**Barbara’s Blog April 2020**

Well, we’re into our fourth week of enforced idleness and I for one am getting very used to having all day to do very little. I’m very fortunate in that I don’t have to share my living space with anyone, I have a lovely garden and the weather has been surprisingly good.

I am trying to contact three or four members a day by phone and am gradually getting through the list.

Have learnt a new skill – video conferencing- as have re-started my existing Beginners Group by doing Virtual Lessons through Zoom. Bit of a learning curve but we’ve all got there – sometimes more successfully than others. But it’s been a lot of fun.

I’m aiming to set up a Meet and Greet video conference for any member who wants to drop in to have a chat or a bridge question answered or anything else. Watch this space. I will contact everyone whose email address I have and hope to meet you on line.

Are many of you playing bridge on line? How do you like it. I am playing on Funbridge at the moment against robots – they don’t seem to mind the expletives and how many times I challenge their mental capacity LOL (Laugh out loud for the unitiated). Of course, it’s always their fault when we end up in the wrong contract.

I’m guessing those of you with gardens are like me and have never had them looking so good so early in the season. I have purple sprouting broccoli and romanescue and have already had a couple of pickings of early rhubarb, together with cavelo nero in the greenhouse, and the broad beans sown as an experiment in the greenhouse to prevent them being flattened by the winds, could well be ready for picking in 2 – 3 weeks time. Sadly my only disappointment seems to be that we must have had a late frost as my Victoria plum tree has very little blossom on it. C’est las vie, we had a good crop last year. On the plus side, the fig tree looks to make up its deficiencies of last year and seems to be on track timewise and the morello cherry and apple trees are laden with blossom. The ornamental black plum and next door’s ornamental cherry are the best I’ve ever seen them.

The joys of cats – last night my Moggie (Mr. Mainwaring) as opposed to the three posh Siamese, decided to stay out late. However, he was very apologetic and brought me a baby rat to tell me how sorry he was. Of course he promptly let it loose in the kitchen so I went to sleep to the sound of 4 cats chasing a baby rat around the kitchen. Delightful ………………..………I should say I did try to save it but when I picked it up it promptly bit me – that’s gratitude for you.

So far everyone in the club I’ve spoken to is remaining healthy. Norman (Taylor) is sadly locked down in the Normanhurst and of course they are not allowing visitors so if anyone wants to cheer him up I suggest you ring Muriel for his mobile number.

Vicky Penfold is also doing well but the next stage of her treatment is in abeyance until the Covid virus lets the hospitals get on with normal business. Again I’m sure she’d welcome a phone call from anyone with time on their hands.

That seems to be all the excitement at chez Herold; like most of you the highlights of my week are the weekly shop to the supermarket, a weekend trip to the newsagent for a paper and joining my neighbours on a Thursday evening who have come up with all manner of instruments including a football rattle. As you might expect, my instrument is banging an empty wine bottle on the dustbins Ha Ha