



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

**Newsletter number 23
November 2021**

Dear Member

Since our last newsletter the clocks have gone back an hour and from the current weather forecast our first snows of the year may be on the way. To help us through the darker evenings, many local places (including Buckingham, Hanslope, Newport Pagnell, Stony Stratford, Olney, Wolverton) are 'lighting up' their centres and streets which make them much less dreary through the winter. There are 'lighting up' events, which include activities and food for all the family to enjoy. Most of these events are this coming weekend, particularly Saturday 27 November, so look out for the actual times if you plan to go along. Later in this newsletter you will read of a slightly different 'lighting up' that you may not have heard of and that you may be tempted to visit. Needless to say, also in the newsletter are suggestions for things to do at home – a recipe to try, a book to read, some garden tasks, and Morag's recollections may tempt you to bring out that old photo album ...

With the extra help afforded by our new committee members we have been able to set up a new group email which will enable the whole committee to access it and hence we can share the load of secretarial work. So we will no longer be using the mkssg.sec@gmail.com address (although any emails will still be forwarded from it for now). If you have an MKSSG business card or have that email address on your phone/computer please replace it with support@mkssg.org.uk for future use.

Since September 2020, we have been sending out these special extended monthly newsletters to help keep in touch with you all through the pandemic. They will end in this current form in December so if you have given any thought to making a contribution to a newsletter, the December issue is your last chance! We would love to hear from you!

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Stoma care team

Should you need help at any time, remember that our stoma care team are always available (in the photo from left to right Karen, Grainne, Helen and Elena).

Their contact details are:

Stoma Care Direct Line: 01908 996951 (an answer machine which is checked very regularly and your call will be returned, but please ensure you leave your name and contact number)

email: stomateammkuh@mkuh.nhs.uk



Brain teasers

- 1 Three doctors all say Robert is their brother. Robert says he has no brothers. Who is lying?
- 2 The water level in a reservoir is low, but doubles every day. It takes 60 days to fill the reservoir. How long does it take for the reservoir to become half full?
- 3 Four people arrive at a river with a narrow bridge that can only hold two people at a time. It's night time and they have one torch that has to be used when crossing the bridge. Person A can cross the bridge in one minute, B in two minutes, C in five minutes, and D in eight minutes. When two people cross the bridge together, they must move at the slower person's pace. Can they all get across the bridge in 15 minutes or less?

(Answers next month; answers from our October newsletter are in this month's supplement.)

Growing up in the fifties

Morag reflects here on her childhood memories of the fifties. Do any of these experiences ring any bells with you?

Do you remember the days before mobile phones, computer games and videos? In my Lanarkshire childhood in the fifties, cars and television were still luxuries. Yet, without recourse to any sophisticated toys, my friends and



I were never bored and spent most of the day outdoors.

The girls would play for hours with two rubber balls, bouncing them against the wall. We had different routines and rhymes to chant.

Skipping games were also popular. Great fun in dry weather, but it could be painful in the rain. If you misjudged your timing, you'd get a skelp (smack) on the legs from a heavy, wet rope! Again, there were many different rhymes.

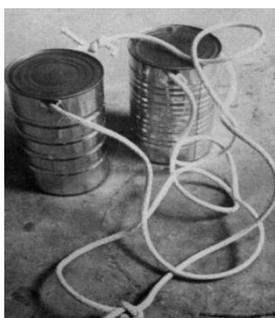
'Het' (You're it) was a game played by boys and girls together. One child was 'het',

which meant they had to chase the others. When someone was caught, they in turn became 'het'.

Another chant likely to be heard resounding in the streets was, 'Ali Baba, Ali Baba, who's got the ball?'. One person stood with their back to the others and threw the ball behind her. Someone caught it and everyone put their hands behind their backs. The thrower had to guess who had the ball. The others sang, 'Ali Baba, Ali Baba, who's got the ball? I haven't got it in my pocket. I haven't got it at all.'

If the thrower guessed correctly, she was allowed another throw. If wrong, whoever caught the ball now threw it. Such simple fun, but it kept us out of mischief for hours at a time!

Other games spring to mind. Statues, Piggy in the middle, Kick the can, What's the time, Mr Wolf?, rounders, and a great favourite – peever (hopscotch).



Occasionally, we'd collect some empty cans. Holes would be pierced in them and long pieces of string fed through. We'd stand on the cans, pull the string tight and hey presto, we had stilts!

The boys would build a 'bogey' from old bits of wood, or boxes. Some old pram wheels were added and a piece of rope to guide it with. They'd take turns pulling them up the hills and then careering down again. Girls were not allowed to join in!

