

## FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH – June 2020. Edition 66.



Hello. I hope you are coping during this terrible time. This edition heavily reflects what we have all been going through and hopefully offers some hope for the future.

As I have said before, this publication is open to anyone who wants to contribute in a non-offensive, non-sexist and non-racist way and you can do so by contacting us at: [dean@fthm.org.uk](mailto:dean@fthm.org.uk) . I think it is important to say that you don't have to be at a professional level to get involved – I myself doubt certain things but just have a go and do my best!

# Competition!

Short Story Competition in English on any subject: Adult, up to 3,000 words with prize of £75 for the best entry which will be published in a future edition of the magazine. Child up to 16 years of age, with prize of £25 for the best entry and

publication of the story in a future edition of the magazine. Competition closes 31<sup>st</sup> of July, 2020 at midnight GMT. Please send entries to: [dean@fthm.org.uk](mailto:dean@fthm.org.uk)

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**CONTENTS** (click the links below to be taken to the relevant section)

[MY NOT VERY SERIOUS STARS](#)

[COVID – AN INTERESTING POINT OF VIEW](#)

[LIVERPOOL](#)

[BRENDA'S WILDLIFE CORNER](#)

[THE CORONAVIRUS](#)

[GRAHAM TOWNSEND'S MONTHLY QUIZ](#)

[KEEP SMILING](#)

[SOME MORE GOOD RECIPES FROM JUNE](#)

[ALBUM REVIEW](#)

[SOME PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCE OF THE LOCKDOWN IN ENGLAND](#)

[ANOTHER FUN QUIZ FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH](#)

## MY NOT VERY SERIOUS STARS



### **Scorpio 24 Oct – 22 Nov**

Now is a good time to sit in your garden and cultivate positive plans for the future, and to weed out all the negative thoughts that have always held you back. You may have saved a considerable amount of money recently, but when the opportunity arises, don't spend it like a fool otherwise you will regret it

and soon be back to square one. Clean your teeth more often.

### **Sagittarius 23 Nov – 21 Dec**

Someone who you once considered to be a waste of space will do something that leads you to see them in a totally different light – and appreciate them more. You may have learnt something valuable about yourself during the lockdown, but don't get too big-headed as many people still consider you to be a bit of a half-wit. Don't drink so much alcohol.

### **Capricorn 22 Dec – 20 Jan**

A trip to the dentist is long overdue but don't worry as your teeth are so bad that it won't make much difference now. After a nightmare patch, you can now pick up the pieces and construct something new and long-lasting in your life. It is also a good time to start planning a well-deserved holiday for the future, but for now, do all those boring jobs that you always put off.

### **Aquarius 21 Jan – 19 Feb**

Like many people you have recently been experiencing a difficult time in your life, but there is definitely light at the end of the tunnel - if you're careful and persevere. A good time to dance around the living room in just your underwear if you want to feel liberated. It is also a good time to pick up an old hobby like making model aeroplanes or making your own clothes.

### **Pisces 20 Feb – 20 Mar**

Someone you really love may no longer be in your life, but don't worry, as new love is waiting for you in the near future. You are however, consuming far too much food at the moment and this may cause you many problems tomorrow. You have also had a troubled mind but hold onto the thought that everything changes including your thoughts.

### **Aries 21 Mar – 20 Apr**

Some good news this week will lift your mood but also make you realise how interdependent we really are. You have been watching a lot of telly of late, but new opportunities will soon arise to broaden your choices. It is a good time to look for a partner if you're single, as more than your eyesight will diminish with time. You will enjoy some very colourful dreams soon!

### **Taurus 21 Apr – 21 May**

This month you will realise that all this staying indoors was worthwhile as we are here to tell the tale. In your past, you have had the morals of an alley cat so now is the time to start to claw your way back to respectability. A comment from someone close to you that is very near the bone may remind you that we should not leave a mess on our own doorstep.

### **Gemini 22 May – 21 Jun**

You always seem to want to have a finger in every pie, but hasn't what has happened this year made you realise that people are more important than money? Recently, you have been quite a coach potato but now is the time to peel back the years and relive aspects of your youth. Why not dress to thrill your partner this month who has put up with all your moods and tantrums?

### **Cancer 22 Jun – 23 Jul**

Life may have hammered you a lately, but why not make a new start symbolically like re-growing your fingernails or painting your beard blue? There is no rhyme or reason for what has happened this year, but from now on you should cherish your life like a well-loved poem. Cease to worry as all your prayers will gradually be answered if they are positive ones.

