

Cautious hope

Well I even managed to burn the Easter hot cross buns for the grandchildren – I'm clearly out of practice but no matter, we laughed just from the joy of being together, even if it was in a rather chilly garden. April has been unusually cold with a nagging north wind and frosty mornings, and so dry with ne'er a drop of rain. Watering the garden tubs and containers while nurturing pathetically slow seed germination in April adds just a bit more craziness to the last year's surrealism.

As a nation we took part in the first socially-distanced royal funeral, very traditional in some respects while closely observing the rules of the day. The sight of our minute, lone Queen is one that will stick for a long time. She was back to business in a couple of weeks, a real symbol of strength.

But while it didn't stop planning and visits to plant nurseries in the hope of sunshine ahead, it was just too cold to sit outside with friends for coffee in the garden or indulge in a pub lunch. We'll have to be patient a while longer; all the signs are that more restrictions will be lifted next month with overseas travel again on the cards, indoor hospitality and entertainment venues opening and then, whoopee, all legal limits on social contact removed in June. There was a palpable feeling of hope and resurgence in business and the arts, with full strength music festivals being trialled.

One of my treats for the family is Giffords Circus in the summer and Chippy Panto at Christmas. Neither happened last year, but it looks as if the circus visit is on in late June. It will feel very strange to be mixing with people again but with all adult family members now vaccinated we should be safe enough. I have to get over this nervousness about mixing again. Is this our passport to a new freedom?

The image shows a digital vaccine record card with a light blue background. At the top, it says 'Name' followed by a dotted line. Below that, there are two numbered entries for vaccine doses. Entry 1 is for 'COVID-19 mRNA BNT 162b2' with batch number 'EL0141' and date '10/1/2021'. Entry 2 is for 'Pfizer' with batch number 'ER1741' and date '23/03/2021'. Between the two entries, there is a reminder to attend a second appointment and a field for the 'Second appointment date:'. At the bottom, it provides the Public Health England gateway number (2020311) and product code (COV2020311).

Name	
1	Name: COVID-19 mRNA BNT 162b2 Batch no: EL0141 Date of vaccine: 10/1/2021
Don't forget to attend your appointment to have your second dose of vaccine. You will have the best protection after two doses. Second appointment date:	
2	Name: Pfizer Batch no: ER1741 Date of vaccine: 23/03/2021
Public Health England gateway number: 2020311. Product code: COV2020311	

It was ridiculous just how much I looked forward to a haircut; what I'm not looking forward to is a resumption of face-to-face Parish Council meetings from early May. A combination of wearing a mask and having to shout to be heard by a socially distanced group will be, er, interesting, to say the least. I'm one of those spec wearers who steams up easily, so with a mask, I can't see with my glasses on and I can't see with my glasses off! We'd happily got used to meeting by Skype, but now we can compare haircuts in person.

With the Covid team standing down from the end of April, it's also time to think about wrapping up this Covid in Deddington archive. At the end of June I fervently hope to be able to report that there is nothing to report.

