

The magazine for older people in Leeds

Shine

June 2021

LET'S TALK ABOUT SEX

A frank look at sexuality and intimacy later in life

PERSONAL STORIES

Keep dancing

From Harehills to the Outback – a dancer's tale

IN CONVERSATION

RECLAIM THE NIGHT

We talk to feminist campaigner Al Garthwaite

MEMORIES OF LEEDS

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Shine is a magazine by and for older people in Leeds. We're part of Time to Shine, which focuses on preventing isolation and loneliness amongst older people. Time to Shine funds various projects across Leeds that use creative ways to engage people – some of these projects feature in our magazine. Linda Glew is Time to Shine Programme Manager and she introduces each issue.



Hello and welcome to the June issue of Shine. We're looking forward to warmer weather and anticipating the planned lifting of Covid restrictions. I have missed hugs! Hugging is such a universally comforting thing. According to scientists, it not only makes us feel good, but also brings us increased health and happiness. However, we still to be careful.

So, perhaps no hugging strangers just yet - which I have been tempted to do! The subject of hugging is particularly appropriate to this issue's In Focus. The piece covers sexuality and intimacy in later life. We talk to people about of the basic human need for intimacy and physical contact.

“We have some wonderful stories this issue. Interesting older people from across the city”

This issue is packed with some good reads (as always) and it is really good to see our older writers get increasingly involved in creating the content of Shine. If you fancy trying your own hand at writing for the magazine, we would love to have you on board. Just call us or drop us an email and we can bring you on to the team.

We have some wonderful stories this issue. Interesting older people from across the city tell us their tales of dancing, making films and saying farewell to Leeds. We also talk to Headingley & Hyde Park Councillor Al Garthwaite. Al tells us all about how she helped to organise the first Reclaim the Night March back in 1977, and how it is still relevant today. Leeds Museums and Galleries celebrate their 200th anniversary this year and we introduce some of the key objects in their collection, including the famous Leeds Tiger. And in our Health section we look at the importance of home and the need for the security and safety.

Finally, I wondered if you might do us a little favour? Shine is funded to the end of 2021, but we are working hard to find a way of continuing to produce it beyond then if we can. It would really help us to hear from you about what the magazine means to you. In the July issue we will be including a brief questionnaire. Whilst reading the June issue, have a think about what you like, what you don't like and what changes you might like to see. You can always pick up the phone and tell us too of course - it is always great to hear from you.

Linda Glew
Programme Manager
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Shine

At Shine we rely on our readers to provide stories. We're always looking for people to share their story. Do you have something to say? Maybe you're an aspiring writer, or maybe you just want to get something off your chest?

Send your story ideas to us in the following ways:

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Shine

JUNE 2021



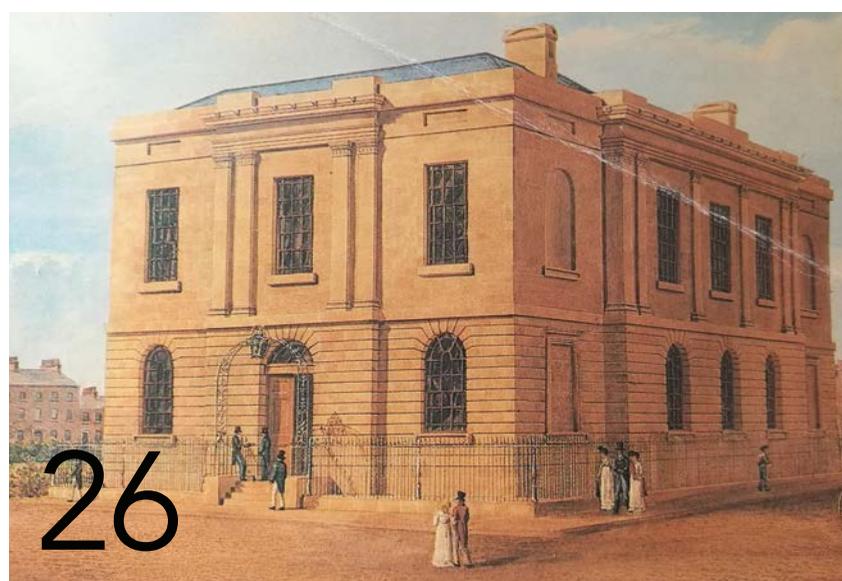
06 In Conversation *Judith Sullivan meets feminist campaigner and city councillor Al Garthwaite and finds out what it was like to be battling for women's rights in the 1970s.*

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Every month we talk to an inspiring or interesting older person and delve a bit deeper into what makes them tick. Sometimes a Leeds person, sometimes someone fascinating from further afield. This month Judith Sullivan meets women's rights activist Al Garthwaite.



“ I do think there have been changes, otherwise I would feel I had wasted my life. And I don’t ”

As a rabble-rouser and feminist icon, Leeds councillor Al Garthwaite defies stereotype. Now 73 and a grandma, she is soft-spoken and measured.

In the 1970s, Al Garthwaite was at the early stages of the Reclaim the Night movement in the UK. Reclaim the Night highlighted the right for women to be safe after dusk and has been in the news again this year, following the disappearance of Sarah Everard in South London, and the arrest of a serving police officer on kidnapping and murder charges.

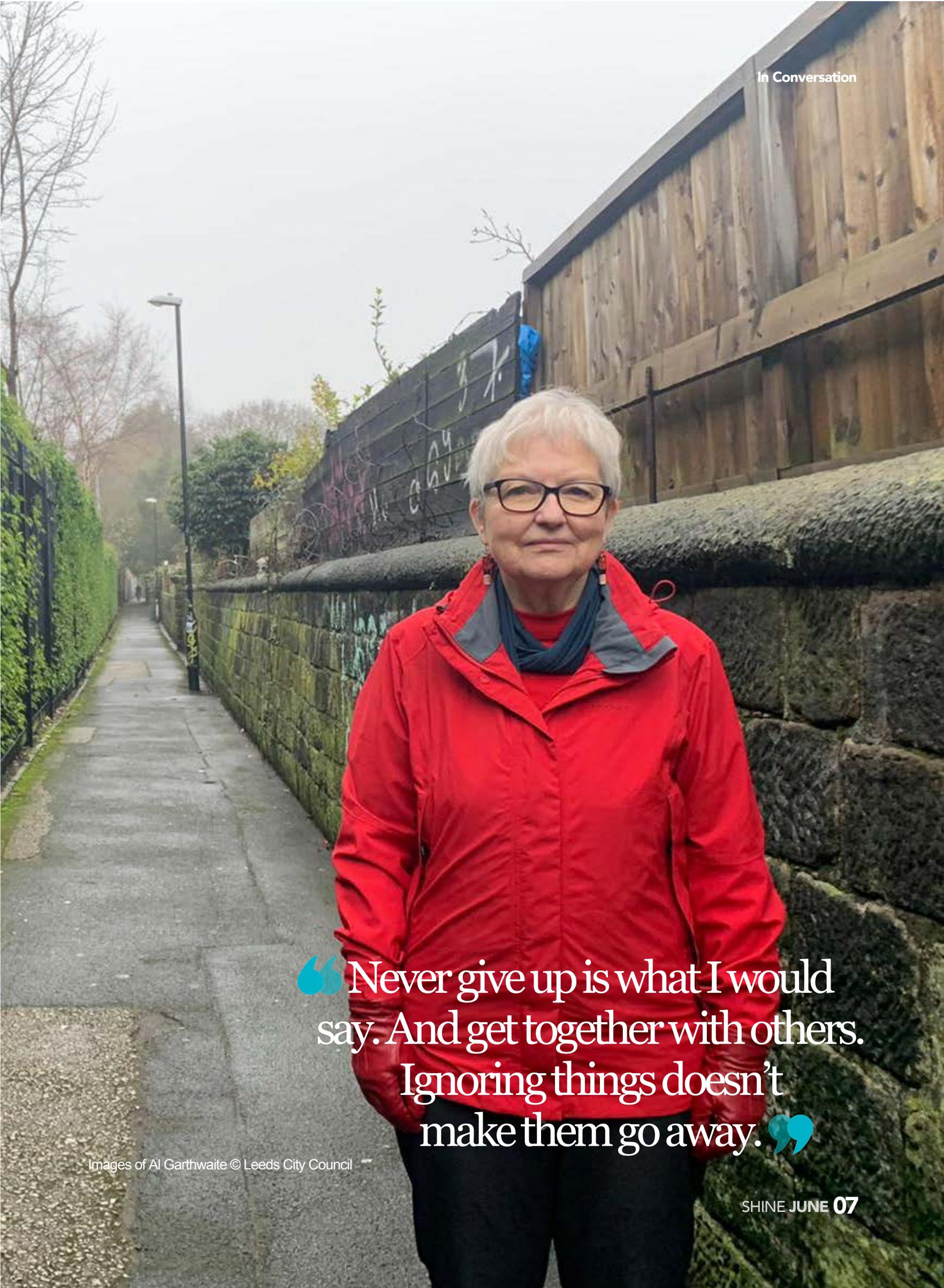
These events have nudged Garthwaite into the limelight, a limelight she would surely have not requested. Garthwaite has been campaigning and speaking out for nigh on a half-century. She remains an activist via her day job representing Hyde Park and Headingley as a councillor. As she explains, sometimes the most ordinary of activities can prompt social and mindset changes.

A scan of online interviews revealed a pattern in Garthwaite's deeds and words. She is more interested in practicality and action than flowery phrases or rigid dogma. She is and has been one of life's doers.

Tell me about your early life. What were the seeds of your activism?

My father was in the army, so I moved around throughout childhood, in Germany and Turkey. After a peripatetic childhood, I went to university in Durham, and I think it was there that I first started - although not in an organized way - thinking about the unfairness and inequality experienced by women. The summer before I went to uni, I picked strawberries in Norway. At the end of the week the farmer told us all how much we had earned, and the boys got a higher rate for each pallet of strawberries than the girls did. The farmer said, "That's the law here, that's what happens." This seemed incredibly unfair, but it was enshrined in the law. It was just very blatant and very obvious. Then I went to university to study English Literature and became totally aware of the ways in which women were regarded.

I started my career in feminism in Oxford and joined the women's liberation group there. It was a relief to be among women, to be talking about all these things - the general inequality and unfairness. When a young boss interviewed me, he asked the salary I expected. I named a figure and he looked horrified. He said, "I could get a man for that!" That spurred me on, really. ►



“Never give up is what I would say. And get together with others. Ignoring things doesn't make them go away.”

In Conversation

At the time, a married woman had no separate legal or financial entity, except as an adjunct to her husband. You could not fill in your own tax returns. It was no good being married. I was part of the formulation of the four demands that were part of the Women's Liberation movement: equal pay; equal education and job opportunities; free contraception and abortion on demand; and 24-hour nurseries.