### **Leo 24 Jul – 23 Aug**

Up to now, you have let one friend in particular walk all over you, but now is the time to stand up for yourself and rewrite the rules of the relationship if you want to maintain it. It is a good time to re-invent yourself and become more interesting than the geek you have been up to now. You may have been hoarding lots of money but remember life is for living.

### **Virgo 24 Aug – 23 Sep**

Now is a good time to put aside a bit of money for Christmas so you are not scraping around to buy presents like last year! But after everything you've been through this year, why not treat yourself to something you've always wanted to do or own? You may feel unattractive at the moment but at least you are still here and life can only improve from here on.

### **Libra 24 Sep – 23 Oct**

An unexpected present may initially please you until you learn who it is from. You may not feel very creative at the moment but be patient and ideas will start to flood through you again! You may think you have let yourself down by doing a certain thing but don't be so hard on yourself as we all feel like this sometimes. A good time to try a different laxative.

## COVID – AN INTERESTING POINT OF VIEW



Written by [Robert A Williams](#)

What is happening in the current times with Coronavirus, Covid-19 and lockdown?

There are differing schools of thought and differing opinions about the whole Coronavirus and lockdown scenario, lots of different and sometimes opposing points of view.

To my mind there exists a virus that has the ability to be transmitted quickly and the ability to kill those who are not fit enough to tolerate its presence. By fit I am not meaning olympian or anything close to that but rather just being fit and well enough to cope with a new virus being introduced to one's body's system. Many folk cannot cope with this, especially the elderly and vulnerable, that much seems clear.

The statistics and the figures, to my mind, are all manipulated.

The greatest threat in all this Coronavirus and lockdown that exists all over this planet lies with the media and those that control it and how that may in turn influence those who listen or indeed "believe" what is being said.

Some interesting facts that have happened, many people from the likes of conspiracy theorists like David Icke to more mainstream scientists have been silenced on the internet. Their YouTube accounts have been deleted and so have their social media accounts, for many this is true and it seems now that the only corporate giant in this arena that is still allowing freedom of speech to many of those silenced other places is [Twitter](#). If you want to know more about this then visit this website [www.altcensored.com/](http://www.altcensored.com/)

Both Google and Facebook are clamping down on what we can and cannot see, controlling media in a way that is unprecedented and from my own point of view is more destructive in many ways than Covid-19. Once Freedom of speech is gone then what is left?

Then, and sorry if I am sounding a bit doom ridden, but when we look at England and what has happened with Brexit and what is likely going to happen as a result of Covid then we see a recession looming, the likes of which has probably not been seen since the 1920's. This is further vilified by articles such as

this [www.theguardian.com/business/2020/may/17/brexit-strange-idea-derailed-strange-times-pandemic](http://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/may/17/brexit-strange-idea-derailed-strange-times-pandemic)

And so, to conclude, what lessons can be learnt?

Quite simply stay safe and don't trust the media or the government, no matter which country you live in; keep an open mind and keep active.

[Robert](#)

Webmaster and Host at [FTHM](#) and many other websites.

## LIVERPOOL



Normally, Liverpool is a vibrant, multi-cultural city that is known throughout the world as a major industrial force, and, in more recent years, as the birthplace of the world-famous music group the Beatles and also because of the celebrated football teams Everton F.C. and Liverpool F.C.

Liverpool has a hugely interesting history some of which we will now consider:

In the sixteenth century, its population was around 500 and the original street plan was designed by King John and laid out by seven streets which made up a H shape.

It is situated on the eastern side of the Mersey Estuary and became a city in 1880. During the Industrial Revolution, the port became more important as it handled many things like coal, cotton, freight, general cargo and, infamously, it played a part in the slave trade.

Interestingly, there were battles to take control of what was then a town, during the English Civil War which included an 18-day siege in 1644.

It is true to say that following the construction of the first commercial dock in 1715, profits from tobacco and the slave trade helped the town to prosper – which was reflected in the construction of many major buildings. It is also important to add however, that three local men campaigned for the abolition of the slave trade: Edward Rushton, William Rathbone and William Roscoe.

Liverpool also hugely prospered in the nineteenth century as a large volume of trade was passing through it. Through the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, Liverpool and Manchester became the first cities to have an intercity rail link.

Not surprisingly, the wealth of the city was greater than that of even London during periods of the nineteenth century.

