

# The Neuro Bureau

Newsletter 26-21



## Welcome

### **We may be physically challenged but we are differently able.**

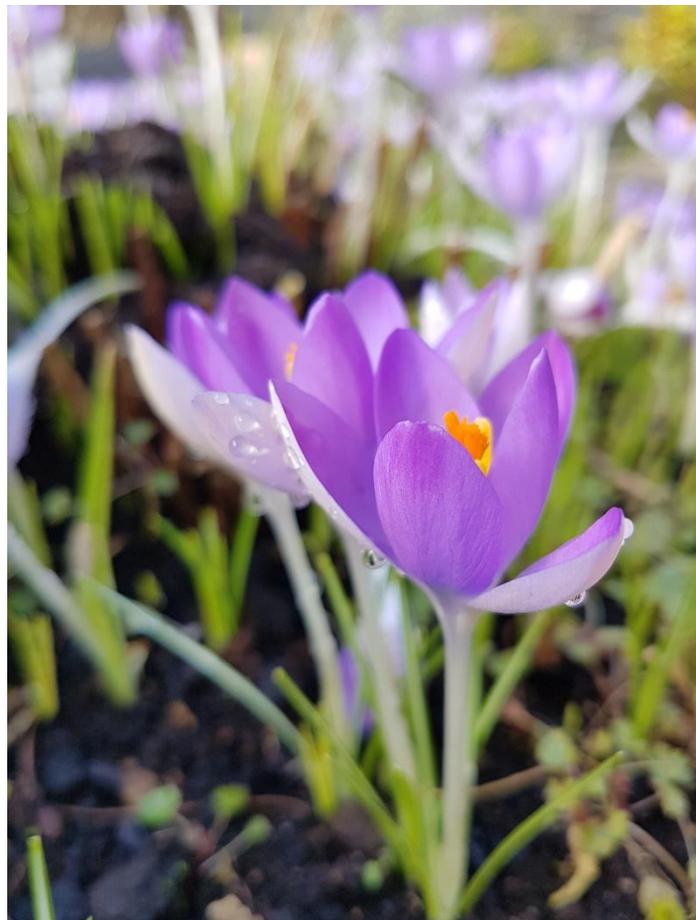
Welcome to our twenty sixth newsletter. Please enjoy the features and photographs. If you would like to make a contribution for a future edition, please get in touch with our editor, Lesley MacLeod.

New members are always welcome. Copies of this newsletter can be emailed to anyone who requests a copy.

We are currently **NOT** meeting every Tuesday between 1030-1430 at: North Town Cricket Club, Summerleaze Road, Maidenhead, SL6 8SP.

**Please note our contact number is 07577 506165**

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## Sequela memories

Sequela was founded in 2012 and moved to Grove Park in 2013. The grand opening took place in March 2013 when it was declared open by the local MP, Theresa May. We moved to Maidenhead Cricket Club in February 2018 and until Covid 19, enjoyed a variety of fun activities on site.

I hope you will enjoy viewing a selection of photos from the archives.









## Diary Dates

As you know, the current situation with Coronavirus means that all meetings have been cancelled until further notice.

We all look forward to being able to get together again soon but in the meantime, we will continue to meet via Zoom, at 1030 every Tuesday morning. Everyone is welcome to join. We meet for about an hour and half, usually fitting in a short exercise session. Anyone who has difficulties but would like to join in, can contact Anke on 01628 621574 or 07863 661468 or David on 01628 61573 or 07719 215242.

## Fundraising

**Give as you Live** is a shopping and price comparison website and so easy to use.



You can shop for products from thousands of leading online retailers and a percentage of every purchase made will be donated to Sequela.

As it's likely that many of us are currently doing more shopping online, please remember that if you use Give as you Live, you will raise free funds for Sequela. If you're not sure how to do it, get in touch with Anke or David and we'll help you get started.

Download the free 'Donation Reminder' to your electronic device and every time you visit a participating site, a handy reminder pops up: click on the green button and it all happens without any further effort.



Since 2018, we have now raised over £450 through GAYL and a further five pounds through the recent addition of Amazon Smile.

**smile.amazon.co.uk**

If you shop online at Amazon, please use [www.smile.amazon.co.uk](http://www.smile.amazon.co.uk)

Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organisation of your choice. AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service. Support Sequela by starting your shopping at [smile.amazon.co.uk](http://smile.amazon.co.uk) and choose the Sequela Foundation as your charity to support.

