



Bags of food for youth club members

By Diana Cormack

Maureen Clemetson runs two youth clubs on Strawberry Vale, N2. The Monday Club is primarily football for boys aged 11 and upwards while the Friday Club caters for a mixed group of seven to 13-year-olds, offering a variety of activities. Since lockdown began both have had to close, leaving Maureen concerned about what is happening to club members.

But being the person she is, Maureen has ensured that not all contact has been broken. She phoned around from her flat on the estate, telling parents what she intended to do, starting with the Friday Club.

Now, thanks to the generosity of a very supportive benefactor, on what would have been their club night Maureen supplies those youngsters with food bags left outside her door. These usually contain biscuits, crisps, cupcakes, juice or canned drinks with separately packaged jerk chicken and rice.

She prepares up to 20 bags on a Friday and a few less on a Monday. On Fridays Maureen is assisted by two friends: Cherry Binnie, who used to run an eatery back in Jamaica, takes over to prepare particularly tasty jerk chicken (she also makes delicious cakes) and Emma Morris cooks trays of her speciality, macaroni cheese.

Whilst intending to continue

with this for the foreseeable future, Maureen is hoping all the present restrictions will be well and truly over by the end of October when the Monday Club celebrates its 15th birthday.



Maureen Clemetson with her bags of food ready to go



Well oiled: Pub handyman Dan Storey with his eye-catching painting of roses. Photo John Lawrence

A passion for painting that couldn't stay hidden

By John Lawrence

Dan Storey is a pub handyman who lives above the Bald Faced Stag in the High Road and is an accomplished oil painter in his spare time.

He has been kept busy constructing 40 screens to go between tables ready for when the Stag and other Greene King pubs in the area re-open to customers this month. But on weekends and evenings his woodworking gives way to subtler skills at the easel.

Returning to painting

Dan, 45, did art at GCSE level when he was 16 but left

his A-level course to find work. It took him 27 years to pick up his brushes again, and since then he hasn't stopped.

"I was interested in art galleries when I was young and always thought I would paint again," he says. "I started about five years ago after being out of work. I was back in a job and that helped. I need a clear head to paint, with no worries."

Just one year into restarting, Dan had assembled enough work for a successful exhibition at Lauderdale House in Highgate. He hopes to exhibit again this year with some spectacular pieces he has committed to canvas during the lockdown.

One brushstroke more

Among them are a striking image of roses and a soothing seascape of a scene in Thailand. "The roses came from all the ones I saw in front gardens in May when I went out on lockdown walks, and the Thailand scene is from a friend's photo."

The roses took three hours to paint, but Dan says they may

not be finished yet. "I've always worked quickly. I can see the finished painting before I start so it's just about getting it on the canvas. I work in oils because they can take weeks to dry. So I might stop work on a piece and three weeks later see something I want to change and I can do that because the paint isn't fully dry. When it's definitely finished, I varnish over the top."

Dan was living as a household with other staff above the Stag during the lockdown and is glad that the pub is coming back to life. Should you pop in for a drink, you'll be able to enjoy one of his other seascapes on show in the bar.



Much appreciated: Matt the postie and three of the bin men on their Bedford Road round. Photos Erini Rodis

We couldn't do without you!

By Erini Rodis

A few weeks into clapping for our NHS workers, residents in Bedford Road, N2, decided to show some appreciation for some of our other key workers too, who

continued to work throughout lockdown despite the obvious risks, such as our reliable postie Matt, and our hardworking bin men. A total of £1,000 was collected up and down the road and distributed among them all. Well deserved, we think.

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