



MILTON KEYNES STOMA SUPPORT GROUP (MKSSG)

Newsletter number 18
June 2021

Dear Member

Summer is officially with us and it seems that the relentless rain we had recently may be behind us – at least that's the indication of the coming weeks' weather forecasts especially for July – which means the possibility of getting some fresh air in our gardens or walks. We know some of you are already away on holiday so here's hoping the weather is fine for you and you have an enjoyable time. For those at home we hope this newsletter will give you a pleasant read and bring a few smiles to your faces.

We had our usual Zoom meeting this month, an 'intimate affair' with just four of us. We weren't expecting many as we had received several apologies including from those of you on holiday, but as it turned out we were quite a lively bunch and found plenty to joke and laugh about. Details of the next one will follow in due course – try not to miss it!

Zoom meetings are just modern seances



*'There's someone who wants to join us.'
'Elizabeth, are you there?'
'We can't hear you.'
'Can you hear us?'*

* * * * *

Stoma Care matters

One of our members recently had difficulty with getting her ostomy supplies and added to that she was unable to get in touch with her delivery company. She is following up some contacts on this and has been in touch with our stoma care team. As yet, the matter is still unresolved. Have any of you had problems in getting your supplies delivered? Please let us know. We may be able to help and if the matter is urgent please remember that we have excellent support from our stoma care team (there are now four in the team and we will update our photo soon!) so do ask them to help.



Stoma Care Direct Line: 01908 996951

(This is an answer machine but it is checked very regularly and they will always return your call. Please ensure you leave your name and contact number.)

*Alternatively, you can email them using their team email:
stomateammkuh@mkuh.nhs.uk*

Coincidentally, Colostomy UK have said in their latest edition of *Tidings* (Summer 2021/Issue 62) that they are currently investigating the service of manufacturing and delivery companies. They are running a survey (relevant to ileostomates and urostomates as well as colostomates). If you want to take part, the link is <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/5WMVKCW> or there is a printed form to post in the magazine itself (if you are not online and don't receive *Tidings* we can send you a copy). The form is short and simple (Yes/No tick boxes) so, if you can, do complete one.

Brain teasers

1 A man was walking in the rain. He was in the middle of nowhere. He had nothing and nowhere to hide. He came home all wet, but not a single hair on his head was wet. Why is that?

2 You've escaped a maze and there are three doors in front of you. The door on the left leads to a pit of hot lava. The door in the centre leads to a room filled with deadly gas. The door on the right leads to a lion that hasn't eaten in three months. Which door do you choose?

3 Guess the next three letters in the series GTNTL.

4 The number 8,549,176,320 is a unique number. What is so special about it?

(Answers will be in the supplement to the July newsletter.)

Exciting times for Jenny in Holland

Despite all the mishaps Jenny and her friends covered a lot of mileage on their adventure – check out their route in the supplement to this newsletter.

In the years before Covid came along it seemed to have become the norm for those 18yr olds who were finishing school or college to take a group holiday off to Benidorm or Ibiza. Not so exotic in 1970! When we finally left High School a group of four girls, including me, decided our rite of passage would be to embark on a cycling trip around Holland, staying in Youth Hostels.



We caught the Harwich to the Hook ferry and cycled up to our first overnight stop. The following morning we checked our map, agreed the most direct route to our next destination and mounted

our bikes. Although the road appeared to be quite busy we were impressed by the number of cars that hooted at us and waved – Holland must be very friendly towards cyclists we thought! However it wasn't until a passing motorist wound down his window and shouted 'motorway' at us that we realised our mistake. Back in 1970 motorways hadn't got to Essex and we hadn't thought to look that thoroughly at the Dutch map. We came off the motorway faster than we got on and tried to find our way to Scheveningen. We clearly looked lost because an elderly man on an equally old bicycle stopped to ask if we needed any help. On discovering we were English he insisted on personally escorting us onto the right road; he explained to us that he was so grateful for all the support England gave to Holland in the war that he had to help us. We found that very moving and thanked him profusely. We continued our journey north, following the coast and cycling between 25–40 miles a day – which as my bike didn't even have gears was quite enough. How we managed to get a fortnight's clothing and toiletries into just two cycle paniers I can't begin to imagine now. The weather was mixed and initially we encountered heavy rain and strong winds – which was not pleasant, but then the weather changed and it became very warm.

