



Founded 1983

East Dorset Antiquarian Society

Charity No: 1171828

www.dorset-archaeology.org.uk

mail@dorset-archaeology.org.uk



<https://www.facebook.com/dorset.archaeology>

Edited by Geoff Taylor, email: geoffnsue19@gmail.com, Tel: 01202 840166
224 Leigh Road, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 2BZ

INTERIM NEWSLETTER 2 – April 2020

As I said in the first one, these interim newsletters will concentrate mainly on topical items that I've found or been sent, with as many positive or funny things as possible.

But I need things to include and I certainly haven't been inundated as I hoped. Many thanks to those few who have sent items, but if I don't get many more then this will be the last interim newsletter. You must have something that would be of interest to other members – a joke or cartoon you've seen, an unusual or interesting photograph, a short article you've seen or written about something you've done – anything really, and certainly not limited to antiquarian matters. If it's not digital, put it in the post (address above); I'll return anything that you want back.

Please send your contributions to geoffnsue19@gmail.com.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE EDAS ADDRESS OR REPLY TO THE COVERING EMAIL as that just means Peter has to pass them on.

The article on **Devon pandemics in the past** is shown here with the permission of the author (I've added the photographs from the internet). It demonstrates that there's really nothing new in the issues we're facing at the moment. Of course, in most respects we are now far better placed to face the problems than ever before.

With the changing situation, many things I've gathered are already out of date. I'll still include them if I think they add something, and claim that they're now of antiquarian interest. That particularly applies to the toilet roll 'crisis', which I think is now over. There will be nothing more on that in future (unless it's really good).

Of course, with daily routines disrupted for many, and people finding new ways of occupying themselves, it's likely that many of you will have seen much of what's included here. I'm sure that some of it, at least, will be new to everyone.

You'll also see several mentions of my family and friends, spread around the country and further afield. I imagine we're not a lot different from yours, so perhaps seeing things about them will make you think of interesting or funny things about your family and friends – let me know.

And I should say that any opinions expressed or implied in this newsletter, or the newsletters generally, aren't necessarily those of the committee or of EDAS as a society.

Geoff Taylor

It's an odd reversal from their teenage years that our kids now shout at us for going out.

Perhaps a little late by the time you get this, but Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister of New Zealand, said that the Easter bunny and the tooth fairy were classified as essential workers.

You may have seen this giant Easter bunny installed by Fiona McArthur in Southbourne to put a smile on people's faces.



Of course, Fiona's point is that we're all in this together, so do try to help others if you can. In particular, please remember your local Food Bank and donate to them if possible. People now having to apply for government support will usually wait weeks before anything comes through:

**Check online how to support your local food bank,
there's usually a current list of things they particularly need.**

Support Groups

Alan Dedden told me, several weeks ago, that two Verwood Town Councillors, Shelley Rose and Matthew Parker, have set up and are running the "Verwood Corona Virus Community Support Group". They started this initiative as residents rather than councillors but the Town Council, along with another councillor, Simon Gibson, is supporting the group.

It offers free help to anybody who is vulnerable, elderly or self-isolating with collecting shopping, medical advice (from professionals), posting mail, dog walking, urgent supplies or just a friendly phone call. Within days leaflets were written, printed, stuffed into envelopes and distributed to 6500 Verwood households.

Contact is by a range of dedicated mobile phone numbers, depending on the service required, directing the caller to service coordinators who arrange the help required from their team of volunteers (all DBS cleared).

This was an amazing early response to the problems, and similar support approaches have subsequently grown up in many places. For instance, I've put a copy of the leaflet Wimborne residents received recently at the end for anyone who hasn't seen it. If there isn't anything in your area, why not try to get something going?

I saw a letter from someone who was clearing out a shed in 2015 and found some gas masks from the war. They'd donated them to a local museum, and wondered if it was too late to ask for them back. No, they weren't serious (or maybe just a little).
A later letter said best not get them back as they contain asbestos.

**"Many other artists are doing mini concerts from their homes – I thought I'd do you all a favour and not."
Singer James Blunt**



A Historical Video Worth Watching

Thanks to Lilian for telling me that, some time ago, she fronted a 44 minute video on 'Exploring Wareham 1999', with journalist Andrew Wright and produced by Steve Pitts, one of Mike Ladle's fishing buddies. It's now on YouTube, telling us about the history and archaeology of the town.

Some of it, which was cutting edge at the time, may seem a little dated, but most of the information remains relevant and it's all just as interesting now as it was then. It's also interesting to see Lilian back then; she's hardly changed at all of course. Find the video at: <https://youtu.be/d8Dm64NdqVU>.