For various reasons, I decided to move to Leeds in 1973. The group here soon split up into smaller groups. We campaigned for a local playgroup to become a nursery. We generally became more and more aware that women were not free to walk about at night the way men were. If we did and if something happened, it was our fault: Why were we in that place at that time, dressed in that way, having had a drink? Why didn't we have someone with us to look after us and protect us? It was ridiculous. If women did go into a police station to report a rape, the experience was absolutely appalling. I think a real moment for me was watching a fly-on-the-wall type reality documentary. A woman reported a rape. Then you saw several male police officers in uniform shouting at her and doing their best to disprove her story. That was extremely consciousness-raising at the time.

Then, in 1977, I was in the Leeds Revolutionary Feminist Group. I read in Spare Rib magazine about women in Germany who "reclaimed the night". Women going around in groups saying, "we've got a right to walk about at night and go where we want". And we set up an event on 12 November 1977.

Why was the 12th November picked?

First of all, we thought the 31st October because it was Hallowe'en. And then we realised we wouldn't be ready in time. Looking back, you couldn't organise something like that instantly. It was a matter of putting it in our internal newsletter and writing letters – through the post. If you had a phone number, that was a bonus. Not everyone did. It just took a lot longer than it does today, where you can organise a massive vigil on Clapham Common in 2 days. But that wasn't the case then.

But you still did it – and without social media!

We still did it. At least 12 towns or cities in the country organised a Reclaim the Night event. In Leeds, there were two groups: one in Chapeltown and another in Hyde Park, maybe 30 - 40 women in each group handed out leaflets. We marched into town. We had banners saying, "Reclaim the Night" and leaflets to give out to passers-by. Not that there were many passers-by. Unlike these days (in non-Covid times), when Leeds is really busy at night, and the city centre

is packed. At that time, it wasn't, it was pretty deserted. We had slogans: "However we dress, wherever we go, yes means yes and no means no!" and "Women unite, reclaim the night!"

When the group I was in got to North Street, the men were just coming out of the Eagle pub. It was closing time, 11pm. They saw a group of women – they came towards us, saying, "Let's get them". We were carrying flaming torches! We advanced towards them, shouting. And they shrank back. That was a very positive, empowering moment. We weren't aware at the time that that would become a big movement that would carry on to this day. It was just something we did, and we went on to something else.

That was around the time of Peter Sutcliffe, wasn't it? Tell me about how you felt about that.

We were very, very angry, especially at the police. It became a kind of contest between the Police Officer leading [the hunt for the killer] and this mythical man. It went to the extent that the crowds at Elland Road were shouting, "Ripper 12, Police nil!" and singing, "There's only one Yorkshire Ripper." It was really offensive. A lot of women were terrified, wouldn't even put the bins out at night. Women gave up jobs, women gave up studying and left Leeds. Women were really scared to go out at night.

We also knew it could be any man at all. There were large numbers of women who reported their husbands, brothers, even their sons, saying, "We don't know where he was that night, you need to look into it." But the police were off on the trail of a man with a Geordie accent. They didn't listen.

We were angry on many different fronts. Anyway, finally Peter Sutcliffe did get caught by uniformed police; a traffic offence. But Reclaim the Night marches continued, because the problem had not come to an end. We set up a group: Women Against Violence Against Women. That was a national movement. It went far beyond women on the streets at night, into all sorts of other issues.

Back in the 70s, feminists would be doing all this work and there was no support from the police, no support from the local authority, the city council. We wouldn't have dreamed of going to talk to a city councillor about this sort of thing. As far as we were concerned the council dealt with potholes, not women's rights.

How did that change? How did you help make your once-radical ideas become more acceptable?

Bringing women's issues into the mainstream took some doing, but that began to change in the 1980s,

when first of all the Greater London Council set up a Women's Committee. Other cities followed suit. Eventually, after campaigning from the Leeds Action Group we got one, in I think 1983. That was the beginning of Leeds City Council beginning to see this sort of thing as important. There was an Equality Unit – and a conference every year to elect women. It was a good force at the time.

Let's bring things up to date. Recently, there was the Sarah Everard case - and talk about a 6pm curfew for men. What do you think about that idea?

Back in the 70s we were saying that there is, in effect, a curfew on women. We were being told to stay in at night, whereas men could go out and about with impunity. If something happened to them, it was unfortunate. Whereas, if something happened to a woman, it was our fault. I remember graffiti appearing on walls in Leeds saying, "Curfew for Men!" So, it was interesting to read Baroness Jenny Jones saying there should be a 6pm curfew on men – in 2021. It's something that has come up over the years. Why shouldn't men be questioned about what they're doing out and about? I do know in Leeds there is increasingly a watch kept on potential predators. There are plans for the police to do more. The beginnings of reporting of sexual harassment. What we need is for misogyny to be made a hate crime, in my view. If men knew they could get a criminal record, they might think twice. Women would also be more inclined to report. I don't personally know if a 6pm curfew on men would actually work. It would be very difficult to implement. But it is a good thing to be calling for as it highlights whole situation of how women are being punished and constrained for something that some men do – which is simply not right.

How far have we come in 40 years – and what do we still need?

I do think there have been changes, otherwise I would feel I had wasted my life. And I don't! I think that the fact that a lot of men are saying they are "male allies" is a good thing. Back in the 70s, we didn't want men involved in any way because that would have just meant men taking over. But now there's the White Ribbon campaign, which has been set up by men, for men to join. Started by a male youth worker in Hebden Bridge. They pledge never to commit, condone or remain silent in the face of violence against women. We want men to be actively involved in challenging other men. Men talking to other men. They become White Ribbon Ambassadors. The Leeds United and Rhinos teams have joined the White Ribbon movement. The Rhinos made a short film

where the players were filmed standing in the middle of the pitch and talking about how they would stand up for women. That was for the big crowd to see at a match - and that's great. The more that men are seen as visibly talking to other men, the better.

I've also instigated training for club and bar staff around sexual harassment. This was sparked off by a story a young woman told me about being in a bar in Leeds. She was at the bar and a man came up from behind and put his hands over her breasts. She turned round, said, "Get off me –and apologise!" And he refused. She was very angry, her boyfriend came up – and the man apologised to him. She and her boyfriend were outraged, they complained to the bar staff and said they wanted to call the police. The bar staff said, "Don't make trouble". But they did call police – and they were very helpful – but by that time the man had gone. But it made us think that bar staff really needed training. There are lots of initiatives like that. The Ask for Angela Campaign. If a woman is being harassed and experiencing any trouble from a man, she can go up to the bar staff and "ask for Angela". This is code for requesting that a designated person to come over deal with the situation.

Taxi drivers have to go through a certain amount of training before they can be licensed. Part of that is safeguarding. Most of that was around children in the past but we have included now an element about partner abuse or sexual harassment or abuse that might be going on in the taxi. Hotels are another issue. It had become apparent that men were taking advantage of women who were separated from their friends and the men were booking into hotels on the periphery of the city centre. Obviously, there is a need for training and awareness among hotel staff and for common sense.

These are the sort of things that we can embed into existing systems through everyone's work. It is not a separate thing itself in a different place and a different time. It's embedded in daily life.

What advice would you give to people who care about women's safety?

We cannot sit back. Never give up, is what I would say. And get together with others. Ignoring things doesn't make them go away. Talk to the police, talk to local councillors.■

Thanks Al for making the time for speaking to us. If you want to contact Al Garthwaite you can email al.garthwaite@leeds.gov.uk

The Joy of Bread

*During the Covid lockdowns, many of us turned to making our own bread. As **Mally Harvey** knows, there's something special about the process of creating a perfect loaf. She explains her love of baking in this warm, sensual, personal column.*

The smell of baking in my home is one of my earliest memories. My mum standing at the stove, turning to smile as I come in from school. The smell permeates every corner of the house. My joy is my kitchen and baking bread. Today it's Poppy Seeded Bloomer day.

I am breathless. I feel a small flutter of anticipation at what is before me. I fill the sink with hot water. I speak politely to Alexa, my sole companion for this morning's task, and request some love songs. She kindly obliges. I immerse my mother's large cream mixing bowl in the hot water. I get the scales, strong white flour, salt and the small tin of quick acting yeast from the pantry and place them on the granite baking slab. I dry the now thoroughly warmed bowl and sift 675grams of flour into it. I am metric, since the demise of my Salter scales. After 50 years, they met their end when the cat leaped on to the work surface and sent them flying, never to weigh again.

I add two teaspoons of salt, (10 grams but there is only so much metric I do) to one side of the snowy pyramid in the bowl, and three teaspoons (15 grams if preferred) of quick-acting yeast to the other. I recall the days buying fresh yeast from the village shop, pouring hot water on to it and waiting for it to react. I bless this more reliable and convenient yeast. Bringing the dry ingredients together, I delight in running the tips of my fingers through the mixture.

I measure 15 fluid ounces (imperial now) of warm water into a jug, make a well in the flour and pour in the water. Turning the bowl, my fingers encourage the flour into a sticky lump. I resist the urge to add more flour for with some gentle coaxing I can persuade the mixture to integrate and become a pliable dough. In no time I have a shiny ball. Now the real pleasure begins.

I turn the bowl upside down and am rewarded

by a satisfying slap as the dough falls onto the granite work surface. At my request, Alexa moves up a rhythm or two and the sound of Motown fills the kitchen. I pull, push and stretch the dough, my body moving as I sway and twist with the music. I am in another place. I am flying, swooping and diving, over mountains, fields and rivers. I sing sweet arias in the Albert Hall and swim the Channel in record time. I can do or be anything or anybody and all the time the magic is happening with the dough. I am at one with this moment, my heart rate has slowed, and I'm suffused with a warm pleasure.

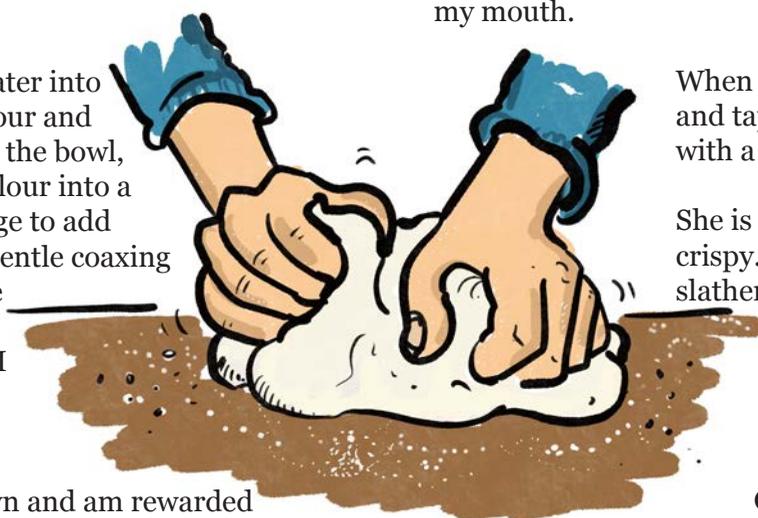
Finally, I return to my kitchen and allow my abused friend some much deserved rest. I put her in a warm corner. For she is she, fecund with all the beauty of a pregnant woman. I clean and tidy the detritus of my labour and make a coffee, savouring the smell of the yeasty air. The dough is swollen. Small bubbles appear at the edges of the bowl. I begin my assault again. Turning her from her refuge, she collides with the granite and I knock her back, forming her into a large baton. Putting her on a baking tray I slash her diagonally across her back. Is there no end to her beatings? For my pleasure, she has endured so much already, so I leave her to rest for a while. I baste her with saltwater and scatter her with poppy seeds. They look like a colony of ants, running for cover. I place her into a hot, steamy oven for 40 minutes. The smell in the kitchen is heavenly, I feel the drool collecting in my mouth.

