



Just when we were just heading in the right direction ...

A Turn for the Worse

The Scottish NHS Officials and Scottish Government Ministers have done a good job throughout the crisis - certainly when compared with the briefings from Downing St.

It's difficult to dodge the conclusion that Nicola Sturgeon is streets ahead of Boris J. who most of the time seems to be fishing for answers ... and he doesn't know, he tends to repeat his old mantras "Take Back Control!" and "Get BREXIT done". Not directly connected to the Pandemic - but enough to get the crowd going when he was floundering!

The Scottish National Clinical Director, Jason Leitch, has also done a great job. He has spoken well - without using too much jargon and 'big words'.

In saying that - I wouldn't like to be a Politician just at the moment. They are all on a "hiding to

Life's just not fair! Just when it looked as if we were heading in the right direction with the good news about the roll-out of the COVID vaccine we've been hit with this new form of the virus. Xmas plans have been wrecked as the new 'national lockdown' bites. For 3 weeks from 26th December, all of the Scottish mainland will effectively be 'closed'. New regulations ban travel between Scotland and England and household 'mixing' will be restricted to visiting for 'caring' purposes and childcare for essential workers.

All's not lost! With the vaccine roll-out, there's still plenty to celebrate - and we can still look forward with some optimism for the new year as this unhappy and horrendous 2020 comes to an end.

It's not over - but it's crucial that we don't relax too early and jeopardise the progress. We must keep our guard up to defend ourselves from a sucker punch. Covid-19 is still a highly contagious and deadly virus.



We all want to have an enjoyable festive season but we must still be super-cautious against increasing the Covid-19 transmission rate. It's not worth risking another spike in the virus cases, which could

nothing". The rules of the game keep changing and they're running to keep up. just can't do it right!

My mother used to use an expression "They're more to be pitied than scorned". Without appearing to be too 'political', it seems just right for the current set - in Westminster and Holyrood.

put the NHS on the ropes and cost of yet more lives. When all this came to the fore, away back in January, none of us thought it would be nearly so bad. After that, every time when cases dropped and lockdowns were lifted, we saw 'thoughtless, selfish and 'downright stupid' crowd behaviour".

It musn't happen again. Make sure you play your part

You MUST stick to the FACTS

- Face coverings - always wear a face mask or covering in shops and other public places
- Avoid crowded places
- Clean your hands thoroughly and regularly
- Two metre gap - remember 'social distancing' and keep a 3 metre (6 ft) gap between you and others
- Self-isolate and book a test if you have any sign of symptoms

Committee Xmas Lunch

The Scottish Retired Members Secretary, Barbara Fulton, says she thought the Scottish Committee's Xmas lunch went well - but lacked a wee bit of atmosphere this year ...

Sic' a Parcel o' Rogues ...

January 1st 2021 will go down as an infamous day in UK history. It's becoming clear that we're going to have a "No Deal" Brexit - and the UK is heading for disaster.



Robert Burns wrote the "Sic a parcel o' Rouges" in 1791 - referring to the Scottish business men and landowners who signed the agreement for the Act of Union. They had sold us out and 'betrayed' Scotland ...

We've been 'betrayed again by the Brexiteers ...

This EU Withdrawal Bill is not what the UK voted for in June 2016! Prime Minister Johnson and his gang may scabble around blaming everyone else for the mess they've created.

Amongst so many other things, They promised the UK that withdrawal would be 'easy' and that negotiation of a new "Australian style" trade agreement

They promised that cutting our ties to Europe would allow an extra £350 billion/week for the NHS ...

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Seasons Greetings and Best wishes for 2021 to all Scottish UNISON Retired Members
Liam C



Tell us what was good in 2020?

Often when reading this newsletter, we comment that all or most of the content is too 'gloomy'.

Is that how the news seemed to you this year?

Surely there were some things that made you feel good!

Recall a wee bit of sunshine from 2020. Tell us what your 'happy' highlights were in 2020.

For example, most of us remember the glorious weather that we had in the Spring and Summer.

The glorious weather in May and June got us out and about - and discovering the wonderful parks and gardens in our Scottish towns

Send your happy memories - let us know what made you SMILE ...

It's the "Annual Awards" season again ...

It's the end of the year and the media has been pumping out the usual crop of 'Annual Awards' - so why shouldn't Retired Members News be any different? This year TV broadcasts have been different. They were done 'virtually' - with no live audiences. The main celebrities and personalities deserved their awards. Marcus Radford, Lewis Hamilton and others from the sports world did a lot to 'buck us up' during the crisis.

Age made no difference. We sat enthralled as "Captain Tom" Moore doggedly trudged the length of his garden with his walking frame. He set out to raise £1000 but ended up with over £32.79 million. Then there was the remarkable 6-year-old spina bifida sufferer, wee **Frank Mills** from Bristol (right) who, inspired by Captain Tom, walked 100 laps of his home also with his walking frame to raise over £70,000 for NHS Charities. Let's give a big socially-distanced hug to both of them!



Reality TV - "Strictly", "Great British Bake Off" etc had us on the edge - and gave much-needed distractions from the horrors of the real world. 55-year-old Bill Bailey (left) gave old folk a boost as he outdanced much younger opposition and proved we've still "got it".