YouTube, of course, has lots of other things you might like such as:

- If you've not seen any, I highly recommend Sandi Toksvig's daily talks, 'Vox Tox'. They're about 10 minutes each, sometimes funny, but always interesting. For example, the April 3rd item was on *The Amazing Woman Behind Spitfires*. Who knew?
Just go to You Tube and search 'Vox Tox' to see any or all, or direct to https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=vox+tox
- The National Theatre Live performance of *One Man, Two Governors* with James Corden at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUDq1XzCY0NIOYVJvEMQjgw>
It's 2 hours and 40 minutes but, believe me, from seeing it at the Tivoli in Wimborne, well worth the time. Set it to full screen and get tissues for the tears of laughter.
- Mrs Hughes, an American comedian from about 10 years ago but still very funny, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jWrj9TaA0Mc> especially first 3 or 4 minutes (references to American culture after that aren't always obvious).

You don't have to sign up, but there are ads with some videos.

Or perhaps you'd like something to do, for example:

From Barbara Geldart at Wimborne U3A, for knitters with some spare soft double knit wool (or you can probably order some online), why not make a bonnet for a premature baby. They are always needed by our local baby units and will be very much appreciated. Contact her if you do make one to arrange gathering them up at some point - derek.babs@tiscali.co.uk

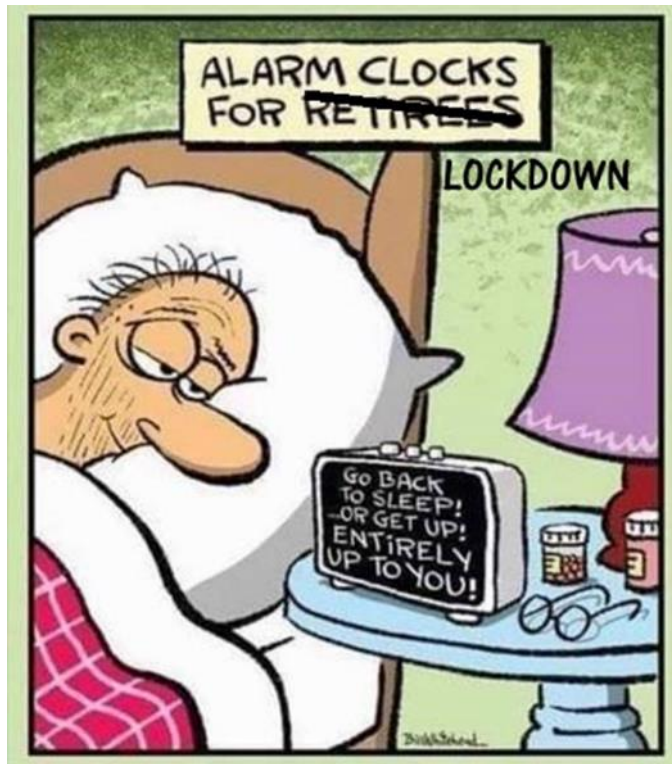
With size 10 needles cast on 80sts
K1 P1 rib for 5cms (2 inches)
Change to size 8 needles
K2 P2 rib until work measures 10cms (4 inches)
Next row: k4 k2tog through back of sts to end of row
Next row purl
Next row: k3 k2tog as before
Next row purl
Next row: k2 k2tog as before
Next row purl
Next row: k1 k2tog as before
Next row purl
Next row: k2tog to end
Thread yarn back through remaining sts
Finish off by sewing seams together

[No, I've no idea what this means (ed.)]

Researchers at the University of Central Lancashire say that boredom is one of our most creative forces – lockdown could unleash Britain's most creative period since WWII as people find new ways to keep alive their leisure, careers and relationships.

It seems no-one has made or done anything as interesting as the 'Stone Age spear' in the last interim newsletter but if your creative idea or project is still a work in progress let me know when it's done. My thoughts go out to the men who have told their partners many times "Yes, I will do it when I've got some time".

Maybe one of these is more in your line:



Actor Stephen Graham after his young son's first attempt at cutting his hair at home.

Or perhaps some of these are just more comforting:

We bought the elephant a little while ago for our granddaughter who is 4½ and has a massive collection of cuddly toys that she plays with all the time, though doesn't like dolls much; it's nearly 2 feet high. Of course, we can't take it to her on the Wirral, so our youngest daughter snaffled it as her birthday present (she lives close by so we were able to do a hands-free handover).

In response to the photograph, my sister in Australia sent me pictures of her 'pets'. She says they don't need feeding, walking or cause a mess in the house, and there are no vets bills.



