- 30 grams butter
- 50 grams golden caster sugar

For the crumble:

- 120 grams plain or self-raising flour
- 60 grams oats
- 90 grams butter
- 90 grams demerara sugar
- 100 grams dark chocolate
(70%/80% cocoa)

Please note: Apples work equally well in this dish, as might drained tinned pears



Method:

- Set the oven to 180 degrees/gas mark 4.
- Peel the pears, rubbing each one with the lemon to prevent any discolouring.
- Cut them in half and discard the stalks.
- Scoop out the core with a spoon.
- Melt the butter for the pears in a shallow pan, tip in the pears and caster sugar.
- Let the pears colour slightly and the sugar caramelise here and there..
- Tip the pear mixture into a suitable baking dish.
- Make the crumble by rubbing the butter into the flour, until the mixture has a fine crumb.
- Stir in the demerara sugar and oats.
- Chop the chocolate into small pieces, then fold in through the crumble.
- Tip the mixture over the pears, leaving the surface quite rough.
- Bake for up to twenty-five minutes, or until lightly coloured.
- Serve with custard or pouring cream.
- Serves four to six.



A Much Travelled Chairman

About four months ago, Bob Dumbarton told us about some of his world travels. I thought I've been to most of those places too, over the years.

My first trip abroad was courtesy of the RAF when they posted me to Germany. I enjoyed the country very much and came across my first nudist beach. I also hitch-hiked to Denmark one weekend.

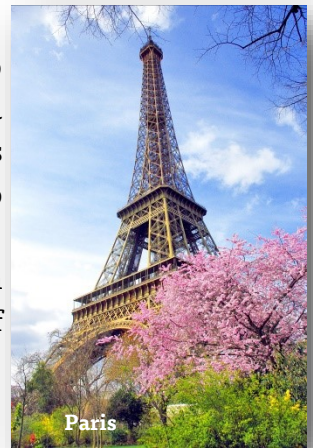
When demobbed I joined the Foreign Office. They sent me on the Orient Express to Belgrade which was the capital of the then Yugoslavia. It was in the Embassy there that I met the girl who was to become my wife. As it wasn't behind the Iron Curtain, we were free to travel all over and did so, although we were much followed.



Vienna Rathaus Keller

Rather than come all the way home on leave, we drove to Trieste in Italy quite often and one year to Limone sul Garda. Another time we drove to Venice for a holiday. We drove to Athens one Easter. Another holiday saw us drive to Vienna where, thanks to advice from Embassy staff, we had a wonderful evening in the Rathaus Keller with the locals and no tourists. I still have the wine dispenser we bought.

We came home on leave and got married in St Mary's in Cheadle. Maud, my wife had to resign because the Foreign Office didn't employ married women in those days. She got a small dowry from them, though. After our honeymoon on Scotland we were sent to Paris for the next 2½ years. I didn't know that we knew so many people until then. We had so many visitors it wasn't true and became expert guides to all the sights in Paris and Versailles. Once more, we often holidayed in France and Europe. I lost a small fortune in the casino at Monaco but became quite a good croupier and had my own roulette set. If you've never been to Brittany, it's well worth a visit.

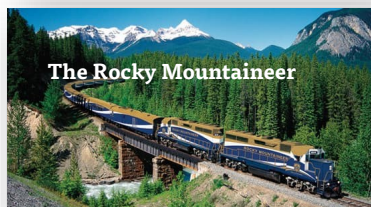


Paris



Khorramshahr

Our next posting took us to Iran. I became a junior vice-consul in a place at the top of the Persian Gulf called Khorramshahr. We drove some 3742 miles to get there from London. It was not far from Basra which was across the River Shatt Al-Arab, the Tigris and Euphrates joined together. We got used to temperatures of 128°F (53c). Unlike all the other expats there, I had to wear a suit and tie! We visited Basra, Tehran, Shiraz and best of all, Persepolis.



The Rocky Mountaineer

I next transferred to the Home Civil Service and thereafter our travels became holiday ones. Like Bob, we loved New Zealand and if it wasn't so far from anywhere would have been happy to settle there.



New Zealand



Machu Picchu

All told I've visited some 48 different countries, some of them more than once. I won't list them all

but some of the highlights have been crossing the Bridge over the River Kwai on a Christmas morning, riding in the Rocky Mountaineer train over the Canadian Rockies, exploring The Taj Mahal in India, going on safari in South Africa, climbing Ayer's Rock in Australia, riding the cable cars in San Francisco, seeing Machu Picchu, touring Cuba, Egypt, China and Peru. And, I've got, slides, ciné film and video recordings to remind me of all of them. I even get asked from time to time to give a video show to friends and groups.



