



Lockdown Times



Hello Everyone,

As I write this we are waiting for new guidance from the Government about further restrictions to prevent the spread of Covid 19.

All being well, we plan to re-open Hello on Wednesday 7th October at 2 pm and Thursday October 8th at 3pm at Christ Church Hall.

You should already have received a letter giving all the details. Please remember that your health is our top priority. We are taking all the precautions we can, but if you have any doubts about rejoining us please talk to your doctor, family and friends.

After examining all the pros and cons, the Hello Board decided that for many people getting out of their home, in safe and hygienic surroundings, was really important during this period of uncertainty and lockdown. We all need to talk to people.

But, it is your decision. Think carefully.

Best Wishes,
Heather

Heather Honour
29 the Ridgway
SM2 5JX
07790 031764
heather.honour@sky.com.

CAN YOU LIMERICK?

Richard Clifton, one of our local councillors, wondered whether we had thought of printing limericks in our newsletter. Why not?

The origin of the limerick is unknown, but it has been suggested that the name derives from the chorus of an 18th-century Irish soldiers' song, "Will You Come Up to Limerick?"

The first two are from Richard and the third from me (Heather). Please have a go yourselves and let me have them. We will ask Richard to choose a winner who will receive a box of chocolates.

*There was a young lady from Cheam
Whose exploits just had to be seen
Though wearing a mask
She completed her task
Of eating some strawberries and cream.*

*You know I'm not one to complain
But really it is such a pain
I used ZOOM to speak
To my folks twice a week
Now technology's failed me again.*

*There was a young lady from Sutton
Who lunched out on roast beef and Mutton
She said", I've a hunch;
That this beautiful lunch
Must make me a terrible glutton*

LOOK OUT! LOOK OUT! THERE'RE SCAMMERS ABOUT

Anne Lamb

As you are probably aware the concession for free TV licences for all over 75s has now been withdrawn and you will be required to pay the license fee. It is still free to those in receipt of pension credit or 50 per cent if registered blind/ severely sight impaired.

By now you've probably received the official letter by post and a booklet explaining it clearly and outlining ways to pay. If you have already made your payment, apologies for old news.

Unfortunately there are people out there who see us as easy prey. Notifications by post, phone or email can be very convincing and it's easy to get taken in by scams. So be on your guard and if you can look at the Age UK website: www.ageuk.org.uk/sutton/



The most common scams are by email, known as phishing, where scammers send bogus emails pretending to be from a respectable organisation or a friend. If you've received such an email (I have but it was clearly a scam) **DO NOT RESPOND**, just delete and don't give any bank details. One Hello member has a capable friend who sadly had her bank account cleaned out by a very convincing TV licence scam.

Oddly enough, whilst writing this piece a letter arrived from Mascot who provide personal alarms. A person purporting to be a member of the team had contacted a customer to try and obtain details regarding payments and bank accounts.

They give this advice:

- Do not engage with people, even if you know it is a scam. Just hang up
- Never ring back numbers left on messages, always look up the number on the internet or old bill
- Do not give any personal info such as confirming passwords/ DOB/ Passwords
- Never give financial information, ring your bank if you have
- The Police will NEVER call you asking to help with an investigation
- Only scammers will place pressure on you to make a decision and make payment there and then.

CHARLOTTE'S BAD MORNING

A SHORT STORY BY FRAN WILSON

Charlotte opened her eyes and stretched luxuriously. She loved Saturdays. She turned her head slightly and looked at the clock on her bedside table. 7.58 am. The time she would normally have caught her train to Fenchurch Street station. She thought about how she would spend the day; perhaps she could take her niece to the park in the morning, treat herself to lunch and then go shopping.

Then she looked at the letters preceding the number – MON. The glowing green letters seemed to pulse and mock her. With a loud squeak she leapt out of bed, caught her foot in the duvet cover and ended up on her backside on the floor.

With a muttered ouch following her into the bathroom she took a 2 minute shower and an even quicker brush of her teeth, dressed in her work clothes, her flattest shoes and with a final quick brush of her hair rushed downstairs. “No time for breakfast” she thought as she grabbed her bag and her keys and left her flat.

Running as fast as she could she passed the building site at the end of her road and with a faint thought of surprise that the builders weren't working she rushed to cross the road opposite the station.

Waiting for the lights to change she suddenly felt someone fiddling with her clothes behind her. She turned and found her next-door-but-one neighbour, old Mrs. Carpenter, who wheezing slightly said “Charlotte, your skirt is tucked up in your knickers!” Blushing Charlotte thanked her and told her she was late for work. “...but Charlotte” cried Mrs. Carpenter, but Charlotte was gone.

She managed to catch the 8.45 train by the skin of her teeth, thinking it was odd that she managed to get a seat. She spent the time in the train thinking what she could use as an excuse for being so late to work, but eventually decided just to tell the truth.

Reaching the office she grabbed the door handle and pushed – nothing. Frowning she tried again, but it wouldn't open. Cursing under her breath she retrieved her phone from her bag and phoned the office number. “Come on, come on, Sarah, answer the phone” she muttered. There was a click on the line and Charlotte said “Oh Sarah I'm so late – please come down and open the “ but a disembodied voice interrupted her, and with mingled feelings of horror and relief she heard

“YOU HAVE REACHED THE OFFICES OF FARMER, SCHUSTER & BELL, SOLICITORS. THIS OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED ON BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY, 31ST AUGUST”!



Covid Summer Holiday

Ann Lambe

What are the things you're missing most with this interminable Covid? Well, as I write this, it is summer, and going on holiday featured high on my list together with my weekly swim. Then I got the chance at the end of July to go to Portugal for a week, staying in the family apartment with my 21yr old grandson. I took my first wary plunge in the pool and found I could still swim, what bliss!