Through the vagaries of predictive text, this last one became a "fraught excluder"; probably appropriate currently.

Past Pandemics in Devon

Our current situation is not unusual, but, because we are the first generation in England which has no memory of suffering a pandemic, it is natural to think that somehow what we are going through is unique. In fact, it is only exceptional to us. Every previous generation, for many centuries, has endured waves of various infectious diseases and the last pandemic, when Spanish Flu overwhelmed society at the end of the Great War, has similarities with today which may be particularly useful to remember.



The author, Dr Todd Gray MBE, a historian, primarily of Devon, and Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Exeter.

Hopefully it is reassuring to know that events today are not unusual: it has been commonplace for epidemics to not only interrupt the course of everyday life but also result in mass illness and sometimes the sudden loss of many lives. Previous generations lived with this lottery of death, whereas we have come to expect modern medicine to overcome new outbreaks of infectious diseases. Anthrax, cholera, diphtheria (or croup), dysentery, influenza, leprosy, malaria, measles, plague, scarlet fever, smallpox, syphilis, tuberculosis, typhoid fever and typhus are some of the infectious diseases which have played a part in English life. Gradually the medical world finds treatment and hopefully cures and vaccines.

In 1918 the arrival in Devon of a contagious disease, that of a new form of influenza, caused the closure of some schools and shops in Exeter and across the county. This was initially precipitated by a lack of healthy adults able to work but eventually it was commonplace for schools to close across the county. As the days passed public transport services were curtailed, cinemas were closed to children and soldiers, visitors were barred to military barracks and hospital wards, and public events were cancelled.



Protecting against the 'Spanish' flu, Torbay 1918.

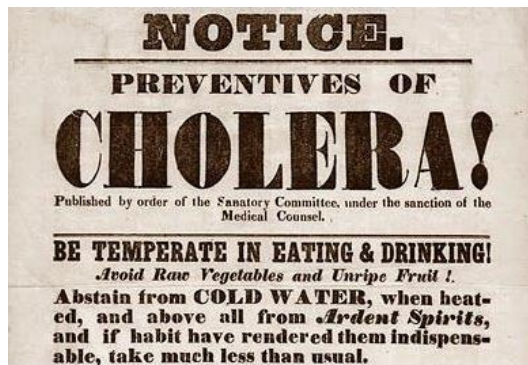
One key characteristic of the appearance of any new virus or bacteria is that national or local authorities are baffled in knowing how to act: until a disease's nature is understood. Officials can only guess at what actions they need to take to prevent or cure disease. Each disease needs to be understood as to how it is transmitted; does it enter a body's system through personal contact or via agents such as fleas or lice?

Those most at risk also differ. In 1918 it was not initially understood that younger adults, and particularly expectant mothers, were more susceptible to the new form of influenza. Death was

often rapid: an individual apparently in good health in the morning could fall ill and die by the evening. It was also not known that the virus would return. There were waves in 1918 and 1919: flu appeared and went away only to unexpectedly come back. The outbreak seemed over but then returned once more. Hundreds of Exonians died in the middle wave but the overall number was substantially increased by the deaths of those local men who were still serving overseas or were convalescing elsewhere in military hospitals. Plymouth had three times the number of deaths which occurred in Exeter.

In 1918 Exonians recalled the earlier outbreak of influenza in 1889-92 as well as the many others throughout the early 1800s. Today some Exonians will recall when flu appeared in 1957-8 (Asian Flu), 1968-9 (Hong Kong Flu) or 1977-8 (Russian Flu). In 1918 some Exonians referred to the events of 1832 when cholera took over the city. Again, it showed that authorities were unprepared because they were ignorant of the nature of cholera. Councillors spent great sums in providing flannel belts which they wrongly believed were a preventative. Local people also took up drinking brandy: this was thought to be

a cure if not another way to pre-empt catching the infection. It was crucial to avoid contaminated water, so in one respect the drinking of alcohol would have been advisable. Critics complained that the city was given over to licentiousness, but many locals were desperate to stay healthy by any possible means.