When I lift the bread from the oven and tap her bottom, she rewards me with a drum beat and she is done.

She is golden brown, her crust crispy. I break off the nob end, slathering it with butter which drips from my chin as I eat the labours of my morning.

I am at peace with the world.

Oh! The joy that is Bread.■



Getting older, getting around

Every month we feature a column from the Age Friendly Steering Group. This issue, **Diana Al-Saadi** shares her personal thoughts on the issue of transport. A good public transport system is really important, especially amongst older people without access to a car. It's a passion of Diana's, as she explains below. Illustration by Paul Atkinson.

One of the most important issues today is the need for a much-improved public transport system to ensure people have a healthier future. Personally, I could put my head in the sand and ask myself, "Why should I worry? I have a car! I can drive and get around! What is the problem?" Many do; it is simple and convenient. So why worry? Be happy! However, as a mum of three and grandma to five, I am acutely aware that what is true today is not necessarily true tomorrow. This makes me concerned for the future. I observe with concern the increasing numbers of cars, vans and trucks on the road. It is good to see environmentally friendly public buses, bicycles and scooters – healthier too.

Most needed in both urban and rural areas are regular 'hopper' buses. These enable older people, disabled people, parents and school children to gain access to their local amenities: the GP surgery and health centre; dental practice; schools; community library; recreation park or playground; cafes; and shops. Only when residents have easy access to these facilities, at reasonable cost, will they consider leaving their car at home - or better still, getting rid of it. Local businesses are more likely to thrive if the residents can support them instead of heading to the large supermarkets in their cars.

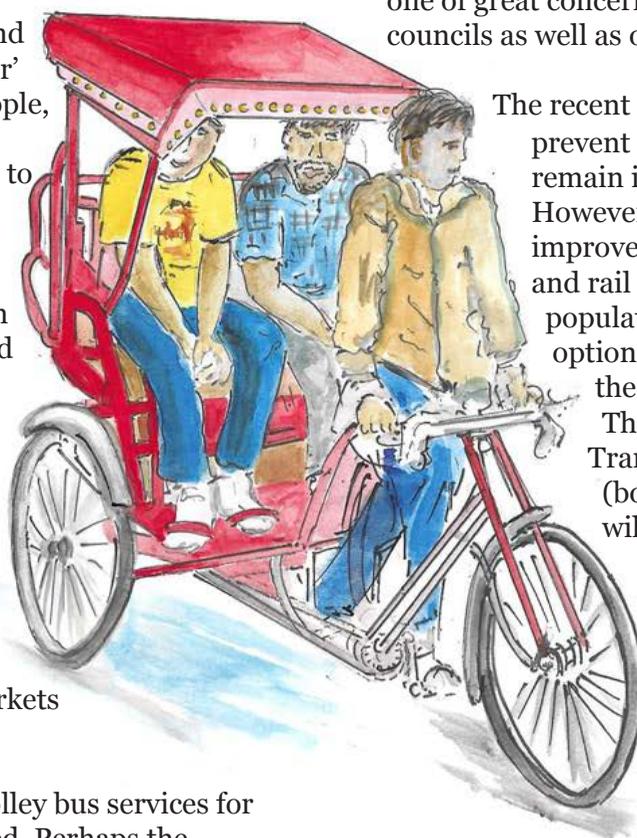
The plans for tram and/or trolley bus services for Leeds were eventually dropped. Perhaps the introduction of modern, electrical-powered rickshaws (cycles equipped to carry passengers) could become the norm! What fun it would be, to ride in a gaily painted chariot, waving to friends as you pass by! Food for thought for some young entrepreneurs.

Can we consider promoting river and canal travel? It happens elsewhere, so why not here in Leeds? A few years ago, I remember having a lovely day on a fascinating canal trip in the city. Many places do offer water transport - not necessarily a luxury, but the simplest method of getting around while avoiding queues, traffic jams and tempers.

Last month I attended a webinar entitled 'Accessible Transport: Unlocking a Better Normal.' The panel comprised of older people, some with disabilities, both visible and invisible. Also in attendance were senior staff from railway and bus companies, as well as the manager of a major motorway services company. It was evident that the matter of public transport is one of great concern for the UK government, regional councils as well as ordinary people.

The recent necessity for 'home working' (to prevent the spread of Covid) is likely to remain in practice for a long time yet. However, the need for efficient and improved flexible public transport by road and rail is vital, especially with an ageing population. A variety of green, clean options must be considered to cater for the differing needs of today's society. The current Combined Authority Transport Strategy consultations, (both regionally and nationally) will be discussing, investigating and consulting with a cross-party group as well as with the public at large.

The time has come for the Great Debate on Transport, both public and private, to succeed in its mission of providing a cleaner, efficient and modern system. We should not ask what we would like, but what we need for the future success of a healthy and happy nation! ■



Let's Talk about Sex

Every month we look at an issue that is important to older people at Leeds. In this issue Ruth Steinberg talks to people about sex, intimacy and relationships in later life. From an 80-something on her third marriage, to someone who has changed their gender as an older person; all these stories are frank, honest and somewhat revealing.

I was born in 1952. The 1950s were when teenagers became a 'thing', with Teddy Boys and Girls, and rock and roll. It was when Elvis Presley was "Shakin' All Over", moving his hips in a way that shocked the older generation. I became a teenager in 1960s, when the Beatles excited young girls to fever pitch. "I Wanna Hold Your Hand" and "She Loves You, Yeah Yeah Yeah". It was a time of the sexual revolution, miniskirts, contraception. The old world, as we saw it, was prudish and backward. As with every upcoming generation, we wanted to sweep the old world away. It felt like we had invented sex.

The contraceptive pill made it safer to have sex and the era of "free love" had arrived. For young women, there were new possibilities as well as exploitation by young men. The world had changed. The women's movement, gay liberation and civil rights movement were active. Homosexuality was finally decriminalised in 1967. So, there were massive changes from the world of our parents - and sex and sexuality was very much at the forefront. Now I am 68 and my husband is 84. I know that my view of sex and sexuality has changed since I was young. I'm sure for me, back then, the very idea of older people having physical intimacy and desires felt very weird. My parents' generation found it difficult to have the conversations we can have now. So, when I was asked to write this article it allowed me to be curious and ask a number of questions about sex, intimacy and relationships in older life.

Do our views about sex and intimacy change as we get older? What are the issues and challenges we, as older people, face? What are the messages we get about older people and sex and intimacy from the wider world? How are negative messages challenged? What is it like for women and for men? What about people in same sex relationships? What happens when a partner dies? We've talked to a few different people and asked them

to share their experiences. First, a couple of regular Shine writers.

Mally is 73 and married; she wrote this personal take on the issues of sex and sexuality:

The mechanics of an intimate sexual relationship as we age are rarely spoken of or acknowledged among our peers. It's embarrassing to some, particularly our adult children. But our intimate relationship remains satisfying and enjoyable. Our joints ache, they don't bend and move as they used to - but we are so confident in each other that we can accommodate and move accordingly. For women, the hormone changes in our bodies have meant dryness requiring lubrication, care and maybe not full penetration. For men, maintaining an erection may take more time and encouragement, but if after all those gentle manipulations the act is incomplete, so what! Giving mutual pleasure through touching each other is just as rewarding. We have the shared joy of each other's naked, maybe wrinkled and aged bodies, but bodies that are warm, comfortable and familiar. Loving and being loved by someone is not only sexual intercourse. It is being there when life gets harder, more painful, distressing through illness or loss. And sharing an intimate relationship is more important than ever.

Betty is 87 has recently married for the 3rd time, after being a widow for over 12 years:

I was married to Eric for 25 years. It was wrong from the beginning. When I married it was in white, I was a virgin and so was he, and our sex life was very poor. We weren't given any information on that. All my mother said was, "You'll soon know". I think if we had had sex before marriage, I don't think we would have married. Then, after 25 years, I just decided to divorce. I had three children. Then I met John. And now we were coming up to 60. Three times a night! We went at it. He hadn't had a very good relationship with his first wife. I found I liked 'it', you know. I mean, I know a lot of people don't like 'it', I liked 'it'. I still do. So, we had a really great time for about 12 years. Unfortunately, he died. I was on my own again for 12 years. I joined Moor Allerton Elderly Care. Through them, I started having a bit of a social life. That was when I met Cy, my third husband. Sex is not on, at all. There's something wrong as he can't. I've had to give up sex - but not bad for 87. It's just nice to have cuddles in bed and ►

LET'S TALK ABOUT SEX

“It become very clear to me
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connection with other
human beings”

get up in the morning after a little cuddle before you get out. You know, it's never too late. I did it at 80, anybody can. It's not just the sex, it's the loving companionship. As you get older, it's more what you're looking for. Try it. Have a go. I was on my own 12 years and I had a full life. I had lots of friends. I was financially independent. But there's always something lacking, somebody to kiss you in the morning, somebody to hold your hand. The worst thing about being on your own, is going out, enjoying yourself and then coming back to an empty house. Now if I go out now, he's there when I come back.

Shared Tables

I asked Betty what she thought when I asked her about sex in later life. Her answer made me smile: "Yes please!" It worked out for Betty. But how do older people meet new partners, especially if you're not too confident? Charley Connor works with Cross Gates and District Good Neighbours Scheme, which provides support to older people experiencing loneliness and social isolation. He told us about the Shared Tables Project, which invites older people living alone to enjoy a meal together at a local restaurant. Initially, it started off as for Singles and it was very popular. All the attendees were local older people, all single, possibly recently bereaved, or maybe just hadn't ever been out with anyone else single. There was never an intention for romantic partnerships, but further down the line that did actually happen. One couple got married. Both their partners had died recently. They just clicked. But they worried about the stigma around it as well as how other people might perceive this. It's a touchy subject in older age. Here are Ken and Anita telling their own story. Lippy People have made a lovely film about them.

Anita: I approached the table that Ken was sitting at and there was something about him that made him stand out from everybody in the room. He was smartly dressed. He just had this persona about him. My mum said, "Why don't you just ask him for a coffee?" I remember saying, "I can't do that!" But, yeah, we did go out for a coffee and then we went for a meal.

Ken: We just talked. We talked about [Anita's late husband] George and my wife Mary - and that was the whole evening.

