

MIXED BLESSINGS

T I M E S

LITE

Welcome to another edition of our “lockdown” magazine.

We British can be very modest about our achievements in life, and very rarely sing our own praises. We may let it slip that we learnt a little Latin at university but fail to mention that we got a double first in Classics. We’ll happily tell friends that we failed our driving test 17 times but never dream of telling them that we won a gold cup for calligraphy.

For this issue, we asked members to cast off their modesty and blow their own trumpets for once, and some of them have done. I do hope it hasn’t made them feel too exposed.

Thanks to all the brave contributors, and thanks to Graham for his sterling work again.

I hope you’ll find this edition as interesting to read as I do. *Derek*

Issue 11

**21 Aug
2020**



The *Mixed*
Lantern
Blessings

**STAY
ALERT** 

**CONTROL
THE VIRUS**

 **SAVE
LIVES**

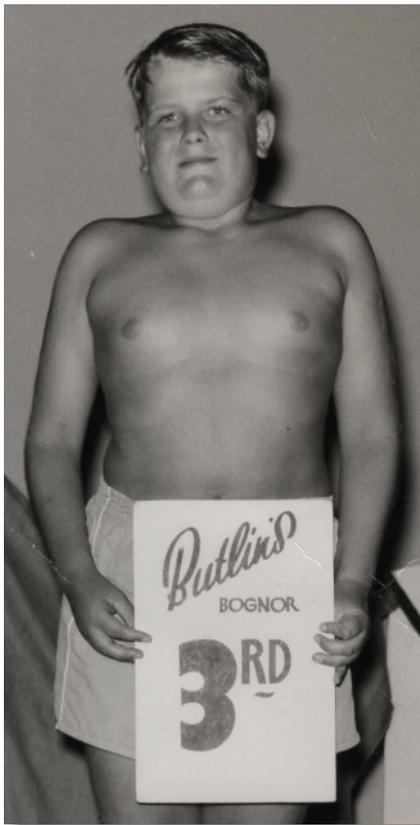
“These are a few of my favourite things ...”

We asked Chris, Tony, and Roz to tell us a few of their favourites. Here’s what they said:



My favourite:

	Chris	Tony	Roz
<i>Meal</i>	Coronation chicken	Stir fry	Salmon risotto and garlic bread
<i>Drink</i>	Fresh coffee	Tea	Dry white wine
<i>Pudding</i>	Lemon meringue pie	Bread & butter pudding	Summer fruits, Greek yogurt, honey
<i>Fruit or vegetable</i>	Runner Beans	Grapes	Bananas
<i>Item of clothing</i>	Jeans	50 year old jumper	Slippers
<i>Hobby</i>	Bible study	Fishing	Puzzles
<i>Sport</i>	Board games	Cycling	10-pin bowling
<i>TV programme</i>	Vera	Dragons Den	Pointless
<i>TV detective</i>	Vera and young Morse	Z cars	Inspector Morse
<i>Film</i>	Saving Mr.Banks	The Shawshank Redemption	The 100ft journey
<i>Actor</i>	Brenda Blethyn	Tom Hanks	Matt Damon
<i>Musical show</i>	Les Miserables	Les Miserables	Mamma Mia
<i>Singer / group</i>	Stuart Townend	Abba	Ed Sheeran
<i>Song</i>	Somewhere over the rainbow - Eva Cassidy	I have a dream	I can't help falling in love with you - Elvis Presley
<i>Book</i>	The Bible	The Robe	The boy, the mole, the fox & the horse - Charlie Mackesy



There's no doubt that Mixed Blessings is a talented group of people, so in this issue we're celebrating our successes.

Firstly, can you identify who this handsome young man is? We'll let him tell us the background to this photo:

"There I was, having the time of my life at Billy Butlins, when the Redcoats decided to have a Tarzan competition. So I queued up in my swimming trunks with the other lads, and when my turn came I held in my stomach, puffed up my chest, and bellowed out my best impression of the Johnny Weismuller Tarzan call (learnt at Saturday morning cinema). It only took a few minutes to find out I'd come third.

I've always thought I was a natural for the part."

Derek

Below - **Jenny Ball** with her Welsh Cob "Shalloon" at the Seven Counties Horse Show held at Lytchett Matravers in 1993. Together they won 1st prize in the ridden section, and 2nd for "in hand".



My first memory of being given a prize was when I was six. It was two orange bone needles and some wool, and told that I could go up to the top class. This was spoilt by the usual pat on the head and asked if my parents put manure on my shoes!