In 1832 the streets of central Exeter were abandoned for weeks as all commerce stopped. It was said that the only noise one heard was that of the ringing of funeral bells. Containment and isolation have been standard practices for more than five hundred years because severe outbreaks of disease were commonplace. In the late 1500s plague struck somewhere in Devon every few years, while in the 1620s disease became so widespread in one year that Exeter's mayor fled the city and left it without effective government. The disease caused the economy to

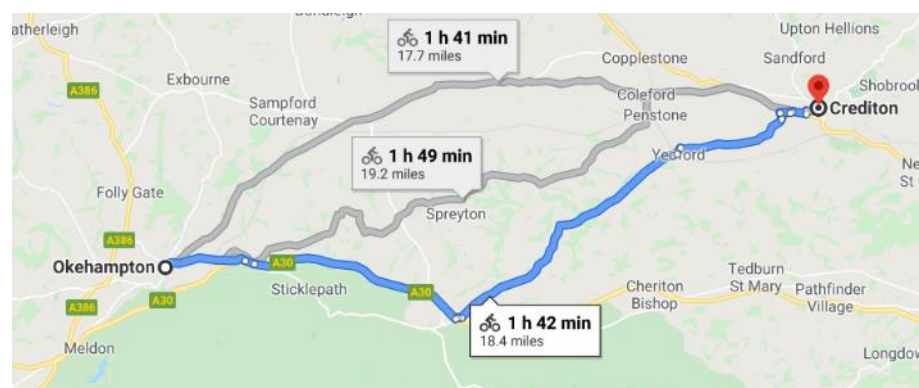
collapse and working people threatened to riot unless they were given financial assistance. Fortunately for Exeter, a councillor stepped in and ran the council.

As with other infections, quarantines were commonly used to stop the spread of disease. Barnstaple stopped strangers from entering the town, and across Devon pest houses were routinely set up to separate those who were ill from people who remained healthy. At this time it was standard for some ten per cent of a village or town's population to die in an outbreak.

A considerable number of diseases passed through Devon during the Civil War in the 1640s including the Sweating Sickness at Tiverton. Nearly 450 died there in 1644. The highest proportion of Devon deaths from one outbreak of disease has long been thought to have occurred from 1347 to 1351 when the Black Death probably removed as much as half the population.

Research has been crucial for society to be able to learn how to overcome infectious disease: twenty years after cholera struck Exeter in 1832 it was proved that unclean water was the carrier of infection. By then Exeter had overhauled its sanitation and water supplies. The next national cholera outbreak was inconsequential in the city. Syphilis was another disease which spread through Europe in the 16th century, but it took centuries for an effective treatment to be found.

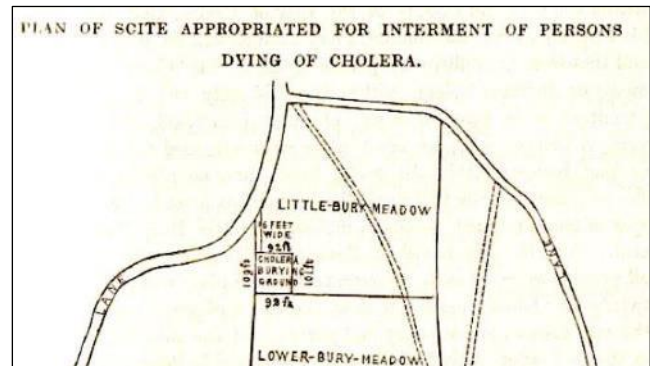
Uncertainty about the reasons for infection caused Devonians in the 1500s and 1600s to constantly question whether it was divine intervention that caused plague to hit one village but spare all those others near it. Many Devonians today will remember this was the way in which some people talked about HIV in the 1980s. Fear, panic and despair were also the natural consequences of other epidemics in which sudden death became commonplace. In the early 1600s, an Okehampton man was discovered in Crediton having succumbed to plague: he was surreptitiously removed from Crediton in the dead of night, placed on a horse and returned to Okehampton, where he was cast into the gutter. In 1918 one young Devon woman threw herself out of an upstairs window after contracting flu. That year local people were shocked by reports of 'alarming proportions' of the populations being ill.



Hundreds of years earlier, during an outbreak of plague, it was rumoured across Devon that a 'vision' of

a funeral cortege had been seen one night passing through Newton Ferrers near Plymouth. Local people followed it to the church where the mourners and coffin disappeared but left behind a newly dug grave. The ghostly mourners then assembled at the ferry where the ferryman fell ill and died. The human response to each outbreak of disease has been, naturally, to fall back upon what they had learned from other epidemics: minimize contact with people to avoid becoming ill.

One consequence of the cholera epidemic of 1832 was that society was unprepared for the disposal of the large number of bodies. Riots broke out in St David's in Exeter when a corpse was brought for burial in the public park now known as Bury Meadow. On occasions local people felt that corpses were not given the dignity that they deserved: coffins were being carried under-hand instead of on the shoulders of the bearers. In one instance a riot took place when it was believed infected people had been placed in coffins before their deaths. Likewise, unease was felt when the corpse of a 'very large bulky woman' was forced into her too-small coffin.



Map made for Thomas Shapter's *The History of Cholera*.
The cholera pit is now under the children's playground!

