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JUNE 2022
Issue 62

Monthly Business & Community magazine delivered in & around Chester

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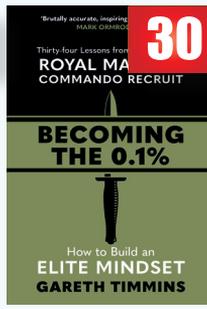
WHAT'S IN THIS MONTHS LOVE CHESTER MAGAZINE



10



16



30



34



36

This month in history

Chester Zoo news

Book Review by John Morris

Puzzle page

Chester Rambling Club

Love Chester The Local Magazine for Businesses in and around Cheshire.

Do You Know?	8
Community page - Dementia care	9
This month in history	10-11
Recruitment - Autism Together	12
Charity page - Big Sunflower project	14
What's happening at Our Zoo	16-17
Community page - NHS	18
What's On	19
Community page - PCC	24
Book review by John Morris	30-31
Charity page - The Joshua Tree	32
Puzzle Corner	34
Charity page - Sicily Oak Gallery Exhibition	35
Chester Rambling & Hill Walking Club	36-37
Community - Poem by John Fowler	38
What's On - Music	39

Cover Photo: Grovesnor Park



Dear Friends,

May we wish our Queen a wonderful Platinum Jubilee on the 2nd of June and I am sure most of us will be enjoying a lovely long Bank Holiday weekend to mark such a

momentous occasion!

In this month's issue you will find some interesting facts about Queen Elizabeth II, some you may know but some you won't!

Please let us know what is going on in your community or chosen charity this summer, we can help promote it on our community, charity or what's on pages.

If you are in business and want to attract new customers, why not advertise with us and/or in our Love Wirral or Love Wrexham magazines, we offer affordable advertising in our popular magazines - contact details are on our front page.

All our magazines are available online - as well as the answers to our puzzle page :o)

Best Wishes

Maxine & Mike

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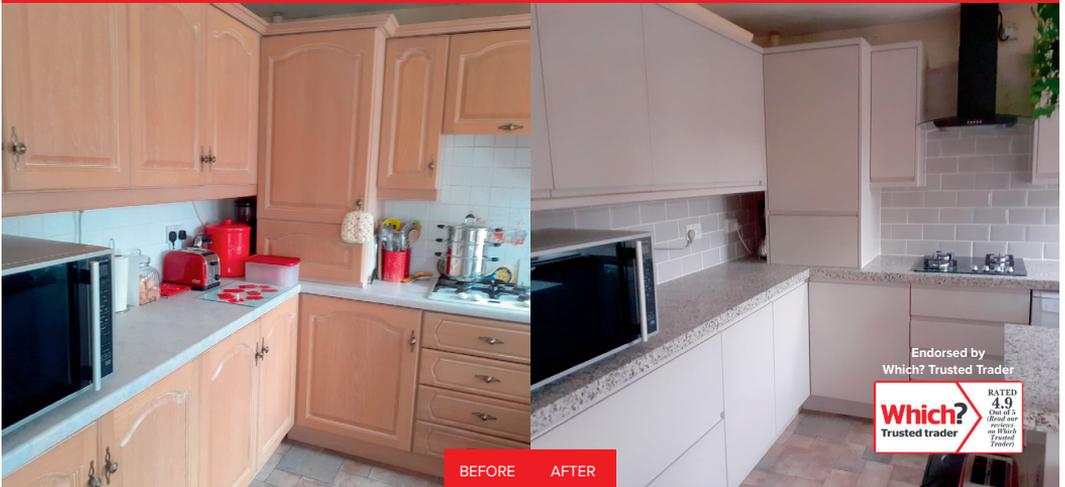


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DO YOU KNOW?