Significantly, in the 1840s hundreds of thousands of Irish migrants began arriving in Liverpool due to the Great Famine. Also, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, many immigrants arrived from Europe and, consequently, influenced the religious and social makeup of Liverpool, which is reflected by the diversity of its religious architecture.

Following the end of the First World War, the city experienced great social unrest as society tried to cope with the loss of young men whilst also, trying to accommodate veterans in the economy. Some colonial soldiers and sailors from India and Africa who had served the UK also settled in cities like Liverpool and, in June 1919, the country witnessed race riots. However, Liverpool also became home to a large West Indian black community and to some commonwealth immigrants who settled in poorer areas like Toxteth.

Happily, in the sixties, Liverpool became world-famous due to the emergence of the “Merseybeat” which included bands like the Beatles and Gerry and the Pacemakers – in 2002, the city’s airport was renamed after the murdered Beatle John Lennon.

Unfortunately, from the mid-1970s onwards, Liverpool docks and industry declined resulting in huge unemployment in the city, in the 1980s. But, in the late twentieth century, Liverpool’s economy revived and there was regeneration in the city.

In the twenty-first century, tourism has become very important to the city with promotion of its many popular music acts like the Beatles, world-class art galleries, museums and landmarks. Importantly, property developer Grosvenor developed Liverpool city centre through a project named ‘Liverpool One’, which opened in May 2008.

Many people may be unaware what a social trailblazer the city has actually been – it was the first to have a School for the Blind, high schools for girls, council houses and Juvenile court. It also introduced the district nurse, slum clearance, a cancer research centre and free school milk and meals – and much more!

Culturally, Liverpool is very rich e.g. it is home to the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and to the Liverpool Playhouse which is the oldest surviving repertory theatre. It was also the birthplace of inventor Frank Hornby who introduced us to toys like: Meccano, Hornby Model Railways and, of course, Dinky Toys!

If you appreciate horse racing, it would be unforgiveable not to mention The Grand National which usually takes place annually at Aintree Racecourse on the outskirts of the city, and which is watched by millions of people around the world.

Natives to Liverpool are known as Liverpudlians and colloquially as “Scousers” which refers to a form of stew called ‘Scouse’. You will not meet warmer, more hospitable people than “Scousers”, so if you have the chance, visit this lovely northern city that is Liverpool!

\* With a lot of help from Wikipedia

If you want to visit more places then look at [Dean’s Places on this website](#)

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## BRENDA’S WILDLIFE CORNER



### **Ball Python**

The ball python is also known as the royal python snake and is native to West and Central Africa. It lives in grasslands and shrublands and its existence is threatened by hunting for its meat and also for the international pet trade.

The ball python is the smallest of the African pythons growing to a maximum length of 182



cm (72 inch) and its name comes from the fact that it rolls up into a ball when it is stressed or frightened. Its diet includes mice, shrews, gerbils and birds.

Python breeders have developed many morphs with varying patterns and colours. Specimens from the wild don't usually adapt very well to captivity and often refuse to eat. However, the oldest recorded ball python lived for 47 ½ years at the Philadelphia zoo.

Interestingly, the ball python is revered by the Igbo people in southern eastern Nigeria who consider it to be a symbol of the earth.

\* Ref. Wikipedia

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## THE CORONAVIRUS



**Written by June Charlton**

The Coronavirus seems to be hanging around and it's now going into the seventh week of lockdown as I write.

Hundreds of people are dying from it every day all around the world. I don't think some people took it seriously when it first emerged (myself included). I know the

scientists are working very hard to try and find a cure for it – I think they will do this, but how many more people will die in the meantime?

It's terrible when you hear on the news how many people have contracted the virus, or how many people have died on a particular day. I feel sorry for those with underlying health problems who are clearly more susceptible to the illness and it's sad how many people in care homes have lost their life during this awful pandemic.

Fortunately, people, on the whole, have had the sense to keep their distance from one another, but there's always some who don't seem to care or understand. Also, it's good that there are people helping the more vulnerable with things like shopping and delivering necessary medication.

Anyway, let's hope that a cure will be found in the not-so-distant future. But it's lovely how many people are showing their appreciation for NHS workers and other key workers who are holding everything together, by clapping and making noise at 8 o'clock on a Thursday evening.

