

Bowsden Bugle

October 2020

Welcome to the fourth Bugle of Lockdown, reporting news and views relating to life in Bowsden and district in these days of restricted social activity. Published by the Editor every two months, the Bugle is an independent news-sheet seeking to inform its readers and reflect their opinions. Contributions from readers are always welcome and this month we feature more from Bowsden resident Claire Smith .

The December Bugle should be published in late November so please let the Editor have any material by Friday 27th (phone 01289 388 543 or e-mail hgew13@gmail.com)

What we now know as Covid-19 has produced over 30 million cases world-wide with nearly a million recorded deaths to date. Although it is clearly the biggest challenge to health and social care in living memory, we should remember that the so-called Spanish flu in 1918-20 claimed over 50 million deaths worldwide, including 675,000 in the USA. It was estimated that some 500 million people were infected, about one third of the then world population.

It is hard to predict what will happen in this country with the number of new cases now rising rapidly. Two weeks ago, **new local restrictions** were imposed in the North East banning socialising with others outside one's own household or support bubble in private houses and gardens, restricting hospitality venues to table service only and requiring bars, pubs, restaurants, cafes and other leisure and entertainment venues to close between 10pm and 5am. Now the Government has made most of these applicable to all of England but has stepped back from a ban on socialising outside one's own household (although apparently there was some support for making this nationwide too).

Some Really Good News, more than welcome in these straitened times. The Editor has great pleasure in announcing **the birth of Bowsden's newest resident**, Scarlett Evelyn Isabel born on 25th August to Sandy and Selina Kerr of Applesteads. It is several years since we had a baby in the Village and I'm sure we all wish baby Scarlett and her proud parents the very best for the future. We might even be able to raise a glass in the Bowsden Arms whenever Lockdown regulations can be relaxed.

The Village Hall Trustees have closed the Village Hall to all activities until further notice as Bugle readers will know. Despite some relaxation in Lockdown restrictions, the position of the Trustees remains the same and Café Bowsden and the Bowsden Arms remain closed. There will be no more Community Lunches for the foreseeable future and the various Village Clubs and Societies are unable to meet in the Hall. The Annual Meeting of the Trustees has been postponed and they continue de facto in office until this can be held.

Bowsden Parish Council held their Annual General Meeting on Monday 3rd August. As the Village Hall was not available, the meeting was held in the open air in Bowsden Hall farmyard, courtesy of farmer Richard Cockcroft.

The main purpose of the delayed meeting was to adopt the Governance Statement and Accounts for 2019-20. The Election of Officers was deferred to the next Ordinary meeting as the Chairman and Vice-Chairman agreed to continue in office until then.

The Demise of the Bowsden Black Bull was almost inevitable when Northumberland County Council suspended sittings of its Local Area Councils in March. This meant an application to demolish the 200 year old building and build two four/five bedroom houses on the plot was decided by the Strategic Planning Committee (County-wide membership with minimal local input). Sadly the application was passed by 15 votes to 1 and so the Black Bull will be no more, probably sooner rather than later.

An Introduction to Forest Gardening was written by Bowsden resident Claire Smith and published in the August Bugle. Since then Claire writes:

Following on from my last article, there has been a bit of interest in the group. One comment I have heard a few times is that not everyone is on Facebook. So, in order to make the Group as accessible to as many people as possible, I will try a different approach. From 1st November I will send out an e-mail once a month to let everyone in the Group know what is available. So if anyone else wishes to join, just send me your e-mail address and you will be included in the list.

The list will be sent out on the first of every month, if anyone has any plants or seeds to swap or if you are looking for anything just contact me and I can add them to the monthly e-mail. We hope that at some time in the future we might be able to organise garden meet-ups or foraging walks as well as sharing tips on preserving, seed saving, pruning etc.

I have recently saved some Angelica Sylvestris (wild angelica) seed from the garden and hope soon to be given some Myrrhis Ordorata (sweet cicely). Both require a period of cold stratification to simulate their natural conditions and will need to be sown in the autumn. If you have any seeds similar to this that you want to share or learn more about, please get in touch.

I can be contacted on claire.smith@manx.net

The Anglican Church (St. John the Baptist) in Lowick was closed during Lockdown but recently the Churchwardens have been able to re-open the building for a fortnightly service at 10.00a.m. The next services will be on 4th October (the Harvest Festival) led by Revd. Marion Penfold followed by Revd. Frank Holt on October 18th.

Coffee in the Park unfazed by the continuing unavailability of the Village Hall, the Sim family obtained permission from the Parish Council to hold an open air coffee morning in the newly-restored Bowsden Park on Saturday 5th September. Luckily the weather was kind and despite the short notice people turned up in a steady stream from the opening at 10.00 a.m. Tables were spaced out and were cleaned each time guests left to enable new arrivals to take their place and enjoy the delicious scones and cakes, all prepared by Sue and John Sim and family. The event was held to raise funds for the Macmillan Nurses and, together with the proceeds of a raffle collected a magnificent £439.60.

Thanks to all who came and gave generously, thanks also to all who could not come but left a donation but above all thanks to the Sim family who organised the whole event, setting out the Park, preparing the food, collecting raffle prizes and clearing up afterwards.

