



MASE Monthly Newsletter



Proud Recipients of Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

May 2020



Origins of May Day - May Day has its roots in astronomy. We are (about) halfway between the spring equinox and the summer solstice! It's one of the Celtic cross-quarter days, which celebrated the midway points between all solstices and equinoxes of the year.

As with many early holidays, May Day was rooted in agriculture. Springtime celebrations filled with dance and song hailed the sown fields starting to sprout. Cattle were driven to pasture, special bonfires were lit, and both doors of houses and livestock were decorated with yellow May flowers.

Later, celebrations evolved to speak more to the "bringing in the May" with the gathering of wildflowers and green branches, the weaving of floral garlands, the crowning of a May King and Queen, and the setting up of a decorated May tree, or Maypole, around which people danced. Such rites originally may have been intended to ensure fertility for crops and, by extension, for livestock and humans, but in most cases this significance was gradually lost, so that the practices survived largely as popular festivities.

When Is May Day? May Day occurs annually is **always** held on May 1st.

Wrapping a Maypole with colourful ribbons might be the most known tradition that still exists in some schools and towns. Originally, the Maypole was a living tree brought in from the woods with much merrymaking. Ancient Celts danced around the tree, praying for good crops and fertility. For younger people, there was the possibility of courtship. If paired by sundown, the courtship continued so that the couple could get to know each other and married 6 weeks later on June's Midsummer's Day. This is how the "June Wedding" became a tradition. People would crown a "**May Queen**" for the day's festivities.



However, the Maypole dance became a common rite of spring at colleges from the late 19th century through the 1950s. Seen as a wholesome tradition, this celebration often included class plays, Scottish dancing, Morris dancing, concerts, and various cultural dancing and music displays.

Keep Talking to each other - stay strong - stay positive

We have heard a little rumour.
We don't know if it is true.
That the world is going to be at
peace,
For at least a month or two.
We know that folk must stay at home,
And spend their time with kin.
Slow down, relax and take a breath,
And find some peace within.
And though we may be worried,
About money, jobs and bills.
We will notice beauty everywhere,
Blue skies, fresh lakes, green hills.
And when a month or two is over,
People will go back to normal life,
and be so very grateful if their loved
ones have survived.

It is so difficult to know what to put into our monthly newsletter for you all. There are no words of wisdom we can offer, other than to let you know we are thinking of you all and are fully aware of the very difficult times you are going through.

We wish we had a magic wand which would put everything back to normal, but unfortunately we are unable to offer that to you. We have to trust in the Government and pray that they are doing the right thing for us all.

In all honesty everyone's patience has been tested to the limit, and it is difficult to know who to believe. The one thing that keeps us as Trustees going is the fact we know that when the 'all clear' is given, we will definitely be restarting the Groups, and the friendship and camaraderie of the MASE will begin again. We are trying to keep in touch with as many people as possible during these troubled times - however you all know that you can always telephone us to have a chat. Let's keep our fingers crossed that the good weather will return, and the day will come when we are told it is safe to go out again. In the meantime we send good wishes to each and every one of you. Please go steady, take care of yourselves, be patient and most important of all be kind to each other.

MASE Trustees: Daphne or Richard Sharp ☎01785 211140 or 07939 505455 Michael Creek ☎01785 663596

Alzheimer's Society Dementia Helpline 0300 222 1122 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday and Saturday and Sunday 10am - 4pm.

Some useful tips for lockdown

Coronavirus: stay at home

Remember only leave your home if it's essential. This will help stop the spread of coronavirus.

Looking after someone with dementia

Caring for someone with dementia can be challenging and stressful. But with the right support, it can be rewarding and often satisfying.

Helping someone with everyday tasks

Sometimes as symptoms get worse, the person may feel anxious, stressed and scared at not being able to remember things, follow conversations or concentrate.

It's important to support the person to maintain skills, abilities and an active social life. This can also help how they feel about themselves.

How you can help

Let the person help with everyday tasks, such as:

Laying the table - Gardening - Taking the dog for a walk

Memory aids used around the home can help the person remember where things are. For example, you could put labels and signs on cupboards, drawers and doors.

As dementia affects the way a person communicates, you'll probably find you have to change the way you talk to and listen to the person you care for.

Help with eating and drinking

Eating a healthy, well-balanced diet is an important part of a healthy lifestyle for everyone.

People with dementia may not drink enough because they don't realise they're thirsty.

This puts them at risk of urinary tract infections (UTIs) - and can also cause constipation or headaches

These can lead to increased confusion and make the symptoms of dementia worse.

Common food-related problems include:

Not recognising foods - Forgetting what food and drink they like - Refusing or spitting out food.

These behaviours can be due to a range of reasons, such as confusion, pain in the mouth caused by sore gums or ill-fitting dentures, or difficulty swallowing.

Looking after yourself

Caring for a partner, relative or close friend with dementia is demanding and can be stressful.

It's important to remember that your needs as a carer are as important as the person you're caring for.

Do not be afraid to ask for help

- Alzheimer's Society's National Dementia Helpline on 0300 222 1122
- Age UK's Advice Line on 0800 055 6112 (free)
- Independent Age on 0800 319 6789 (free)
- Dementia UK Admiral Nurse Dementia helpline on 0800 888 6678 (free)
- Carers Direct helpline on 0300 123 1053 (free)
- Carers UK on 0800 808 7777 (free)
- The Silver Line is a wonderful befriending service to combat loneliness. It is a helpline for older people - if you call this number 0800 4 70 80 90 they will explain how the system works.



Try and talk to other Carers

Carers often find it difficult to talk about the stress involved with caring. If you feel like you're not managing, don't feel guilty, another Carer will probably have some of the answers you are looking for.

Sharing your experiences with other carers can be a great support as they understand what you're going through. You can also share tips and advice.

If you have a computer please take a look at our website which covers all MASE activities: www.themasegroup.org

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