



**MILTON KEYNES  
STOMA SUPPORT GROUP  
(MKSSG)**

**Newsletter number 17  
May 2021**

Dear Member

Until the pandemic caused us all to withdraw to our homes and avoid any socialising together, we held regular get-togethers at Dobbies garden centre and quarterly meetings at Lovat Fields. Since lockdowns started, we have been keeping in touch with our members through these extended monthly newsletters and monthly Zoom meetings. With restrictions being eased, we are considering resuming meeting up at Dobbies in July or August and Lovat Fields in September. We need to know what you, our members, want. Please help by giving us your views on the following question.

- Do you think you are/will be confident enough to join us at Dobbies in July/August and Lovat Fields in September?

You can contact us by email or phone (details at the end of this newsletter). We look forward to hearing from you. Thank you. Please remember that everything depends on what pandemic restrictions may still be in place when we make any decisions.

We are also considering having quarterly *evening* Zoom sessions in a few months time to allow members who are at work during the day to stay in touch with the group. Meanwhile, though, our usual monthly (morning) meetings are continuing and details of the next one will follow in due course.

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**Stoma Care Team news**

Morag has been in touch with Karen to ask how things are with the stoma care team. Needless to say they are continuing to work tirelessly but Karen has always had our ostomate community in mind and was pleased to hear that most of us had been vaccinated and starting to feel more comfortable about getting out and about. Here is her news for us on how the stoma care team are faring.



*We remain very busy with both emergency patients and our elective patients but are running a pretty much normal service now.*

*We have a new stoma nurse joining us from Bedford Hospital in June so we are very much looking forward to welcoming her to the team. Her name is Helen.*

*Finally, please reassure your members that we are always here for them so if they need us please do ask them to telephone or email us.*

**Stoma Care Direct Line: 01908 996951** (This is an answer machine but we check it very regularly and we will always return your call. Please ensure you leave your name and contact number.)

Alternatively, you can email us using our **team email: stomateammkuh@mkuh.nhs.uk**

**Quiz: tempting snacks**

Complete the names of the snacks from the cryptic clues. The number of missing letters is given by the number of dashes following the initial letter. The first one is done for you.

1	Spin around	T----	Twirl		
2	Lorry drivers' snack	Y-----		8	Lots of parties C-----
3	100% Au	A-- G---		9	Outside meal P-----
4	Istanbul harem	T----- D-----		10	Locals from Malta M-----
5	Out there (look up at night)	M---- W--		11	Reward B-----
6	Even more out there.	G-----		12	Sweet tooth cleaner C---- F----
7	Big cat's pub	L--- B--			

(Answers will be in our June newsletter.)

## Cycling in Center Parcs

*I was looking through some old photos and came across some of a fantastic holiday we had at Center Parcs years ago. We still have very fond memories and thought I'd share these with you.*

*Morag*

*We were at the Elveden Forest parc in Suffolk. We had a lovely villa and the whole parc was quiet, peaceful and relaxing. Just what I needed! One day, we were at the Cycle Centre of the village. My husband and my daughters were choosing the bikes they wanted to hire. On impulse, I decided to join in. Their faces were a picture of astonishment. They knew that I'd never learnt to ride a bike but I optimistically reckoned I wasn't too old to learn.*



*Graham, my husband, was quite encouraging but my daughters just laughed at the idea. They knew I was by no means a sporty person. My normal exercise on holiday is turning the pages of my book or lifting a glass of alcohol to my lips.*



*We hired our bikes and the fun began. The rest of the family jumped on their bikes at once but, for my first attempt, I wanted to go where no-one could see me. Graham shook his head, but duly found a quiet spot. After a short practice, I was able to wobble along for a few minutes without falling off.*

*I looked aghast at Graham as he suggested cycling down to the local shop. He reminded me that guests weren't allowed to take cars onto the village, so I'd be quite safe. The girls assured me that I'd come to no harm, so with words of encouragement ringing in my ears, I set off.*

*Everything went okay – as long as we were going straight! The first trouble came when I tried to turn a corner. The bike went one way and I went the other.*

*Not one to give in easily, I picked myself up and dusted myself down. Gritting my teeth, I clambered back on the beast and rode precariously down the road.*

*I decided that I couldn't risk taking my hand off the handlebars to signal, so just shouted out what direction I was going in, much to everyone's amusement. To this day, one of us only has to shout 'Turning left!' and the rest of us collapse in giggles.*

*I was just beginning to get the hang of keeping upright, pedalling and steering at the same time, when disaster struck. Graham warned me that a delivery van was approaching. Panic stricken, I turned the handlebars in the opposite direction to the van, shot off the road and ended up lodged in a large bush.*