The next was winning the obstacle race at the school sports day. To start we had to cast on ten stitches with two matchsticks and some string. My mother had taught me to knit so I knew how to cast on using the thumb method, much easier, so I was way ahead by the last obstacle which was to crawl under the pig net. Unfortunately the net caught in my knickers (no shorts during the war) and that was the picture in the local paper. I was not pleased.

The next prizes that I remember were at the local Country Show held each year at the Community Centre. I won best bean chutney, best runner beans, and some knitting for the grandchildren.



The picture above is of me being presented with an award that my choir - The Allen Singers - had been nominated for. Unfortunately I cannot remember the name of the MP (*on the right*) who did the presentation, but I feel very proud to have won that.

Babs

Front cover photo - Val and Caroline - two of Mixed Blessing's unsung heroines

We moved into Corfe Mullen and, wanting to take part in local life, we went along to a Horticultural Society meeting. We found out that they were organizing a show and we picked up a schedule. We had nothing horticultural to offer, but there was a cookery section. I entered a boiled fruit cake and a Victoria sponge. After the judging, we went back to the cakes and there, in the middle of about a dozen Victoria sponges was my cake with a red, first place, label on it! And "Yes", I did make it myself, and "No" it didn't come from M & S.

Agnes

Agnes' Victoria Sponge Sandwich

Ingredients

- 125g/4oz butter (softened at room temperature)
- 125g/4oz caster sugar
- 2 medium eggs
- 125g/4oz self-raising flour
- 1 tbsp warm water
- Seedless raspberry jam

Method

1. Heat the oven to 180C/160C Fan/Gas 4
2. Line two 18cm/7in cake tins with baking parchment.
3. Cream butter and sugar together.
4. Beat in the eggs.
5. Sift the flour into the mix and fold in.
6. Add the water and stir in.
7. Divide the mixture between the cake tins.
8. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes until a skewer comes out clean.
9. Allow to stand for a couple of minutes before turning out and cooling on a rack.
10. Sandwich together with the jam in the middle.
11. Sieve a little icing sugar over the top (Optional)

*A competitive eater named Perkins
Specialised in munching green gherkins.
One day for his tea
He ate ninety three
And pickled his internal workings.*



At grammar school in Halifax, I won the under fourteen cross country, but have nothing to show for it - no cup or medal, and it probably wasn't mentioned in the local paper, the Halifax Courier. Never mind.

Keith



*Why did the scarecrow win a Nobel prize?
Because he was out-standing in his field.*

Jared Littlewood (The Lantern Youth and Assistant Teaching Pastor)

If you're anything like me then you're probably really competitive. I'm edging ever closer to 30 years of age, and I'm still as bad at losing as I was when I was 10 years old losing at Monopoly!! (I still struggle to play that game!)

As I've aged, I've noticed that my mindset had gradually changed in terms of my approach. I love running. I run more or less every day, and the longer the run the better I feel afterwards! I've run a couple of marathons and have my sights on a couple more!

Interestingly, running isn't one of those sports where you end up competing against those around, leaving them panting in the dust, as you stride past them. This is mainly because you can find all shapes and sizes and spectrum of abilities, so there will always be someone better than you on the day! First place isn't ever the goal for most people. Just finishing with the rest of the community that you're a part of, spurring each other on, is more important.

Normally there's this real sense of personal achievement, a sense that it doesn't matter about anyone else, just that you're putting everything into it that you can.

As a Christian I think this is even more apparent in my life. The idea of comparing our gifts alongside the gifts of others can be a really toxic place to start from, and it can leave us feeling substandard and undervalued.

In the Bible, Romans 12:1 speaks about offering our bodies as "living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – This is your spiritual act of worship." Everything we do can be an act of worship!! How exciting! God has never asked me to be the best out of everyone, but rather the best *me* that I can be. And out of everyone watching, He's the one that really counts.

Think of it like this. When the *really* good runners are racing, the crowd just lifts them! That kind of support is important! I don't tend to get such big crowds when I run (or any at all!), I just think of an "Audience of One." It's all for Him, and regardless of what the talent is, cooking, singing, writing stories.... when it's all for the One, and we offer Him our best, He delights in us and everything we have.

So although I'm sometimes *slightly* too competitive.... I'm learning to strive a little less each day.... And rest in the knowledge that those gifts and talents that God has given me are enough just as they are.....