It was on a very hot day that we found ourselves at lunchtime once again examining the map to look for the shortest possible route to our next destination. We had stopped by what appeared to be a wooded area and although the road went around it, the map indicated that there was a track through the middle that would significantly reduce the length of our journey – so we pushed open the gate and pushed our bikes through. It seemed a lot cooler amongst the trees so we propped our bikes against a post and started to enjoy our lunch. But the wood wasn't as peaceful as we had anticipated as we began to hear an ever increasing number of bangs and booms. Somewhat alarmed we thought it a good idea to read



the sign on the top of the post against which we had propped our bikes. On consulting our Dutch phrase book we discovered that the word 'Verboden' indicated 'forbidden' and it didn't take us long to realise that the bangs we could hear were actually gunfire. It transpired that we had

inadvertently strayed onto an Army firing range for our picnic!! Needless to say we got out of that wood a lot quicker than we went in!!

We had allowed ourselves a full day to explore Amsterdam, so leaving the bikes at the Youth Hostel we set out to discover the city. I think it suffice to say that we saw sights there that we hadn't seen at home when we walked through the red light area! A whole new meaning to 'window shopping'!



But Holland is a beautiful country and we visited a lot of the well-known places on our trip, although I have to say that cycling on the cobbles around Edam was not altogether a pleasant experience.

On the penultimate day we were quietly pedalling along a cycle path at a gentle pace when a motorcyclist cut across in front of me, catching his rear wheel hub in the spokes of my front wheel. We were briefly entangled together and I was dragged along with him until my spokes broke and I crashed to the ground. He continued on his journey, seemingly unaware of the incident, but I had a badly grazed elbow and hand. Fortunately my paniers had taken the worst of the initial impact, but the force had still managed to shear the buckles off. Perhaps it was as well we were returning to England the next day!

News from the suppliers

Our supplier's news this month comes from Trio Healthcare. The Sil2 flange which is part of the Genii bag is only for colostomy (closed) and ileostomy (drainable) bags at the moment. However Sil2 is in their range of supporting products and accessories which are suitable for urostomates.

Who's behind healthier skin?

We don't think anybody should have to suffer with red, sore skin around their stoma. That's why we use Sil2 Breathable Silicone Technology® in our products.



Sil2™ is made of silicone, which means it sticks brilliantly, but is super flexible and breathable, just like normal skin. Our products are designed to stretch and respond to the body's movement providing excellent protection against leaks. Unlike other products silicone does not absorb output, instead it creates a protective barrier to help break that cycle of irritation that leads to sore skin. Want to know more about the latest technology in stoma care? Would you like to trial our stoma care products?

Visit <https://trioostomycare.com/sil2-technology/> or contact the team on **0800 531 6280** or via email at careline@triohealthcare.co.uk

Humour:

10 classic one-liners from Morag. Enjoy!

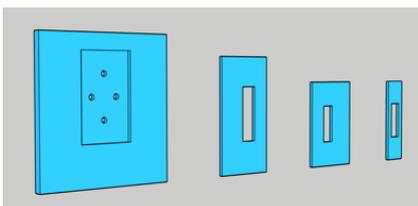
- 1 *When one door closes and other one opens, you are probably in prison.*
- 2 *To me, drink responsibly means don't spill it.*
- 3 *The older I get, the earlier it gets late.*
- 4 *When I say 'the other day', I could be referring to anytime between yesterday and 15 years ago.*
- 5 *I've had my patience tested, I'm negative.*
- 6 *Remember, if you lose a sock in the dryer, it comes back as a Tupperware lid that doesn't fit any of your containers.*
- 7 *I run like the winded.*
- 8 *When I ask for directions, don't use words like 'east'.*
- 9 *I don't mean to interrupt people, I just randomly remember things and get really excited.*
- 10 *Don't bother walking a mile in my shoes, that would be boring. Spend 30 seconds in my head, that will freak you right out.*

Multitalented member

In January, our member Tony wrote a piece for us about his work with a 3D printer, which he also uses again here. We hope you woodworking folk out there will be impressed with his skills as he describes how he built a planter – and the rest of us can certainly admire the finished article!