Some interesting facts about our Queen



1. Queen Elizabeth II is the longest reigning monarch ever in Britain. Beating even Queen Victoria (her great-great-grandma!). She is also the longest-lived sovereign that Britain has ever had.
2. As Queen, she has been served by 14 UK Prime Ministers, including Winston Churchill, Margaret Thatcher and more recently, Boris Johnson.
3. Her favourite dogs are corgis. She even invented a new breed of dog when her corgi mated with a dachshund belonging to her sister, Princess Margaret, creating the “dorgi”.
4. She’s the only person in the UK allowed to drive without a licence.
5. The Queen has two birthdays. Her actual birthday – 21 April – and her official birthday, which is held on a Saturday in June – when the weather’s better!
6. The Queen first sent an email in 1976... and published her first Instagram post in 2019!
7. She has many hobbies. Including horse riding, pigeon racing, and football.
8. Queen Elizabeth became a homeowner at just six years old. When the people of Wales gifted her a house in the grounds of Windsor’s Royal Lodge. Named Y Bwthyn Bach, it means “little cottage”.
9. The Queen has sent around 50,000 Christmas cards – and counting!
10. She owns an elephant, two giant turtles, a jaguar and a pair of sloths. Presents from other countries, all of which live in London Zoo.
11. Even the monarch can go undercover sometimes. On a recent low-key trip to Scotland, she met some American tourists while walking. When the tourists asked if she lived locally, she mentioned that she had a house nearby, and when asked if she’d ever met the Queen she simply pointed at her security and said, “No, but he has!”
12. The Queen has 6 royal residences where she normally (pre covid 19) spends most of her time: Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle, Balmoral Castle, Sandringham House, Hollyrod Palace and Hillsborough Castle.
13. There have been seven Roman Catholic popes during the Queen’s reign: Pius XII, John XXIII, Paul VI, John Paul I, John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis.
14. It is estimated that the Queen has worn in excess of 5,000 hats (and counting) during her reign.
15. The Queen does not have a passport - because all passports are issued “in the name of Her Majesty”, which means she would be issuing one to herself. All other members of the Royal Family require one.
16. Despite not having a passport, Elizabeth II is perhaps the most widely travelled head of state in history, having visited at least 116 countries to date, many as part of duties as head of the Commonwealth.
17. The Queen has a keen interest in horse riding, and breeding racehorses in particular. The hundreds she has owned over the decades are believed to have claimed more than 1,600 racing wins.
18. The Queen’s estimated lifetime winnings from horseracing is in the millions.
19. The Queen has a long-held fondness for corgis, established in her youth. She has owned more than 30 during her reign; her first was Susan, who was given to her as a present on her 18th birthday.
20. Elizabeth II has already passed a number of regnal milestones: her Silver Jubilee (25 years) in 1977, her Ruby Jubilee (40 years) in 1992, her Golden Jubilee (50 years) in 2002, her Diamond Jubilee (60 years) in 2012 and, most recently her Sapphire Jubilee (65 years) in 2017. The Sapphire Jubilee was a first for any British monarch; Queen Victoria only reached her Golden Jubilee.





Dementia care experts meet in Hooton

A group of dementia care experts met in Hooton, Cheshire, during May, as part of Dementia Action Week to share knowledge and look at ways of improving the service for patients.

A dozen Admiral nurses and memory assessment nurses from across Wirral and Cheshire attended the event, held at the Meeting Centre in Waterworks Lane in Hooton.

It was the first of a series of biannual meetings organised by Dementia Resource Community.

Guest speakers included dementia expert Dr Alison Ward from the University of Northampton, Consultant Admiral Nurse Rachel Thompson an expert in Lewy Body Dementia, Dr Karen Harrison-Dening, Head of Research and Publications for Dementia UK and RMN Senior Admiral Nurse Anne Calvert.

The event was organised by Admiral Nurse Cathrina Moore, who founded Dementia Resource Community, a non-profit subsidiary of Chapel House Care in Puddington, to improve life for dementia patients in Wirral and Cheshire.

The Chapel House DRC works with Dementia UK to provide Admiral Nurses to a number of key partner organisations in Wirral and Cheshire.

Admiral Nurses are registered nurses with significant experience of working with people with dementia. They help people with dementia to stay at home for longer as well as working in other care settings, including care homes.

Cathrina said: “The aim of Dementia Resource Community is to make a difference to those living with a dementia diagnosis and to provide the practical advice that families need.

“This was the first time we have been able to meet and I was delighted that so many dementia experts from across the country came to our inaugural meeting.

“As well as sharing excellence and improving knowledge, it was a chance to look at what’s new in dementia care provision and discuss our ideas for how the service could be developed.”

SIXTH MONTHS HISTORY

This feature each month will give interesting facts from years gone by. See what you remember that happened in your lifetime.

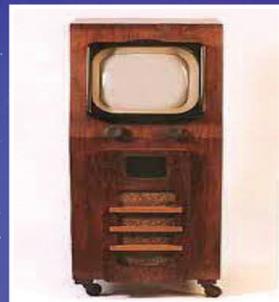
THIS DAY IN HISTORY FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE

1st June 1946

The television licence was introduced to coincide with the post-war resumption of the BBC service the same month.

Television licences always included a licence to receive radio broadcasts until 1971.

The cost was £2 (in old money)



2nd June 1953

On a cold and wet day in London, the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II took place in Westminster Abbey.

Elizabeth II acceded to the throne at the age of 25 upon the death of her father, George VI, on 6 February 1952, being proclaimed Queen by her privy and executive councils shortly afterwards.

The coronation was held more than one year later because of the tradition of allowing an appropriate length of time to pass after a monarch dies before holding such festivals. It also gave the planning committees adequate time to make preparations for the ceremony.

During the service, Elizabeth took an oath, was anointed with holy oil, was invested with robes and regalia, and was crowned Queen of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Pakistan, and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka).



Celebrations took place across the Commonwealth realms and a commemorative medal was issued. It has been the only British coronation to be fully televised; television cameras had not been allowed inside the abbey during her parents' coronation in 1937. Elizabeth's was the fourth and last British coronation of the 20th century.