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## GRAHAM TOWNSEND'S MONTHLY QUIZ



### Questions:

- (1) Jon Anderson, vocalist with the band Yes was born in which Lancashire town in 1944?
- (2) Eleanor of Castille (1241-1290) was the first wife of which King of England?
- (3) "The Constant Gardener" and "Smiley's People" are books by which English author who was born in Poole, Dorset in 1931?
- (4) Which New York born economist won the 1976 Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences for his research on consumption analysis, monetary history and theory and the complexity of stabilization policy?
- (5) James Dean and Rocky Hudson were both nominated for Best Actor in a Leading Role at the 1957 Academy Awards for which film?
- (6) The Italian aperitif Aperol has a vibrant hue of which colour?
- (7) Which English Football League 2 team play their home matches at Home Park?
- (8) The BBC TV series "Death in Paradise" is filmed on which French island?
- (9) "Cawood Delight", "The Sutton" and "Timperley Early" are UK varieties of which vegetable?
- (10) Charlotte Bronte originally published the novel "Shirley" under which pseudonym?
- (11) What is the state capital of Maine?
- (12) On the ITV quiz show "The Chase", which of the "Chasers" is an avid Chelsea supporter?
- (13) What is the county town of Wiltshire?
- (14) In 1843, Nancy Johnson created what type of machine used to create a frozen dessert?
- (15) Which two-time snooker world champion was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland in March 1949?
- (16) In Greek myth Zeus was the king of gods, what was the name of his wife?
- (17) Which band won the 1974 Eurovision Song Contest at The Dome in Brighton, England?
- (18) Which pretender to the English throne was born in Belgium in 1474?
- (19) Which video game, originally released in 2011, is the bestselling video game of all time? (As at 29<sup>th</sup> April 2020)
- (20) Who was elected leader of the British Labour Party in April 2020?

### Answers

- (1) Accrington (2) Edward I (3) John Le Carre (4) Milton Friedman (5) Giant (6) Orange (7) Plymouth Argyle (8) Guadeloupe (9) Rhubarb (10) Currer Bell (11) Augusta (12) Shaun Wallace (13) Trowbridge (14) Ice Cream Maker (15) Alex Higgins (16) Hera (17) ABBA (18) Perkin Warbeck (19) Minecraft (20) Sir Keir Starmer
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## KEEP SMILING



**Written by Francis Tait**

How often do you smile?

Did you know it is estimated that the average adult manages to smile approximately 20 times each day in comparison to children who smile approximately 400 times each day?

In general it takes a greater number of facial muscles to frown than it does to smile - so why make work for yourself - keep smiling!

Here is your chance to get smiling. June 15th 2020 is 'National Smile Power Day'. It is the day for everyone to share 'The Power of The Smile'. Starting your day with a smile is certainly empowering. The great news is starting your day with a smile can lift your mood and if you exchange a smile with another person it may lift their mood also.

Did you know a smile can spur a chemical reaction in the brain that can make you feel happier?

Has anyone ever sympathetically told you to 'cheer up and smile'? It may be good advice because science has shown smiling can lift your mood, lower stress levels and even boost your immune system. Smiling, together with the mood burst helps the body to release cortisol and endorphins that can result in the reduction of blood pressure and in some cases there can be a reduction of pain.

So, the smile we wear releases the feel good factors and the amazing thing is the smile doesn't have to be real to be effective.

Smiling is contagious, so therefore, it not only has the power to elevate YOUR mood but can also change the mood of OTHERS!

The smile is a simple and surprisingly powerful way to improve your own life and the lives of others. So, go on, change someone's day around, you may help them to smile too!

There is no down side to smiling. It is good for everyone! Now is your chance to get smiling. June 15th 2020 is National Smile Power Day. How can you celebrate this day?

- \* challenge yourself to smile more often
- \* start your day with a smile

- \* smile at others - make their day
- \* simply smile throughout the day doing your daily tasks

On National Smile Power Day, challenge yourself to witness the power YOUR SMILE has and enjoy the day and KEEP SMILING!

\* References:

[abcnews.com](http://abcnews.com)

National Day [Calendar.com](http://Calendar.com)

[www.henryford.com](http://www.henryford.com)

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## SOME MORE GOOD RECIPES FROM JUNE



### **Cod in Cider**

Ingredients:

- 1 lb of cod fillet
- 8 mushrooms
- 2 large tomatoes (halved)
- ½ pint of cider
- 1 oz of butter
- 1 oz of plain flour
- 2 oz of grated cheese

Salt and pepper

Method:

Cut cod in four and arrange in a greased oven-proof dish with the mushrooms and tomatoes. Pour in the cider and season with salt and pepper. Bake at gas mark 5/375F for about 20 minutes. Add the flour to melted butter and cook for a few minutes. Add liquid from the fish with the water if necessary, to make ½ a pint. Bring to the boil and cook for 2-3 minutes stirring continuously. Pour over the fish, sprinkle with grated cheese and brown under the grill.