The main difference today is that we have learned about the nature of each disease. Unfortunately, the



speed of travel makes it more difficult to deal with any outbreak. Each day many thousands of people arrive in Devon having travelled considerable distances to get there. Many have come from the other side of the world. Devonians had watched cholera take 5 years to travel from India to England. It finally arrived in Sunderland in 1831, moved south towards London and, months later, it arrived in Exeter via a woman who caught it in Plymouth. Historically, Exeter was less at risk of infectious disease than Plymouth where naval ships were often the carriers of infection. However, in 1586 Portuguese prisoners at the county courthouse at Rougemont Castle in Exeter

transmitted disease to their judges: they caught 'gaol fever', what we know as typhus, and it then spread throughout Exeter. The prisoners had been kept in filthy conditions (the "filthy stink... of the stinking dungeon") and the typhus bacteria spread through the bites of the men's lice and fleas. Today we have a much more immediate possibility of catching disease: a person infected in any part of the world can bring it with them to any part of Devon the following day.

Society in 2020 will learn what previous generations understood: preventing the spread of infections requires a practical approach in avoiding the risk of contamination. Perhaps the most obvious lesson each generation has learned is in taking responsibility for one's own health, and in remembering that our own well-being depends upon collective action. As one local man said in 1918 "it was the duty of everyone in the initial stages of the disease to go to bed and isolate themselves". This remains true a century later. What is also true is that after each outbreak society emerges better-informed and more capable of confronting the next threat.

Todd Gray from Rosemary Hart

Taking some exercise is important now, as part of looking after your health, so I'm indebted to Alan Dedden for this valuable way of keeping fit using things you probably have in the house.

Online Pilates and Yoga has also become very popular and I got this through Wimborne U3A from Lynn Holloway who used to hold Yoga classes:

She has a recorded yoga class that she can send to anyone who is willing to complete a health questionnaire (I guess to ensure that positions are appropriate). The recording is free.

Her email address is lynnsyoga@aol.com, or look at her website where there are free resources that can be accessed at any time by anybody: <http://www.yogadorset.com/>

EXERCISE FOR PEOPLE OVER 60

Begin by standing on a comfortable surface, where you have plenty of room at each side.

With a 5-lb potato bag in each hand, extend your arms straight out from your sides and hold them there as long as you can. Try to reach a full minute, and then relax.

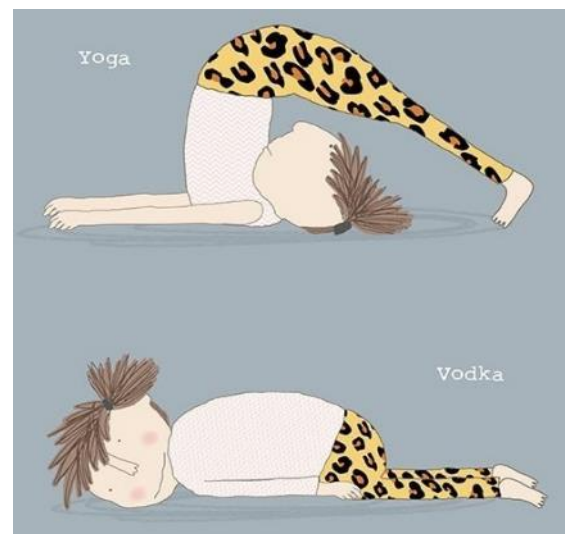
Each day you'll find that you can hold this position for just a bit longer.

After a couple of weeks, move up to 10-lb potato bags. Then try 50-lb potato bags and eventually try to get to where you can lift a 100-lb potato bag in each hand and hold your arms straight for more than a full minute. (I'm at this level).

After you feel confident at that level, put a potato in each bag.

My youngest (the one who stole her niece's elephant) is a yoga teacher and was on a yoga course in India when things turned more serious. It's a long story, but we're very relieved that after a week of trying she managed to change her flight home and left India on what turned out to be the last day before they 'closed'. She was home before her birthday and this is the card her uncle sent.

Alcohol is, of course, another coping mechanism. One consequence might be:



On the other hand, as someone said,
"I'm so excited --- it's time to put the bins out. What should I wear?"

I'm not sure which direction Alan and Lindsey are going – lifting potatoes or making vodka out of them – as they told me that they received an email from Lindsey's Swedish nephew which said:

"We have started to clean the house; started with the booze cabinet getting rid of old half-full bottles, then we forget what we were up to and went to bed."
Their response was "Don't understand, what is a half-full bottle?"

One comment I saw was that "Half of us are going to come out of this quarantine as amazing cooks. The other half will come out with a drinking problem."