12th June 1987

President Ronald Reagan stood just 100 yards away from the concrete barrier dividing East and West Berlin and uttered some of the most unforgettable words of his presidency: “Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall.”

By the time Reagan traveled to Berlin, Germany, to commemorate the 750th anniversary of the city’s founding, the Berlin Wall had divided the city in half for nearly 26 years.

Built, and officially closed on August 12, 1961, to prevent disaffected East Germans from fleeing the relative deprivations of life in their country for greater freedom and opportunity in the West, the wall was more than just a physical barrier. It also stood as a vivid symbol of the battle between communism and democracy that divided Berlin, Germany and the entire European continent during the Cold War.



30th June 1937

From 1927 the recommended way of contacting the emergency services was to dial 0 for the switchboard and ask for the relevant emergency service operator. However, there was no way of the operator knowing which incoming calls to prioritise and the switchboard was often jammed with calls making it difficult to alert anyone.



In mid 1937 the system we still use today came into place and is the worlds first emergency services number. The decision to launch such a service was made after five women died in a London Fire (Wimpole Street) in 1935 in which callers trying to contact the fire brigade found themselves kept in queues by the telephone exchange. This prompted the government to consider how emergency calls could be identified by telephone operators.

The system was created by the General Post Office who at that time ran the telephone network. They proposed a three digit number that when dialled would trigger a loud buzzer and flashing light to go off at the telephone exchange centre alerting operators to incoming emergency calls and enabling them to divert their attention.

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OUR ZOO

What's
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First twin red-bellied lemurs born



Seeing double! Twin red-bellied lemurs have been born at Chester Zoo

Adorable twin red-bellied lemurs – a species listed as vulnerable to extinction – have been born at Chester Zoo.

Zookeepers spotted the fluffy duo nestled in mum Aina's (4) thick fur just moments after their birth.

The tiny primates currently weigh just 70 grams each and will spend the first few months of life clinging to mum and riding around on her back, before gaining in confidence to branch off and explore on their own.

Red-bellied lemurs are one of the world's rarest primates with their numbers having declined by more than 30% in recent years.

An international conservation-breeding programme involving some of the world's leading zoos is now playing a vital role in the efforts to secure the species' future.

The world's authority on the state of nature, The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), lists red-bellied lemurs as Vulnerable and as a result, face a high risk of extinction in the wild.

Jessamine Smith, Primate Keeper at Chester Zoo, said:

"The birth of any red-bellied lemur is always a real boost for the conservation breeding programme, but to have twins born for the very first time at the zoo is incredibly special.

"Red-bellied lemurs are one of the few lemur species that form a monogamous couple, meaning that they pair up for life and live in a small family troop of mum, dad and their offspring. So far mum Aina and dad Frej are both doing a wonderful



To save Chester Zoo head to: www.chesterzoo.org/saveourzoo

of job of caring for their new babies – they can often be seen snuggled up in mum’s fur and clinging tightly to her as she leaps from tree to tree.

“At the moment they’re absolutely tiny, but they develop really quickly and within a few months will be off exploring by themselves.”



Scientists report that Madagascar, the world’s most biodiverse island with wildlife that cannot be found anywhere else on the planet, has already lost up to 90% of its forests - leaving many species on the brink of extinction. Large-scale habitat loss across Madagascar continues to be the biggest factor in the demise of thousands of species, including the red-bellied lemur.

Lemurs are also hunted for food and persecuted for their occasional raids on crops, as well as being captured for the illegal wildlife trade.

Mark Brayshaw, Curator of Mammals at the zoo, added:

“Red-bellied lemurs are sadly undergoing a sharp decline in Madagascar meaning the safety net population found in leading zoos around the world is becoming ever more important. The arrival of these two new babies will help us continue to play a vital role in ensuring the species has a future.

“In tandem with this key international conservation breeding programme, our experts are also working in Madagascar alongside our field partners Madagasikara Voakajy. The teams are fighting to protect the remaining forests; home to thousands of species that cannot be found anywhere else on the planet. As part of this we’ve also been actively engaging with local communities and schools to educate younger generations about the importance of wildlife and healthy forest ecosystems - providing a much brighter future for the world’s most biodiverse island.”

In 2015, the Malagasy government established The Mangabe New Protected Area, co-managed by the zoo’s field partner Madagasikara Voakajy and the communities that live in the Mangabe region, providing a safe haven for nine species of lemur, as well as hundreds of other endangered species.





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Community of practice projects shine for mental health awareness week

During mental health awareness week, local NHS Trust, Cheshire and Wirral Partnership (CWP) were raising awareness of the importance of good mental health and reaching out when you need support.

As part of the NHS Long Term Plan commitment to improving community mental health services, the NHS has joined together with Social Care, and the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sectors in Cheshire and Wirral to form the Community Wellbeing Alliance.

One of the top priorities for the Alliance is improving access to wider practical support in the community to tackle issues which contribute to poor mental health including loneliness, support with welfare issues and improving physical health and fitness.