*For even more recipes check out [FTHM Recipes Channel](#)*



1 lb of pork sausages

### **Toad in the Hole**

Ingredients:

¼ lb of plain flour

Pinch of salt

1 standard egg

½ pint of milk

1 tablespoon of melted butter

Method:

Sift flour and salt together, add egg, ¼ pint of milk and butter beating well. Stir in the remaining milk. Arrange sausages in a 10 x 12-inch baking tin and bake at gas mark 7/425 F for 10 minutes. Remove from oven and quickly pour batter over and return to the oven at gas mark 6/400 F for a further 40-50 minutes until well-risen, set and browned.

### **Banana Doolittle**

Ingredients:

¼ lb of pork chipolata sausages

4 tomatoes (peeled and slice)

4 bananas

1 medium onion (peeled and sliced)

1 teaspoon of brown sugar

¼ pint of water

Salt and pepper

Method:

Lay sausages in the bottom of a greased casserole dish and cover with a layer of sliced tomatoes and onion. Slice the bananas lengthways and arrange on top. Pour water over, season with salt, pepper and sugar. Cook for 1 hour at gas mark 4/350 F.

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## ALBUM REVIEW



**Written by Graham Townsend**

**Title: FUTURE NOSTALGIA**

**By: DUA LIPA**

Released in March 2020, this is the second studio album from the English singer, songwriter and model. It is the follow up to her self-titled debut album in 2017.

Prior to release of this album, some people may have been familiar with three or four tracks that appear here, as they have been released in their own right as singles

with much commercial success, particularly in the UK and US.

Much like those singles, this new album has already achieved great success and topped the UK album chart for three weeks so far. It has also reached the top 5 in the US Billboard album chart and topped album charts in Australia, Ireland and New Zealand amongst a host of other countries.

So, what is all the fuss about? Well let's start with some basics. There are 11 tracks on the album and the running time is just over 37 minutes.

The album has a recurring theme of electro-pop, disco and synth pop and fans of bass guitar will be pleasantly surprised by the part it plays throughout. If you are looking for a nice ballad, you're definitely in the wrong place

You can clearly hear the influences of other artists, from Madonna, Lady Gaga and maybe a touch of Gwen Stefani at one end of the scale to Daft Punk at the other end of the spectrum. There are many others too.

The opening track is the title track. It is an upbeat number and sets the tone for the rest of the album.

Track 2 "Don't Start Now" has already been released as a single. It has catchy lyrics and plenty of bass.

Track 3 "Cool" is a little more refined but still upbeat and has some undertones of Prince about it.

Track 4 "Physical" is an all-out synth-pop song and acknowledges the early 1980s Olivia Newton-John song of the same name, by including the "Let's get physical" line from it in the chorus, although the song is not intentionally based upon it in any other way.

Track 5 "Levitating" definitely has a feel of Daft Punk about it. You could class it as space rock, I guess. I feel this one has potential to be a future single release.

Track 6 “Pretty Please” grew on me after a few listens. Not every track can be an absolute classic but this is a solid effort all the way through. It seems a little gentler than the previous tracks but is pleasant enough.

Track 7 “Hallucinate” has plenty of pulsing beats that will want you to get involved and start dancing. A great pop song with lots of bass.

Track 8 “Love Again” contains a sample from “Your Woman” by “White Town” a 1990s UK number 1 single. This works very well in my opinion.

Track 9 “Break My Heart” is my favourite track on the album. I was familiar with this number already. It’s just a full-on foot stomper and I’d defy anyone to not like this one. How can you not like a song that contains a sample from “Need You Tonight” by INXS?

Track 10 “Good In Bed” is the worst track here. It’s not terrible by any means but seems more focused on the storyline of a relationship that has good sex but little else going for it. The lyrics are a little school playground like.

The only track that comes close to a ballad is the final track “Boys Will Be Boys” but that is more down to the lyrics and the subject matter, even then you wouldn’t class it as a slow song. I like this song, maybe not for the reasons that Dua would want me to. I respect her feminist views, which she attempts to get across very strongly in the lyrics, but it’s the way the song has been structured which grabbed my attention. The fact that, in my opinion, this is one of the weaker songs on the album but still impresses me to some degree says a lot about the quality of the music.