Anita: We realised that perhaps we should have been going home because the staff were putting their coats on and turning the lights out. On the 20th of January this year we got married. It's a natural progression from friendship into something else. I haven't got

52½ years with Anita as I did with Mary. But, however many it is, I've got them.

Anita: But we do still have Mary and George with us. We've got photographs of them and we talk about them. I've learned that you've got to give it a chance and live life. Life is for living.

Challenges

Finding a partner later in life can be challenging. For some older gay people, there are other challenges. Keith has been with his partner for 34 years – but it's not as simple as that.

Our story is an unusual one as we have travelled and lived in several parts of the world together, and sometimes apart, as I worked for the United Nations for much of our life. This was before we could be formally partnered and so we had some hurdles to overcome to be together. Furthermore, my partner is a Muslim (from Indonesia) and not 'out' to his family which has added another dimension. Keeping our relationship a secret from them and yet being able to travel the world has also been a 'special' part of our life together. In countries like Indonesia, having to live in secret is an issue that many Indonesians would recognise. In fact, many of our friends have asked us how we have been able to be together for so long, given the challenges we have faced. We have become a bit like 'agony aunts' for younger Indonesians finding themselves in similar situations. As we get older (I am 62 and he is 57) and we have to think about tackling issues relating to dying, funerals, death, inheritance etc, our relationship will bring its own challenges.

Pauline faces challenges too. She is a trans woman, which means she was assigned as a male at birth. She spent many years living as a man and has now transitioned into a woman.

I didn't transition until well into middle age. I simultaneously faced the challenges of becoming an older person and coming out as a transwoman. I think that my focus was very much on just enjoying my life as a woman. I hardly noticed at the time that I was an older woman and it's kind of crept up me without noticing. I don't feel like an elderly woman. I think I'm a much younger person than I actually am. I think that many women do that. It's tougher to grow old as a woman than as a man. We have to decide how we're going to tackle ageing. Do we simply accept ourselves completely as we are, like some women do, I think quite bravely, or seek to camouflage it away and pretend we are younger than we are?

I used to dread the idea of growing old alone. Very important to me to be with somebody, to have a soulmate. But then after you transition you have, in relationship terms, a different set of problems. In one sense you are in a better position to have a successful and happy relationship, because at least the person knows who you are. You're not pretending anymore. But on the other hand, as an older transitioner I do feel extremely unattractive to anybody. I don't think anybody will be interested in me. For many trans women, solving their gender identity is only one part of the puzzle. On the whole, my attraction would be to the person rather than to the gender. I've got plenty of options, in one sense. But I've got very few - because who wants to be with a trans woman?

This article started as being about the issues around sex in older life, but one of the things that has become very clear to me over the last year of Covid is the very human need for connection with other human beings. The stories above are, at their heart, examples of this need for human connection. Sex (being physically intimate with another human being) is just one of the many ways we seek connection. This doesn't stop just because we have lived for several decades.

Championing older people

Someone who has been looking into the issues around sex, sexuality and relations for many years is Dr. Sharron Hinchliff. She's spent over two decades listening to thousands of older people, both in the UK and overseas. Sharron learned about the joys and challenges of sex and intimacy for people as they get older. She also heard about accompanying stereotypes and taboos.

Sharron is a champion to older people. She has found ways of challenging misinformation and negative attitudes about older people and sex. A very creative project she is very proud of is "The Age of Love". She partnered with an artist, Pete McKee, famous for his mural "The Snog", on the side of a pub in Sheffield. She says, "I saw "The Snog" and I thought that really encapsulates the work that I do. It's this older couple and they're caught in a clinch. I approached Pete and he was happy to be part of the project". Together they created an exhibition called "The Age of Love", which is a collection of cartoons about sex and older people. As she says, "Relationships are central to human life and one of the most important that we have is with our intimate other. We know that many older adults enjoy sex and intimacy, that they are important to quality of life, but that they experience barriers to talking about this with partners, friends, and health professionals." The Art of Love aims to promote conversations around sex and intimacy, making the

invisible visible. She wants to reach not only older people but across the board including younger people, health practitioners and general public.

Sharron also created a website called "Age, Sex & You: Promoting better sexual health in older adults." It is somewhere older people could go to for reliable trustworthy information about the normal changes with ageing. If you want to see what is happening elsewhere around older people and sex you couldn't do better than look at Sharron's website.

I want to mention a nationwide campaign 'Let's talk the joy of later life sex' that was launched in April. It is from Relate, the UK's largest provider of relationship support. 5 naked (or nearly naked) couples and a woman have been photographed by Rankin, and his images are accompanied by words that challenge stereotypes of sexual desire and activity in later years. The posters will be displayed on billboards across the country. Shooting five older couples and one woman in their most intimate settings, the team set out to show what sex and intimacy can mean in later life in a way that's never been done before. Ammanda Major, a psychosexual therapist with Relate, said the organisation was trying to "start or widen a conversation about sex in later life – a topic people often find difficult to talk about." She said that some chose not to have a sex life, and some, who had lost partners or whose relationships had ended, found little opportunity for sex and intimacy.

The world of sex, sexuality, intimacy and relationships in later life is definitely on the agenda now. There are conversations now that my parents never dreamed of. The idea of what is "normal" is unrecognisable now to a few years ago. Prejudice, stereotypes, taboos and misinformation are being challenged. Although most of the stories we've shared are from couples and long-term relationships, you are as likely to hear about "hooking-up" (what we used to call one-night-stands), multiple partners and from people who don't want sex and are happy on their own. The important thing is to be able to have the conversation. Sex, intimacy and sexuality doesn't just belong to the young. As at any age, there are benefits as well as challenges. But at the end it is about being able to have closeness with other people, in the way that is good and comfortable for each person. There is a reality of our bodies changing as we get older, but the need to be close and connected to others will always be there.■

Thanks to everyone who spoke to us for this article. Check out Sharron Hinchliff's website at www.agesexandyou.com

Cara Too

**“The idea of
Cara Too
was to work
specifically with
the wider
community,
so it wasn't
just the Irish
community.”**

Every month we focus on a project funded by Time to Shine to see how they support older people in Leeds. This month we hear about Cara Too, a project based at Irish Health & Homes that supports older people find friendship and community.



CHAPELTOWN
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MONTEGO BAY

CORK

DROGHEDA

SLAINNE

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To learn more about what Cara Too does – and why it's called Cara Too – we spoke to Sarah McBride, services manager at Irish Health and Homes. Sarah started by telling us about the origins of the project.

The Cara Project was originally a 3-year project – we're in year 7 now! Cara means "friend" in Gaelic. Our main aim was to create friendships for people who were lonely and isolated in the Irish community. That project was a huge success and we achieved what we wanted to achieve. We connected a lot of people back into the community, we built some lovely friendships, and we delivered some activities which were always very well engaged with. But we felt there was more to do, so much more potential. So, then we decided to put in another proposal which would be for another three years of funding - and that's when we came up with Cara Too.

The idea of Cara Too was to work specifically with the wider community, so it wasn't just the Irish community. We also felt that there were an awful lot of older people in care homes where they didn't receive visits from people. A lot of the support staff from Leeds Irish Health and Homes were going into care homes and were feeding this back quite regularly. Some people just kind of sitting around. A lot of care homes do have events co-ordinators, but some people weren't really engaging. So, what we felt was that we needed to offer something a wee bit more holistic to them. Also, co-production is very important to us, so we really wanted something that was led by older people themselves. In our proposal we decided that we would work with 7 care homes across Leeds, and we would also work 1:1 with people in the community too.

We would go into care homes, and we'd deliver events. They were our hook really, because they were very popular, and we got some lovely feedback. But what we did find was that a lot of our older people were disengaging - we found that a lot of people were falling asleep when activities were taking place! This was difficult for the staff. There were quite a few issues working in care homes. So, we decided we'd also work with sheltered housing schemes; people there were more able to engage. We listened to what people wanted - they really told us the kind of activities that like to see. We delivered all kinds of things - Spanish afternoons, French afternoons, IT sessions, poetry, music. It's always been very well received.

Now we're in Year 7, what we want to do now is develop projects even further. We want to leave some sort of legacy in place when the project does end. We have amazing volunteers. We're very lucky that we've

got very good volunteers and they do some fabulous work. They're invaluable really. I say this all the time: volunteers are bricks and mortar to any organisation. The staff and volunteers work very well together. In our original plan we said we'd recruit older people as volunteers. We've got retired nurses and we've had ex-teachers and all sorts. We've got a lovely volunteer at the moment – she's wonderful. She is retired now but she was a consultant and she's been amazing. She's matched with a lady who's in her 90s with her son who is in his late 60s - he's also very lonely and isolated. So, our volunteer offers support to them both in such a holistic way, it's wonderful.

Covid response

It's been difficult through Covid. It's had huge impact on the work that we do. We converted an activity timetable to 'virtual' one and we've really pushed on the digital inclusion. We were lucky enough to get some funding and be able to recruit a digital inclusion officer and she's worked really well with Irish Health & Homes. We've got more people connected and provided devices, which has been wonderful. We've offered mindfulness, Pilates, chair-based exercise, poetry and song - all online. We have woodland walks and there's all kinds of things for people to get involved with. Even in lockdown, we've continued to deliver events. We've had 'Zooming Lovely', which is like a coffee morning once a week. And what we can do now is invite the Cara participants into Leeds Irish Health and Homes events to bring everybody together. This is another way of trying to build networks amongst each other and build friendships.

We're working with quite a lot of people and we're seeing some quite sad examples of where people are entrenched in isolation. You have to build up trust with them - they're very wary. I suppose a little bit suspicious to begin with. It's difficult to build that confidence when someone's a little bit suspicious. But I think with our approach we've managed to do that. We've been going very slowly and very gently - and it's been it's been worth it, because people have engaged. And we've had some real successes.

I want to leave a legacy after Cara Too ends. To put something in place where there are peer groups in place and people can all connect with each other. We've got one volunteer and one participant of Cara - they've been friends since the original project was set up all those years ago. That volunteer still goes to see that lady once or twice a week. She's very fond of her and she feeds back to me all the time if she's concerned that the lady might be struggling. It really has been invaluable, the work that we've done. It's made a huge difference.

We spoke to one of the older people who've received support from the Cara Too project. Michael Murray is 73 and lives in Halton. Michael is visited regularly by a support worker at the project, who encourages him to get involved with activities.

When did you first get involved?

It was the GP who gave me one of the girl's phone numbers. Can't remember her name. She wasn't there very long, she went back to live in France. She saw me a couple of times. She had a little dog. I'd had a dog, but I'd lost it, it had died. She said, "you can have a look at this dog!" Then she passed me on to someone else. She's coming to see me this morning.

Who is comes to see you nowadays?

Emma. She's very helpful with the computer, the tablet. She's very good. And she helps me manoeuvre it. Shows me the workings of it, how I could be able to do it. I have learned bits of it, definitely.

What would you do on the tablet?