This handy message will pop up every now and again if you go to amazon.co.uk to remind you to switch to [smile.amazon.co.uk](http://smile.amazon.co.uk).



30<sup>th</sup> March – Easter bonnets on display:



## Profile – Gywneth Stockford continued ...

*... stories of life in Japan ....*

When I met Mike, he had just relocated to Cambridge with his company, THL which was a Research & Development company formed by Christopher Cockerell to develop a high speed "railway" system based on aircushion suspension and linear induction motor propulsion.



The flat, desolate Cambridge Fens had been chosen as the location for the test site and Mike was one of Sir Christopher's original five-man team. THL was closed by the government in 1974 and Mike realised that his lack of business education (particularly finance) would prove a stumbling block to career advancement, so he went back to university to take an MBA.

We got married in May 1974 soon after he had graduated, and Mike joined a small consultancy practice in Kensington. He initially commuted from Cambridge but in 1975 we moved to Maidenhead where I applied for and was appointed Secretary & PA to the Divisional Director of Social Services—a broadly based department which embraced Child Welfare, Mental Health, the Elderly and the Handicapped. Once again, despite the advances in office equipment and technology, my shorthand skills were invaluable, particularly in meetings with social workers which dominated the working day.

In the meantime, Mike had joined the UK's premier consultancy practice, PA Management Consultants. PA is an international company and so we were able to visit its Far East offices en-route to Tokyo, take some holiday and spend a few days in Thailand, Malaysia and Hong Kong.

We rented a house in Sangubashi a Japanese (as opposed to foreigner) dominated district of Tokyo. We hadn't been there long when Mike saw a student hurrying down the road bleeding profusely-- he had (virtually) severed two fingers in a lawn mower. Mike cleaned, dressed, and iced the wound, then took him to hospital. His fingers were thankfully OK, but news of the incident spread around the village and from then on, we were no longer strangers. Indeed, at the next festival which involved about 30 men carrying a huge (2.2 Kg/4m long) shrine around the streets, they stopped outside our house and asked Mike to join the bearers - a very rare honour! Similarly, the first time we had snow, two students came with, and fitted, snow chains to our car. I cite these as typical examples of the friendliness of the Japanese IF you make the first move!

Several friends and family came and stayed with us and over 30 years later I still keep in touch with a Japanese pen pal.

We spent a lot of time out and about seeing the real Japan. In stark contrast to its ultra-modern cities, much of rural Japan has remained in the 18/19th century. Thus, outside of the cities, all place and road signs are in Japanese (Kanji, Hironana or Katakana) only. Therefore, before going anywhere, Mike had to draw the route on an English language map then pass it to his PA to annotate, in Japanese, every place en-route so that we could look for that sign and cross it off once we had passed it. That was OK for the larger towns and places of interest which were well sign-posted but not so easy for small villages, in heavy traffic, approaching junctions/traffic lights or a roundabout, a crossroad, or similar. I would guess that some 10% or so of our rural mileage was turning back to/for something we'd missed!

Large hotels outside cities are rare, indeed most are Ryokans - small guest houses, and are usually located off the main road/down a side road and finding them was great fun. When you did get there, the owners rarely spoke English, so we didn't always get what we thought we'd ordered! That is unless there were any children (from about 7 years old) around. If there were, then they would quickly become our interpreters and they loved it! I wonder how many of our 7+ year olds could do the same in Japanese?

A major headache when driving were temporary road signs. You don't realise how many there are until you can't read them! On one occasion, when Mike was taking me to the airport, a distance of about 20 miles, we got to within 3 miles of the airport only to discover that the turn off we needed was closed - presumably we had not recognised the signs---so we had to continue on for another 12 miles or so to the next junction and follow the diversion signs back. Lesson learnt: leave plenty of time, you will probably need it!

Possibly the best loved time of the year in Tokyo is in May - the cherry blossom season - which signals the end of winter. The parks are ablaze with colour and everyone seems to go out for a picnic. They sit on the grass in small groups--- just like we do on Brighton beach--- washing their food down with a drink BUT no-one ever seems to get drunk and the following morning there is no litter. WHY? Can it just be that they are a thoughtful, conscientious nation who respect their neighbourhood?