Overall, despite the minor failings of a couple of the latter tracks, anyone who loves pop music will be hard pushed to find a better album than this anywhere. If you thought that this lady might be a bit of a flash in the pan when she burst on to the scene three years ago, think again would be my advice as this is likely to become an all-time classic album for its genre.

\* Rating: **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**

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## SOME PEOPLE’S EXPERIENCE OF THE LOCKDOWN IN ENGLAND



**Chris Scheller**

The more I’ve thought about writing about life during the lockdown the harder it’s become. What can I write that doesn’t sound like it’s a cliché? Is it okay to admit there are some things I like about it? Well, I can only try so here goes.

Emotions during lockdown, like so many people have said, are all over the place. It’s like living inside a kaleidoscope with the pattern constantly changing as my mood shifts from

sadness to outrage to joy (often over relatively simple things) within a matter of hours on any given day.

I know I'm lucky. I live with my family (a supportive partner, a nearly adult son, an attention seeking cat and, for the time being, my 89-year-old mother-in-law). I live in a lovely place and although we don't have a garden I can be out in amazing countryside within minutes. I've always liked walking, but I've probably never appreciated it as much as I do now!

Over the past winter, for the first time, I carried on swimming outdoors each week. Now during lockdown this has been my lifesaver. I've found a new pond; one I can walk to. It's surrounded by huge trees full of nesting herons. I can swim in my own little world, first with toads and now with ducklings for company. I know this won't be for everyone, but I always come away elated.

At home my mother-in-law is finding lockdown hard to cope with. The timing hasn't been good as her home was flooded in February. We thought she was only coming for a few weeks but now who knows.... She, understandably, feels like all sense of control has been taken away from her. Sometimes things get stressful for all of us and of course escape options during lockdown are limited!

I think my nearly 18-year-old son is coping incredibly well. He's normally a very sociable boy and while he's now more addicted to his X box than he ever was before he still goes out on his bike each day, helps with cooking and shopping and even lets me watch terrible Netflix shows with him. I love spending this time with him that I probably wouldn't have had without lockdown, although I do worry a bit about his future....

There are other things I worry about too. My mum who will be 91 tomorrow. She lives in a nursing home miles away. I'm scared that something might happen to her and I won't be able to see her. My best friend works in a hospital and I whisper the nearest thing I get to prayers for her safety. There are other friends I worry about too especially those with fragile mental health or with underlying health conditions. Still, one of the things I've realised more than ever during lockdown is how precious our friends are. I'm not really one for social media but I've loved all the support and messaging and WhatsApp groups. Occasionally it can get a bit much but then I just leave my phone in a room and walk away...

Finally, work. I can't say I miss the daily drive through endless roadworks but I do miss my colleagues. While I've been forced to 'embrace' the new technology (which is a little outside my comfort zone) I find Zoom meetings a lot more tiring than the real thing. I work as an advocate within social care. We're described as key workers and for some reason I feel slightly guilty about this. The people in my team aren't visiting anyone face to face because of the restrictions. We're still trying our hardest to ensure people's rights are upheld but it's difficult. How can you fully represent someone you've never met? Particularly when the decisions are as fundamental as about end of life care and 'Do Not attempt Resuscitation' notices. Knowing how bad things are in care homes has been difficult too, especially wondering whether lives have been lost unnecessarily because not everyone is seen as having equal value.



I'm really hoping there will be some things we've learnt during this time that will stay with us, but, honestly, who knows? If nothing else at least I've baked my first cake for years. It was a vegan chocolate and surprisingly nice!

### **Joanne Smith**

Since Lockdown began, I have been at home with my husband and youngest son who is 13 years old. To begin with I found it quite difficult (like many people) not working or going out except to walk my dog or for food shopping. I still find it quite stressful going to a supermarket as I am shopping for my family, my mum and my mother-in-law so that usually means shopping with three lists. I only go once a week so have to do it all at once, the supermarket staff are doing a fabulous job though. There is also the problem of home schooling a 13-year-old, his maths homework is way beyond my capabilities and he knows this, and takes full advantage! I am missing my eldest son and speak to him every day and also my best friend who I normally see a few times a week. I miss talking to people face to face but it's the same for everyone!