It keeps you occupied. At the moment I've nothing going for me. You get depressed, that's the problem. I live on my own. I have one brother, who I was out with last night. I see him every Tuesday. My other brother is in Wakefield, but he's not so good. The

other two are out of the question, they're in Australia! I'm on my own at home every day. I feel lonely. There's no answer to it, is there?

I've been watching Leeds United for 70 years. And you can get it on the tablet. It's very good. You can spend quite a lot of time on it. Leeds are doing quite well at the moment. The last away match I went to was in Madrid – Real Madrid. They were last in the Premiership 17 years ago. They got to the final of the FA Cup twice in a row in the 70s – the other teams, they don't even get near Leeds United.

Have you tried video calls?

I've tried it. I've managed it once. You're face-to-face on the screen, on Zoom. It's tricky. But I haven't touched it for over a week now, so Emma's going to help me.

Thanks Sarah and Michael. ■

You can find out more about the Cara Too by contacting Sarah McBride at Irish Health & Homes.

Phone: 0113 262 5614
Email: sarah.mcbride@lihh.org
Website: www.lihh.org/CARA



KEEP DANCING



*In this month's selection of stories,
Villmore James tells us what it's like to
keep dancing as you get older;
Julie and Ann get animated about animation;
and Judith bids farewell to her adopted city.*

Villmore James started dancing 50 years ago – and hasn't stopped since. He set up Phoenix Dance Company with 2 friends in Leeds in 1981 and still works as a dancer and teacher. Mally Harvey spoke to Villmore about his life in dance.

Even on Zoom, Villmore James's enthusiasm for dance shines through. He's danced for 50 years and is still as passionate about the art form as he was when he was a 10-year-old at Harehills Middle School. But it wasn't as unusual for a boy to dance as we might think. "There were so many boys dancing," he says. "It was basically the norm. There were almost more boys than girls going into that creative art at that time." Villmore is still enthusiastic about boys' dance. He says, "Boys' dance is an extremely powerful thing to watch!"

Tell me about the early years. Who first introduced you to dance at school?

The teacher was Nadine Senior – a lovely teacher, very creative. She was a P.E. teacher, but she stepped into dance when she was younger and continued in the P.E. section. We are going back 50 years now! Going back to a time when it was very new, a new activity to be brought into schools. It was taken on by not all the schools in Leeds - but by the majority. Nadine introduced us into dance and the creative world. Seeing all the guys dance was just inspirational. If it hadn't been for her, I wouldn't have had a career in dance. She taught us the creative aspects of the Laban type of dance, but I learned more of the technique from John Auty at Intake High School.

Were you encouraged by your family?

I think the people around me - my parents - didn't really know any different. As far as they were concerned, we were going to school and what you learn at school, you learn at school. Dance was part of that activity. I don't think they questioned the input of the cultural or movement arts.

What style of dance were you doing at that stage?

It was creative dance, modern dance. It was from the Laban movement, which we had begun with Nadine. Laban has a lot of technique, but we also delved into our creativity – being a flower, growing, using actions and putting it to music. And working together as males and females in one class, which, for some people, was a problem.

Everyone who was interested in dance went on to another school in Bramley – Intake High School. 7 or 8 miles on the bus. It took an hour to get to school. But that was the only school where we could continue with the performing arts. I was one of the last groups to be able to go up to that school. It stopped the year

after me. Our dance teacher John Auty, he came from a different approach, more technical. He taught us to understand how our creative movements would help our performance. He taught us about weight, speed, shape and flow in dance, and the quality of the body working together. At Intake, there was more than dance: the performing arts, drama, musical plays, singing. I got my love of the stage from there. There was a lot of trouble up there, a lot of prejudice. We had to combat that - not only from other pupils, but from teachers as well. Harehills had been mainly Black, and Intake was white middle-class, and we were coming into that area. It was hard, but as a group we were very close, and it was a good grounding, at that young age. I think it prepared us for the rest of our lives, we put up with it and got on with it.

John helped us develop the skills, creativity, understanding and technique, and we all concentrated on that. Even then, I wasn't sure that dance was the career for me for me, I just followed my peers. At that time, I thought more about stage management. There was a local group at the Civic Theatre who built sets and I helped there. I was going more with becoming a stage manager or stage crew.

You were part of setting up Phoenix Dance, weren't you?

I left school when I was 15 or 16 and I went on a YOBS scheme at the Civic Theatre for 6 months. It was during that scheme that David Hamilton had the idea to create Phoenix. He was 3 years above me, so when I got to school at 10, he had done 2 years there. But I had met Dave when I was about 7. We all lived close by, grew up in the same area, went to Harehills School at the same time – either bumping into each other as kids or meeting them later. We all knew each other. We formed Phoenix and at that time we were very special. We were the only dance company that had never had professional training. It all came from school. We were an all-male black dance company too. We started Phoenix and things started to happen quickly. It was all coming to us!

We were mixed heritage, in the sense of a cultural heritage. We had African roots and had the Caribbean music and dance, our background and cultures. But we lived in Britain and we were mixing with our peers, listening to all the music – absorbing everything around us. And we were able to gel that in with our performances. ►

With Phoenix we did a lot of travelling. We were on tour for three months, over England, Scotland and Wales. In the early days we had to go to the venues by bus or train, carrying our costumes and ghetto blasters. We couldn't drive and we didn't have cars anyway. Then we got some Arts Council funding and got a bus and a driver. We toured in Spain, Germany, all over. And we spent 6 weeks in Australia in all sorts of venues. Into the Outback, performing in shacks. We had to adapt to suit the place where we were performing. One place was so small we could only fit 3 people on the stage at a time - so there were lots of duets, solos and trios - instead of all 5 of us being on stage at one time! I am sure lots of companies could not do that now; we had to be so versatile, we had to adapt the show. We were on the road all the time. We didn't know what we were facing until we got there. From the largest places, down to the most minute. Schools, prisons - all kinds of places. Some venues were gigantic. We had to adapt the show when it comes to a performance. We had to get set up and in the early days we had to prepare everything before a performance. Once the technician wasn't coming until 4pm so we had to put up our own lights and focus them - we had to do everything!

The performance is the main thing. It's always about the performer performing. It doesn't really matter what's around it - the lights and all that. As long as you've got a clear space, the performer should be able to tell the story, without all the glitter. It's nice to have all the lights and things to create an effect, but in the end it's about the performance.

What have been the highlights for you? And what have you most enjoyed?

There have been lots of highlights, lots of opportunities in different places. One was the opportunity to go on the South Bank Show. But every performance was special, wherever it was. In colleges, schools - everyone was special wherever we performed. Working with primary schools, people with special needs, people in colleges. Every one of those people had a special, heartfelt experience.

As I say - it's the performance, that's the main thing. I do love performing and if it comes down to it, I would like to die as a performer, on stage. My heart is as a performer. I am getting older. I would like to continue performing but as I get older, there is only so much I can do. But I keep working my body, keep stretching, keep flexible, then it'll hopefully keep healing itself. There are more constraints as you get older. But that happens because I'm not able to work my body all the time. I'd like to be 24/7 in a studio. Keep my muscles flexible, keep moving. There are

so many people who've inspired me to keep going. So many people, too many to mention, but Tammy, Ross McCain and Nam Ron spring to mind. I admired them as dancers and how they performed.

What are you doing now?

The Performance Ensemble, a group formed specifically for older people, gives me that opportunity to do what I love, to be creative. Things like that keep you going and if you end up doing a performance, then little things like that keep me going throughout the year. I love riding on my bike - I like it to be nice and warm though! I love walking, activities that keep me going. But performing still excites me and I benefit from it. Teaching keeps my body active. I go to the dance studio in Leeds at Mabgate, go to colleges and so forth. Just odd things to keep me going. When you've done something all your life, the benefits from it are not just in your body. The creativity, it still excites me. I just don't want to throw that away. You have to change your teaching ethics to all the different groups you have. I like to move - go "bang, bang, bang"! Instead of "soft, soft, soft". I've still got the energy to go for it as a dancer. But it depends where I am, how I approach my teaching.



Villmore James and Sally Owen, in Performance Ensemble's *Bus Ride* (2016). Image by Mike Pinches.

I don't always get there and achieve what I want to achieve - there are failures. But I think about how to do it the next time. I hope we are all lifetime learners - we can't stop, can we, not really?

At present, I am doing an online dance/ movement psychotherapy course. It's only the beginning of something, but it will be great to use the skills I have and adapt those skills to help people. To help people look at their bodies and how they use their bodies, then think about their mind and their bodies together.

You can't treat one without the other. Getting them to look at their posture. Your posture, just the way you stand - it helps build confidence. Helping people understand that it all works together. Good posture can help will mental health. The mind and the body are powerful. My life's not over yet - and I love to perform!

I have a grandson who is really keen on dancing. What advice would you give to him and to any young boys who want to dance?

The advice I would give anyone who wants to dance is enrol into a dance or creative arts school. It's all about finding the right school. Or a dance centre to go to every week. Make sure you find the right one for him. That is important. Some of them might just do Ballet or Contemporary Dance. And some boys aren't interested in that. They just want to let out some energy in their movement, and go for it. We all have to move – and when boys move, it's just as powerful

as girls or women. Boys' dance is a powerful thing to watch. Boys can interpret a lot through dance. Other boys might be scared but the ones who dance are really powerful.

What's next for you Villmore?

Hopefully watch this space! I would love to continue in this field for the rest of my life. Over last 30 years I've had a stroke, a heart attack, blood clots and I am diabetic. I've had everything! Lots of other things have happened to me, but every time something has happened to me, I haven't relied on my body's collapse and gone down. I just got up, tried my hardest and got back to dance, the thing I love. That has helped a great deal. It's important for people to know that you can help yourself. By working on your body, just keeping going. I've got a positive attitude and I say, "just keep moving!"■

Thanks Villmore for sharing your story!

You can find out more about Phoenix Dance Theatre at www.phoenixdancetheatre.co.uk.

The company is planning to return to live performance in the Autumn.

Villmore is part of Performance Ensemble, who are always looking for creative older people to get involved.

Find out more at www.performanceensemble.com



Villmore James and Sally Owen, in Performance Ensemble's Crossing (2020). Image by Mike Pinches

A Letter to Leeds

Regular Shine writer Judith Sullivan is leaving Leeds after over 20 years. Here is her farewell epistle to the city she loves.

Ah Leeds, you have been so very good to me, welcoming and nourishing me since 1997. And yet I am leaving you behind this spring. I am the problem, not you. The pastures new beckon and I must heed the call.

Leeds, you have inspired, amused and thrilled me - never the same one week to the next, one year to the following. At heart, you remain the gorgeous, eccentric, varied site so appealing that even the French ran their hallowed annual bike race over your hills, your valleys and the hard tarmac of the city centre. So cosmopolitan, you house the world's foremost armaments museum. So beautifully planned, that parks small and large dot your every neighbourhood, but you remain a vibrant centre of industry and commerce.