CREDIT: YOSHIO TOMII/GETTY IMAGES

One of the downsides of living/working in Tokyo is the Japanese work ethic: they arrive before opening time, leave late and on Monday to Thursday (and often Friday) they go for an 'office' drink after work. Typically, workers would be in the office for 11 hours a day! Mike does not drink so he soon extracted himself from the after-work tittle but nevertheless, his normal day was still to leave home about 07.45 and get back around 18.30 unless there was an evening meeting he had to attend (which was typically at least once a week). So that meant a very long time for me to be on my own with little more than the BBC Overseas Radio Service for company.

Thankfully, I had determined to make the most of my time in Japan .and enjoyed such pastimes as the theatre, especially Kabuki (mime), Junupantoru (puppets), Ikebana (classes in flower arranging) and cooking Japanese food.

There are two Daily newspapers (shinbun) in English in Tokyo and an 18 hours a day English language TV channel which broadcasts both world news and films plus several game shows where understanding the language is not necessary!

We soon got to know many other gaijins (foreigners); whilst the vast majority were in Japan for 3-4 years, a surprisingly large number had met and married a Japanese national and had no intention of returning to their home country.

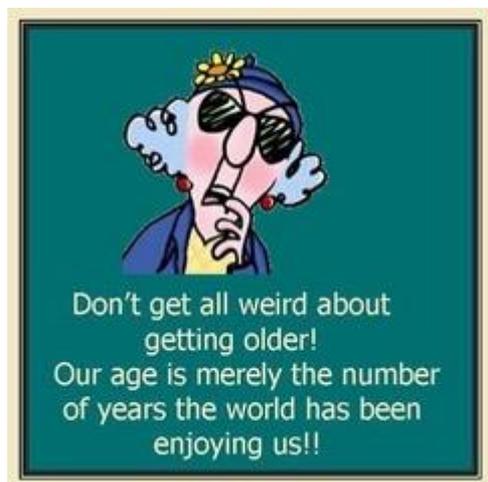
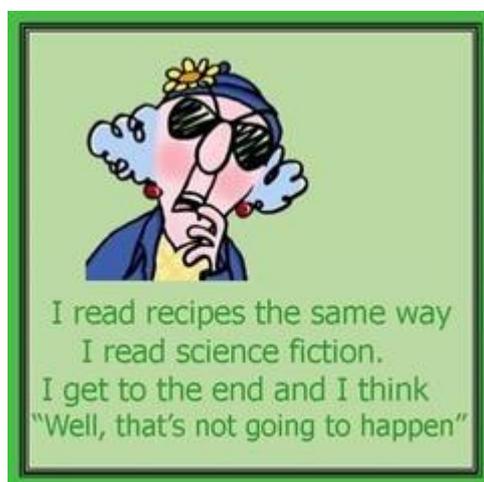
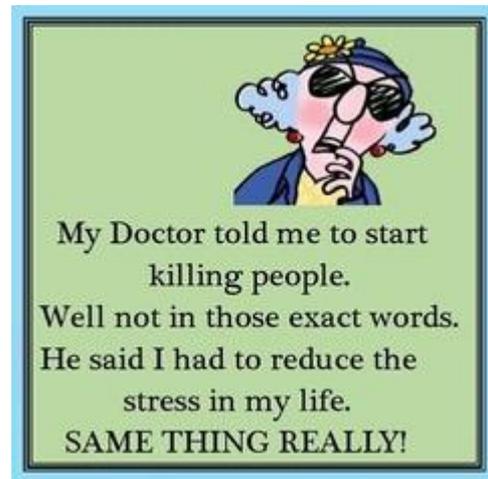
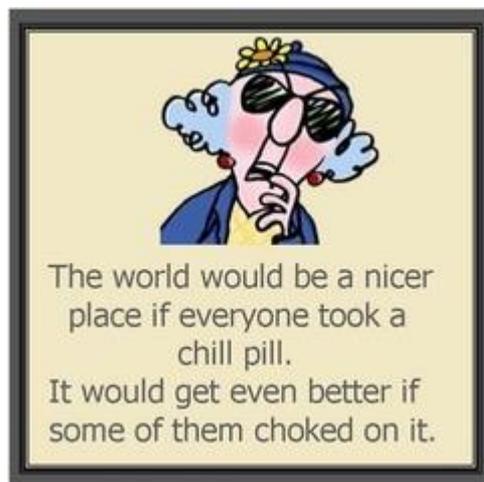
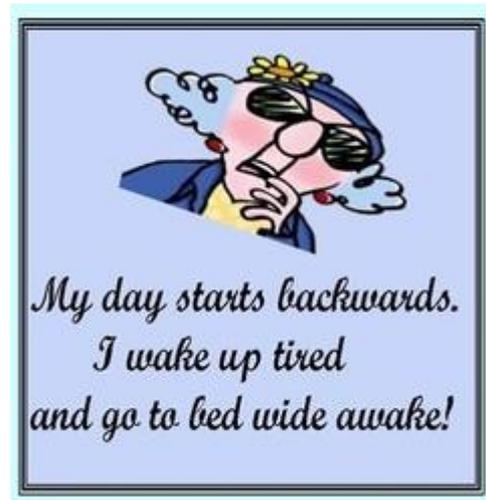
Our best friends were two Slovaks—the vice ambassador and his wife (one of the most sincere and genuine ladies we have ever met). We went with them on a couple of skiing weekends (they skied and taught Mike, while I watched!) and to Hong Kong for Christmas and the New Year. An interesting aside on the latter was that whilst watching HK TV Mike saw his old boss & wife at a carol service that was being televised. He rang the news channel, explained, they passed the message on and we ended up spending the 28<sup>th</sup> December with them and another ex-colleague who was also working in HK at the time.