Won't you have breakfast dear?

It was a lovely week, which went all too quickly, but not without its small problems; there was some age adjustment to do. It would seem students don't go to bed at night or get up in the morning. Half the day could be gone before Lou emerged. What ever happened to breakfast together?



Well I was happy with my book and the pool to myself, some pampering at a local salon, nice walks. I could really chill out and Covid seemed like a distant memory. Tourist numbers were well down so it all felt pretty safe. Eating out was usually an al fresco event and we were often the only customers. Lou loved to order exotic cocktails for his grandmother; impoverished students have grand ideas!

Airports aren't what they used to be!

There were a few surprises at the airport; things had become automated since I last flew. Picture a somewhat bleary eyed lady of advanced years arriving at Heathrow at 6am and finding it's all DIY from now on: checking in your suitcase (make sure its not too heavy to lift on the belt yourself) and as for passport control! As everybody else shoots through, I watch what they do and try to look savvy but whatever I do nothing happens. Turns out I have a knack for choosing the scanner that's not working.

Form filling

Otherwise all went well: flights dead on time, lots of empty seats. I returned back to UK with Lou in tow. The plane was half empty so we had whole row to ourselves and plenty of time to fill out the dreaded on-line quarantine form.

Lou got me started before concentrating on his own but I'd forgotten there would be no wi-fi in flight. That got me thinking what happens if you have no smart phone ,I do know such people, is it now a requirement before you take to the air? Why couldn't they issue a hard copy for those less IT literate?

Anyway we arrived at HR and it would appear that the form was actually several annoying virtual pages long. Who writes these things? Well Lou managed to complete his eventually and was adamant that they wouldn't let me through without it.

Or rather, not filling in the form!

Everybody else from the flight had disappeared, it was very late, I was tired and said I'd take my chance. Well the

airport was pretty deserted and there was nobody to bother so I'm ashamed to say just walked through and never did complete it and spent the next 2 weeks waiting for the call which didn't come.

Oh dear - how did I become this petulant, law breaking oldie! Don't get me wrong - I'm 100% COVID careful but

My Lockdown Project

Hannah Witkowska

One of the project suggestions for Hello Arts & Crafts was "Through a Window" and I thought I could work with that and, as a bonus if finished, it could double up for or "Crafting a Village" exhibition project. My preferred medium for crafts is using fabric.

Next, inspiration required so I spent several hours looking at pictures on the Internet and decided on something I thought I could do if I simplified it a bit: a beautiful view through a deep stone aperture to a stained glass window in soft shades of grey and brown.

Colour is my guiding principle, if I do not like the colours I am going to use I will not do it. So, again, time spent on finding the fabrics that could do the job; some from my stash and a few from sellers on the Internet.

So what's next?

In this case it seemed to be how complicated could I make this for myself! I really do seem to be a glutton for punishment and it is a good delaying tactic anyway.

I decided that I would try to incorporate several different techniques so that it would stretch my abilities. Instead of a

standard patchwork wall hanging I would try to embellish it with ideas from other projects I have completed and collage.

Also being a complete wimp this might allow me to ditch the idea that the piece would have to be quilted. I have discovered that I do prefer the method of quilting called "Quilt by Cheque". Meaning that I am happy to pay someone to do the annoying quilting rather than leave an item finished except for the quilting, backing and finishing of the item. I have several UFOs (Un-Finished Objects) in my possession to support this idiosyncrasy.

The method of patchwork that I am most comfortable with is English Paper Piecing. A piece of thick paper or thin card is wrapped around with fabric; glued or tacked with thread and then sewn together with other pieces of wrapped card to make yet another piece of fabric and once all the papers have been removed that can be made up into a finished item: bedspread, wall hanging or cushion cover; the list is endless. And so to my greatest amazement- I finished it.



**IT IS NEVER TOO EARLY
AND WE NEED SOMETHING TO LOOK
FORWARD TO!**

Isabel Evans

Christmas cake

This is a cake which is lighter in colour than a standard Christmas cake, and has a greater variety of dried fruit. It uses 1kg of dried fruit or nuts, but the exact mix can be adapted to taste or availability. It is adapted from a recipe by Delia Smith.

As a guideline, this would include 250g of sultanas and 100 – 150g each of crystallised pineapple, dried apricots, glace cherries, crystallised ginger, candied peel, dried cranberries, walnuts or pecans, or any other dried fruit you like. Fruit needs to be cut to about the same size as the sultanas, and nuts chopped fairly finely.

250g butter
250g soft light brown sugar
4 large eggs
100g ground almonds
250g plain flour
Grated rinds of 1 orange and 1 lemon
1 tbsp lemon juice
3 tbsp brandy or rum
1kg of fruit – see above.
Set oven to 170°, gas mark 3.

Grease a 20cm tin, and line with a double thickness of greaseproof paper. For extra

protection you can wrap brown paper or newspaper round the outside of the tin.

Cream the butter and sugar together till light and fluffy.

Whisk eggs and beat in gradually.

Fold in the ground almonds, lemon juice and brandy, followed by the flour, grated rinds and fruit.

Place mixture in tin and level the top. Place below centre of oven and bake for 1 hour, then put a double thickness of oven down to 150°, gas 2, and bake for a further 2 - 2½ hours. (I have an AGA and cook it overnight in the simmering oven)

When cooked it will have shrunk slightly from the sides of the tin, and be springy when pressed lightly in the centre.

Leave in tin till cold, then peel off papers, wrap in fresh greaseproof paper and store in a tin.



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NB I asked Isabel for her recipe as she made this cake as a raffle prize at our party last year. It was the most delicious Christmas cake I have tasted and it disappeared very quickly!