Before I came here, I knew you only as the meeting point of one Thomas Spencer and one Michael Marks in the late 19th century. My music pals knew you as the setting for an iconic The Who album. I decamped from Paris (yes!) and came here for love (of a man). That man, so very sadly, has left us, both Leeds and his circle of friends, richer and stronger for having included him. Essex-born, he lived here for more than 50 years.

There is so much to catalogue in this marvellous town and I will try to do her justice by naming just a few of my favourite things:

The Hyde Park Cinema, a century old and still graceful and exciting, a rallying point for cinephiles of the lefty bent. Manager Wendy knew all of us regulars by name and personally responded to our requests for showings. This is no faceless Cineplex, but a screen away from home, a sometimes down at heel but never stingy friend of long standing. She will reopen post-lockdown, beautified but still our local movie house.

Roundhay Park. The majesty and breadth of this oasis are such that having used it as my walk for more than 14 locked-down months each visit seemed like the first. The adorable kids, the pug-nosed canines, the sweep, the paths, the bounce, the

family bonding. All we had to do was look at its landmarks, like the rotunda, from a different angle and it was virgin territory. Not so long ago, a friend and I sought out local sportswomen statues at the park's southern periphery. We were underwhelmed by the artwork, but delighted to discover something new.

Kirkgate Market. Originally from Baltimore, I relished its famous Lexington Market there. Though an ocean apart, the Lexington and Kirkgate have much in common. A down-at-heel faded glamour, a perpetual busyness, an aroma all their own. The developments at Kirkgate in the past decade have not overly gentrified the downtown site and it remains affordable and accessible. The street-food stalls are beginning to hum with business. I personally recommend the Vietnamese stall Banh & Mee for its healthful, yummy, inexpensive eats.

Aartis Restaurant. My husband's and my local. Inauspiciously tucked atop a coffee shop on Street Lane, this family-oriented restaurant makes some of the best curries this side of Bangalore. No fuss, no frills but darn, the food is good!

The staff at LGI intensive care. I'm am decamping in part because of the sudden death of my husband last October. Smack in the middle of lockdown, the people who ushered Clive through his final journey were professional in every second. Attentive without being overbearing, they treated Clive as a person, rather than a patient. Clive's daughters and I received compassion of the type money simply cannot buy.

The list goes on ... but space is tight. In my early days here, every time I spoke during a bus ride, a driver or passenger would develop saucer eyes and exclaim, "You're not from around here, lass!"

They were right, I am not from around here. I will never master flawless Yorkshire-speak, nor will I refer to lunch as dinner. But Leeds, I adopted you for 20+ years and I do hope you kind of adopted me, and may shed a tear when I take that final LNER trip down to the Big Smoke. I will weep for you, with much joy and some sadness. ■

Our Creative Journey

Last year Bramley Elderly Action took part in a film project with Leeds Animation Workshop (LAW) and they wanted to share their story. Maureen Kershaw spoke to Ann (one of the participants) and Julie (a support worker) about the project – and the controversial destruction of one of our magazines!

Julie: Leeds Animation Workshop were due to come along to us to do a workshop -

Ann: But then Covid happened!

Julie: Ann and a few other members wondered whether they could offer it online. LAW had not previously taught animation on Zoom.

Ann: So, we were all guinea pigs really! There were nine sessions with five volunteers and five animators. It was all based around lockdown. We each received a bag containing drawing materials, pipe cleaners, fabric, a dolly peg, a 'Shine' magazine, glue, scissors etc - and it was down to us to use them to the best of our ability. I made a peg doll, photographing each stage of adding clothes and sticking a face cut out from the 'Shine' magazine!

I've suffered with my mental health. Lockdown was like a double whammy for me. I don't go out generally. My friend used to take me to our Centre each Tuesday for gentle exercise. Wednesday was coffee morning, coupled with shopping - and on Thursday she took me to Bingo. So, with Covid, I missed all that interaction with people. I felt as though I was trapped in a cage, so I made a cage with pipe cleaners –photographing each stage of the process. As the lockdown began to be lifted, I would snip some of the cage bars one by one. That was my take on it. I made a street – don't ask me how. It was a cardboard high street with all the shops on. And of course, you have to wear a mask in the shops. I'm exempt from wearing a mask because I'm asthmatic, so the peg-doll then went shopping and had a sticker saying she was exempt too! The third part was life before lockdown – a room with gentle exercise, one at the coffee shop and one in the hall doing bingo.

All the way along I got such great feedback, but I don't take it very well. I got great input from the animators. We'd go into separate rooms on Zoom and work with the animators to help us. I worked with Naomi and Terry. But an hour wasn't long enough. Next time we need half a day per session!

Julie: It was a way to get people together. People need a distraction from the monotony of the lockdown. It was very oppressive. No one knew what was happening and this project was a ray of sunshine, even just for an hour in the day.

Ann: I must admit there was resistance from me initially.

Julie: I was very proud of how you engaged in the workshop, Ann. Because you gave it your all. You worked hard and took full part – and it really told your story. When I watched the film, it felt really poignant. And I was so happy that you'd taken part!

Ann: I couldn't see where it was going to go at the start. When I saw that bag of art stuff I thought, "what the hell am I going to do with this?!" But a lot of encouragement has come from Julie. She puts her heart and soul what she does. I know that if I'm down, I only need to send her an email and she'll be on the phone.

Julie: I love working with you Ann. And all the people we work with. You're a shining example of how when we form bonds with people, have trusting relationships, we can help and support each other. I love my job!

With the project complete, Leeds Animation Workshop made a YouTube video which was presented with its own Premiere, Unfortunately, no sooner had Ann stepped off the 'red carpet' than she fell, breaking her arm and wrist. We wish Ann a good recovery and hope it won't be too long before she, Julie and Bramley Elderly Action are back together again – in person! You can see the film on the LAW Facebook page.



Email - hello@shinealight.org.uk

Phone - 0113 244 1697

Post - Shine, LOPF

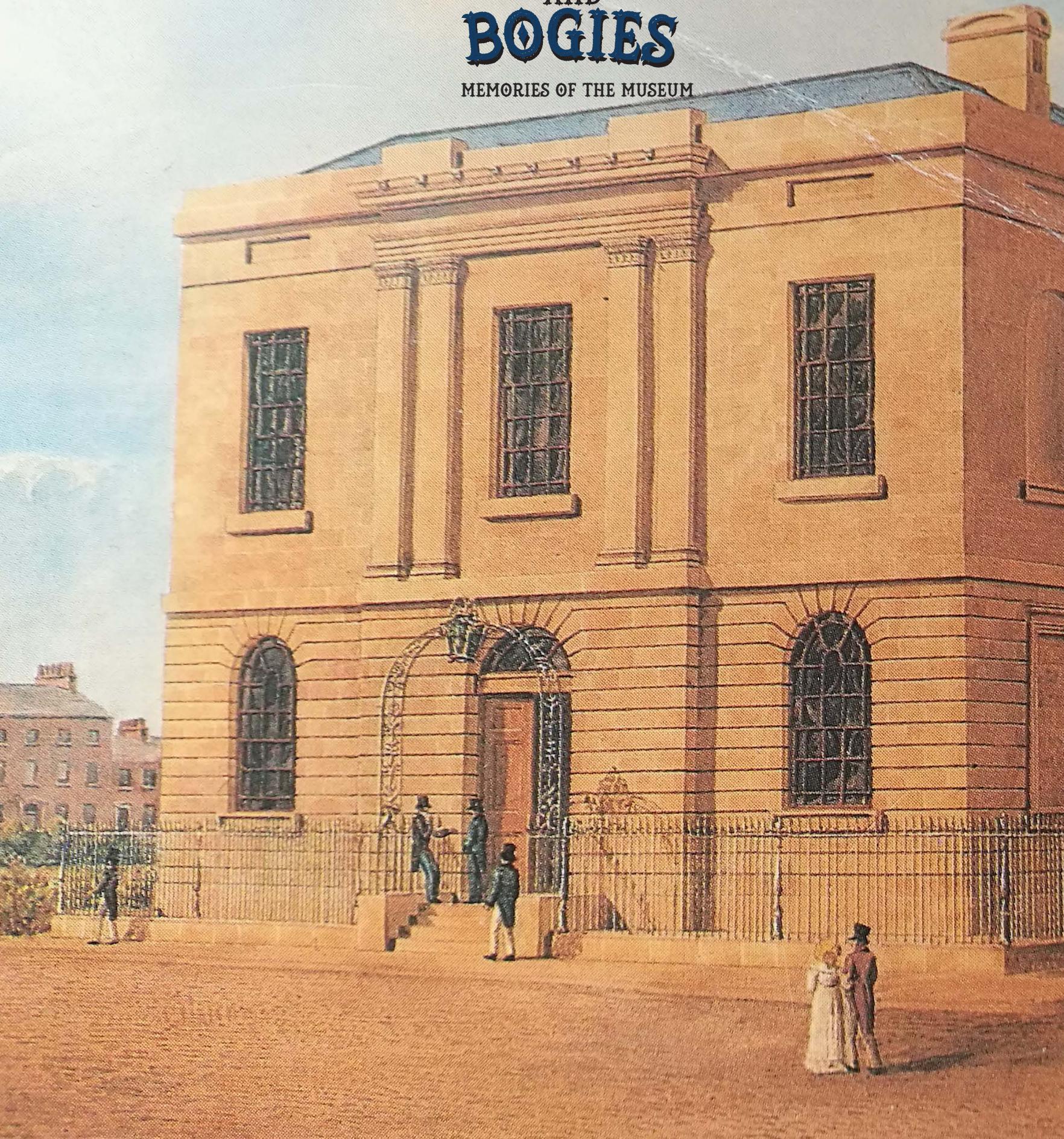
Joseph's Well,

Hanover Way, Leeds,

LS3 1AB.

TIGERS MUMMIES AND BOGIES

MEMORIES OF THE MUSEUM



Leeds Museums and Galleries are celebrating their 200th birthday. As part of the festivities, we gathered a group of older people to share their memories of some of the more familiar objects in the collection.

In 1821 the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society opened their newly built Philosophical Hall to the public Park Row – it had a lecture theatre, library, laboratory and museum. A century later, control of the museum and the collection was handed to the Corporation of Leeds, which later became Leeds City Council. Since then, more sites have been acquired and opened to the public. Today, Leeds Museums and Galleries is a collection of nine different attractions that span the whole city. Over the years, the museum in Leeds City Centre has been through many different iterations. The Park Row site was bombed in WW2 and some items were damaged. In 1965 the museum closed, and part of the collection was moved to the Central Library. The museum is currently in Millennium Square.

To help mark 200 years of the collection, we asked a group of older people to share their memories of particular objects. Curator Catherine Robins has worked with a team of volunteers to find 50 of the public's favourite objects from the Leeds collection. We chose just a few from this list of 50 to show older people at a digital meeting at Cross Gates & District Good Neighbours scheme. Catherine introduced each object and people shared their thoughts and memories.