I remember when roller skates were the 'in' thing. Not the comfortable boots of today, but skates with metal wheels that

you tied onto your shoes. Mine never seemed to fit properly. I didn't have a very good sense of balance either, so usually had scabby knees throughout the summer!

If your friend wasn't affluent enough to have skates, then you'd share a pair. Taking one skate each, you'd go to the top of the nearest hill. A book would be placed on the skate; you'd sit on the book and then take off. We'd shoot off the pavement and end up on our bottom in the middle of the road! Thankfully, cars were rarely seen on our council estate.



Sometimes, we'd fill up 'ginger' bottles with water, take a few pieces (sandwiches) and just disappear into the countryside for the day. In those carefree days, parents weren't worried about us. We were perfectly safe on our own. They knew our empty stomachs would ensure our return by tea time.



We'd have races, catch baggie minnies (minnows) in the burns and dare each other to jump across the burn. This would carry on until, eventually, someone would fall in, causing great hilarity. I remember the discomfort when I'd jumped in water that reached over the top of my wellies. I squelched for the rest of the day! We'd compete to find the biggest cow pat, tumble our wilkies (go head over heels) down the hills. The only danger was getting snagged on the barbed wire fences between the fields. The pain of any scratch was nothing compared to the telling off you'd get at home if you managed to tear your clothes!

If we were stuck indoors because of bad weather, we could get lost in the adventures of Enid Blyton's Famous Five. Perhaps we'd swap scraps or stamps, or play shops with empty packets from Mum's cupboard. Then, there was always hide and seek. Not to mention dolls and prams! The list is endless.

Okay, so we didn't have designer clothes, only hand-me-downs from older siblings or cousins. We had no money and few sweets. However, we had something denied children nowadays – innocence.

News from the supplier

Our supplier this month is Coloplast who have supported us at many of our quarterly Lovat Fields meetings. We hope to welcome them back to Lovat Fields again next year, pandemic permitting.

Bodies change over time.

Recent changes to your daily life may impact your diet and routine. This may also mean that, like many of us, your body shape has changed. These things can all affect the fit of your stoma baseplate and can contribute to leakage and skin problems. That's why it's so important to periodically check your body profile and the area around your stoma.

In fact, just over a third of people living with a stoma have an outward or 'curved' area around their stoma. Yet many people continue to use the same baseplate they were discharged on from hospital.

You can check your body profile and the fit of your product by using the online self-assessment tool **BodyCheck** from Coloplast – alternatively you can speak to your Stoma Care Nurse who will help you to get the right product solution for your body and stoma area.

You can find the self-assessment tools on the Coloplast website: www.coloplast.co.uk/bodycheck



Recipe: Stuffed peppers

One of Lynne's favourite foods is peppers and this is one way she loves to cook them, prompted originally by some particularly large ones she was able to buy.

Serves: 2-4, as a complete meal (2) or part of a meal with e.g. chicken, burgers or fish (4).

80g rice

2 large or 4 normal size peppers,
halved lengthwise and deseeded

1 tbsp olive oil

1-2 onions, thinly sliced

1 tsp dried basil

1 tsp Italian seasoning

1 tsp salt

1 pinch ground black pepper

1 tomato, diced; or 2 tbsp pesto or 2 tbsp tomato puree

100-200g sliced goat's cheese or crumbled feta

or grated cheddar

1 Preheat oven to 200° and lightly grease a baking sheet or tray.

2 Place peppers cut-side down on baking sheet/tray. Roast 25-30 minutes until tender and starting to brown.

3 Approximately 15 minutes after the peppers are placed in the oven: put the rice on to cook. Heat the oil in a large pan; add all remaining ingredients except the tomatoes to the oil and cook for 2-3 minutes.

4 Stir in the tomatoes and cook for 5 minutes or until the rice is cooked.

5 Add the cooked rice to the pan and stir until heated through.

6 Remove pan from heat and mix in cheese.

7 Spoon mixture into pepper halves and cook for a further 5 minutes in the oven.

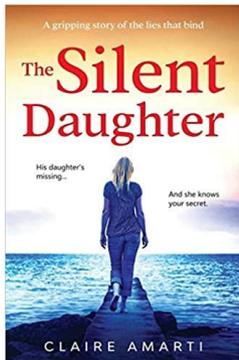


Possible alternatives/extras to add to the rice for the filling, to suit your taste:

pitted black olives, chopped; 2 garlic cloves, crushed; 1 tsp cumin; 1 tsp coriander; 1 tsp oregano.

Book review

For this month's review Morag has chosen *The Silent Daughter* by Claire Amarti.