Ian Drummond is hedging his bets. He says:

"To alleviate some of the boredom [remember, boredom is a creative force] I decided to try my hand at baking. I thought I would try something simple to start with such as a cake. My first attempt was, I think, very successful, I just can't remember what it tasted like. But I thought I would share the recipe so others can try this culinary delight."

Lockdown Rum Cake

Before you start, check rum to make sure it's of good quality.

1. Select a large bowl, measuring cup and spoon, then check rum again.
2. With an electric beater beat one cup butter in a large fluffy bowl.
3. Add one teaspoon sugar. meanwhile check rum again.
4. Add 3 rare yeggs, 2 cups fried druit and beat till bery high.
5. Iff druit stick in beaters, pry tout with screwdriver.
6. Taste rum again.
7. Add fre scups baking powder, a pint of rum, a seaspoon of toda and one soup of pepper.
8. Add one babblespoon of scown bugar or whatever colour you have.
9. Check rum again.
10. Turn pan to 150 degrees, grease over and pour the whole mess in.
11. Sample rum while waiting.
12. If cake doesn't turn out so well, change brand of rum.

Paracetamol may then be needed, but If you open a pack of paracetamol, why do you always seem to get the end with the paper instructions wrapped around the pills?

My American friend sent me this prototype, designed to kill two birds with one stone:



But after using that you really will need to social distance from the refrigerator, and one piece of advice is to try your jeans on every few days just to make sure they fit.

Perhaps you need to cut your consumption to reduce those trips to the shops. Anita Rigler from the Ancient Technology Centre suggests you have one piece of bread at lunchtime, as an open sandwich, Danish style, instead of two. She assures me her family haven't missed it and that's a loaf or more saved each week.

I'm sure some of you have other suggestions?

If you live near enough, it would be lovely to get to the seafront as these people did at Boscombe on 4th April.

Seems to me there's altogether too much running and cycling going on there.

A gentler alternative is to look for things that reveal the history of the area near where you live, such as the following in Parkstone.



History through the 'humble' pillar box

In these times of social isolation, solitary walks are becoming necessary, but in your perambulations have you missed an opportunity to learn something about local history? Have you considered that the humble post-box might actually be a source of information?

Frequently ignored, post-boxes outwardly appear much the same, and they are so plentiful that they rarely warrant a second glance – but take a closer look and you may see the evidence for local dating.

In Lower Parkstone post-boxes offer the rare opportunity to see the boxes covering all of the monarchs of England from Victoria to the present, all in a small area of less than a square mile. Of course, few (any?) of the houses in Lower Parkstone date from before Victoria, and the rapid residential development in the area can be mapped by the placement of post-boxes.



There are some Victorian boxes, but those of George V predominate, highlighting the area's most expansive phase. There are rare examples of both Edward VII and Edward VIII, as well as those of George VI. The fact that there was relatively little post-war building is shown from the few Elizabeth II boxes in evidence. Sadly, with the fairly recent rapid re-development of the housing in Lower Parkstone, it is becoming increasingly difficult to match the architectural styling of properties with the relevant boxes.



Nevertheless, the few remaining large, older properties can show the needs and the norms of their times, such as stabling for horses, servant accommodation and multiple chimneys. Plot sizes are, of course, much greater as land then was comparatively cheap.



Pillar boxes also offer a secondary insight into the styling of the day with the type of lettering used for the crest, and the different crowns, as can be seen from the photographs.

This area clearly indicates how a little closer examination of these so-familiar objects can offer an insight into local history, one that you can test near where you live. So next time you are out getting your daily exercise, take a moment to get a second look at that post-box and its setting.

Pat and Jess (from Ian Richardson)

I liked the picture of the Matterhorn illuminated by Swiss light artist Gerry Hofstetter.

I also liked the one below taken by the 3rd daughter as she was very clearly social distancing. She lives in the mansion you can see, well, actually in one of the converted outbuildings. She says she only needs to social distance from a few cows and the odd rabbit.



However, what was once the park for the mansion is now a public park on the outskirts of Brighton and it was actually used for a small music festival only about 10 days ago, attended by a couple of hundred people or more. The café and bar in part of the mansion was open too! So now it's patrolled regularly by the police and difficult to use for her and the family, even though it's sort of her garden.



*'Any person wandering
must be lonely as a cloud.
Daffodils, where essential,
may gather in a host'*

However, a friend saw this bird's nest on his car and thought, well, "it would take a very zealous police officer to accuse us of gadding around the countryside".