The Leeds Tiger

Catherine: The Leeds Tiger was donated to the museum in 1862 and is part of the museum's Natural Sciences collection. This tiger was shot and killed by a colonel named Charles Reid in India. It's unclear why he was shot – some stories say that the tiger was threatening a village but it's hard to know if that's true. The tiger was skinned and treated in India then transported to the UK, where it was displayed in the Great Exhibition of 1851. From there, the Philosophical and Literary Society purchased it and they paid for it to be taxidermied. Some have commented that it's not the best taxidermy in the world! We can't say for certain why it looks this way but there are a few factors which go into it. The skin was treated twice, which caused it to shrink by about a foot. Also the taxidermist didn't have a reference for what this tiger should look like! It is also possible that the skin was trimmed at some point. It's one of the older objects in the collection. When Leeds Museum at the Park Row site was bombed in 1941 a lot of the Natural Science ►



Memories of Leeds

collection was damaged, so it's fortunate that the tiger survived.

Marie: *It takes me back to when my granddaughter was small. Every time I took her to Leeds Museum, we had to whizz really quickly past the tiger. It really frightened her! You couldn't really escape it.*

David: *I remember visiting the museum on Park Row in the 1950s. And the only thing I remember clearly was the tiger.*

Marie: *I was 4 months old when the bombing happened – our house was bombed.*

Ernest: *I'd be 15 years old then. Quite a number of tales were circulated about the bombing. It was said that the morning after, a lady went round a street corner - and she was confronted by that tiger. She got the fright of her life! How true that was I don't know. In the 1930s, I remember my father taking me round and seeing the tiger - and having nightmares for some time after.*

Bob: *I remember going to the museum on Park Row after the war with my Dad. He'd not seen me for several years because he'd been overseas, fighting. I remember, on one occasion, he took me there. If I remember right, the tiger was right in the entrance. I was far from frightened of it. I looked at it and thought, "Wow! It's the first time I've seen one of them!" I was a young kid, about 6 or 7. We saw tigers on Tarzan movies, but nowhere else.*

Marie: *I was a granny before I saw it. I just thought what a horrible waste of a beautiful animal, to be shot like that.*

Bullfrog Vase



Catherine: *This vase was probably made by the Leeds Fireclay Company, though it doesn't actually have one of their marks. The style and the colour are very much what you'd expect from the Fireclay Company, particularly from the Burmantofts Pottery. The company was formed of 5 companies coming together,*

they made predominantly practical stoneware – things like building materials and sanitary ware. But from the period between 1880 and 1904, they also made decorative pottery.

Pauline: *My Dad was born in Newtown, near the*

Burmantofts Potteries. They had something similar to this vase on the Antiques Roadshow recentl

Beryl: *I've got quite a lot of the Leeds Creamware. They started remaking it in the late 70s and it was called Leeds Ware. I've got some lovely plates.*

David: *My father came from Burmantofts. There used to be a big quarry at the very end of York Road, near where the old Woodpecker pub was. I've often wondered if that quarry was linked to the old Burmantofts Pottery. The Quarry Hill flats must have taken their name from it. One of my cousins fell down the quarry, which was a big event in our family!*

Catherine: *The factory did overlook the quarry – but I'm not sure if they were linked.*

Penny Slot Machine

Catherine: *The mechanics of this machine are quite different to those of earlier machines by the same maker. This one is more complex. I don't have a great deal of context of it, sadly.*



David: *I do remember using those machines. Every year we had what we called a "feast" that used to come. Travelling shows with stalls and rides. There was a bit of land near the Torre estate and the Feasts used to go there every year. We'd go and fire air rifles at ducks and win a goldfish.*

Pauline: *I can remember the one at Lupton Avenue. It was massive. They had all the big rides. Health & Safety would've had a field day! It was really dodgy. You took your life in your hands, but you didn't care.*

Bob: *In the 50s a small Feast used to come to Cross Gates. I remember it used to go behind the Ritz Cinema at the bottom of Station Road. At one time it was at the bottom of the ring road, by the Traveller's Rest pub. You didn't see so many of those slot machines at the feasts. But every time you went to the seaside – Scarborough or Bridlington – there were lots and lots of machines. Not quite as sophisticated as the one in the picture. They were usually wooden.*

Brian: *We used to go to Woodhouse Feast. The last time I went, my wife Audrey was heavily pregnant. The baby was born only a few days later. She was*

quite determined to get to the feast! Blackpool was the place for slot machines. I spent a bob or two on them!

Margaret: I used to go to the Hunslet feast. Ooh, the brandy snap! It takes you back a bit.

Damian: I remember winning a goldfish and calling it Dominic. It only lasted 7 days.

Ernest: In the 1930s, on a Thursday night (before the fair opened on a Friday) it used to be called Sod's Night. They'd dig turf out to make foundations for the roundabouts [fairground rides]. We used to throw these at each other - sods of earth, cinders, bits of clinker, a bit of grass on top, goodness knows what. Once, my brother cut his cheek and we took him to the St John Ambulance. He came out covered in bandages like a Mummy. My mother nearly had a fit when she saw him! I got many a good hiding for that.

Nesyamun's Coffin

Catherine: This is one of the earliest objects in our collection. It was brought to Leeds in 1823.

Nesyamun was thought to be a high-ranking priest and scribe, which explains why they have such an intricate coffin. It was uncovered in Egypt in the 1820s. Nesyamun was one of three but the other two were irreparably damaged in the bombing of 1941.



Marie: It's quite beautiful, isn't it?

Ernest: The body inside is embalmed skin – I don't think I quite took to that! Going into the museum back then was like going into church. No noise. We used to tiptoe around, avoiding the security chaps with the peaked caps. If you were talking to your father, he'd say, "keep your voice down." Going round as a 10-year-old, it didn't do much good for my imagination. I'd be thinking about the Mummy before I went to sleep!

Bob: I must admit that when I walk by the Mummy, I do feel a bit uncomfortable, looking at his face. It's a dead person – a bit disturbing. I'm not frightened but it is rather macabre. Perhaps we should be a bit more respectful – they were human being with feelings and emotions.

Silver Cross Pram

Catherine: This is a pram from the Silver Cross Factory in Guiseley. This is a 1958 model, which we think preceded the Balmoral pram, their fanciest option. Silver Cross was founded in 1877 and it's still going today. Originally based in Hunslet, it then moved to Guiseley and is now in Skipton. Apparently, the Queen used a Silver Cross pram for Prince Charles in 1948.



Pauline: My mum had one for my sister Jeanette. And I had one for my children as well. They were really good prams.

Marie: It's fabulous, I have such lovely memories of my son as a baby. Taking him for a walk – he'd be sitting up in it, giggling away. There was a lot of room in those prams. My husband loved pushing the pram too. It was great.

Beryl: You were looking at the child – whereas now the pushchairs, they face away.

Ernest: They had another use as well. When women started going to the public wash-house, they'd put the washing in the pram.

Bob: After my sister was born and the pram was done with – it was quite old by then – my father took the wheels off and made me a bogey. It was fantastic. I got more fun out of that bogey than anything. I eventually destroyed it – I came down a hill into a brick wall. The wheels came off. They were big wheels, really fast.

Ernest: You could go miles on a bogey.

Brian: My abiding memory was trying to steer mine down Coronation Parade. I had a long bar at the front and steered it with my feet. My foot got stuck in a wheel and I nearly ran under a car. That was a bit iffy.

Catherine: Can I just ask – what is a bogey?

Bob: It's where you take the pram wheels off a pram and get planks of wood, fasten them together and steer it with string at the front. We called them bogeys – not go-karts – we weren't posh like that. ■

Many thanks to Catherine and everyone at Cross Gates & District Good Neighbours Scheme.

Home Sweet Home

A healthy home is a happy home. Find out how where you live can have an impact on your physical and mental health.

Where we live is so important to us. Some of us live in a house, others a flat; many older people in Leeds live in a care home or a supported living complex. Wherever we call home, it's our space, no matter the size, shape or condition. And where we live has a huge impact on our health. If our home is warm and dry, it can keep us healthier. If you live in a cold house, you're more likely to get ill with respiratory problems. Where you live has a huge effect on your mental health too. Many older people live alone, and some are lonely and isolated, particularly over this last year or so of Covid restrictions. Leeds City Council is particularly aware of the health

benefits of older people living in good housing. They help fund a great service run by Care & Repair called Home Plus (Leeds). Home Plus (Leeds) aims to help older people live independently and stay in their homes. They also try to prevent older people falling in their homes and support them to keep warm.

Mary (which is not her real name) has had support from Home Plus Leeds. Mary is 92 and lives on her own in a house. She's also had mobility issues for a while – she struggles to get around, even in the house. And she lives with dementia. Mary's son contacted Home Plus (Leeds) and they had a chat with him. One of the first things they advised was that Mary could

get Meals on Wheels delivered. But they also suggested that certain adaptations in her home might make getting around easier. Home Plus (Leeds) arranged for these adaptations to be installed for free – and Mary could stay in her own home. Another older person they told us about was Andrew. Andrew was really worried about paying for his gas and didn't know what to do – he'd built up some debt and was spending more on energy because he was shielding. So, Home Plus (Leeds) had a word with the energy company and the problem was alleviated. The energy company even gave him £40 free credit!

These examples show how much your health can be impacted by where you live. Mary was struggling to get around the house, finding it hard to get upstairs. Andrew's energy problems were really affecting his mental health. Both issues were dealt with and were fairly straightforward – but had a huge impact on Andrew and Mary's health.

Moving house

As we get older, sometimes it's a good idea to move house. Some older people like the idea of downsizing, others start to think it might be a good idea to have some support on hand. For others it's a different and more complicated story, as it was for George and Dot. Their health and housing story was sent to us by the Centre for Better Ageing. George, who is in his mid 70s, moved to a 2-bedroom bungalow with his wife Dot a few years ago. Their home is part of a sheltered housing complex, which includes gardens, shared green outside spaces and a shared community centre. Both George and Dot have health conditions that affect their day-to-day life. "We both have a few different health issues," says George. "I get breathless with COPD. And I'm up at night a lot with prostate problems. Dot has rheumatoid arthritis which, causes her a lot of pain and immobility, as well as some other conditions."

George used to run his own businesses within the pet food trade. Dot worked at Littlewoods until ill-health made it too difficult. George and Dot ran into financial difficulties, so they sold their 4-bedroomed house and bought a bungalow. Sadly, continuing financial challenges made it difficult to manage the mortgage repayments, so the bungalow was sold, and they became homeless for a short while. At that point, they became tenants of the council, which provided them with a two-bed flat. However, as George says, "the steps up to the first-floor front door were getting difficult for Dot to manage". So, the Council rehoused them. George and Dot are very grateful for this support. "The council have really looked after us, and we are here and they are still looking after us," says George.



Image by Mark Epstein © Centre for Ageing Better (NB this image does not depict people featured in the article)

Around their home, George enjoys making home improvements, looking after the garden and doing wood-turning in his shed. Both Dot and George really enjoy looking after their dog Fudge and walking him in the nearby orchard. They are grateful they are allowed to keep a pet. "Fudge is one of the good things," says George. "Being able to have a pet is fantastic." The couple are very happy with where they live now. "Everything is perfect," says George. "A great looking bungalow. Here it is fantastic. Everybody loves it here. The bungalows are not too small. You have plenty of room and you can live independently."