CWP medical director, Dr Anushta Sivananthan, said: "For most people with severe mental illness, the diagnosed problem isn't all they need or want help with. People need mental health services that go beyond symptoms and illnesses, that sees the person rather than the diagnosis; and that everyone works together to promote wellbeing."

"Through the Alliance, I'm delighted that we've been able to fund 15 additional community projects across Cheshire and Wirral to really get the root of some of the issues that contribute to poor mental health, including loneliness. Loneliness, which is the theme for this year's mental health awareness week, impacts millions of people in the UK. Research has found loneliness has sadly increased due to the COVID pandemic."

In Cheshire, one of the projects is being run by local third sector organisation, Bridge Community Wellness gardens in Ellesmere Port. 'Growing Better Lives', aims to recruit a number of people into work placements in both the gardens and the café, providing an opportunity for personal development and skills and confidence building.

Clair Johnson, general manager, Bridge community farms said: "At Bridge Wellness gardens we encourage outdoor therapies and alternative therapies for dealing with mental health issues. Outdoor activity in a safe, friendly, family environment is so beneficial. Our holistic approach to mental health has proven to be successful. Mediation, mindfulness, relaxation along with breathing exercises help to calm moods, lift spirits and teach coping mechanisms.

Another one of the projects in Macclesfield is being run by Reach Out and Recover (ROAR) who have already seen a vast improvement in people's mental health and social connection through their work. They work with groups and individuals to help them connect with others to build a sense of self-worth and share positive experiences.

Dr Sivananthan continues: "The Cheshire and Wirral Community Wellbeing Alliance is committed to widening access to mental health support. Early intervention is just as important for mental health as it is for physical health conditions, so please reach out if you or a loved one are struggling.

"If your mental health has quickly gets worse, this can be called a mental health crisis. Our urgent mental health helpline is open 24 hours, 7 days a week and is open to people of all ages – including children and young people. Please call 0800 145 6485 and our dedicated local staff will support you to access the help you need."



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Friday 17 **70s Disco Inferno**
Saturday 18 **80s Mania**

Friday 24 **The Stars From
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Saturday 25 **Absolute
Noughties**

July

Friday 1 **ABBA Reunion**
Saturday 2 **The Kopycat
Killers + Subarctic Monkeys**

Friday 8 **Mercury,
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Saturday 9 **Club Classics**

Friday 15 **80s Mania**
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Monster Rock Anthems

Friday 22 **Ultimate Party**
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John Dwyer
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Commissioner wants to hear victims' voices

Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire, John Dwyer, is calling on people who have been victims of crime to fill in his 'Cheshire Victims Voice' survey. The feedback will be used to shape the services that are provided to victims.

The survey is open all year round and you can complete it at: www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/cheshirevictimsvoicesurvey

One of the Commissioner's key responsibilities is to commission and fund support services for victims across Cheshire. People who have been a victim of crime within the last three years are being encouraged to fill in the survey, regardless of whether they reported the crime to the police.

Knowing which services people accessed and getting feedback about people's experiences will enable the Commissioner and the police to improve the support provided to victims going forward.

John Dwyer, Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire said:

"One of the key priorities in my Police and Crime Plan is to deliver justice for victims of crime, and to do that effectively I need to know where the current system is working and where it needs to be improved.

"If you've been a victim of crime in the past three years then please do take a few minutes to let me have your views. It's only by gathering as many experiences as possible that we can ensure an ever-improving service for victims in Cheshire."

As well as asking about victims' experiences with current services, the survey also asks about what services should be available to victims in future.

There are three main victim support services currently commissioned in Cheshire:

Cheshire CARES (Cope and Recovery Enhanced Service) was set up by John Dwyer in his first term as Commissioner to support victims and can be accessed by anyone in Cheshire. Remedi provides Restorative Justice services, bringing victims and perpetrators together to mediate and repair the harm caused by crime. Remedi also provides victim support services for people affected by hate crime in Cheshire.

RASASC (Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre) provides support for victims of sexual assault, rape and sexual abuse through specialist counselling.

The Commissioner also operates a Victims Hub on his website, which includes an A-Z of support services and organisations for victims of various crimes.

To find out more about victim services funded by the Commissioner and to access the Victims Hub, go to:



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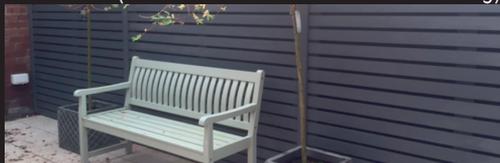
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Book review:

Becoming the 0.1%: Thirty four lessons from the diary of a Royal Marines Commando Recruit

by Gareth Timmins

Published by Hodder & Stoughton

Gaining Personal Confidence to Realise Your End Goal

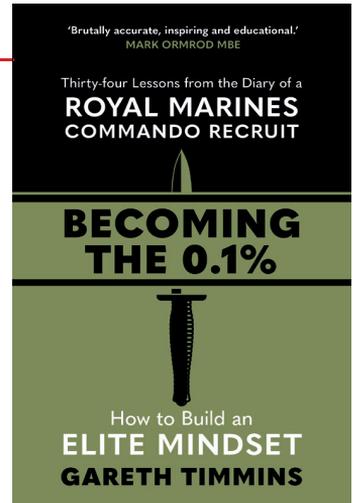
During the period of the pandemic many individuals suffered from social isolation, change in work routines, mental stress and physical illnesses. In recent months, stress for many has increased with the impact of the war in Ukraine, increases in cost of living, in particular costs of electricity, gas, fuel, housing, food, etc. It is these events and others which “trigger” anxiety, emotional uncertainty, stress and in some cases depression and mental illness.

