

September 29th 2020

Hi Everyone,

In this letter: **The Last of the Summer Wine: How Things are Going: An Internet-Free Social Media: Pippa Kelly's Podcasts**

What a difference a week can make. Three weeks ago we so much enjoyed our "Cream Teas at Chesters" garden party and last week St. Mary's put on their Autumn Coffee Morning in the churchyard – both carefully organised within the guidelines. It really was lovely to attend these and meet up with our friends, many of whom we hadn't been able to get together with at such outdoor community social events since last autumn. It was wonderful that we managed to fit in both of these occasions in what seems to have been the narrowest of possible windows between the final stages of the initial peak and the rapid national increase in infections announcing a second wave of the virus – And we were blessed with of lovely autumn sunshine!

In mentioning these occasions, I was put in mind of how important they are in sustaining that something special about Debenham that shows how much it cares. Sadly, this year only a very few such events have been possible and, as autumn follows summer, and winter follows autumn, I think there will be even less opportunity for us to come together to enjoy each other's real company as a community. So, I want to thank everyone who has volunteered to organise and run so many local social and fundraising events for so many local charities, support groups, and get-togethers over so many years. You are why Debenham has such a great community spirit.

Fortunately, for the time being, in Mid Suffolk we remain one of the districts with the lowest levels of infection in Suffolk and England as a whole. However, we know that the rate of infection (the R-factor) can suddenly increase and easily get out of hand as has happened elsewhere in the country. Coming into winter it will be doubly important to take care to reduce the risk of catching the virus, particularly, for us older and more vulnerable persons.

Unfortunately, I see no prospect of any further relaxation in the guidelines and worryingly we will also have to cope with the darker and colder days. So, here are a couple of thoughts:

"Phone a Friend". Make the most of your phone by making a list of your friends and ringing up one or two of them each day for no reason other than to say Hi and have a chat - share your news, what you have been up to, memories, and all those bits and pieces that are the stuff of a good gossip. Try to make contact with each one of them at least once a week, and ask them to do the same. And if you can, add a couple of people who you think may be more isolated than most and would appreciate a phone call.

"Write a Letter". I don't know about you but my post is, by and large boring – catalogues, fundraisers, bills, and such like. However, once in a while a letter ends up on the doormat with a handwritten address and my heart lifts. A handwritten letter from someone is a real pleasure these days. How about once or twice a week writing a letter to someone special who you don't often see or hear from in these difficult times, such as your grandchildren or your oldest

friend, and start a regular correspondence. Or, perhaps you might think about sending a letter or card to someone you know who may not have any close family or friends and would love to hear about how you are and share some memories and stories.

You never know, together we might create Debenham's own "internet-free social media".

Out of the blue last week I had a call from Pippa Kelly. Pippa is a national award winning on-line blogger and campaigner who writes with great insight, understanding, and empathy about all aspects of dementia and the care of the elderly. You can read her blogs at <https://pippakelly.co.uk/blog/>. The last time we spoke was over three years ago when she wrote about the special nature of The Debenham Project. Recently she has become a podcaster and just finished broadcasting (Is that the right word?) her first series of 8 interviews entitled "Well, I know now" It starts with Nula Suchet an interior designer whose husband developed Picks disease, and ends with Sally Magnusson the broadcaster, journalist, author and so much more who cared for her mother and went on to found "[Playlist for Life](#)". To listen and see each of Pippa's guests visit <https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/1-nula-suchet/id1513600445>. Oh, and by the way, Pippa is shortly coming to Debenham to learn more about our project and record an interview for her next series of podcasts starting in October.

Finally, you can access all of our on-line help by visiting our new "[On-Line Resources](#)" page, where you can find the current version of our "Coronavirus - Local Information and Support" list, and our [News and Project Progress page](#).

I hope you find this letter useful and of some comfort at this difficult time.

With all best wishes,

Lynden