Writings

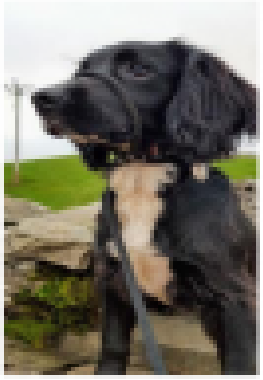
IF – a life in lockdown [with apologies to Kipling] If you can keep your distance while lots of othersGet too close and blame it all on you.If you can trust the science when others doubt itBut make allowance for their doubting too.If you can wait for the lockdown to be liftedAnd not be tired by waiting;And put up with the moaning and the angerAnd yet not moan yourself or join the baiting. If you can dream of one day getting through thisBut not make these dreams your master.If you can think of a brighter futureEven though it won't come any faster. If you can put up with scientists and politiciansAnd treat those two impostors just the same.If you can bear to hear the truth that's spokenBe twisted and distorted to inflame.Or watch everything be put on holdAnd not feel like giving up. If you can suffer through the lockdownAnd never breathe a word of how you feel.If you can force your heart and nerve and sinewTo keep you smiling even though you cannot heal.And so hold on when there is nothingExcept your will to drive you on. If you can keep on smilingEven though you're in despair.And though you miss your familyPretend that they are there. If you can fill the unforgiving minuteWith joy and not with fearAnd live your life in lockdownWithout a single tear. You're a better man than I am – Gungha Din!Les Chandler

Dear friends and family,

Marilyn and I thought it would be nice to keep in touch with you to ask how you're getting on and update you on what is happening here. Which, basically, is not a lot.Obviously, like all of you, our days are very different. Marilyn is still working but from home and the office is closed. A lot can be done by phone and email so she isn't bored.We are also both trying to provide as much support as we can to our community shop. With most of our volunteers being over 70 or having underlying health conditions (or both) and some people unwell the routine has had to change. On a positive note this has

attracted some new volunteers and it has also been possible to employ some youngsters whose university work is on hold. We are doing lots of deliveries now to people who can’t get out and so have reduced the hours open to the general public to reflect this.Bess, the dog, feels hard done by as her favourite walks at the woods and seaside are nolonger possible. As lambing is in full flow at present we are also having to be quite cautious with our walks closer to home. I think that you can see from the picture below that she is very stressed by this.Of course, for much of the week we have had stunning weather so have been able to getinto the garden. We have put in some new fruit bushes so I am hopeful for the future of my jam making. All I need is someone to sell it to! So watch out when this is all over those of you who are not far afield! I give the proceeds to church funds. Obviously there is no church at the moment and we have had to cancel our major fundraising activity which is the annual Street Fair which has been going for 40 years without interruption until now. Anyway, on the bright side, at least we won’t get soaking wet this year as we have for the last three!!It is very strange that everywhere is so quiet – no traffic on the A65 and, as a result, we have experienced some amazing bird song.I thought I’d end with something that have made me laugh this week. First of all, Eileen, a lovely friend of ours (I am sure that she won’t mind my saying that she is in her 9th decade) sent me details of her exercise routine:Last night I went upstairs to draw my curtains when I realised I had been invaded by a lot of flies. I should not have left my window wide open so late when a light was on on the staircase. I resorted to my fly spray and waited for it to work. Then I had to bend down 172 times to pick up dead flies to collect them into a jar. Well that was certainly my exercise for the day.Isn’t that brilliant!We hope you stay well and, if you are unlucky enough to be visited by COVID 19 we hope it quickly leaves you alone.With love,Sue and MarilynNewby News 1 Sue

Mann Hello, Bess here, I have decided that the time has come for me to assert myself in this household and publish some of my thoughts about the challenges for a dog in this period of lockdown. Most of this is going to consist of putting my version of some of the accusations levelled at me over the last few weeks. First of all, I need to address the issue of missing socks and items of underwear. I can only say that, if people do insist on leaving various items of clothing on the floor in their bedrooms or next to the washing machine, it’s just as well that someone in the house endeavours to do a bit of tidying up by putting them in a safe place like the flowerbeds. At least they came to light more quickly than the pair of knickers that someone (not me!) dropped behind the washing machine.Moving on to the slanderous implications about walks. I know that I can be a bit overenthusiastic- yesterday I chased a cat across the village green and ran full tilt into a closed gate (my dignity was slightly bruised). However, do these people realise how lucky they are to have me to pull them up that hill out of Newby – it is 1: 7 you know and it isn’t easy for me to have to drag quite a lot of weight up there (theirs not mine). As it is they put a great harness on me and, even worse, something which would have been seen as an instrument of torture in the past. They call it a halti – I call it a scold’s bridle. See below for the similarities:



I know that we have all had to make some sacrifices in lockdown but no one seems tounderstand that the loss of walks in the woods and at the seaside is a great sacrifice for a young dog like me and could, indeed, cause permanent damage to my mental health. What's more I hardly get to see any of my friends now – no kennels (because they are always here and not going away to give me a break from them), my friends aren't playing on the Green and when we do see other dogs when we're out we have to do something called 'social distancing' – give me a break, all I want to do is sniff their bottoms. And, finally, can anyone explain to me why, when we do go out on one of these pathetic walks, there should be any objection to my eating sheep's poo (which there is quite a lot of round here). A couple of nights ago I tried to bring some into the house to enjoy later – anyone would think I had pooed in a corner myself the fuss that was made. Anyway, that's probably enough from me just now – if you have any pets and they would like to send me a message in these difficult times tell them to get in touch. On second thoughts only dogs – not cats, rabbits, chickens, parrots or fish ! Can't be having with them and they don't seem to like me.Love to all,Bess

These are the marks I make on the kitchen floor when she's just washed it!P.S. I think they are going to do some decorating now. I'll just go and get my ears ready to help spread the pan around – once again not appreciated but I'll keep on trying……xxNewby News 6 Sue

Mann**Whoever Thought That in This Year**Whoever thought that in this yearWe’d see such sorrow and such fear?Science is looking for a cure,While we all must endureAbsence from those far and dear.I heard of a lady of SettleWho’d kept in very fine fettle.To hold Covid at bay,Guided by USA,She was laid low by Dr Trump’s Dettol.A hermit of long durationForsook Settle’s great conurbation.When folk called ‘Six feet!’If they happened to meet,He’d trump it with ‘Full isolation!’When Bojo’s advisor took flightFor Durham to lessen his plight,Cummings’s goings,His to-ings and fro-ingsWere simply to test his eyesight.Although not a technical type,I have learned to zoom and to skype.When lockdown is done,It’ll be twice the fun,But meantime just wash hands and wipe.Confinement gives folk time to think,Or it can turn a person to drink.I had a great notion,But took a libationAnd into oblivion did sink.But some will prove to be sage,Using wisely the stretch in their cage.When all this is over,We’ll be back in green cloverAnd enter a new golden age!So be strong and surely we’ll lick it.Tell doom-mongers where they can stick it!For all will be well,Glad tidings to tell,As the first ball is speared at the wicket.Ian Gray

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Lockdown Exhibition Lives Collide John Platten

Lockdown Exhibition Side by Side John Platten