Developing the skills and determination to re-jig our lives to build a “positive mindset and mental toughness” to tackle setbacks, obstacles and possible failure is not an easy task. In an outstanding, motivational, insightful, challenging yet, “down to earth” book, **“Becoming the 0.01”**, Gareth Timmins details in depth his journey using exhilarating and at times nerve jangling experiences to promote greater insight and awareness of a range of “hurdles”, physical, emotional and psychological. Developing a “growth mindset” and energy to face the range of challenges in life there are skills we can develop. **The author skilfully engages the reader in addressing the key issue of why some people develop the strength, perseverance and resilience to “keep going” whilst others “give up” and fail to achieve their “goal”.** He links his training experiences to a range of “lessons” detailing strategies to build the “elite mindset” necessary to cultivate “peak performance”, to face the challenge in the advert to earn the ‘Green Beret’ as a Royal Marine Commando.

“99.09 % need not apply”. Hence the title for the book, “Becoming the 0.1%”.

In an interesting introduction Gareth Timmins unravels his desire and determination to face the challenge of the Marines training. **He details how the book was based on a diary presented to him by his mother before he began the training with the words, “ write things down, anything. I want to read what you’ve been doing, and when times get hard”.**

He gives the reader an insight into his “personal drivers” with an analysis of himself as a “young man”. Readers may reflect on his struggles at school, his sporting achievements and physical fitness, a negative attitude of seeking conflict, excessive alcohol linked to behavioural issues. The difficulties he faced from “coaches” are highlighted by his comments that the rugby coach at Hunslet was too harsh, in particular singling out players for a “good roasting” and the criticism and lack of belief in his performances in rugby by his father. Readers may well reflect on these comments, particularly those who follow the SAS type training programmes on the TV, which are frequently brutal and demeaning, highlighted by verbal abuse from trainers which is “in your face confrontational, obscene and relentless”. **The author reveals that despite “issues”, he had a nagging “urge to get better”.**



It is the key issues of desire, determination, resilience and tenacity to “make a difference” in his life which are the focus of the text, which is overflowing with details of the physical and mental demands of the training. The structure to maintain the interest of readers with “key points” at the end of each chapter for reflection to build on “skills” is a plus. Readers will gain personal strength and confidence with awe inspiring sections on promoting higher levels of mental resilience, adapting to change as a “gateway to broadening horizons to thrive”. **He points to many facets of behaviour which impact upon individuals at all levels, for instance the fallacy of “judging a book by its cover” linked to snap decisions which may lack accuracy.**

The section on staying motivated, selecting your support network to stay positive and overcome fear and links to previous failure are crucial to opening appropriate “doors of opportunity”. **A key to success is valuing your “end goal” or destination, by “visualisation of the benefits of achievement”** by eradicating bad habits, complacency and lack of desire. The author emphasises that **achieving success involves self imposed sacrifices, dedication, tenacity and at times “real grit”**

Reaching “your goal” involves being ruthless, making sacrifices and prioritisation in terms of utilisation of time and activities. His description of “Making Effective Decisions” in order to mitigate dilemmas develop perseverance to venture outside of your comfort zone and view “failure as a process of learning” is relevant within all walks of life.

The positive aspects of the training and issues discussed in the book are the realisation that promoting the “unexplored boundaries and imposed frontiers” of your mind and extending your capabilities are possible by “re-defining your limits”. **For those individuals who are starting new work pathways or venturing away from home to work or study for the first time it is important to “surround yourself with the right people”.** This choice of “friends” is crucial in terms of support, trust, direction and, in the long term, how successful you will become. You need to cut away the ones with “questionable integrity”, false motives and are bad influences in terms of “choices of action”. The important feature to take from this text is how to stay determined, resilient, confident in your ability, adaptive and tenacious to “realise your end goal”.

This is a brilliant practical analysis of strategies and skills to promote personal experiences within a “growth mindset”. The analysis of the dedication, tenacity and other skills developed by Gareth Timmins in becoming a member of the 0.1% Green Berets indicate that we can all re-define our boundaries of achievement. I am certain that Gareth made his Mum feel very proud that he completed the diary, she “gave him”, so successfully.

About the reviewer

John T Morris BA(Hons),MEd,MPhil,DipPsych,CertEd.