There are some things I am quite enjoying, first of all my house has never been cleaner, I have cleaned out every cupboard in my house. I've been doing lots of baking (not great for the waistline) and lots of gardening. I have got blue tits nesting in my bird box something I may not have even noticed had I still been working. I've also been crocheting a blanket which is nearly finished and spending more time with my 13-year-old son who would normally be out with friends but can't get away from me at the moment!

It is certainly an anxious time for everyone and I am looking forward to things feeling safer and being able to visit friends and family again. I feel like I will never take simple things like eating out at a restaurant or going out to the pub with friends for granted in the future and also, I am looking forward to a time when all my family can get together again - fingers crossed it won't be too long.

### **Zena Charlton**

Due to coronavirus we are all currently in lockdown/isolation.

I haven't found the lockdown too bad. I started off working from home on the 17<sup>th</sup> March for two weeks. Working from home was a very different approach of work for me as I have never had to work from home so had to learn how to use everything on a laptop. After two weeks of working from home I was told that I was going to be furloughed and put onto 80% wage paid by the government and as work wanted to be careful with money, I was fine with this as it was understandable. I have currently been on furlough for around 4 weeks with little to do.

I have been spending my time watching a lot of TV series and programmes, cleaning around the house, exercising a lot more than usual, making new changes and baking new things. I have found this time good to catch up on things I don't usually have time to do when working full time. Although lockdown is boring, I am trying to find a positive in it. It has been very different spending a lot of time with family as we are all isolated together, as I am not used to spending so much time with them.

Through the lockdown I have been trying my best to use my one hour of exercise per day. I have been doing a weekly shop to try and prevent going out of the house too much for small bits of food. I have also been doing my grandad's weekly shop and delivering to his house, as he is completely isolating. I decided to start studying a new online child care course to get a qualification at the end of it, there is a lot of course work involved so that does keep me occupied when I do it.

Overall, I haven't found the lockdown too bad due to being able to catch up on things I needed to do and make new changes with a lot of time to do it.

### **Graham Townsend**

First and foremost, as someone who spent almost the whole of the last decade working alone, I should perhaps consider myself fortunate that the lockdown has probably had less of an impact on my mental health than on many other people, simply for that reason. Of course, I have missed seeing friends and family, some more than others, but the effect has been reduced by using social media and the good old-fashioned method of speaking with them on the telephone.

I have continued to take exercise, almost daily, and am also fortunate that I have a decent sized garden along with good neighbours who I have been able to interact with via my patio and their decking areas. I have also enjoyed the community spirit involved in the regular Thursday evening applause for keyworkers. Whilst I cannot say I have enjoyed not being able to socialise in the way I would like to, I feel I have adapted to a different way of life, some aspects of which I will probably maintain after the lockdown has been lifted.

### **Ruth Minich**

Sitting in the sun drinking morning coffee I feel blessed and at peace. Normally at this time I am sitting in a cold office in front of a computer. These thoughts quickly turn to guilt and shame.

Conflicting emotions and feelings - this phrase I use for my current state of mind. I have more time to plant seeds and turn soil, more time to read and relax, plenty of time to worry and try to manage a business that has suddenly been halted by this insidious virus.

My grandson's exploratory operation is cancelled, so he still suffers internal pain, my granddaughter's eye operation is cancelled, John (husband) is too scared to keep his appointment with his kidney specialist, 91 year old Mum can't have her vitamin B12 injection and is suffering serious fatigue, Dad has an angry rash on his leg and had a quick dismissive visit from a curt and overworked district nurse. I feel guilty for my extremely good health, especially when I see news of all the suffering and death that this disease is causing.

Meanwhile 3 mornings a week I fetch groceries for 3 households, continue to garden, cook, bake, visit Mum and Dad every day so they at least see another person, try and help John navigate government websites, bargain and negotiate with suppliers, landlord and customers. The future of our business weighs heavily on John's mind.

I don't miss having a social life as I didn't have one anyway, family and work keep me happily busy.

I still feel we are blessed when I think of all those frontline workers risking lives and working all hours, and when I remember the suffering and bereaved families.

### **Joanne Lyel**

I lost all three, self-employed jobs, in four days. And. Panic. Practically. Paralyzed. Me.

Unemployed. No income, no means of paying for food or bills, nothing! The speed at which I'd gone from employed to unemployed was petrifying. I desperately thought of ways I could earn money - supermarkets, care homes, hospitals. Anything, anywhere. I made phone calls, sent emails, speculative CV's, knocked on doors. Nothing!