Quarantine is a word very familiar to travellers at this time and doubtless we will be hearing it more frequently in the next few months as we try to control the spread of the Corona virus. Derived from the Italian *quaranta* or forty, it translates as *quarantena* meaning a period of restricted movement.

The West Coast Fires are burning from California to Washington and are probably the most damaging that have ever happened. To enable Bugle readers put the TV images in perspective, we have reprinted an e-mail sent to the Editor two weeks ago by one of his American friends. Living in Springfield, Oregon the friend writes:

This week, starting on Tuesday, the Holiday Farm fire started east of us up the McKenzie River and quickly expanded to cover 160,000 acres. It is still 0% contained. Normally they would have about 1000 firefighters on the line but as of now the number is about 200. Two small towns up the river have been severely hit, one of them completely destroyed. Many evacuees are at locations in Springfield with many donations of supplies and money pouring in. There are supposed to be National Guard troops trained in firefighting coming in this weekend.

The fire spread so rapidly because of drought conditions and severe Easterlies coming over the Cascade range to the east. The winds have now died down and are expected to pick up in the opposite direction and some rain is expected on Tuesday and Wednesday. The air here is very smokey and visibility is cut to less than half a mile. It makes breathing difficult and the eyes sting. It is in the house also and the area is covered in ash.

We are about five to ten miles from the fire with little possibility of it reaching us at this stage but we have packed valuables ready to go if needed. The authorities have three levels of evacuation, basically get ready, set, go but we are not in an area listed so far. We have kept Aggie (their cat) in the house but she is not a particularly happy camper.

When we read these words, we were struck by their relatively optimistic tone and wondered how we would feel if deadly fires were burning as close to us as Wooler.

The New Web Site for Bowsden provides easier access to information about Village Hall events and activities and about Bowsden Parish Council as well as copies of the two most recent Bowsden Bugles. More information is available on www.bowsdenvillagehall.net or from the Webmaster Pamela Brewis on pebrewis@gmail.com

The Symptoms of Covid-19 have some similarities to other viral infections such as the common cold or flu. A useful symptoms comparison table was published in The Times on 17th August 2020 and is reproduced below for the convenience of Bugle readers:

Symptom	Covid-19	Cold	Flu
Fever	Common	Rare	Common
Loss of taste or smell	Common	Sometimes	Sometimes
Cough	Common	Mild	Common
Fatigue	Sometimes	Sometimes	Common
Sneezing	No	Common	No
Aches and Pains	Sometimes	Common	Common
Runny or Stuffy Nose	Rare	Common	Sometimes
Sore Throat	Sometimes	Common	Sometimes
Headache	Sometimes	Rare	Common
Shortness of Breath	Sometimes	No	No

Do you have a Smart Meter ? A reader has asked if Smart Meters work in Bowsden bearing in mind our generally poor mobile phone signals in the village. Comments please to the Editor hgew13@gmail.com

Good Neighbours always emerge in times of trouble and Covid-19 has certainly brought out many examples of selfless acts. **Jane Pannell** and her stalwart team from Lowick and district who provided both the catalyst and means of delivery now remind us that there is still work to do. We should still be looking out for friends and neighbours who may be confined to their homes and putting them in touch with one of the many volunteers who are only too ready to help. Here in Bowsden, **Julie Gibbs** (388 950), **Chris Jackson** (07889 169 513) and **Graeme Reavley** (388 206) are the first contacts for those seeking help.

If you are involved in helping others, take a look at the following advice from Emma Richardson, Northumberland County Council lead on Covid-19:

- Volunteers should pay full regard to the Hands, Face, Space messaging
- Volunteers should not enter households and shopping etc should be handed over with social distancing in place
- Meetings with others outside of own households are not permitted. Social activities such as walk and talk should be virtual or by telephone
- Where volunteers attend a workplace such as food distribution, social distance guidance must be followed
- Volunteers should continue to be champions and share good information with and provide reassurance to our communities

Any queries about these guidelines should be directed first to Jane Pannell (388 321)

Are you Missing Out ? Would you like to join the ranks of those who use on-line access to talk to relatives and friends ? Or do you want to be able to have on-line access to accounts or other services ? If you could be shown how, would you be interested ? If a number of you are interested, it may be possible to arrange something. **Contact Jane Pannell** (388-321) for a chatno commitment, just an expression of interest.

Better news from the US West Coast following on from the previous page, the Editor has just heard from his friend in Oregon that the imminent danger from fire has passed. He writes: *We have had over an inch of rain this past week. This has cleared the air of the heavy smoke and has rinsed the ash off the plants and hard surfaces. The house still has traces of smoke but it is getting much better ... the fires have had several causes the major component being climate change with warmer winters (more bark beetles surviving to destroy trees), more droughts and more easterly winds heating the air passing through the river valleys.*

Toby's Tailpiece (a dog's eye view of the world) written by Leo and Freya, two Dalmatians who live with the Editor and his wife in Bowsden (established readers will know that this column is named in memory of Toby, our black Labrador friend who died in May 2018 aged 15). Sadly we have lost three more of our canine friends in the last few months, two whose owners had moved away from the Village and one whom we still saw every day. He was Max the Akita, a gentle giant owned by Michael Inglis. The others were Kit the Border Collie owned by David and Norma Wilson and Millie the Bernese Mountain Dog owned by Howard and Carrie Culley. All were much loved and all will be much missed.