I was going to send you pictures of the Kashmiri goats in Llandudno taking advantage of the quiet streets, but even my sister in Australia and friend in America have seen them

As I know from the one that's been getting in our garden, rabbits are adept at social distancing. Anyone got a gun?

Now, if we were in America:

Los Angeles County was, at 31st March, reopening gun shops to the public after a federal memo listed them as "essential" businesses. Sheriff Alex Villanueva had closed shops the week before, but reversed course, following the guidance. The LA county closures had prompted a lawsuit from gun rights groups.

The change comes amid a national dispute over whether gun access is critical amid the Covid-19 pandemic. The federal guidance issued on 28th March classified munitions makers and sellers as "essential critical infrastructure workers".

What can I say, except that in 2017 gunshot-related deaths in the USA reached almost 40,000. As far as I can tell from incomplete figures, 2019 was very similar. At the time of writing (31st March) coronavirus deaths in the USA were reported as 3,431, although they're obviously much higher now.



Queuing for more guns in LA. Some are even social distancing.

There are, of course, many tall tales and conspiracy theories doing the rounds, and many people seem to believe at least some of them. Apparently, the lack of rational thinking about such things is called 'compensatory control' – when randomness and uncertainty enter our lives it seems more sensible to some people to believe that it's because of the grand plan of governments, the military, mad scientists or even Bill Gates. I'm afraid that the issue really is due to the chance mutation of a tiny virus.

But some people are just not very bright. One story is of man turning up at A&E worried that he might have caught coronavirus from a long phone call to China! Going to A&E was a much higher risk of catching something for the man worried about his takeaway because it was Chinese food.

Alan tells me that he and Lindsey have been lucky with shopping so far with no real problems: "Not that we could get everything we wanted, but have managed to either use a substitute, or go without. One thing we found difficult to get was garlic. This surprised me, but when I mentioned it to Lindsey, she said it was probably because of the "fake news" that it provided protection against coronavirus, causing stocks to be bought up. This had not occurred to me - surely nobody took this seriously?"

But then came the news of attacks on 5G masts, apparently in response to the other fake news that these masts transmitted the virus! How could anybody believe that a collection of electronics and aluminium could be used to disseminate microbiological agents?

I then started to wonder how this idea started. Was it a simple case of confusing a computer virus transmitted by the internet with a biological virus? Or could it be a deliberate act intended to generate distrust and possibly more direct action as has happened? We do know that there are foreign agencies whose working hours are taken up with infesting social media with fake news with the intention of disrupting western economies. I know this sounds a bit neurotic, but having watched the Channel 4 mini-series on Putin over recent weeks, these attacks actually seem highly plausible."

And, of course, you do have to wonder about the information about case numbers coming out of countries like Russia, Iran, China, etc.

Coronavirus myths to ignore

- Holding your breath for 10 seconds without discomfort is a test for fibrosis in your lungs – no, it's not a test and fibrosis (scarring of the lungs) isn't a symptom of Covid-19 anyway.
- Mosquito bites CANNOT give you the virus.
- Giving blood will not get you a Covid-19 test (and you can't get it from a blood transfusion).
- Beware internet recipes for hand-sanitiser – anything based on disinfectants for surfaces is unlikely to be suitable for the skin, and most vodkas don't have enough alcohol to work; better to drink it!
- The virus can survive on surfaces for weeks or months – actually tests on other coronaviruses show that 2 hours is more normal and any risk should be reduced massively after 72 hours. Unfortunately the article didn't say what sort of surfaces.
- Cow urine is a preventative or even cure (really?!) – in fact cow urine has no medicinal properties. ... just social distance and wash your hands properly!

And more fake advice

- Garlic, as above, is said to help prevent infection – well, it's not bad for you in moderate quantities (especially as you'll be less worried now about how your breath smells). Similarly, lemon juice is supposed to be a preventative but, of course, it isn't. No foods or drinks fight the virus, but you obviously need to keep eating fruit and vegetables to stay healthy.
- MMS (miracle mineral supplement) is being touted as able to wipe out coronavirus (and even tackle cancer) – that is rubbish. In fact it contains chlorine dioxide, a bleaching agent which is more likely to harm you.
- Colloidal silver is also claimed as treating all kinds of health conditions, including killing some coronaviruses, especially by people trying to sell it. Again, there's absolutely no evidence it works at all, and it can cause many serious side effects, including seizures and kidney damage.
- It is said that an (unnamed) Japanese doctor recommends drinking water every 15 minutes to flush out any virus in the mouth, but this is rubbish as the virus goes through your respiratory tract. You should, of course, stay hydrated.
- Claims that getting hot and avoiding cold foods can help are also wrong. We know that flu virus doesn't do well outside the body in the hotter summer months, and it is thought that temperatures of around 60°C (140°F) would kill the coronavirus outside the body. You clearly can't raise your body temperature to these sort of levels and it would be seriously harmful to try to get your skin that hot.