John taught physical education in Ladbroke Grove and was fitness coach at the Middle Row Boxing Club. After moving to Wrexham he was headteacher of three specialist centres for young people, fitness and weight training coach in Queens Park, fitness coach at Wrexham RFC and the WRU, Ofsted inspector and consultant adviser in schools and colleges across Wales and England. His research at Lancaster University was on developing growth mindsets to raise performance levels. John currently works with individuals and teams to develop growth mindsets, including resilience, tenacity, drive, determination and team skills.



THE JOSHUA TREE

SUPPORTING FAMILIES AFFECTED
BY CHILDHOOD CANCERS

Summer Styling in aid of The Joshua Tree Children's Cancer Charity

Cheshire based children's cancer charity, The Joshua Tree, hosted an evening of summer styling at the new purpose-built support centre in Sandiway on Thursday 28th April. The successful event attracted 40 ladies who dined on cocktails and canapes while entertained by **Abi Fisher Boutique** and **Running Bear Sports Fashion**.



*Minna Scaiffe, Anita Mitchell,
Alex Walzak, Bianca Latham*



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*Wendy Baines, Rachel
Ryder, Jen Sinclair*

Independent fashion boutique, Abi Fisher, housed in a barn conversion in the heart of the Cheshire countryside, showcased the latest handpicked summer collection, creating truly unique looks with classic statement pieces. "We were absolutely delighted to be involved in such a rewarding and enjoyable event organised by The Joshua Tree, who do an amazing job working closely with families affected by childhood cancers. The new Support Centre was a stunning setting to showcase our Spring/Summer 2022 collection and provided an excellent area for the fashion show. It was great to see people coming together and having such a great time whilst raising money for such an excellent cause" commented Abi Fisher, from Abi Fisher Ltd.

The evening raised approx. £1500 to benefit the The Joshua Tree in continuing to help families affected by childhood cancers. The funds raised will help deliver over 30 family support sessions providing emotional, practical and psychological support.



Pippa Watson-Peck, Communications and Fundraising Manager for The Joshua Tree, said: "As a small, independent charity working across the North West and North Wales, we simply couldn't provide the service to the families who are affected by childhood cancers without the support from the local community and our corporate sponsor for the event **Cobalt Wealth** based in Knutsford. We are excited to be running a more events this year with an upcoming Golf Day, 100 Cheshire countryside cycle ride and a Ladies Lunch."



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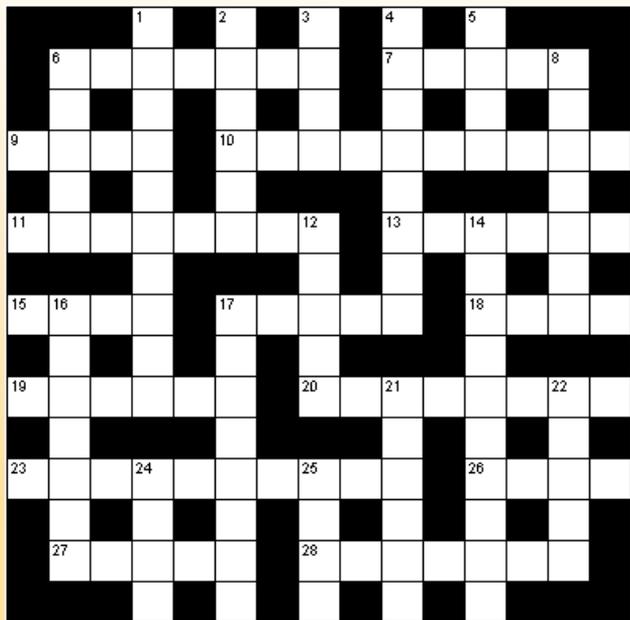
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PUZZLE CORNER



Down

- 1 Believer (10)
- 2 Marksman (6)
- 3 Lazily (4)
- 4 Amassed (8)
- 5 A midwestern state (4)
- 6 Nimble (5)
- 8 Fairies (7)
- 12 Precise (5)
- 14 Recognized (10)
- 16 Dancing (slang) (7)
- 17 Three-masted sailing ships (8)
- 21 Tuft of loose cords (6)
- 22 Sea eagles (5)
- 24 Let fall to the ground (4)
- 25 Pop (4)

Across

- 6 Clothed in finery (7)
- 7 Affirms (5)
- 9 Holes (4)
- 10 Study of mental disorders (10)
- 11 Ancestry (8)
- 13 Responds (6)
- 15 Lash (4)
- 17 Impressive in scale (5)
- 18 Point where 2 curves meet (4)
- 19 Light brownish color (6)
- 20 Giggled (8)
- 23 Benevolences (10)
- 26 Hotels (4)
- 27 Fully developed (5)
- 28 People watching their calories (7)

Sudoku Puzzle

How to play:

The numbers 1 through 9 will appear once only in each row, column, and 3x3 zone. There are 9 such zones in each sudoku grid.