The Taj Mahal

Alaister McCrae

Supporting our nominated charities

Bramhall U3A has two nominated charities. **St Ann's Hospice** and **The Wellspring**. Both charities are still operating normally but are struggling with funding as the Covid-19 restrictions mean that the majority of sources of income have all but stopped. Donations are now more important than ever and can be made, directly to them, via their websites or by phone

The Wellspring **web:** <https://thewellspring.co.uk/> **t. 0161 477 6344**
Project Opening Hours: Monday to Friday: 8am – 4pm + Saturday & Sunday: 8am – 3pm

(This information is taken from the TheWellspring website)

Following the government announcement, we will continue to operate but are unable to accept new volunteers or clothing donations for the time being. Unfortunately, we are postponing our annual Rucksack Project in line with guidance and will reschedule this as soon as possible.

We are still accepting food donations.

Other Items needed: Spare PPE, Cleaning products, Disinfectant, Toilet rolls, Cleaning cloths, Toiletries, Mobile phones, Carrier bags. ***They would like to thank all of you for your continued generosity and support.***

St Ann's Hospice **web:** <https://www.sah.org.uk> **t. 0161 498 9640**

The impact of Coronavirus on the hospice has already been huge. Our nurses, doctors and other staff have been working around the clock on the front line, and adapting our services to ensure that patients and their families can access the care they need at an extremely vulnerable time in their life.

We've not only seen a rise in the need for our services across Greater Manchester, but we've also seen a significant financial impact too. Many of our fundraising events and activities have been postponed or cancelled, our shops forced to closed and large numbers of businesses who also support our work have been closed or unable to do so. We currently face a £1m funding gap for the year.

If you can do one, two, or all of these things, it really will help us to support patients and families who need our specialist care at a very vulnerable time in their life. ***Thank you for your support*** (The above information is taken from the St Ann's website)

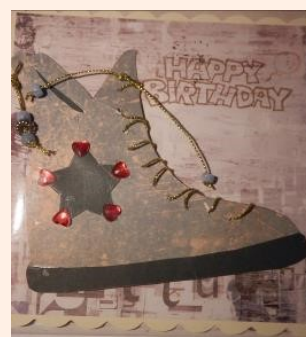
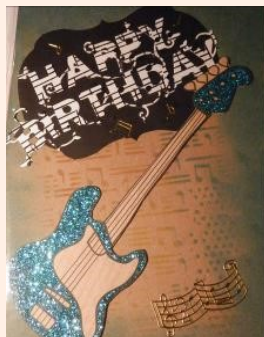
The Card Group

We are pleased to let you know that we have been able to donate £482.15 to “The Wellspring” from cards sold during 2020.

Hope you like our “new” designs. They are aimed at teenagers & young men, but men of any age would love the shirt card.

Wishing you all a happy & healthy New Year from

Chris D, Jill, Avril & Chris W.



Our card delivery service is a great success.

We are so grateful to all those who have ordered cards from us, as it means we can continue to support our nominated charity, **The Wellspring**.

We have decided to make this a regular service, so that people who do not attend monthly meetings where we have a stall, can still benefit from getting our hand-made cards. Many thanks to you all.

Jill Rickman - Card Making

charities@bramhallu3a.org.uk



The Back Page

The North Wind

The north wind doth blow,
And we shall have snow,
And what will the robin do then, Poor thing?
He'll sit in a barn,
And keep himself warm,
And hide his head under his wing, Poor thing!

The north wind doth blow,
And we shall have snow,
And what will the swallow do then, Poor thing?
Oh, do you not know
That he's off long ago,
To a country where he will find spring, Poor thing!

The north wind doth blow,
And we shall have snow,
And what will the dormouse do then, Poor thing?
Roll'd up like a ball
In his nest snug and small
He'll sleep till warm weather comes in, Poor thing!

The north wind doth blow,
And we shall have snow,
And what will the honeybee do then, Poor thing?
In his hive he will stay
Till the cold is away
And then he'll come out in the spring, Poor thing!

The north wind doth blow,
And we shall have snow,
And what will the children do then, Poor things?
When lessons are done
They will skip, jump and run,
Until they have made themselves warm, Poor things!

Anon

Collective Nouns for Birds - Answers:

1 M,	2 O,	3 H,	4 Q,	5 K,
6 G,	7 E,	8 N,	9 B,	10 F,
11 R,	12 T,	13 A,	14 D,	15 J,
16 S,	17 C,	18 P,	19 I,	20 L

Winter tree outlines - Answers:

A Sycamore; B Horse Chestnut; C Beech;
D Rowan; E Lime; F English oak; G Alder;
H Ash; I Silver Birch; J Hawthorn.



Weather Folklore - true or false?

We always used to say, 'It's too cold to snow'.

False!

Well, it is true for Antarctica and sometimes for the middle of large continents, far away from the relatively warm ocean. However, we have the Gulf Stream to warm us and in fact we have to get down to -20degreesC before it is in fact 'too cold to snow'. At very cold temperatures, there will be very little evaporation from rivers or lakes, so the air will be very dry and so, unlikely to snow.

'If a circle forms round the moon, 'twill rain or snow soon'.

True!

A circle, corona or halo around the sun or moon is an indication of very high cloud (cirrostratus). This can be a sign that a rain- or snow-bearing front is on its way.

Another version of this saying is **'When halo rings moon or sun, snow's approaching on the run'.**