Dot and George enjoy the community dimension to living where they do. There is shared outdoor space that before Covid was used for a summer fundraising event; shared laundry facilities; and going to the community centre can help residents to feel less isolated. "I think the centre is fantastic," says George. "When I go over there, I say we are all looking after each other. That way, you are not sat in your house and all isolated. People will notice if someone is missing and phone up to see that they are alright." George helps out at the centre too: "Most days I spend some time at the centre, cooking meals for the elderly residents". This was before Covid, of course!

All these stories show how where you live can affect your health – and vice versa. Sometimes a health condition (like Dot's) mean that certain accommodation just isn't going to work. The key thing is to start thinking about your health and housing. Try our quiz over the page and hopefully that will get you thinking ■

THE BIG HOUSING QUIZ

Circle the answer that most applies to you, then add up the number of A, B & Cs.

1 Which best describes your housing situation:

- A My home suits me very well
- B My home is okay, but I have wondered about making changes or maybe moving
- C Sometimes my home feels too difficult to manage

2 How would you describe the condition of your home:

- A Is in a pretty good state of repair
- B Could do with some improvement work doing to it
- C Needs major repairs

3 What is your experience of moving around your home e.g steps and stairs, using the bathroom etc.

- A No problem – never think about it
- B Starting to be a bit awkward
- C Needs major repairs

We know that there's a link between good housing and health. Take five minutes to do this quick quiz to help you think about your housing in later life, and consider some of your options.

4 How do you manage with the general household tasks, e.g. cleaning, cooking etc. :

- A No problem
- B Not as easy as they used to be – just can't do some things like vacuuming or cleaning windows
- C A real struggle

5 How would you describe heating your home:

- A It's lovely and warm and easy to heat
- B Quite difficult and/or expensive to keep warm
- C Really cold, I can't afford to heat it adequately

6 How would you describe the location of your home?

- A Very convenient
- B Okay, as long as I can use the car and/ or the buses are running
- C Not good, it's difficult to get to shops, the GP or anywhere else very easily

7 Which best describes how safe you feel in your home?

- A Really safe and secure.
- B A bit worried sometimes
- C I often feel frightened and vulnerable

8 How would you describe your neighbours?

- A Great – we help each other out
- B Bit of a mixed lot, but okay
- C Not at all friendly – can even be unpleasant

9 How would you describe you living situation:

- A I am happy living alone / or happy living with my partner or family
- B It is sometimes okay but I wish there was more to do locally
- C I often feel lonely and isolated living here

10 If you had practical help to move house would you:

- A Stay where I am, I have everything I need here
- B Think about it, the thought of sorting everything feels too much
- C Needs major repairs



Image by Mark Epstein

Add up the number of A, B and C answers

A _____ B _____ C _____

MOSTLY A

Sounds like your current home suits you well.

MOSTLY B

It may be worth thinking about getting a bit of help and doing a few things to your home to make it more manageable. To keep your options open you could also look around at the other housing choices you may have. See below for options.

MOSTLY C

It seems that your current home situation is not exactly ideal. Perhaps it is time to contact the local housing options adviser to sort out more pressing difficulties and to find out who can help you to live in your current home more comfortably. They might also be able to help you look at alternative housing possibilities.

Useful Contacts

Leeds City Council Housing & Health Helpline: **0113 378 5858**

Care & Repair Leeds Home Plus service can help with smaller adaptations/repairs /heating improvements, ut also if people need larger adaptations: **0113 240 6009**

Engage Leeds is for vulnerable adults (18+) who have a housing related support need: **0113 380 7615**

Retirement LIFE Council Housing - for an overview of extra housing support for people over 60 call **0113 3783696**

Quiz Corner

Sudoku

The goal of Sudoku is to fill in a 9x9 grid with digits so that each column, row, and 3x3 section contain the numbers between 1 to 9. At the beginning of the game, the 9x9 grid will have some of the squares filled in.

5		2		4	9			
		1	2	7		5		4
4	7			1	5			
3	1			9	2	8		
	9	8		5		2	3	
		4						
1		3		2	8			7
	8						2	9
	2		5		1		8	3

Wordsearch - Star signs

L	M	L	A	E	F	E	O	S	N	U	F	O
I	P	P	R	E	C	Q	V	M	T	A	S	Y
P	I	S	C	E	S	C	E	K	W	H	C	N
S	A	G	I	T	T	A	R	I	U	S	O	A
T	A	U	R	U	S	P	N	E	R	D	R	Q
G	E	M	I	N	I	R	V	Z	R	D	P	U
L	I	B	R	A	U	I	Y	I	O	F	I	A
O	R	K	V	I	U	C	A	S	R	I	O	R
L	F	V	M	D	E	O	E	J	P	G	U	I
E	C	A	N	C	E	R	N	A	N	E	O	U
O	S	Z	I	V	Q	N	A	R	I	E	S	S

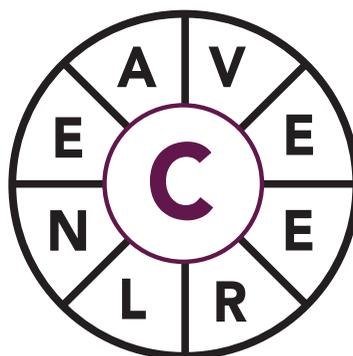
Aries Taurus Gemini Cancer Leo
 Virgo Libra Scorpio Sagittarius
 Capricorn Aquarius Pisces

This month's puzzle page is brought to you by Home Instead Senior Care. You can find all the answers on the bottom of page 35.



Museum Quiz

1. Leeds Museum is housed in the Mechanics Institute in Millennium Square. Who designed the building?
2. What breed is the Leeds Tiger?
3. In what year was the Leeds Museum bombed?
4. In which century was Kirkstall Abbey established?
5. Which monarch oversaw the dissolution of the monasteries, including Kirkstall Abbey?
6. For the 200th birthday, Leeds Museums is promoting 50 objects. Which museum told the history of the world through 100 objects?
7. Nesyamun's coffin dates back to the 20th Dynasty of Ancient Egypt. Who reigned at the time?
8. Who played the title role of The Mummy in the 1959 Hammer horror film?
9. William Wilson founded which business in Hunslet, Leeds in 1877?
10. In what season should you plant daffodil bulbs?
11. In which building would you find the Tiled Hall Café, which features Burmanofts Pottery wall tiles?



Word Wheel

Your target is to create as many words of four letters or more, using the letters once only and always including the letter in the middle of the wheel.

Personal care

Home help

Dementia care

Live-in care

The best home to be in is **your own**

Maintaining independence and quality of life is key to ageing well.

Home Instead provides high quality, personalised care in your own home



Covering Wetherby and Leeds, please call our specialists on **01937 220510** or visit **www.homeinstead.co.uk/Wetherby**

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Leeds Older People's Forum:

0113 244 1697

LOPF can direct you to Neighbourhood Networks and older people's services in your area.

Leeds Coronavirus Hotline

0113 376 0330

For anyone unable to leave their home because of coronavirus, and worried because they don't have family or friends who can help.

Universal Credit Hotline:

0800 328 9559

Dementia Connect:

0333 150 3456

Alzheimer's Society's new personalised support service for people with dementia and their carers.

Covid-19 Bereavement Support Line:

0113 218 5544 or 0113 203 3369

For anyone who has a friend or family member who is seriously ill or who has died from Covid-19.

Leeds Directory:

0113 378 4610

Leeds City Council's Information Service that offers a range of local community care and support services and activities.

NHS:

111

For all non-urgent medical care

NHS number

119

This is the new number for Covid related calls -if you have Covid symptoms, want a test or are over 70 and not yet had your vaccine.

The Carers Advice Line for Leeds

0113 380 4300

If people are one of the 74,000 unpaid carers in Leeds and need some advice, help or support

100% Digital

0113 535 1170

Help with digital stuff or help to just get online

Leeds Gay Community (LGC):

Men's group. lgc@mesmac.co.uk

Sage:

sage@mesmac.co.uk

Group for 50+ year old LGBT+ people

Friends of Dorothy:

info@friendsofdorothy.org.uk

Group for 50+ year old LGBT+ people

Leeds LGBT+ Women's Space:

lgbtwomensspace@gmail.com

Group for LGBT+ women aged 40 years or older.

Silver Pride Social:

A new WhatsApp social 'chat' group with a fast-growing membership of 50+ year old LGBT+ people.

Quiz corner solutions

5	3	2	6	4	9	7	1	8
8	6	1	2	7	3	5	9	4
4	7	9	8	1	5	3	6	2
3	1	6	7	9	2	8	4	5
7	9	8	1	5	4	2	3	6
2	5	4	3	8	6	9	7	1
1	4	3	9	2	8	6	5	7
6	8	5	4	3	7	1	2	9
9	2	7	5	6	1	4	8	3

L	M	L	A	E	F	E	O	S	N	U	F	O
I	P	P	R	E	C	Q	V	M	T	A	S	Y
P	I	S	C	E	S	C	E	K	W	H	C	N
S	A	G	I	T	T	A	R	I	U	S	O	A
T	A	U	R	U	S	P	N	E	R	D	R	Q
G	E	M	I	N	I	R	V	Z	R	D	P	U
L	I	B	R	A	U	I	Y	I	O	F	I	A
O	R	K	V	I	U	C	A	S	R	I	O	R
L	F	V	M	D	E	O	E	J	P	G	U	I
E	C	A	N	C	E	R	N	A	N	E	O	U
O	S	Z	I	V	Q	N	A	R	I	E	S	S

Word wheel

- 4 Letters** ACER ACNE ACRE CANE CARE CAVE CERE CLAN LACE RACE
- 5 Letters** CARVE CLEAN CLEAR CRANE CRAVE CREEL LANCE NACRE
- 6 Letters** CAREEN CAVERN CEREAL CLEAVE CLEVER CRAVEN ENLACE LANCER
- 7 Letters** CLEANER CLEAVER ENCLAVE
- 9 Letters** RELEVANCE

Museum Quiz

- Cuthbert Brodrick
- Bengal Tiger
- 1941
- 12th
- Henry VIII
- British Museum
- Ramesses X
- Christopher Lee
- Silver Cross
- Leeds Art Gallery

Seek medical advice if you suspect diabetes.

If you, or someone in your family, have the following symptoms it may be a sign of diabetes. If left undiagnosed it could lead to a life-threatening emergency.

Lookout for the 4 Ts:

- Toilet - Going to the toilet a lot?
- Thirsty - Unable to quench your thirst?
- Tired - Feeling more tired than usual?
- Thinner - Losing weight?

Contact your GP practice, or NHS 111 if you recognise these signs. In an emergency – call 999.

**HELP US
HELP YOU**

MANAGE DIABETES