There is only one correct solution to each sudoku. Good luck!

Difficulty level: Medium.

Solutions can be found on our website

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



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Also ceramics by Antonia Thompson, Melanie Legg and Laurence Simon.

Our charity this year is The Disaster Emergency Committee
Supporting Ukraine.





The hills are alive

One recent Sunday saw 18 members of Chester Rambling and Hill Walking Club booted up and ready to tackle a 9 mile B-grade walk in the hills surrounding Llandrillo, near Corwen. The previous few days had been bright, dry and sunny, but the forecast promised a disappointing medley of cloud and drizzly showers for this corner of North Wales. As it turned out, the only rain we saw was a few minutes' worth just before lunch. However, with the sun's hat pulled down firmly over his face all day, the promised views of the distant Arenigs and Clwydian Hills only materialised in the afternoon once the low clouds had lifted. Spirits, on the other hand, were sky high and we all thoroughly enjoyed this lovely hike in the company of our fellow ramblers.

We don't walk this area too often and these footpaths on the westernmost edge of the Berwyns were unfamiliar to many of us. We started by heading south out of Llandrillo above the Pennant Valley, at the bottom of which flows one of the River Dee's tributaries, the Afon Ceidiog, In order to create a circular route, our leaders then took us west across moorland, through woods and along lush green hillsides alive with bleating lambs and their placid mums. Passing just below the summit of Moel Heulog, we reached Bryn Meredydd farm with its nearby radio mast. At this point we switched direction to bear east, passing through forested land at Coed Ty'n-y-fron. Once out of the trees, a few minutes' break enabled us to savour the view of the River Dee as it meandered along the valley floor below us. From here, we began our slow descent back towards Llandrillo, where refreshing drinks outside the village pub topped off a superb day's walking.

Our Club walks usually use footpaths away from hotspots, though very occasionally you may spot us on Moel Famau or passing through Loggerheads Country Park! Although we're a sociable group, we prefer less populated routes, those which offer not just gorgeous views, but peaceful surroundings too. Often when we're out with Club members we see very few folk, and on that day at Llandrillo no other walkers were spotted at all, just scores of sheep and cows - and a couple of llamas!

At this time of year, the hedgerows and woodlands are at their most attractive, with wild garlic, bluebells and other spring flowers in full bloom. It's delightful to be out and about in the local hills, appreciating all the colours that nature has to offer.

As I write, preparations are well under way for those of us attending our annual summer camp. Yours truly has a crate of tins and packets all set for gourmet dinners served *al fresco* (or under canvas if the weather puts a spanner in the works!) Our tent, plus all the paraphernalia necessary for a week in a Pembrokeshire field, is more or less ready to stuff into the boot of the car. With 5 days' worth of hikes planned, including coastal walks and a venture inland to trek the Preseli Hills, we can't wait to get going!

If you share our love of the great outdoors and fancy discovering new hiking routes in North Wales, Cheshire and beyond, joining Chester Rambling and Hill Walking Club could be for you. We are a very friendly group who are always ready to welcome new members. In summer we offer 3 grades of walks most Sundays: C's can be up to around 1,000ft of ascent, B's up to 2,000ft, and A grade walks tackle the higher peaks, often in Snowdonia. We are also out every other Wednesday for a hike of 8 - 9 miles, and shorter Tuesday evening walks take place from May till August. Weekends away, summer camps and coach trips enable us to tackle footpaths, fells and forests further afield. Then, once autumn comes, our social calendar kicks off!

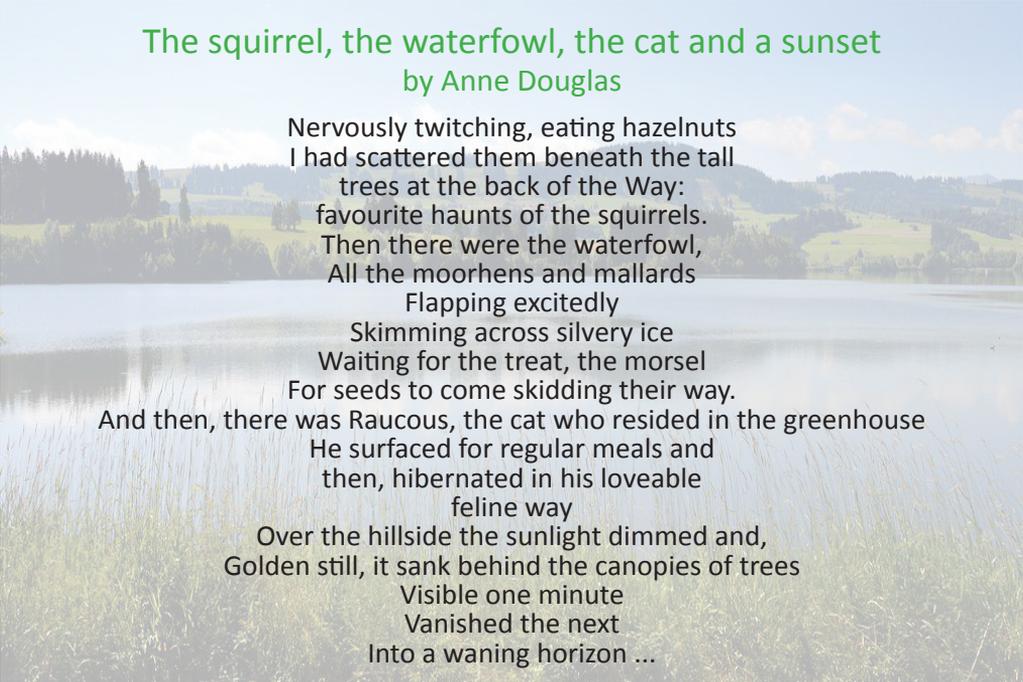
To find out more about Chester Rambling & Hill Walking Club, head over to our website: www.chesterwalkingclub.com Joining details can also be obtained by emailing chesramclub@yahoo.com