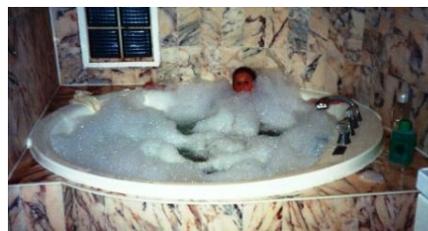
*The bike and I both stayed upright as we were firmly wedged in the foliage. Whether from fear, shock or embarrassment, the blood was pounding in my ears and my legs were like jelly.*

*I strained to turn my head round, peering through the covering of leaves to see why no help was forthcoming. My caring family were unable to help, because they were all helpless with laughter.*

*When the pounding in my ears calmed down, I was able to hear the hoots and screeches. Eventually, with tears streaming down their faces, they came to my rescue. There ended the first lesson. That night I was so pleased we had a Jacuzzi to ease my pain!*

*I did persevere for the rest of the holiday – I've always been stubborn! It certainly kept the family entertained. They had plenty of anecdotes to relate when we got home. The girls decided it was the best holiday they'd ever had.*

*On the last evening of our holiday, I was debating whether or not the exercise had been good for me. I ached in places I'd never ached before. I wondered if my nether regions would ever feel comfortable again. I'd again been soaking in the Jacuzzi to ease my muscles. As I bent over in front of Graham, to retrieve my towel, he laughed. 'Well, I think the exercise has done you good. It's certainly put roses in your cheeks!'*



## Jenny's 'Notes from the garden'

*Despite the recent chilly nights and not overly warm days we are fast approaching the summer months and it's time to cut down those daffodils and tulip leaves and start planting up for summer colour. If planting in containers or baskets, always remove*



*some of the old compost and replace it with new; it is also well worth adding a fertiliser and water retention crystals as both of these will help to retain your plants at their magnificent best. Stake up any of the perennial*

*plants that are now growing strongly – and watch out for slugs and snails that love to munch on tender new growth. If you don't want to use slug pellets try using crushed egg shells around the base of your plants.*



## On the move

We have not used the following two services (so can't directly recommend them) but they are run by reputable sources and we thought they may be of interest to some of our members. If you use them we would be very interested in your feedback to pass on to others so please let us know how you get on!

### Volunteer matters

We were contacted recently by Volunteer Matters. The organisation includes a driver  service which can be booked for medically related journeys (such as picking up prescriptions or hospital visits) throughout Milton Keynes and much longer journeys such as to Oxford and London. Their rates are reasonable but are specific to the users' requirements and also there is some inclusion of a modest fee to cover the extra mileage of the particular driver. We were told that, if a driver is available at the time, a lift to our Lovat Fields meetings *may* be considered under the medical journey specification (because the meeting is part of the support offered by MKSSG and is an opportunity for us to see new ostomy products) so that might be worth asking them when and if the need arises. For more information ring 01908 670309 to see if they can cover your needs and provide a quote.

### MK Connect: Demand-responsive transport

Some of you may be interested in hearing about this relatively new MK bus service  scheme. Ringing conventionally by phone or contacting electronically using your phone, tablet or computer, you book a bus through the control centre (open 7 days a week), specifying your location and drop-off point. You will be allocated a nearby pick-up point, a 'virtual bus stop'. Wheelchairs are catered for and bus passes can be used.

More details can be found by searching on the heading wording here where you can download the app or you can ring 01908 252526. There have been mixed reviews about this service.

## Book review

Morag recommends *Murder in School* by Bruce Beckham – and she is pleased to find that there are plenty more where this one came from ...

*Bruce Beckham is an award winning author, renowned for his crime series featuring a character called Detective Inspector Skelgill. DI Skelgill is a quirky character who is a keen fell runner and fisherman. He is constantly thinking about fishing and looking for his next meal, usually bought by his put-upon underlings, Detective Sergeant Leyton from London and the local Detective Sergeant Jones.*