We had an old planter in the garden that had become rotten and was falling apart but we liked the design and couldn't find a similar one in the local garden centres. So I dusted off my woodworking tools and bought some timber and built a completely new version from bare wood.

My router, which hasn't seen the light of day for quite a few years, was invaluable for cutting tenon and mitre joints and I really enjoyed the creative process. I worked from plans created using my 3D drawing software and the 3D printer came in very useful for creating templates for the tenon joints.



The finished product has an old weathervane displayed on it. This was originally made about 50 years ago by my father-in-law and my wife and I brought it with us when we moved to Milton Keynes over 30 years ago.

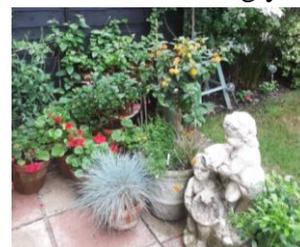
I had to do some sanding and rust removal before repainting the vane and it came out really nicely.



Jenny's 'Notes from the garden'



Late June should now be the time when you can sit back in the sunshine and admire the fruits of your labour. The roses and borders are at their peak and the pots, baskets and tubs are all now filling out with a riot of colour. Providing you follow a few basic tasks then the garden will reward you throughout the rest of the summer. Ensure that all your plants and vegetables are watered and fed on a regular basis. Dead head all plants to ensure repeat flowering. If, like me, you are plagued with slugs and snails, then do whatever your conscience allows you to do to remove them.



However, if you are blessed with visits from hedgehogs – as Lynne tells us she is – please do not use slug pellets as they can prove fatal to these nocturnal visitors.

Lynne's 'Notes on her garden visitors'



I feel very lucky to have regular visits from hedgehogs, sometimes two together (although in the photo here one is clearly camera shy). To supplement any slugs and snails, they also enjoy a night-time feast which I put out for them. If I am quiet I can go quite close to them as they can't see very well. Sometimes a leftover ham sandwich is much appreciated ...

Drakes and ducks like our garden and pond too, and at this time of year families appear. Often a mother duck will bring a new brood to show off to us before introducing the ducklings to water by a quick dip in the pond (or in one case taking turns in a bowl of water left out!) and then off to the canal next day.



Tip

Lynne has found this an unfailing delight when her family visits with young children, particularly those from outside Milton Keynes. Sometimes she deliberately claims she 'needs' an extra something. *With so many places closed, here's one way to entertain young visitors. Starship robots, partnered with the Co-op, deliver to most parts of MK and you can make a great (for the very young, even learning!) game of placing an order. Do the youngster(s) want to book robot service? How many items for how many people (maths)? Helping to do the order itself (IT skills). Meeting the robot at the expected delivery time (telling time). And the final bit, sheer delight as the robot comes along and actually talks to you! Why mention this now? Well, deliveries on any size order have been reduced to just 99p for the summer period.*



Search on 'Starship Robots', Starship Technologies' link, and download the app.

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We all know by now that the Covid-19 restrictions remain in place until at least the 19th of July. As such we can make no immediate plans to meet up and we will continue to produce the newsletter so will be back again in July.