Jared



Practical Help and Support during the Coronavirus Pandemic

The Lantern Church tel: 01202 887733 or email: help@thelanternchurch.org

As a youngster I loved my sport. At school we played football, hockey and cricket, and in the summer term I enjoyed success as a sprinter. But anything longer than 440 yards was too far for me to run.

Fast forward to April 1984. I watched the London Marathon on TV and, seeing people of all ages and shapes completing the distance, I thought I should be capable of completing one marathon in my lifetime. The nearest to Merley was the Wessex Marathon, based on Portland and Weymouth, which took place in September. I entered, was accepted, and had five months to prepare.

I found a suitable training plan, bought some decent running shoes (New Balance) and kit, and I was off. I ran first thing in the morning, before work when there was little traffic about, doing it six days a week. Initially it was just a couple of miles, but gradually my one long run a week increased in distance. My furthest training run was 18 miles. I found that my comfortable running pace was eight minutes a mile.



Above - We're off - 26 miles to go

I included a couple of 10 mile races to get used to running with others. The first of those was the Portland 10. As in all long distance races, you'll soon find yourself running alongside others with the same pace. In this case it was an experienced lady athlete, maybe 20 years older than me. Jared mentioned that few people watched him when he ran, but this wasn't the case for me. I was getting lots of applause, and as I started to appreciate the encouragement I waved back. However, the lady I was running with soon burst my bubble, telling me that as she was the only female athlete in the race, the applause was just for her!

Back to my marathon. There were over 200 runners, and I ran at my training pace for about 20 miles. But then the hilly course took its toll and I slowed down to finish in 3 hours 56 minutes.



Above - I've made it in under four hours

Just over 30 years later, our son Russ ran the Kiev Marathon. His time? 3 hours 56 minutes. Like father, like son!

Graham



Along with millions of other families, ours enjoyed the fun and freedom that Holiday camps provided. The photo was taken at Butlins, Bognor Regis, around 1960.

These holidays were the highlight of our year, that is except for the 'competitions'. I was a shy child from a family who liked to 'join in'. No choice - it's what you did! So there I was, walking around a large hall with all eyes on me (or so it seemed). But what was I holding? It looked like a washing line, with items of clothing (all made of crepe paper) attached.

A bit of an explanation might be needed. My father liked football. Each week he would fill in his pools coupon, hoping for that Saturday when he would get the winning "8 draws".

Back to my 'moment' in the spotlight. Have you worked out yet what was on my washing line? Yes, 8 pairs of paper panties, or 'drawers' for those less delicate.

I was those '8 draws'!

And I won first prize. Winning memory, yes. Embarrassing, double yes!

Chris

I guess my first real achievement was when I opened the letter telling me that, after almost four years training, I was now a trained nurse - a State Registered Nurse (SRN). What a joy that was. It changed my life, but that will be another story.



More recently, during the last four to five years, I came second making a Dorset Apple Cake, judged by Mary Berry's secretary. I used a recipe given to me by Maggie.

We'll ask Pat and Maggie to share the recipe with us in the next issue - Ed.



I also came first baking a Victoria Sponge, but wait for it I was the only one that entered. Then I felt obliged to give half of it to the judge because it was his birthday!!

Pat Piddock

Grin with Graham

A king decided to hold a contest to find his daughter a husband. The beauty of the princess drew many young men, but the king did not announce what they had to do. Once gathered in his castle, the king revealed a large moat filled with all sorts of beasts. "The first man to cross the moat will inherit all my riches as well as the hand of my daughter in marriage. Who among you has the courage to claim the prize?" The men all took one look at the terrifying creatures and backed away. No one appeared willing to accept the dangerous challenge.

The king was dejected, but suddenly there came a loud splash. And a young man was swimming as fast as he could, fending off the snapping jaws of deadly beasts. Amazingly, the handsome man made it to the other side with only a few scratches.

"Congratulations stranger!" the king said. "Step forward and claim your reward!"

The princess flashed the brave swimmer a winning smile, but to everyone's surprise the man merely shook his head.

"If it's not my daughter's hand, then surely you must want my riches?"

Another shake of the young man's head.

"Tell me your desire, and if it is within my power, I shall give it to you."

"I only want to know one thing," the young man explained as he panted heavily.

"Who pushed me in?"

