



Hello everyone,

As I write this, we are enjoying our 4<sup>th</sup> lovely sunny day in a row – surely it must be Spring! Each year it lifts our hearts and spirits, makes our problems seem smaller, encourages us to look out for each other, and it helps us cope with the aches, pains, stresses and anxieties of living with the impact of illness (and old age) on our daily lives. Whilst we might be looking forward to summer holidays, our thoughts often turn to memories of times past. Sharing those memories with others is one of life's pleasures. For those who have dementia, and those who care for them, reminiscing can be much more than a pleasant activity. When someone's short-term memory has become very poor everyday conversations between husband and wife, mother and daughter, old friends, etc. are no longer possible and they can easily become isolated from each other. But more often than not their long-term memory is still "all there" – we just need to find the way to trigger it. Reminiscence "therapy" is a grand phrase for encouraging this.

Everyone enjoys a good old natter about the old days and there is something special about bringing back memories. So we are starting a new group called "Way Back Then". The first meeting will be in the afternoon of April 12<sup>th</sup> at Dove Cottage. It is intended to be very informal **and for everyone who enjoys a yarn**. Come along and enjoy remembering with friends what you did in the 40s, 50s, and 60s - enjoy talking about the hobbies and activities that you loved with others who also enjoyed them - hear about what Debenham and the surrounding villages was like all those years ago and tell us what it was like where you grew up. Look out for more details elsewhere in this edition and on the posters.

As you know much of what we do is concerned with creating opportunities for socialisation, meeting and making friends, sharing, mutual support, and access to information and advice. That means we get through a tremendous amount of tea, coffee, biscuits, and especially CAKE – I am often to be heard telling people that "everything we do is heavily lubricated with chocolate cake". As with all community activities, it doesn't just appear as if by magic. There is a wonderful band of "Mary Berrys" who generously deliver cake after cake and other goodies to our door – Ann, Audrey, Bridget, Claudine, Margaret, Penny and Sue - we are so grateful to them all.

Finally, now that Spring is here, if you know of someone who you would love to take for a walk in the sunshine, don't forget that we have a couple of wheelchairs for loan.

Best wishes,  
Lynden  
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