We would appreciate any contributions from you no matter what the topic or the length. We need all contributions by/on Monday 19th July latest please. 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

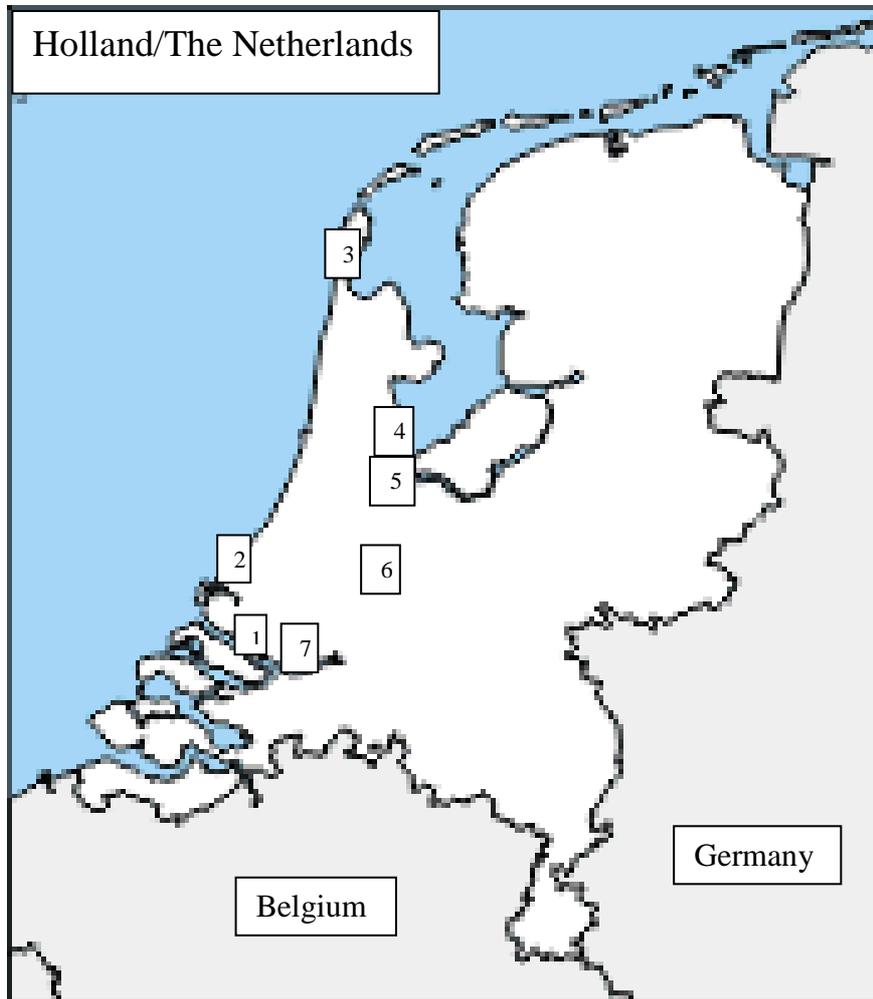
Contact details: www.mkssg.org.uk • mkssg.sec@gmail.com • 07843-768386 (leave a number for us to call you back) • a *closed* Face book page (search for the group and request to join)

Supplement to June newsletter

Jenny's journey through Holland

The main stops of the girls' route are marked on the map.

As an indication of cycling distance: from Hook to Texel is about 160km (100 miles).



Key

1 Hook of Holland; 2 Scheveningen; 3 Texel; 4 Edam; 5 Amsterdam; 6 Utrecht; 7 Rotterdam.

From Hook of Holland the girls headed north along the coast through Scheveningen to Texel. From there they headed back via Edam to Amsterdam, on to Utrecht and Rotterdam and finally Hook of Holland.

Answers to the 'tempting snacks' quiz in our June newsletter

1	Spin around	Twirl
2	Lorry drivers' snack	Yorkie
3	100% Au	All Gold
4	Istanbul harem	Turkish Delight
5	Out there (look up at night)	Milky Way
6	Even more out there.	Galaxy
7	Big cat's pub	Lion Bar

8	Lots of parties	Celebrations
9	Outside meal	Picnic
10	Locals from Malta	Maltesers
11	Reward	Bounty
12	Sweet tooth cleaner	Candy Floss