Quiz - identify who is behind each mask - your choices are:

Prime Minister Boris Johnson
Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall
US President Donald Trump
Kate, Duchess of Cambridge
Jasper, Louie's friend
F1 World Champion Lewis Hamilton

TV presenter Lorraine Kelly
Meghan Markle
Government Minister Michael Gove
Scotland's First Minister Nicola Sturgeon
UK Chancellor Rishi Sunak
Russia's President Vladimir Putin

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Answers on next page

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Born and Bred in Dorset - John Taylor

In this issue John's focus is Blandford Forum



From Salisbury the road to Blandford and Dorchester, which provides an alternative route to Exeter, undulates across the downs through the heart of the County.

Blandford Forum on the river Stour has an architectural character worthy of its dignified name. Following the disastrous fire of 1731 this town was completely rebuilt under the provisions of a special Act of Parliament. Its town hall, parish church, hotels and other buildings and residences are in the classic style of the Georgian period.

The Ryves Almshouses of seventeenth century brickwork and the picturesque Old House are almost the only earlier buildings which survived.

Blandford was the birthplace of many famous men, including Archbishop Wake and Lindsay. Alfred Stevens the sculptor, Christopher Pitt who translated the "Aeneid", John James the outstanding nineteenth-century Non-conformist, and George Vince who sailed with Captain Scott in the "Discovery" and died in the Antarctic.

The eldest son of the Duke of Marlborough holds the title Marquis of Blandford. Urns, axeheads, coins, sword blades and many other interesting relics from prehistoric and Roman times have been discovered on the hills and along the river valleys around this pleasant market town. There are also numerous ancient burial mounds and entrenchments in the vicinity.

North of Blandford stand Hod Hill and Hambledon Hill facing each other near the river Stour. Their bare summits rise from wooded lower slopes, in the case of the latter an unusually large yew wood, and each is surmounted by prehistoric earthworks. Those on Hod Hill contain a Roman encampment neatly fitted into the Iron Age defences almost 2,000 years ago. Hambledon Hill has traces of a Neolithic village as well as massive ramparts of the later Iron Age.

Between Tarrant Hinton and Pimperne is one of the finest long barrows in England. Parts of the old Roman highway are plainly visible further along the Salisbury road. There are numerous tumuli on the surrounding downs.



Behind the mask - answers

1. *Kate, Duchess of C'bridge*
2. *Michael Gove*
3. *Lewis Hamilton*
4. *Nicola Sturgeon*
5. *Rishi Sunak*
6. *Lorraine Kelly*
7. *Boris Johnson*
8. *Camilla, Duchess of C*
9. *Jasper*
10. *Meghan Markle*
11. *Donald Trump*
12. *Vladimir Putin*

Our Father in Heaven ... - Pat Piddock

What is that in your hand?

Lord, we thank you for the many talented people who have worked so hard, during this pandemic to keep us all safe - such dedication.

We ask You to bless those who think they have no talents or gifts but have been equally important and have used what is in their hands, be it shopping for a neighbour, a smile or "hello" on their daily walk, a telephone call or a letter.

Help us, Lord, to be ourselves and not wish we were someone else. You have gifted us all.

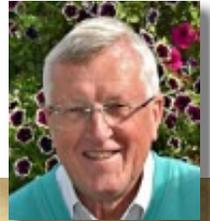
Lord, we ask You to be with the people and helpers in Beirut at this time. Bring peace.

In your name we pray, Amen



The previous issue of this magazine featured the results of our "Virtual In Bloom" competition. We sent a copy of it to Richard Nunn, Chairman of the Wimborne in Bloom Committee (pictured).

We received this smashing reply from him:



May I congratulate the Mixed Blessings Times on your excellent and praiseworthy initiative in the creation of Virtual Mixed Blessings in Bloom. Obviously the time in the garden has been well spent and your entry numbers were very impressive not to mention the superb displays! Thank you for embracing the RHS Britain in Bloom campaign and extending it in this way so that your results can be shared and enjoyed by many. Competitions are always difficult to judge and often tend to be subjective but you seem to have made admirable choices – well done.

Wimborne in Bloom has suffered like all 'In Bloom' groups this year and we were very disappointed to have to cancel our displays around Wimborne. With all our fund-raising events unable to be held the absence of displays was an inevitable consequence. Our very popular Open Gardens Day in June could not take place but a virtual tour was put on our website to soften the blow!

Thank you again for your excellent initiative by helping to 'fill the gap'!

Richard Nunn
Chairman, Wimborne in Bloom

There'll be more of your "success" stories in the next issue of our magazine - Ed

Mixed Blessings Times Contact details:

Derek Baker Tel: 01202 888241
Graham's email: maths.graham@gmail.com