

### WELCOME TO THE FIRST NEWSLETTER OF 2021

#### Dear Community Members,

We hope that this newsletter finds you and your family and relatives well. 2020 has been a year unlike any other and all of us have been through unusual experiences. For some, it has been a very sad time with friends and loved ones who have passed away. The committee members and Trustees send our heartfelt and deepest condolences to all families for your loss.

So much has changed in the last 12 months and it's been amazing to see people from all walks of life embrace the changes – some changes we didn't have a choice over and some which we probably should have adopted long time ago, like ordering groceries online! Let's see what 2021 brings and hope it's better news for all.



#### Staying in touch...

The one overwhelming need during the lockdown has been to stay connected with friends and/or family here and possibly overseas. When we cannot be together, the desire to connect is greater.

In the spirit of supporting the BMUK community, the Committee have also been trying to stay connected with you as members, friends and family.

Just before Christmas the committee members phoned every elderly member to check-in with them, make sure they are ok and to offer support or just for a chat. The beauty of a community like ours is that we are and have always been a close-knit group. BMUK is like a large family with very close and in most cases old ties between families who have shared experiences. There has never been a better time to get re-acquainted with fellow members and their families and make new friends even whilst in lockdown. So pick up the phone, email or get started with online meetings – see what you have missed or who.

As we look forward to safer times when we can meet and get together, the Committee continues to look for ways to stay in touch with you, plan for future events and get creative new ideas for our Community. You can help or contribute – please just get in touch with a Committee member and let's have a chat.

#### Mental Wellbeing

2020 has been tough for many for various reasons. If you have struggled, particularly with your mental health, there is much help and support available. One thing you can do is speak with your doctor, they can help directly or signpost you to NHS resources.

If you are at home, and anxious, worried or bored, looking after your mental health is vastly important. As the NHS advocate: "every mind matters"! To this extent, the following link gives excellent advice and signposts:

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-at-home-tips/>

Also, whilst there are many resources online, the NHS has provided a whole list of "mental health charities, organisations and support groups can offer expert advice":

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mental-health-helplines/>

Basic advice is to go for walks, focus on a hobby and remain in touch with friends. And please remember, you can talk to family and friends in BMUK – sometimes just a catch-up or chat about life or old times can be enjoyable, pleasant and calming.

## Upcoming event to lift up our spirits.

As a start, we are delighted to announce and confirm that BMUK will be hosting the 'Zoom Bhajans' on 27th March 2021 7:00pm to 8:30pm to which all members and family members are cordially invited. The event will also be open to friends of members. However, please be advised that the number of connections is restricted to maximum of 300 on a first come first serve basis. Details will also be available on our Website including how to access the event for which you will need the following Zoom user id **83425344149** and password **BKM**. We hope to see you all there.



## Charitable Donations to support others suffering due to COVID.

COVID has hit many societies in many ways with so many individuals and households left without income, basic essentials or some form of support. On behalf of BMUK, the Committee and Trustees are looking to make a significant donation either to our BM Community in India or another charitable organisation they are supporting that is helping those hit hard by COVID. We cannot help everyone but perhaps we can make a small difference to those in real need. Please join us by donating to the BMUKCV19 collection we are launching and we will ensure that all donations are pooled, added to a BMUK donation from our current funds, and then directed to where most needed. If you have any suggestions for charities/ NGOs working in India which might put our donations to best use, please do let a committee member know. We will update you in due course either through our website and/or in next newsletter how our donations have helped others.

You can make your donation directly through Internet banking to

**Bank: TSB**  
**A/c Name: BRAHAMKSHATRIYA MANDAL UK**  
**Sort Code: 77-91-21**  
**A/c No: 25454860**



Please quote reference BMUKCV19/<your surname> and if you can please email or text our Treasurer so that we can correctly identify and allocate your donation to [treasurer@bmuk.org](mailto:treasurer@bmuk.org) or Harshalbhai Kshatri: [harshal.kshatri@bmuk.org](mailto:harshal.kshatri@bmuk.org)

If you are making a contribution toward the BMUK general funds please use the same account as above and quote reference BMUK2021/<your surname> and again a quick email or text to our Treasurer would help.

If you prefer to make either a donation or contribution by cheque please contact a committee member who will advise you further.

## Subscriptions “Holiday” for 2021



As you know we normally collect member's subscriptions at the AGM/Diwali meeting and as that meeting did not take place, we have not collected subscriptions for 2021. So whilst we did not have any funds coming in during 2020, likewise we did not have any major outgoings. We have reserves, but they are limited so we do not want to use them unless absolutely necessary.

Considering all the difficulties we face, the BMUK Committee has decided not to collect subscriptions for this year but would still welcome any contributions you may wish to make in the interim period. In the meantime, we are looking into how we can arrange for members to pay their subscriptions online, safely and securely for the future. We want to ensure when we resume a (new!) normality, there are plentiful funds for BMUK activities.

### BMUK Committee and changes...

The Committee and the Trustees have been meeting via online video calls on a regular basis to plan ahead and to collectively deal with member queries that come through. By way of an update, Manisha Majithia has stepped down from the Committee as she is expecting her second baby! We thank her for her hard work and wish her all the very best. Rajeshbhai Ashra has stepped back in to be the secretary.



Also, Prakashbhai Soneji whom you all know so well has resigned as Treasurer after serving the Committee and BMUK in this capacity for over 25 years!! We deeply thank him for his hard work, commitment, tenacity and dedication. He has inspired and guided everyone who has joined the Committee and we will certainly miss his vision on finance management. Harshalbhai Kshatri has stepped up to be the Treasurer.

The Committee as always welcomes any interests from members who wish to be active in the running of BMUK. You may be interested in joining the Committee or simply as a support volunteer – so please do get in touch with a Committee member to find out more.

We would like this newsletter to reach as many people as possible so please do pass along the newsletter to everyone in your family or direct them to our website. We look forward to hearing from as many of you as possible, do email us if you have any ideas for the Committee, want to help with projects/plans or if you wish to donate. We hope 2021 brings you all great opportunities and experiences and more importantly that you, your family and friends all remain safe and well.

We look forward to seeing you virtually and in person very soon.

## BMUK Membership and Directory

Some while ago we started a census to gather the most up to date information from our members with a view to keeping our data-base up to date and also to create a new Members Directory. We are still planning to go ahead with printing the Directory but we found that a number of households had not submitted their details or the forms were incomplete. Hence, around the middle of last year we rang every household to confirm the details we held. Normally, we would do this at the AGM/Diwali meeting, which sadly had to be postponed. The result was that we have now updated practically everyone's details. However, if there have been any specific changes since then, relating to you or your family, please email *Yashvant Machchhar*: [yashvant.machchhar@bmuk.org](mailto:yashvant.machchhar@bmuk.org)



### \*ANNOUNCEMENTS\*

We regret to inform about the passing of our following members recently and over last year. Our thoughts and prayers are with their families.

- Chandrakalaben Machchhar 4<sup>th</sup> April 2020
- Prafulbhai Popatlal Kapadia 10<sup>th</sup> April 2020
- Ravibhai Jayant Nirmal 28th September 2020
- Savitaben Gordhandas Kakaiya 11<sup>th</sup> December 2020
- Pankajbhai Dhirajlal Master 10<sup>th</sup> January 2021
- Pravinbhai Nirmal 11<sup>th</sup> January 2021
- Hasumatiben Prataprai Mamtora 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021

## CONTACT US

### BMUK Committee Members' Contact details

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