Happy days.



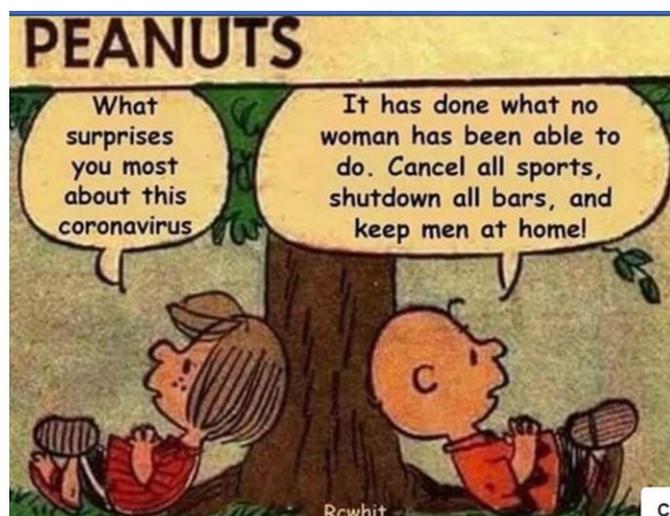
## Jenny's gems

- Once you're in heaven, do you get stuck in eternity wearing the clothes you were buried in?
- Now that I've lived through an actual plague, I totally understand why Italian renaissance paintings are full of naked fat people lying on couches.



## Heley's humour

Danke Anke!



## Pensioner trying to re-set a password ...

**WINDOWS:** Please enter your new password

**USER:** cabbage

**WINDOWS:** Sorry, the password must be more than 8 characters

**USER:** boiled cabbage

**WINDOWS:** Sorry, the password must contain one number

**USER:** 1 boiled cabbage

**WINDOWS:** Sorry, the password cannot have blank spaces

**USER:** 50damnboiledcabbages

**WINDOWS:** Sorry, the password must contain at least one upper case character

**USER:** 50DAMNboiledcabbages

**WINDOWS:** Sorry, the password cannot use more than one upper case character consecutively

**USER:**

50damnBoiledCabbagesShovedUpYourAssIfYouDon'tGiveMeAccessNow

**WINDOWS:** Sorry, the password cannot contain punctuation

**USER:**

ReallyPissedOff50damnBoiledCabbagesShovedUpYourAssIfYouDon'tGiveMeAccessNow

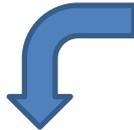
**WINDOWS:** Sorry, that password is already in use



## Lesley's laughs

Following Pat's Pilates class on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, we had the usual relaxation session ... which David REALLY enjoyed!

The rest of us can be seen shouting 'wake up' ... which he did ... eventually ...



## Useful contacts

**Anke Heley**  
Chairwoman

01628 621574  
[ankeheley@hotmail.com](mailto:ankeheley@hotmail.com)

07863 661468

**Maidenhead Voluntary Car Service**

01628 673937

**People to Places**

01628 587920

**Maidenhead Care**

07538 418448

**Mohammed** (used by Barbara Copcutt)

07912 419856

**Windsor Voluntary Car Service**

01753 831090

Andrew Taft ([www.wvcs.co.uk](http://www.wvcs.co.uk))

Caring private-car transport for Windsor (SL4) residents

### **Newsletter editor:**

Lesley MacLeod - 01628 671573 – [lesley.j.macleod@talk21.com](mailto:lesley.j.macleod@talk21.com)