Please continue to be wary of scams.

One email scam I had the other day gave a password that I'd apparently used, and demanded £500 in Bitcoins (told me how to buy them) otherwise they would send a video of my 'nasty habits' taken on my hacked webcam to all my contact list.

Not a very clever scam as it wasn't one of my passwords, whereas the previous similar one did have a correct password – it came from a defunct site I'd once used (I know as all my passwords are different). They were cheap too; the earlier one asked for \$1200.

Thing is, I don't have a webcam on my computer.

And some unscrupulous people are selling **coronavirus home testing kits**. They probably don't work and may well actually be dangerous. None have been certified under European safety standards and it's illegal to sell them.

Watch out, too, for pleas to contribute to **fake charities**.

Toilet (roll) humour

No more after this, honest.

Short of toilet rolls? (probably not by the time you read this)

- Use a small dog. Do not flush.
- Cut up newspapers, as many will remember, BUT: they don't break down in the sewers and can easily cause blockages.
- Kitchen roll, wet wipes or facial tissues don't break down either – if you go that route you'll have to bin them.
- Cut up old towels or get cheap face cloths, use and wash like we did with nappies in the olden days.
- Jug of water, soap and personal towel to wash while sat on the loo. Wash hands after, feel virtuous.
- A couple of centuries back it was common to use oyster shells with the rim smoothed, so if you hear that oysters are in short supply...
- "... there is none in the world comparable to the neck of a goose". Rabelais, *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, mid-16th century.

Panic buying isn't new of course. Petrol rationing was due to start on 16th September 1939 but was delayed while the coupons were distributed. A woman turned up at a garage in Dorset and demanded to have a large metal dustbin filled with petrol; how she intended to get it home isn't known. Just part of the eagerness to stockpile then, as now. It wasn't toilet rolls then, though, as the soft ones weren't common until the 1950s.



*'I make him wear the mask
to stop him telling his
loo-roll-buying stories'*





Above - supermarket in Merimbula Beach, NSW, Australia, 15th April 2020. So we're obviously going to get:



Vanessa sent me this picture from her solitary walk the other day and you can see that the bluebells are about to give their usual wonderful display. There are some benefits of course.



Why not send me some photos to celebrate Spring and the glorious weather we've been having (though those of us with gardens really want it to rain)? Here's a couple from our garden.



But what we should celebrate most is the NHS, carers and all those who are working to keep things going in this difficult time.

NHS staff from Dorset County Hospital in Dorchester participate in the second "Clap for Carers" tribute to their fellow NHS staff and other key workers.



COVID-19 COMMUNITY RESPONSE

Wimborne Minster Community Resilience Support

Do you need help? Here's who to contact:

The Wimborne Minster Community Resilience Group has been set up to assist and coordinate support for people living in Wimborne Minster. The Group is being coordinated by Dorset Councillors Shane Bartlett and Maria Roe.

If you do not have the support of family, friends or immediate neighbours to help with shopping, befriending, collecting prescriptions or other urgent supplies contact one of the volunteers below, nearest to your area between 9 am and 5 pm:

Area	Volunteer Name	Telephone Number
Town Centre	Jan Mouzer (Community Volunteer)	07551 811750
	Paul Keys (Catholic Priest)	01202 883312
	Carole Gadsden (Salvation Army)	01202 884194
	Shane Bartlett (Councillor)	07593 197302
East Wimborne	Shane Bartlett (Councillor)	07593 197302
	Ian Thorpe (Baptist Minister)	07989 536214
	Kevin Metcalfe (St John's Church)	07528 028193
	Maria Roe (Councillor)	07956 630607
West Wimborne	Andrew Rowland (Rector)	07486 089652
	Louise Hinks (Councillor)	07759 685134
	Angela Hudson (Community Volunteer)	07767 814478
	Shane Bartlett (Councillor)	07593 197302

Should you need assistance we will need your name, telephone number, address and e-mail address (if you have one). By giving us your details, you are giving us your permission to hold your data while the Coronavirus Outbreak exists.

The Wimborne Minster Community Resilience Group is supported by Wimborne Minster Town Council and registered with the Volunteer Centre, Dorset.

The Town Council contact details:

Telephone: 01202 881655

Email: office@wimborne.gov.uk

Website: www.wimborne.gov.uk

The offices are open 9.30am – 1pm, Monday - Friday. An answer machine facility is available outside of these times.