Sadie and her best friend, Fiona, attended Horton College. Fiona died in an accident on graduation night ten years ago and Sadie has been trying to block it from her memory. She returned to Horton College as a teacher but lost her job. She is living with Fiona's mum although her own mum lives nearby. A pupil from the school, Devon Hundley, goes missing.

The suspense starts and continues to build throughout the book. When Devon last saw Sadie she whispered 'I know your secret'. In fact, everyone in the story seems to have a secret. The book has many twists and turns and I couldn't put it down. The ending was completely unexpected.

Available: Kindle edn £3.99; Paperback £14.90. 288 pages.

Jenny's 'Notes from the garden'

It's tempting to think that, by November, there are no more jobs to be done in the garden – but there are still tasks that need to be completed before the gardener can retire indoors for the winter.

This year the leaves are exceptionally late in falling from the trees, allowing us to enjoy the splendour of the autumn colours for an extended period. However, they do need to be cleared from the lawn and flower beds as soon as possible.

If you haven't already done so, lift and store dahlias (I over-winter both the begonias and dahlias in the loft – which is dry and frost-free).

Put food and clean water out for the birds on a regular basis.

It's not too late to plant tulip bulbs, and although there may not be as much colour in the flower beds until the bulbs emerge in the spring, there is always the opportunity to plant pots and tubs with winter flowering plants to add cheerful colour to views through the window.



Humour

My daughter asked for a pet spider for her birthday, so I went to our local pet shop. They were £70!

*B***** this, I thought, I can get one cheaper off the web.*

A mate of mine recently admitted to being addicted to brake fluid.

When I quizzed him on it he reckoned he could stop any time.

My neighbour knocked on my door at 2:30am this morning, can you believe that, 2:30am?

Luckily for him I was still up playing my drums.

Contributed by Morag.

Day trip: Silverstone Racing Circuit, Towcester, NN12 8TN

Continuing our suggestions of places to go within one hour of Milton Keynes here is one suggestion especially for the festive season that you may not have thought of, the Silverstone Lap of Light, which is suitable for the whole family. Silverstone Racing Circuit is approximately 17 miles from MK.



From 26 November to 3 January, you can drive your car on a spectacular light and laser display along almost a complete lap of the track circuit, which takes about half an hour. The journey takes in light/laser shows of scenes from across the world ('Silverstone to San Francisco ... Paris to the Pyramids') and scenes in massive glass globes. There are many additional attractions including drive-

in cinema (take blankets as you'll be seated in your car without engine running/heating for this!), ice skating, curling, other activities not to mention Santa and his elves. Food and indoor games are also available. You can even decorate your car ('pimp it') and enter it into a competition!

People with disabilities/wheelchairs are well catered for, but please note that the light/laser displays are intensive and fast moving so not suitable for anyone who is sensitive to these circumstances. The cost per car for the circuit is about £35 and any other attractions have to be paid for in addition. If you decide to book for the drive, also check out all the information online for any other attractions you want that may need to be booked in advance.



Looking forward to seeing many of you at the Christmas lunch!

For our December newsletter – our final one – we need all contributions by/on Monday, 13 December, latest please. Email or text is easy for us if you can, or please don't hesitate to phone.

Best wishes

Tim (Chair), Jenny, Justine, Lesley, Lynne, Morag, Tony
MKSSG Committee

Contact details: www.mkssg.org.uk • support@mkssg.org.uk • 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 November newsletter

Answers to brain teasers in our October newsletter

1 Jimmy's mother had four children. She named the first Monday. She named the second Tuesday, and she named the third Wednesday. What is the name of the fourth child?

Answer Jimmy, because Jimmy's mother had four children!

2 Imagine that you are in a boat, in the middle of the sea. Suddenly, you are surrounded by hungry sharks, just waiting to feed on you. How can you put an end to this?

Answer Stop imagining!

3 Once there lived a king who did not allow anybody to enter or leave the kingdom. There was only one bridge that connected his empire with the outer world. A single sharpshooter guard was specially assigned for a lookout on the bridge. He must kill anyone trying to go outside and send back anyone trying to come in to the kingdom. To take rest, the guard used to sit inside his hut for 5 minutes and then return back on the lookout. The bridge took a minimum of 8 minutes to pass. Even then, a woman was able to escape the kingdom without incurring any kind of harm to the guard or herself. How?

Answer The woman started walking across the bridge when the guard was inside the hut. She walked all the time he was inside (5 minutes) and then turned and started walking back towards the kingdom. On approaching the kingdom she was asked for her papers by the guard who was now back on duty. Since she did not have any, she was sent back.