Maria Owen, Press Officer, Chester Rambling and Hill Walking Club



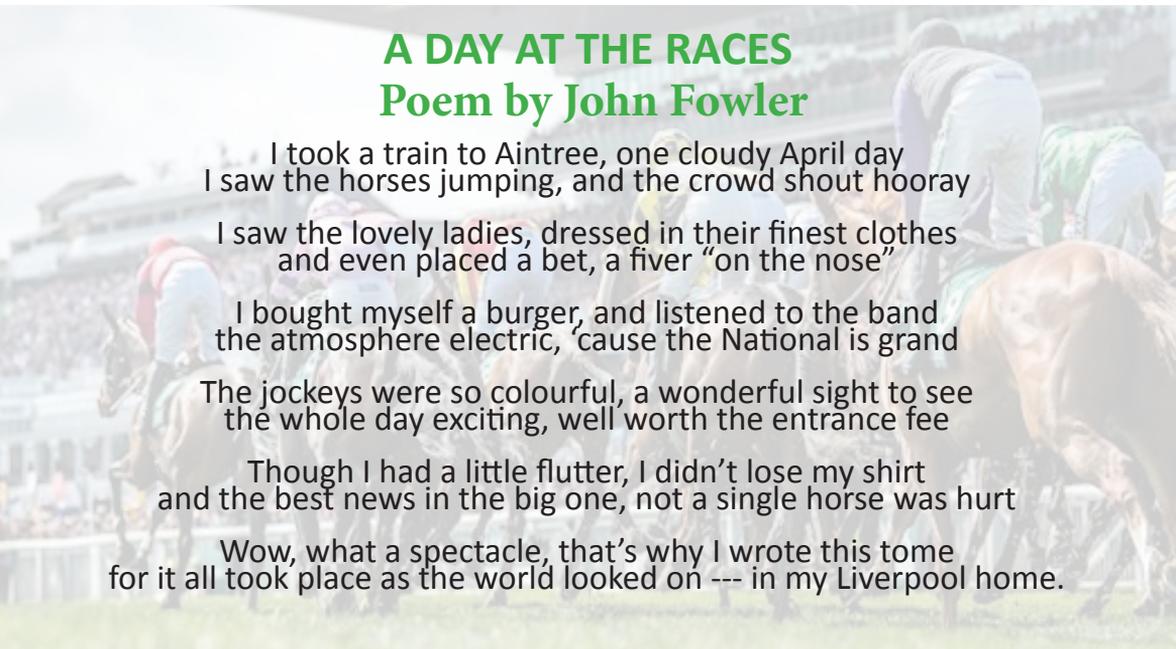


The squirrel, the waterfowl, the cat and a sunset by Anne Douglas



Nervously twitching, eating hazelnuts
I had scattered them beneath the tall
trees at the back of the Way:
favourite haunts of the squirrels.
Then there were the waterfowl,
All the moorhens and mallards
Flapping excitedly
Skimming across silvery ice
Waiting for the treat, the morsel
For seeds to come skidding their way.
And then, there was Raucous, the cat who resided in the greenhouse
He surfaced for regular meals and
then, hibernated in his loveable
feline way
Over the hillside the sunlight dimmed and,
Golden still, it sank behind the canopies of trees
Visible one minute
Vanished the next
Into a waning horizon ...

A DAY AT THE RACES Poem by John Fowler



I took a train to Aintree, one cloudy April day
I saw the horses jumping, and the crowd shout hooray
I saw the lovely ladies, dressed in their finest clothes
and even placed a bet, a fiver "on the nose"
I bought myself a burger, and listened to the band
the atmosphere electric, 'cause the National is grand
The jockeys were so colourful, a wonderful sight to see
the whole day exciting, well worth the entrance fee
Though I had a little flutter, I didn't lose my shirt
and the best news in the big one, not a single horse was hurt
Wow, what a spectacle, that's why I wrote this tome
for it all took place as the world looked on --- in my Liverpool home.



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