

The Orange

by Wendy Cope

At lunchtime I bought a huge orange
The size of it made us all laugh
I peeled it and shared it with Robert and Dave--
They got quarters and I had a half.

And that orange it made me so happy,
As ordinary things often do
Just lately. The shopping. A walk in the park
This is peace and contentment. It's new.

The rest of the day was quite easy.
I did all my jobs on my list
And enjoyed them and had some time over.

I love you. I'm glad I exist.

We always seem to begin these newsletters with a suitable text, and I was casting around for a poem or something equally uplifting on the theme of 'we'll meet again', but couldn't find anything – unless it was Vera Lynn, with whom you'll all be quite familiar. Then I remembered my shortlist for the 'Poem Of The Week' wall display at



the library, and this poem, which for me catches the spirit of these times, when we're all having to attend more closely to the familiar and the everyday.

I hope you're all well and bearing up under the current lock down restrictions. Library business is still going on, you may be surprised to learn, but under the expert tutelage of our Secretary Cheryl we've moved away from the meeting room and on to Zoom. More on that development later.

But now, on to some news...

When will the library reopen?

We're keeping in regular contact with Richard, our liaison at South Tyneside Council, and the latest update is as follows:

The government is setting up task forces, each led by a Minister, to develop plans for how and when closed sectors can safely reopen.

Libraries fall within a task force grouping that will also include recreation, leisure, tourism, culture and heritage, entertainment and sport. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport will lead the task force, and library professionals will be involved in its deliberations, which will begin early in July.

In common with all other businesses, libraries will be allowed to reopen only when they can meet new COVID-19 secure guidelines which relate to their specific activities. We do not as yet know what those guidelines will be, but I will circulate details as and when they become available. In the meantime, we have set up a Covid19 committee to keep an eye on developments and consider how we as a library should respond.

Activities and events – online?

When the lockdown began our programme of activities and events stretched into next year, so it's been sad to see lectures and quizzes and the Easter Fayre cancelled at such short notice.

However, on line quizzing has become popular during lockdown, with teams meeting up using Zoom and FaceTime and similar social media apps, and we are considering



restarting our own monthly quiz along similar lines. We're also looking into the possibility of having our guest speakers deliver their lectures through the same media. There are some technical points to resolve, but I will keep you informed of progress.

In the meantime, if you already have some experience of running online quizzes and competitions, or simply feel that you have the necessary technical expertise

and would like to become involved, just let Gail Barkel and/or me know. I'm conducting most of my library business using the info@thelibrary.uk.com email address at the moment so that's the best way to reach me.

And now some good news:

We were successful in our application to the Council for a Small Leisure Businesses grant, and received £10,000. We also qualify for help with the rates due to the Corona virus situation. We are very grateful.

Next newsletter

Will be on an 'as and when' basis, as the situation regarding Covid19 is changing so rapidly. Look out for newsletters in the weeks to come, as I'll try to keep you up to date.

Very best wishes to you all.

Adrian Mallen

Chair of Trustees