Unbelievably, as fast as fear froze me, there was an immediate outpouring of concern and support... tentative text messages, emails and phone calls from friends and family. They'd seen the news and anticipated my jobs would go. Each one immediately there for me with the same message and urgent insistence, the same unconditional love and kindness, 'Joanne, I've plenty of money, it's yours whenever you need it, don't you dare struggle, my savings are yours, my nest egg is yours, my good fortune is yours, my investment it's yours – it's no good sitting in a bank, use it, it's yours!' Ten friends in total! TEN!

Not. One. Will. Ever. Be. Forgotten. Ever!

Friends and family provided me with reassurance and strength, I felt protected, I felt loved and I felt safe. My lockdown experience has taught me a priceless and valuable, lifelong lesson - I continue to be forever enriched by my friendships, I know that I have true wealth.

### **Sarah Stone** (week commencing 16/03/2020)

On Monday I went to work at the museum, everyone was talking about the impending situation. On Tuesday morning I also went to work, again, everyone discussing the virus.

On Tuesday afternoon, within the space of two hours I had been informed that the museums were closing, hence all my casually contracted work was to end for the foreseeable future, and also that my other place of employment, Square Chapel, had gone into administration. We knew that the schools would be closing imminently. So, in the blink of an eye I was totally unemployed and facing the situation of home schooling my son whilst trying to look for some other form of income.

I started by applying for benefits whilst scouring the internet for frontline worker jobs which was all that was available. All these posts were being bombarded with applicants. I applied for two supermarket jobs and a health service job. I was in touch with other friends in similar positions to me.

In and amongst this utterly depressing situation there was much goodness however. Family members got in touch and offered to help me financially and two friends came round unexpectedly and just stuffed money in my hand – I will never forget that kindness. There were so many lovely phone calls, a time which really made you realise true friends.

In short, within a fortnight I was working and earning again. My friend Joanne had a chance meeting with an old acquaintance which led to a job at a local cash and carry. She got me an application form and as luck would have it there was a position which needed filling immediately - I still can't believe how fortunate I was.

'Home schooling' has not been without its challenges but the extra-curricular learning experiences which we have encountered I think will prove to be invaluable in the longer term. Life has settled into a gentler rhythm.

I am fortunate that no one close to me has been seriously affected by Covid-19. I talked with an ICU nurse recently and listening to him brought it home that we are dealing with a horrific and dangerous virus. OUR NHS STAFF ARE AMAZING, as are all the other individuals who are keeping the wheels on our country now, basically, the working classes. I hope that this is NEVER forgotten and that future voting habits reflect this, I doubt it sadly, but time will tell....

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## ANOTHER FUN QUIZ FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH



### Questions:

- (1) From where did pizza originate?
- (2) Where is the Pope based?
- (3) What is the capital of Guinea?
- (4) What is the French word for 'bread'?
- (5) What is the Roman Numeral for 1,000?
- (6) Who is head of the Church of England?
- (7) Where did the Coronavirus allegedly originate?
- (8) Who invented the Penny Farthing?
- (9) Who normally produces the most wine in the world?
- (10) What is the German word for 'brother'?
- (11) How old was Jesus Christ when he died?
- (12) What is the currency of New Zealand?
- (13) What is the chemical symbol for plutonium?
- (14) Who played the lead male role in the film Jaws?
- (15) What are the ingredients of a Hibiscus Lemon Gin?
- (16) Who has won the most caps for the male Welsh football team?
- (17) Where was Queen Boudicca born?
- (18) When was the new £5 note introduced in England?
- (19) What is currently the most expensive car in the world?
- (20) When did women first get the vote in England, Wales and Scotland on the same terms as men?

**Answers:**

(1) Italy (2) Vatican City (3) Conakry (4) Pain (5) M (6) Elizabeth II (7) China (8) James Stanley (9) Italy (10) Bruder (11) 33-36 (12) New Zealand Dollar (13) Pu (14) Roy Scheider (15) Tonic water, gin, wild hibiscus flowers, ice and lemon juice (16) Chris Gunter (17) South East England (18) 13 September 2016 (19) Rolls Royce Sweptail \$13 million (20) 1928

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**Editor's Last Word:** Thank you for reading this magazine and I hope you got something out of doing so. If you want to get involved, advertise, or donate then please contact us at: [dean@fthm.org.uk](mailto:dean@fthm.org.uk) Best wishes, Dean, Brenda, Robert and Graham.