

TITBITS

EDITORIAL

A warm and overdue hello from UBS!

Dear all,

I hope you are all happy and healthy and are now enjoying the summer, where does the time go?

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Michael McGrath and I have been working here at UBS Head Office since Natalie Stow's departure to undertake voluntary work in South America in July 2003.

Permit me to tell you a little about myself: I come from a town called Birkenhead on Merseyside and am a history graduate and keen sportsman from Newcastle University. I am part of what our Fundraising Director John Burgess aptly calls "The Northern Invasion". My colleagues Mrs. Siân Burgess and Mrs. Janet Wilkinson who are our Regional Development Officers on Merseyside and Tyneside respectively complete our staff.

I left university in 2001, how time flies, and my life has seemed to have followed the opposite route to my predecessor's in that my work overseas, in Africa, has led me now to London and UBS! So far so good I must hasten to add.

May I also take the time to offer you all my best wishes, I hope you are all fit and well and that you are looking forward to the summer,

managing to stay safe and warm and full of cheer!

We enjoy hearing from you all, the lovely cards and letters you send are always gratefully received and make the office a brighter place. However, please do not ever feel that you must reply to every cheque or note we send. We do know how difficult this can be sometimes.

Can I stress that *Titbits* can be your newsletter? We are considering changing the name, please do send in your suggestions; the one chosen will win a mystery star prize! We would also welcome your own contributions to and ideas for this newsletter. We cannot promise to include all of them but if you feel like sharing your thoughts, anecdotes and wisdom, please do, especially in the light of this year's commemoration of VE and VJ days.

I am doing my best to keep up the tradition in this issue of including useful tips and hints for coping with the cold weather that we hope will be helpful.

Take good care of yourselves and very best wishes everyone here at UBS,

Michael McGrath.
UBS Manager

Best shopping trip buys, especially in winter.

- If the winter weather is as bad as it was last year and you don't feel well enough to go to the shops, you will need to be able to rely on the 'basics'. Do your best to try to shop for at least two or three of these items each week in addition to your day-day needs to keep well stocked:

Milk – long-life, dried or evaporated and tinned milk puddings.

Meat and fish – tinned corned beef, ham, sardines, pilchards and tuna.

Soups – tinned or dried, meat and yeast extract; stock cubes.

Cereals – breakfast cereals, plain biscuits, crisp bread and pasta. Grated cheese is a tasty addition to fish, fresh or instant mashed potato, scrambled egg or toast. If you are worried about your weight, look for low-fat cheeses.

Drinks – tea, coffee, cocoa and malted milk.

Fruit, vegetables and juices – tinned fruit and vegetables, baked beans, dried fruits, lentils and other dried beans and peas and long-life fruit juice.

Enjoying and eating a good variety is important. If you eat well, you are likely to feel healthier, stay active for longer and protect yourself against illness.

Frequent hot drinks are comforting and warming. A bedside flask could prevent any unwanted trips to the kitchen at night.

- **Useful recipes.**

Shepherd's Pie – enough for two days...

Generous knob of butter

6 medium sized potatoes

4oz of grated strong cheddar

½ lb of mince

1 large onion

1 Oxo cube

4 small carrots (chopped)

½ tin of baked beans (rinse off the sauce in a colander)

1 tin of plum tomatoes

Dessertspoon of sweet basil (optional)

Salt and pepper (a couple of generous shakes of each)

1 teaspoon of English mustard

2 tablespoons of vegetable oil

A splash of milk

Peel the potatoes and chop in half, cook in salted water. Peel and chop the onion and place in the hot oil until soft and gently brown. Add the mince, pepper, salt and mustard and turn the gas up a little and cook until the mince is browned. Stir in the carrots, baked beans and then the chopped plum tomatoes and their juice; add the Oxo cube and the sweet basil. Cook until the mixture simmers (about ten minutes). Place in a pre-heated pie tin in the oven on a low heat.

Rinse the potatoes in a colander, put them back in the saucepan, add some milk and butter, put back on a low heat until the milk and the butter is hot. Mash until creamy, adding the cheese.

Take the meat mixture out of the oven and spoon the potato over the top, smoothing it over with a fork. Place under the grill and cook until golden brown. Enjoy!

- **Handyvvan and Handyman schemes.**

This is a scheme developed by Help the Aged in many areas throughout the UK. Fully vetted fitters provide security equipment such as door chains, locks and smoke alarms, and carry out small jobs for elderly people on low incomes.

To see if there is a Handyvvan in your area, contact Help the Aged on **0207 278 1114**. Help the Aged's senior line **0808 800 6565**, Mon-Fri 0900-1600.

- **Hearing & Sight Problems**

Blind or partially sighted people may be interested that information is available from the RNIB, detailing what benefits are available and how they can be claimed.

Call **08457 626 843**. (Charged at local rate from anywhere in the country).

- **Hearing Concern** now has a help-line for those with hearing difficulties. As well as giving information on services and facilities, they also have telephone numbers and addresses for all sorts of similar organisations.

They can even put you in touch with an adviser in your area who can give you specialist local advice. Call **08450 744 600**.

- If you find it difficult to get out to the shops, do find out if there's a local community transport scheme operating in your area. The WRVS and the Red Cross often offer similar schemes.

Silly bits of trivia.

There are more beds in Blackpool than in all of Portugal.

Marriage is like arthritis. You have to learn to live with it.

A mother may hope that her daughter will get a better husband than she did but knows that her son will never get as good a wife as his father did.

If short cuts were actually better then they would be called "the way".

A beautiful smile is always youthful.

If you are entertaining grudges, let them go. They raise blood pressure, cause stomach upset, furrowed brows, and just aren't worth hanging on to.

A woman's best estimate is always more accurate than a man's certainty. (So I am told!)

An excerpt taken from a local eight-year-old child's school essay about what a grandparent is.

"They don't talk baby-talk like visitors. When they read to us, they don't skip bits or mind if it is the same story over again.

Everybody should have a grandparent, especially if you don't have a television, because grandparents are the only adults who do have time."

- **Handy Hints For Domestic Bliss!**

- Treat burns on a carpet immediately by rubbing affected area with a slice of raw potato.

- Put packets of new tights in the freezer for an hour or two, you'll get much more wear out of them. [It might make you grit your teeth when you put them on though!]

- A cork can be made to refit a bottle easily if you first soak it in boiling water to make it pliable. (Please fish it out with a spoon and not your fingers though!)

- Clean rusty garden tools by leaving them to soak in a bucket of wallpaper paste overnight.

- To starch small items of linen or cotton, dip in water in which rice or pasta has been boiled. Then iron when damp.

- When carrying a cup of tea or coffee, put a spoon in the cup and you won't spill any.

- To stretch tight leather shoes, stuff newspaper inside and leave overnight in the freezer. Once defrosted, the leather is softer and stretched without any damage.

- One part white distilled vinegar to three parts of water makes a good multi-purpose cleaner.

- Half a cup of baking soda or borax added to a bucket of hot water will disinfect bathrooms and kitchens. Tea-tree oil is also a natural disinfectant that is ideal for the bathroom.

- A paste of baking soda, water and salt makes a good natural oven cleaner.

- To clean windows, use equal quantities of vinegar and water.

I hope all these pearls of wisdom come in handy over the coming months. From us all here at **UBS**,

"Have a lovely and a very happy 2005!"

Michael McGrath.
UBS Manager