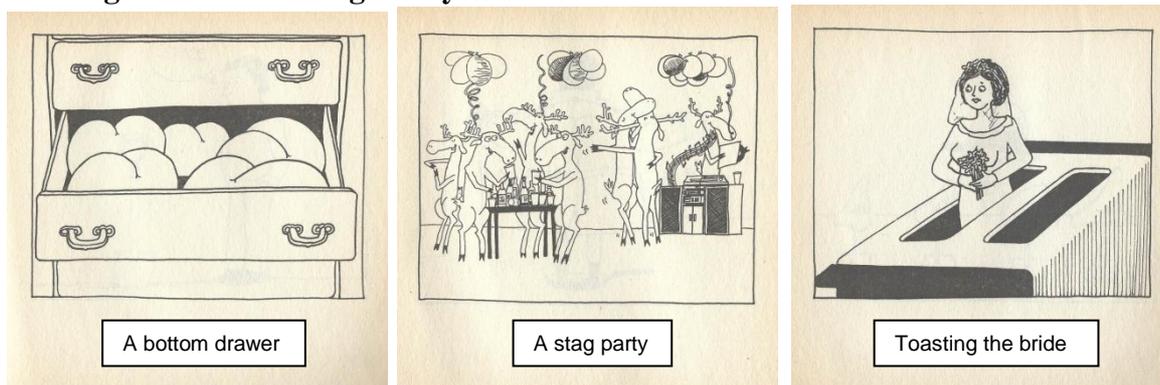
*Murder in School is the 2<sup>nd</sup> book in a series of 16. They can be read in any order as stand-alone books. I found myself unable to put this one down. Skelgill is called in to investigate two apparent suicides in an exclusive private school. His vivid descriptions of the Lake District make you feel as if you were there. The story is full of humour and wit. I particularly enjoyed the author's writing style with extensive vocabulary. Not the usual run of the mill crime series, there's no violence, swearing*



*or sex. I had no clue who had committed the crimes and was kept guessing until the end. I'll definitely be buying more of the series.*

**Available:** Paperback £7.99 (Amazon only), Kindle £2.39. 264 pages.

## Marriage humour: through the years



*'It's been a very emotional day, even the cake is in tiers.'*

*When I asked a friend the secret to his 52 years of marriage, he replied, 'We never go to sleep angry.'*  
*'That's a great philosophy,' I noted.*

*'Yes. And the longest we've been awake so far is five days.'*

Contributed by Lynne.

## News from the suppliers

News from our supplier this month comes from Pelican. Please note that the advertised pouches are not suitable for urostomates.

Style meets comfort

SOFT FABRIC WINS!

COLOUR CHOICES NOW!

Pelican ModaVi

Designed for you proudly made in the UK

Pelican Healthcare

an eskin company

The new **Pelican ModaVi** range from **Pelican Healthcare** really does answer the demand from ostomates calling for more comfort, more discretion, more simplicity and more choice. **Pelican ModaVi's** innovative new design available in 2 colours, showcases a softer and water-resistant fabric, a larger viewing window and a wider easy to use outlet.

The discretion fold gives you the flexibility to change the size and shape of your pouch to suit your lifestyle. Perfect for intimate moments, physical activities and under certain types of clothing.

Style and comfort really are top of the agenda with the new **Pelican ModaVi** range.

Try it for yourself and request your sample by visiting [www.pelicanmodavi.co.uk](http://www.pelicanmodavi.co.uk) or call **0800 318 282**.

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As you will have realised by now our newsletters cover a variety of topics, with articles long and short, not to mention brainteasers and jokes. If it's not too rude or offensive, we'll consider anything! In particular we welcome your contribution, even if it's only few lines, for our next newsletter. We need all contributions by/on Friday 18 June. Email or text is easy for us if you can, or please don't hesitate to use our phone number (you may be asked to leave a message for us to call back).

Best wishes

Jenny, Lynne, Morag, Tim, Tony  
MKSSG Committee

**Contact details:** [www.mkssg.org.uk](http://www.mkssg.org.uk) • [mkssg.sec@gmail.com](mailto:mkssg.sec@gmail.com) • 07843-768386 (leave a number for us to call you back) • a *closed* Face book page (search for the group and request to join)

## Supplement to May newsletter

### Answers to the Alphabet Quiz in our April newsletter

206	Bones in the Human Body	16	Ounces in a Pound
2	Crochets in a Minim	9	Planets in the Solar System
7	Days in a Week	1	Quart is equal to 2 Pints
118	Elements in the Periodic Table	5	Rings in the Olympic Symbol
3	French Hens	12	Signs of the Zodiac
1000	Grams in a Kilogram	3	Tenors
18	Holes in a Golf Course	1	Umpire for a Tennis Match
12	Inches in a Foot	57	Varieties of Heinz
4	Jokers in a Pack of Cards	40	Winks
88	Keys on a Piano	1	'X' in Roman Numerals for a Decade
12	Labours of Heracles/Hercules	1	Yolk in most Eggs
60	Minutes in an Hour	1	Zoo in Regents Park
2	Nickels in a Dime		