But it's also the time to give ...

Christmas is all about giving and we thought hard about who we could send prezzies to.

The NHS front-line staff have already had a bit of a bonus from Nicola Sturgeon - but other 'essential' workers deserve something.

Bus, train and haulage drivers - postal workers, newspaper distributors & sellers, shop workers & delivery drivers. Butchers, bakers & life saving food bank volunteers. Road sweepers and

dustbin men. Electricity, gas and water supply workers ... Could we have done without them?

RM News doesn't have the finance to send them all a present, so we'll have to resort to a "virtual hug" and "big pat on the back" to each and all'.

After careful consideration, however, we decided if we could, we really would like to send small gifts ... and thought about ...

To ● PM Boris Johnson ... A nice new comb

● Jason Rees Mogg ... A pair of jeans, a Che Guevara T-shirt and a pair of trainers



● Dominic Cummings ... A Sat Nav and an AA Road Map of the UK



● Michael Gove ... A healthy dose of 'Scopolamine'

● Donald Trump ... Does anyone know where I can buy a straight jacket? (Size XXL)



Retired Members News EXCLUSIVE Breaking News

A "reliable source" has advised us that the Scottish & Westminster Parliaments have at last caved in to increased pressure from OAP Campaigning Groups.

To avoid ongoing confusion, all official bulletins will now refer to the days of the week as shown right

Thisday ...
Thatday ...
Otherday ...
Someday
Yesterday
Today ...and
Nextday ...

SCAM ALERT

AVOID

Lottery & Competitions

Emails or text messages say you've won a money or big prizes to trick the gullible to give money or personal details to receive the prize.

DON'T call or text a premium rate phone number if they give it to claim the prize.

Remember you can't win a prize if you haven't entered.

Financial scams

You get emails or messages that appear to be from your bank - a financial source or online payment service.

They say there's a problem with your account and ask you to confirm your details on a fake but convincing copy of their website.

'Card skimmers' copy information from the magnetic strip of a credit or ATM card. They can skim your card by putting a discreet attachment

on an ATM. Once your card is skimmed, the scammers create copies and use to your account.

Online shopping & auctions

On-line shopping is largely reliable - but on-line shoppers for victims. That leads to problems ...

- Not getting what you paid for is common.
- They sell a product and send a faulty or inferior quality item, or nothing at all.
- They may pretend to sell a product just to gather your personal details.

They build up your trust then exploit your emotions They ask for help to emergency costs of illness, travel or family crisis.

Advance Fees

You're asked for cash upfront. e.g. to cover fees. They may ask for payment by international transfer. These scams are e-mailed to trap thousands world-wide.

Charitable Causes

Unscrupulous scammers will

take advantage of others happy to donate to a good cause or cure to a health problem.

Others pretend to work for a legitimate (or fictitious) cause or charity. They will exploit natural disasters or crisis that have been in the news..

They claim to work for a cause to get your support e.g. for sick or starving children.

Golden Opportunities

These begin with unexpected phone calls or emails offering 'not-to-be-missed' high return on investment in shares, real estate or currency trading. It may seem convincing, in reality the scammer will take your money and you'll never see the promised returns.

Personal Relationships

Fake dating sites are used to hook you to start relationship to get hold of your money or personal details.

Medical scams endorse products/services that appear legitimate - promising quick and effective but fake cures

TAKE CARE

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Sic a Parcel o' Rogues

So where are we now, with less than a week to go before we leave the Market for good ?

We have no agreement with the EU - the "Australian-style Agreement has been shown to be a figment of Michael Gove's imagination. The NHS in England & Wales (albeit largely due to the COVID pandemic) is in chaos and an organisational shambles.

The same may said for the Educational system.

The pound has dropped against the Euro - but don't panic. As we are now non-EU citizens, the cost of a Continental holiday will probably be too much for many of us to afford.

In February 2019 the EU President, Donald Tusk, was lambasted for commenting that "special place in hell" for "those who promoted Brexit without even a sketch of a plan of how to carry it out safely".

The Brexiteers have a lot to answer for, but they shouldn't have to worry Donald Tusk has that "special place" for them beside the fire

Memorable quotes from 2020

It's been a bit of a shitty, frightening year but Dundee's Mae Stewart has been good enough to pass on these memorable quotes from the year to give us all a wee bit of a laugh. She assures me they are genuine!!

- ★ I'm definitely going to stay up on New Years Eve this year. Not to see the New Year in but to make sure this one leaves!!!
 - ★ Having some areas in lock down and some areas not in lock down is like having a 'peeing section' in a swimming pool!
 - ★ There was a big 'X' on the floor for me to stand on at the supermarket checkout but I'm not falling for that one I've seen too many Road Runner cartoons!
 - ★ They told me a mask and gloves were enough to go to the supermarket. They lied everybody else had clothes on!
 - ★ Don't panic even with the pandemic, no matter how much chocolate you eat, your earrings will still fit you!
 - ★ The buttons on my jeans have started socially distancing from each other!
 - ★ I never thought the comment 'I wouldn't touch him/her with a 6 foot pole' would become a National Policy.
- There you are! Did that lot bring a smile to an otherwise "greetin' face"?

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